

The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent publication

come together

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A New Publication Seeks Resident Input

By Mikhailina Karina

With the departure of the thought-provoking and informative Eagle Eyes emails from Loretta Ratkus, I believe this community needs another communication vehicle to share news, raise concerns, and come up with solutions. The venerable *Times of Montebello* does an excellent job informing the residents of the administrative minutiae – yet it speaks only for the Board of Directors.

While the residents have the online forum on the Montebello website, it has yet to attract any users. Lately, there has been a lot of grumbling about the lack of constructive communication between the Board (including the management) and the residents. As a result of a series of unpopular decisions and perceived lack of transparency, I see a need for better, more civil and honest communication among all of Montebello's constituencies.

The idea behind *The Montebello Voice* is to give voice to more than 2,000 residents, both owners and renters. Because there is no editorial board or policies regarding submissions, this electronic publication would complement *The Times of Montebello* by including free classifieds, photos from home parties or balcony snapshots of beautiful sunsets, as well as free advertising for residents' services, businesses, or organizations. To keep it lively, people can also send in book reviews, restaurant recommendations, announcements of new ventures, or personal reflections. Humorous pieces are always a plus!

In addition, the publication's volunteer writers will provide timely coverage of Board decisions that have a direct impact on our quality of life. For example, with a Board of Directors election coming up this spring, *The Voice* can include any relevant election news.

Everyone who lives at Montebello is welcome to write for *The Montebello Voice* or send in photos, ads, and announcements. Whenever absolutely necessary, only slight grammatical tweaking will be applied to the submissions. Because there are no costs associated with creating this publication, it will be emailed as a PDF file to anyone who requests it. The publication schedule will depend on the timeliness and volume of submissions.

Montebello is a community of educated, accomplished, friendly, and generous people. Each of us has stories of neighbors helping each other in times of need or getting together for raucous parties in our vertical village. For whatever reason, we have chosen to make Montebello our

home – a place where many families are raising their children, downsized from larger homes, relocated for professional reasons, or simply fell in love with a secure environment in a natural setting. A strong sense of community is one of the biggest selling points and reasons for being here. Hopefully, *The Montebello Voice* will create a stronger, happier, better informed community.

If you are interested in participating in this project or subscribing, please get in touch with me at MontebelloVoice@cox.net. To paraphrase this season's most entertaining presidential contender, "let's make Montebello great again." MB

Management Teaches Good Manners, QI Committee Still Studies Low Participation

The opening of the shiny new Fitness Center means the management has another opportunity to create a new set of common-sense rules – a.k.a., gym etiquette – that sound like something out of *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*: share all equipment, don't hog the machines, clean up after yourself, don't come in with dirty shoes, put everything back, don't slam down or drop heavy objects, dress appropriately, don't blare your musical devices, and speak in indoor voice. General Manager Liz Foltin read the list at the Feb. 9 Board of Directors meeting. This list is in addition to the similar rules already posted in the facility.

About 30 people, many of them members of various committees, attended the meeting. The lagging participation has been an ongoing concern of the Quality Improvement committee headed by Board member Guido Zanni. After a computer malfunction destroyed the results of a recent survey, Zanni said a new survey will be put forth to study the "root cause analysis for low participation in committees."

Conducted in a closed meeting on Feb. 10, Zanni said the committee, which is made up of several current and former Board directors and one member of the Communications Committee, "will look at systemic issues and the problems of recruiting chairs and membership."

Bonnie Jacob, chair of the Communications Committee, addressed the Board, "If you want to get to the truth, I urge you to seek input from the people who may or may not choose to participate." MB

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