

Serendipity

By Joseph de Angelis

Historically the unofficial tradition of Plankowner in the U.S. Navy started with the building of wooden ships. Sailors who were going to be crew members of a newly constructed ship or someone who actually had some involvement with the building of the vessel were unofficially designated as Plankowners. As a Plankowner they or their widows could petition the Naval Historical Center's Curator Branch for a piece of the deck planking from their ship when it was decommissioned. However, this practice has been discontinued and the remaining stocks of planking that the Curator Branch had were donated to various veterans' organizations. So, the possibility of obtaining a piece of original planking today

from any given ship is almost impossible, or is it?

If you know anything at all about American battleships, you know that the main outer deck of the ship is covered with hardwood, teak hardwood to be exact. One battleship in particular, the *USS Wisconsin* (BB-64), has been of interest to me over the years because my father worked on it installing the hardwood teak decking when it was being built at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard between January 1941 and December 1943. Since its construction 73 years ago, the *USS Wisconsin* has participated in World War II, the Korean War, Operation Desert Storm, and it has also served as a training ship for the U.S. Navy. It has been decommissioned, modernized, reactivated, and decommissioned again in September 1991 and is currently on

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The quartet



From left: Diane Fitzgerald, Nancy Vogt, Harriet Duval, and Mary Tjeerdsma at the Shawnee Inn Golf Resort in the Poconos Mountains on the banks of the Delaware River. The resort sits on Pennsylvania side, but across the river it is New Jersey.

Board rescinds SACWG, seeks candidates for the Covenants Committee

By Mikhailina Karina

In just 30 minutes, the Board of Directors went through the light agenda at the June 14 meeting.

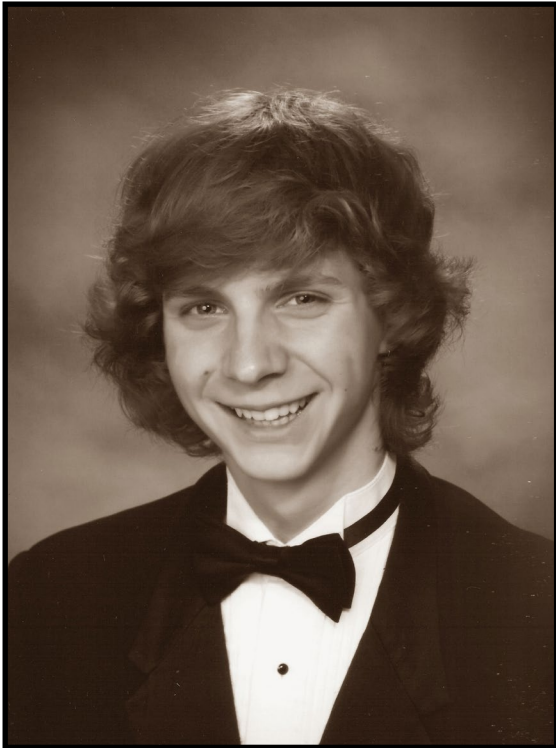
The board unanimously voted to rescind the Safety and Access Working Group (nicknamed Sacagewea). Board president Greg Bender said the new Safety and Access manager "is doing a good job" and the board "felt comfortable with the SAC force doing a good job and keeping us safe."

What used to be a routine board appointment to the three-member Covenants Committee became a disagreement among the new and the old board members. Director Jerry Stedje moved to table the motion to appoint former board treasurer, Joe Riccobono, to the Covenants Committee. "It has nothing to do with Joe's qualifications," Stedje said. "It's more of a process issue." He suggested opening the position to all qualified Montebello owners to "get around the perception that board appoints people already affiliated with the board."

Director Bruce Shaw said he agreed with the idea of "new blood," but added that the Covenants Committee, which is mandated by the Virginia Condominium Act, "is an exception. I agree with the principal, but not for the Covenants Committee."

In a 5-3 vote (one board member was absent), the board agreed to send

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Christopher Chapman received his diploma from Thomas Edison High School on June 15. He will be working full-time at Ironistic, a web design and marketing firm in Old Town Alexandria, where he has interned for the past year and a half. In addition, he will be a full-time student at NOVA. You might have seen him around Montebello riding his bike on weekends. He is the grandson of the late Joseph Cooke, who lived in Building 1 for over 26 years. – Catherine Cooke

Congratulations!



Sarah (left) and Sophie were confirmed on Sunday, June 5, at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church. A number of Montebello friends joined them for a celebration. Photo by Diane Bastin.

*As you teach,
you learn.*

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out an MML calling for candidates to submit their résumés. Bender said he had the final authority to appoint the new committee member.

The board also appointed new committee liaisons and left previous ones unchanged:

- Activities: Lauren Pierce
- Art in Montebello: Bruce Shaw
- Communications: Lynn Tjeerdsma
- Covenants: Greg Bender
- Election: Bonnie Daniel
- Finance & Budget: Doug Kleine
- Neighborhood Improvement: Jerry Stedge

Quality Improvement: new member John Powers

Times of Montebello: Guido Zanni

General Manager Liz Foltin reported that after kinks are worked out with the lobby monitors, she expects them to become operational in late June. In addition, the contractor will take care of sticking balls on the tennis court surface. 🏠

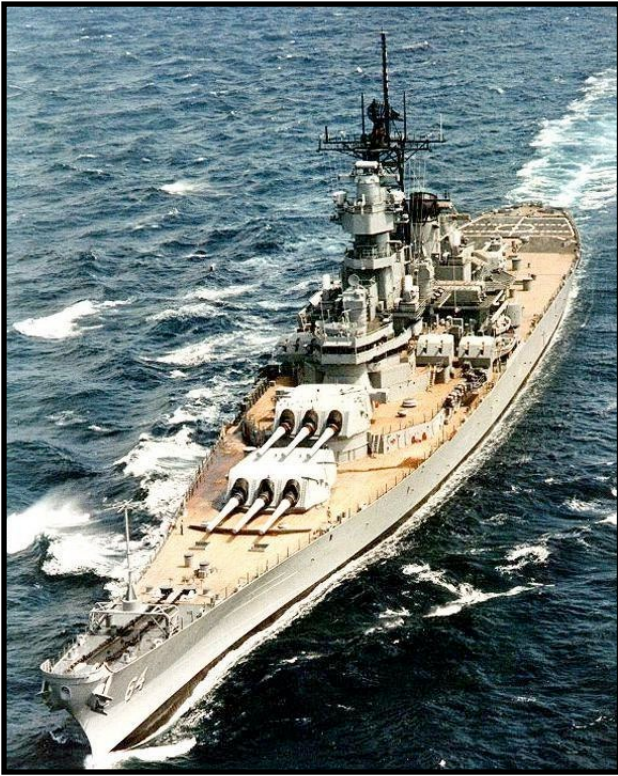
The MONTEBELLO Voice

Alexandria, Virginia
an independent gazette

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Editor & Designer.....Mikhailina Karina

Contributors..... Joseph de Angelis, Carole Appel, Diane Bastin, Catherine Cooke, Guin Jones, Dian McDonald, Dottie McKelvey, Sarah-Mai Simon, Mary Tjeerdsma, Nancy Vogt



display as a museum ship at Waterside in Norfolk, Va.

The *USS Wisconsin* underwent modernization in 1986 at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Va., where my son James is currently the comptroller for the shipyard. As part of its modernization, sections of the teakwood deck were removed and set aside in order to accommodate the installation of new weapons systems. One day not too long ago my son became aware of an ongoing project from a co-worker at the shipyard. A Navy Admiral was retiring and his staff had a shadow box made for him by a skilled wood worker. The shadow box was to be presented to the Admiral with his medals, rank insignia and other memorabilia upon retirement. In and of itself, this was not an unusual event. However, what was unusual was the fact that the shadow box was to be made from four pieces of hardwood teak planks that were found in the Naval Museum warehouse in Norfolk, which were going to be discarded. Believe it or not, the planks were from the *USS Wisconsin*, the same ship that my father and Jim's grandfather had worked on.

Realizing that there was a possibility of acquiring a piece of the original decking that his grandfather worked on, Jim immediately set off on a quest to determine if there were any more planks to be had. After making some inquiries Jim learned that there were a few pieces of the original decking left over, and as before, they also were going to be discarded as they were too

My son was very fortunate in that he was able to procure a piece of the original decking from the *USS Wisconsin*, but rather than keeping the piece of planking for himself, he unselfishly gave it to me for Father's Day with the following inscription:

*Americo Carmen Dominic De Angelis
USS Wisconsin BB 64
Plankowner 1941-1943
Original Teak Decking*

I now proudly display the piece of



small to be used for anything else. Acting quickly, Jim was able to acquire an 8-inch-long piece of the original decking from the *USS Wisconsin* before it was discarded.

I was totally unaware of any of these happenings until my son called me asking for information about his grandfather. He wanted to know his full name, the dates he worked at the Philadelphia shipyard, and the name and type of ship his grandfather worked on. I immediately suspected what might be going on, but did not pursue the issue with him. Since I had written an extensive and detailed family history, I had all of the requested information readably available and sent it to him immediately.

The *USS Wisconsin* permanently residing in Norfolk, the finding of the planks in the warehouse at Norfolk, his grandfather having worked on the *USS Wisconsin*, and him being the comptroller at the shipyard, all suddenly came together in one grand serendipitous moment for my son when he actually held a piece of original hardwood teak decking from the *USS Wisconsin* in his hand.

decking from the *USS Wisconsin* on my bookshelf and whenever I look at it I remember my father and my son, and how unrelated events over time can come together to unite generations and strengthen family bonds: A truly serendipitous series of events. 📖

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Rediscovering the forgotten joy of creativity

By Dorothy McKinley

“Do you remember when you were ‘turned off’ the act of creating something?”

Almost everyone I have asked that question remembers without hesitation that time when they felt crushed. Almost everyone feels the regret of not having continued to work at some creative act, which they once enjoyed so deeply.

Many times I have asked the question, “What do you feel you missed in your education?” Or “What do you wish you had received in your education that would really be of benefit to you now as an adult?” The answers I hear over and over again, are familiar ones, “Oh, I would give anything if I could paint, play the piano or write a poem! These are the things I yearn to do, but now I can’t do anything like that. I am not creative at all.” And they usually continue, “But my children will have these opportunities that I missed. They will be exposed to many possibilities, so they won’t look back on their past lives wishing, wishing, wishing.”

Of course, the only reason this adult can’t create is because he thinks he cannot create. Perhaps her parents showed dissatisfaction or even embarrassment at their piano recital. Perhaps he was criticized or ridiculed in art class. I can remember an art teacher drawing a huge X over a portrait I had labored on when I was already a super-critical pre-adolescent. It had taken me a long time to even get the nerve to attack a drawing of a person. I was devastated. I never drew the human figure again until college, when as an art major, I was compelled to take many hours per year of life drawing. I was still struggling miserably after four years of college. In graduate school I had a wonderfully gentle teacher, who gave me help, encouragement,



Dottie McKinley

and the belief that I could draw people. Finally, the mental block was broken after many, many years of struggle. I can also remember feeling very embarrassed all my life when I had to sing, even in a large group. Many times I simply pantomimed or barely whispered so as not to be heard by anyone. At the age of thirty-six I decided to try to break my vocal mental block. I began voice lessons with a close and trusted friend, who assured me in the beginning that I was not a monotone.

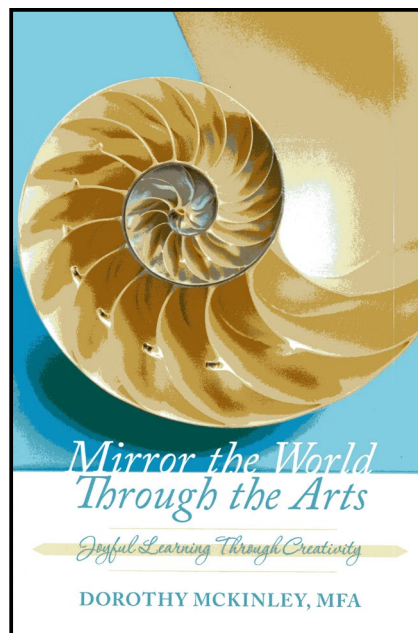
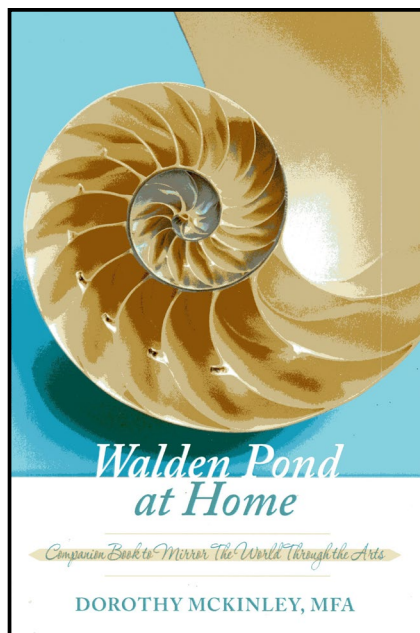
Nine months later I felt great about my singing, although I was not ready to share it with the public. I now find great joy in singing as it had been suppressed for so very long. I am virtually spilling over. I hope that I am an example to others who have a desire to do something creative but think they can’t. I had one of the worst cases of “I can’t sing” plague that I have ever seen, and a short time after lessons was able to sing, “I can sing!”

The creative process fulfills so many basic human needs that this explains the universal outcry of, “Oh, I wish I could.” It also explains why so many children are receiving the opportunity to take all kinds of extra lessons, i.e., art, music, drama, cooking, etc. The parents are living vicariously through their children. They are living that part of life they feel they missed. And they fortunately are quick to realize, at least at this point in time, that it is their responsibility to make these areas available to their children.

The art processes provide a different kind of learning. Experience and materials are ordered into a new combination with a personal statement. During the creative process, the creator becomes aware of the consequences of his own choices and own work, resulting in feelings of personal satisfaction and self-confidence from the accomplishment.

The countless choices that the creator makes while engaged in the process of the arts provides many opportunities for decision-making. The process of decision-making is vitally important in our lives, and learning how to make decisions needs to start very early.

There is so very much for us to see, hear, taste, smell, and feel in our exciting world in order for us to learn about ourselves, others and all living things on earth and their dependence on each other. Carefully planned and logically arranged trips help children gain knowledge and understanding of the ecological adjustment of man to his natural environment. It is important to take the gift of the moment – the child’s curious questions and interests – and provide opportunities for him to continue his discoveries through explorations of his real world.



Ideas for encounters with nature:

✿ **Things to take along**

A magnifying glass or field glasses, a glass jar for collecting insects, a bag for collecting rocks, feathers, or fossils and drawing materials and paper.

✿ **Color walks**

Look for greens... describe shades in own words, i.e., moss dark green... focus on one color during each walk.

✿ **Texture walks**

Gather things you like to feel...close eyes and describe how it feels to you.

✿ **Shape walks**

Gather leaves... describe their shapes.

✿ **Listening walks**

Focus on sound only...identify and imitate.

✿ **Smelling walks**

Describe smells of flowers, leaves, earth...close eyes when smelling.

✿ **Flower collecting walks**

Gather flowers with interesting colors, shapes and markings

✿ **Collecting leaves**

Gather several leaves attached to a short twig rather than single leaves.... grouping shows leaf placement as well

as twig and bud characteristics

✿ **Tree hunting safari**

How many different trees can you find your yard? Are their leaves different? Do any of your trees have unusual leaves, berries, cones, needles, or flowers? Which trees give your yard the most shade? Which tree do you like the best? Why? Which tree has the biggest limbs and trunk? Are

any of your trees a home for other animals or birds? Have you noticed any animals hiding in your trees for safety? Have you noticed any insects building homes on your trees?

✿ **Exploring mathematics**

Estimate how many leaves there are on a small tree...estimate how many leaves there are on a large tree. Is it easier to estimate the number of leaves in the winter or the summer? Why? Estimate and then measure distances between trees in your yard. How many steps does it take for you to walk between the trees? 📏

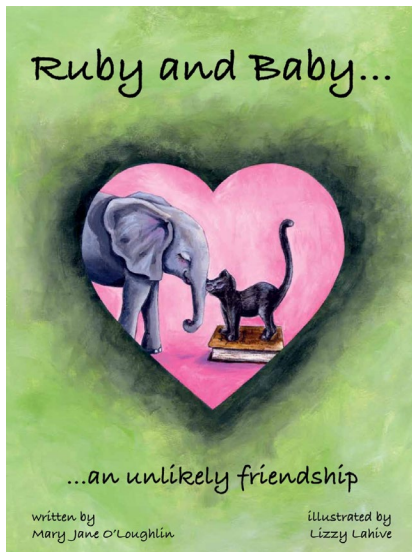
*Building 1 resident Dorothy P. McKinley, MFA, has 45 years of teaching experience and is the creator of Walden Pond InterArts Learning Center in San Antonio, Tx. Her books, **Mirror the World Through the Arts** and **Walden Pond at Home** are available on Amazon.*

What lies before us and what lies behind us are small matters compared to what lies within us. And when we bring what is within out into the world, miracles happen.

– Henry David Thoreau

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The "VIEW FROM WITHIN" is the experience I receive when interacting with a client. He or she radiates life responses through the body in very delicate but perceptive ways. The complexity of each subject brings a challenge and an excitement that I want to celebrate with paint.

Texture, color and shapes define my response to what I see and feel in our painting relationship. Sometimes those responses allow for abstraction and other times, not. However each work becomes my celebration of that Being, that life. The fauvist movement with strong colors and the variety of paint application heavily influence my work. Klimt's influence is present as well.



Photo by Carole Appel

Presidential Proclamation Honoring the Victims of the Attack in Orlando, Florida

By the President of the United States of America

As a mark of respect for the victims of the act of hatred and terror perpetrated on Sunday, June 12, 2016, in Orlando, Florida, by the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby order that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at the White House and upon all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions until sunset, June 16, 2016. I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same length of time at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations.



*For Orlando
2010 Gay Pride in San Francisco*

By Mikhailina Karina

Animal Magnetism

We adopted Olive through BARK (Bandit's Adoption & Rescue of K-9's) in August 2012. Her foster mother brought her to us at PETSMART and we loved the dog at first sight. Olive had spent 6 months in a program for prisoners to learn how to train canines. Olive was the first graduate and has a diploma to prove it, along with testimonials from the inmates who worked with her. An Australian Cattle Dog mixed likely with a touch of Beagle, Olive adapted to life on the 15th floor without skipping a beat. We sent her to graduate school at the Olde Towne School for Dogs where she earned another diploma. Olive is our first socialized dog, loves meeting other dogs and even gets along in the company of our friends' cats. – Sarah-Mai Simon.



Photo by Dian McDonald



Karen and Donald Barnes reconnect with Jerry Wolf (on the right).

Beloved former neighbors and eternal friends, Aline and Jerry Wolf, were in town this week for a family celebration. The Wolfs lived in Building 1 for nine years before moving to Florida's warmer climes last October. Their bridge partners got the old gang together at an informal party hosted by Janette Sherman.

Aline Wolf (left) shares a laugh with Ginny Kandt.



Mystery fungus behind Building 1



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I am excited to share with you another season of the Mount Vernon Nights Concert Series at Grist Mill Park and the Workhouse Arts Center. This series of free, public concerts features a variety of musical performances reflecting Fairfax County's diversity, culture and community spirit. Bring a picnic dinner and a blanket and enjoy one of Fairfax's County's special summer traditions. Come early to the Workhouse Arts Center to explore its vibrant arts scene. To volunteer for the Mount Vernon Nights Concert Series, please contact my office at 703-780-7518. I look forward to sharing a wonderful season of music under the stars with you.

– Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District Supervisor

Workhouse Arts Center at Lorton

9601 Ox Road, Lorton

Saturday Evenings • 7:00-8:00 p.m.

JUNE

- 4 Earl Carter (Smooth Jazz)
- 11 Sylver Logan Sharp (R&B)
- 18 Jeffrey Foucault Trio (Blues)
- 25 The United States Army Blues (Jazz)

JULY

- 2 Peter Mawanga & the Amaravi Movement (Afro-vibes)
- 9 Global Arts "Bolivian Night" (Dance and Music)
- 16 Big Daddy Love (Appalachian Rock)
- 23 National Concert Band of America (Big Band)
- 30 The United States Air Force Celtic Aire (Celtic)

AUGUST

- 6 Barefoot Movement (Bluegrass)
- 13 The Claire Lynch Band (Bluegrass)
- Come join the Workhouse BrewFest 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., followed by free concert at 7 p.m.*
- 20 The Trongone Band (Southern Rock)
- 27 The Taters (Roots/Pop)



Peter Mawanga



Scythian

Grist Mill Park

4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy, Alexandria
Friday Evenings • 7:30-8:30 p.m.

JUNE

- 3 Rachel B (Soulful Pop)
- 10 Rick Franklin & His Delta Blues Boys (Piedmont Blues)
- 17 Mariachi Los Amigos (Mariachi)
- 24 Memphis Gold (Blues)

JULY

- 1 Art Sherrod, Jr. (Smooth Jazz)
- 8 Craver Hicks Watson (Old time music)
- 15 FIVES (Alternative/Indie Rock)
- 22 Verneau (World Jazz)
- 29 Ruthie & the Wranglers (American Roots)

AUGUST

- 5 The Annandale Brass (American Popular Music)
- 12 Rain Follows the Plow (A Dust Opera)
- 19 The Ransom Notes (Folk/Bluegrass)
- 26 Scythian (Irish/Rock)

Mount Vernon Nights is presented in partnership with the Friends of Mount Vernon Nights and generous support from the following sponsors.



The summer concert series is made possible through corporate and private donations. To donate, visit www.fairfaxparkfoundation.org/projects



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