

The **MONTEBELLO** Voice

an independent gazette

dare to be different

April 27, 2017



Into the woods

By Michael Hora

Memories of a gun-slinging shoplifter at Woodies

Woodies downtown store was part of my introduction to Washington, D.C. I had spent the previous five years doing a doctorate at the Penn State main campus, in Happy Valley. Flying in at night, one saw no lights whatsoever until just before landing, giving a sense of being many miles from anywhere. As for crime problems, drunken frat boys were about it, though a few hillbillies did attack us once when we were seated, peacefully protesting the war. (Don't remember which war...there have been so many!).

I had come to D.C. to work at a research institute, conducting studies of crime and crime prevention. When I was barely a month here, the media covered the tale of an event at the downtown Woodies. A plainclothes store detective had observed a well-dressed middle-aged female slipping merchandise into her handbag. As required, he allowed her to leave the premises without paying, thereby establishing the element of larceny. But, when he attempted to detain her, she pulled out a gun and began blazing away at him. Fortunately, she wasn't much of a shot and, unharmed, he was able to disarm and arrest her.

At the time of this incident the District had acquired some renown as the USA Murder Capital. I had also lived in Detroit, a city where – for fear of carjacking – at night one simply did not stop for red lights. But even so, to me, middle-aged female gunslingers seemed a bit much and she will always be a part of my Woodies memories. –
Richard Titus

The way we were

For a cinematic stroll down the memory lane of Richmond Highway, watch this nine-minute video from the historians at Fairfax County:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmxFR-87L274&feature=youtu.be

voices on the 37

Marketing ideas

The weekly Thursday farmers' market near the Huntington Metro is back on April 27 from 3 to 7 p.m. The new location is next to the Metro station at 5919 North Kings Highway. For more information, go to smartmarkets.org/markets/huntington/

The following vendors are slated to offer their products:

Barnola
Chester Hess's Farm and Orchard
Ignacio's Produce
Real Country Sausage
Uncle Fred's BBQ Smoke Shack
Allie's Pies
Arc Angels Creations Salsas
El Tenedor De Nacho Empanadas
Greenwich Farms Pork & Meats
Inside Scoop Ice cream
Kingdom Gourmet Foods
Lund's Sustainable Produce
Metropolitan Baking Company
Sweet Craft Candy Company
Towers Bakery Bolivian Baked Goods
Borekg Fruit Drinks

High school musicals

A few worthwhile theater productions are coming up at nearby high schools. You can catch terrific shows for less than \$15 a pop.

West Potomac HS

Billy Elliot

April 27-May 6

www.westpotomactheatre.org

Their productions tend to sell out, so it's a good idea to get tickets in advance

Edison HS

Honk!

May 4-6

edisondrama.wixsite.com/edison-drama

Hayfield HS

Les Misérables

May 4-13

www.hayfielddrama.com

The Montebello Voice wants to hear from you: musings, travels, announcements, photos, reviews, commentary, memoirs, essays, analysis, poems, suggestions, club news, recipes, and free ads

A twice-monthly publication for the residents, by the residents

The **MONTEBELLO** Voice

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Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose

Four familiar candidates vie for three seats in the upcoming Board of Directors election

By *Mikhailina Karina*

A quartet of gentlemen of a certain age – an engineer, a defense industry PR man, a government management consultant, and a psychologist – walk into a room. All are attired in dark suits and sensible shoes. Two wear white shirts (they later remove their jackets), two wear blue. Two wear yellow ties with subtle patterns, one wears a blue tie with diagonal stripes, one wears a tie with a restrained tear drop pattern. Two have neat goatees, two are clean-shaven. Three have served in the U.S. Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Two have doctoral degrees. One has a divinity degree. Two live in Building 3 and two in Building 4. Three live on the 16th floor, two have combined units – all face east. One has a dog.

Four seemingly perpetual board members with about half-a-century of combined service to Montebello engaged in a civil, informative discussion during the Sunday night candidates' forum.

Most of the attendees were the several dozen familiar faces who regularly come to board meetings and social events. In spite of Joel Miller's humorous introduction that a "tremendous" crowd was waiting to get in and the line stretched as far as Krispy Kreme, about two-thirds of the seats were filled and gradually emptied as the two-hour-long discussion progressed.

Last year, nine candidates ran for the Board of Directors; three of the four people elected were first-time directors who brought new perspectives to this tradition-bound nine-member institution.

This year, three of the candidates – Greg Bender, Guido Zanni, and John Powers – are incumbents. The fourth candidate, Doug Kennett, retired to great fanfare last year as board president after more than two decades of service to Montebello. As the audience gazed at

the familiar faces, the word "recycling" came up a few times as people wondered why more owners did not choose to run. Three seats are up at this election.

Instead of directly addressing the candidates, residents submitted written questions that were read by Miller, co-chair of the Elections Committee. As in the past, people asked about new ideas, technological improvements, protecting the woodlands, improving customer service, increasing community participation, and establishing the Montebello brand. General Manager George Gardner, who frequently attends committee meetings, was inconspicuous in a plaid shirt and took copious notes on a legal pad.

With regard to the "new and innovative ideas," board president Bender said improving customer service was high on Gardner's agenda and he is currently putting together an action plan. Kennett would like to see more younger residents involved – a theme he echoed several more times in his responses. Powers, an aficionado of the ad hoc committee format, would like to see even more ad hocs to come up with workable solutions to specific problems. And Zanni, who chairs the Quality Improvement Committee and takes a scientific approach to data analysis, would like to see a Montebello app for smart phones as well as find ways to keep Montebello from slipping into a mediocre condo community.

Board member Doug Kleine asked the panelists how they saw their role to making the relationship with the general manager successful. All four agreed that Gardner should be allowed to manage without being micro-managed by the board. "We have to listen to him," said Kennett. "He has a fantastic background." Likewise, Bender said, "The best we can do is to let him be the manager" by providing him with

strategic guidance and resources.

In several different contexts, the issue of getting more younger residents involved was mentioned. Case in point: at most, five of the attendees at this forum were under the age of 60, which is a common occurrence at most community events. Bender said almost every condo community is running into the problem of low committee participation. However, younger people, he said, come from a different mindset than his generation: they are busy with commuting and raising children. As part of another question, he said we need to examine what amenities younger people want. He mentioned some ideas such as a Facebook page and new content on the association website.

Kennett added that it was important to get younger people involved by getting them to feel invested in Montebello. He suggested creating a focus group and directly asking younger residents what they would like to see.

The controversial data communication network that was tabled last year is still being studied, Bender said. A new contractor is looking at the possibilities of a fiber network for administrative functions and he hopes to have a town hall meeting this summer. While FIOS is not yet available to individual homes, he said the association was negotiating with Cox to bring in more bandwidth at no extra cost.

The cordial forum adjourned with residents grabbing one more cookie, refilling a coffee cup, and leaving with no more information than they had when they walked in. They had just witnessed a peaceful non-transfer of power: a quartet of polished public speakers, highly educated professionals possessing deep institutional knowledge of competently running Montebello as a "premier luxury condominium." 🍪

Board discusses budget guidelines, project priorities, lobby monitors, and use of volunteers

By *Mikhailina Karina*

For one hour, three members on the Board of Directors sparred about the proposed budget guidelines amendments recommended by the Finance and Budget Committee.

A total of seven amendments were proposed. The first of these changes, according to the board packet on the association website, states, "The amendment codifies the procedure recommended in 2016 by F&B for future Activities Committee budget requests. By putting it in the Guidelines now, we are putting the Board's approval to the process and removing a long standing source of conflict between F&B and Activities Committees."

The rest of the document is available at http://www.montebello.org/document_view.asp?id=2957&lr=1.

The remainder of the April 25 work session was a lot smoother as director Guido Zanni presented six top future priorities chosen by the board and the general manager: data communication network, grounds and landscaping, erosion control, finances, outdoor lighting, and customer service.

Director John Powers, chair of the cost savings ad hoc committee, shared the committee's recommendations, which included the following ideas:

- ✓ Commission an independent audit of Montebello's lighting;
- ✓ Conduct an energy audit for all major energy systems in the community center and the common elements;
- ✓ Bundle all notices from the Café, Hair Expressions, and activities with the monthly delivery of the *Times*;
- ✓ Notify residents desiring under-

the-door notices to place a specific magnet at the top of their doors;

✓ Notify owners of the functional lives of the plumbing components installed by the association;

✓ Determine if the utility of the lobby monitors can be increased.

General manager George Gard-

ner addressed the latter as they relate to the potential return of the bulletin boards. He said the lobby monitors can be linked to the association website, thus providing a direct route to three categories of information formerly provided by the bulletin boards: personal ads, real estate information, and activities announcements. As soon as this capability is explored, Gardner said the management would make a decision regarding bulletin boards in the garage levels.

Speaking on behalf of the pedestrian safety focus group, Powers said an educational campaign was in the works and specific proposals will be presented at the next board meeting.

Another hot issue, outdoor lighting, is moving ahead with a contractor to recommend how to provide adequate light for safety, as well as to eliminate/ reduce the light flooding into units. In addition, new lighting should reduce energy costs by 50 to 75 percent. To encourage more community volunteering in outdoor projects, the board discussed a proposed resolution that provides a detailed framework with extensive paperwork and approval process. (See page 28 of the board packet).

Several directors and residents balked at such a time-consuming approval process for essentially doing a little yard work, such as weeding, picking up sticks, or planting some seeds. No doubt, more discussions will take place in the future.

Speaking of the great outdoors, director Jerry Stedge announced a board retreat "to develop strategies to start making progress on restoring our grounds." The meeting, which is open to the public, will take place on May 24 in PR 3 at 6:30 p.m. 📍



The bridge was reinforced with new wooden buttresses

Leslie Knope: "You know what I need to do? Form a committee. Yeah, 'cause committees are power, and committees make things happen. Committees are the lifeblood of our democratic system. That's really good. Write that down... Okay, read it back to me."

Tom Haverford: "Um 'committees cover our democracy with blood.'"

Leslie Knope: "Sounded better when I said it. It's still good, though."

Parks and Recreation pilot

animal magnetism

Take a Chance on me

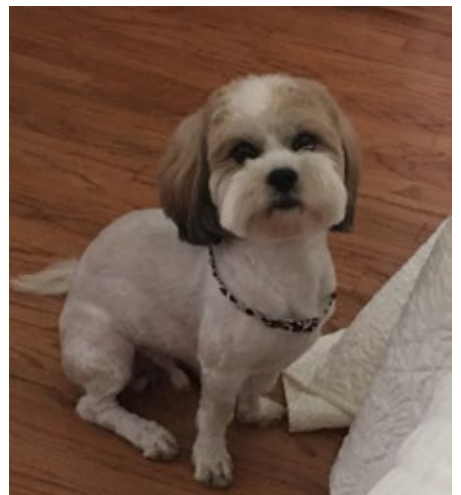
Eve Shelton had recently lost her beloved Bradley, a Maltese who walked around Montebello alongside Eve's daughter's black dog, Keary. With Keary departing to Richmond, Eve had a hole in her heart.

On April 2, intending "just to look," she ended up at the Arlington Animal Welfare League shelter in Shirlington on a particularly busy day. Eve looked down in one of the cages and her eye caught "a shapeless ball of fluff" looking back at her. "It was all hair," she says, but she suspected it was a Lhasa Apso with his "proud walk" and sweet disposition. "I could tell he came from

a good environment," but there was no record of his background.

Based on his teeth and coat, the vet estimated the dog to be about a year old. Because "by lucky chance" Eve happened to come to the shelter, she named the dog Chance. It also happens to be the character from the movie *Homeward Bound*.

Chance took no time to adjust to condo living – he loves the elevator, gets along with other animals and bipeds, and generally behaves as if he's been here all his life. "Nothing fazes him," Eve says. – *Mikhailina Karina*



Chance before and after his haircut. Photos by Eve Shelton

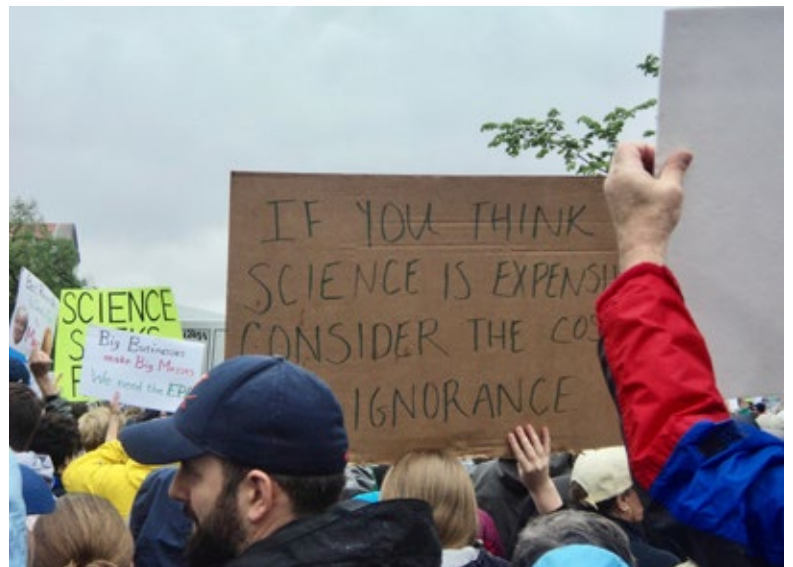


Tax Day March. Photos by Nancy Vogt



marching for science

Photos by Gyami Shrestha and Karen Barnes



Easter egg hunt



Photos by Diane Bastin

building 1 party





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of Alexandria

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Eve Shelton, Owner - Trustworthy, Experienced.
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Chess Game Night with Chess Club

All Levels! All Welcome!
Beginners to Grandmasters!
Play! Share! Learn! Practice!
No Commitment! Just Fun!



4th Thursday
of Each Month (generally)
C.C. Card Room
7:00pm to 9:30pm (latest)



Bring your own Chess Set if you like! - And, if you're brand new to Chess, but you'd like to check out our Chess Club while playing a relatively "quiet" or "cerebral" game that doesn't "compete" with the ancient game of Chess from a noise perspective, you may bring such a game and hang out with us! (Examples of Games that partner well with Chess: Scrabble, Checkers, Othello, etc.)

Contact Lisa J. Stedge at lisa@stedge.com
and/or Nick Nickerson at fnixson@gmail.com
for more information.



MONTEBELLO
FILM SOCIETY

and



Invite you to our opening night



THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER

APRIL 27 7:30 P.M. PARTY ROOM 2



It is not just a scary movie. It is cinema at its best. Robert Mitchum's voice, Shelly Winters's vulnerability, Charles Laughton's directing, and a screen filled with every shade of black and white come together in 90 minutes of tension in this 1955 film that is on every credible list of "bests." Come watch it with us, be a little frightened by it with us, and then chat with us about it at AiM's film night.

Joel Miller will introduce the film and lead the post-movie discussion.

The Montebello Voice wants to hear from you: musings, travels, announcements, photos, reviews, commentary, memoirs, essays, analysis, poems, suggestions, club news, recipes, and free ads

A twice-monthly publication for the residents, by the residents

final glance



Beauty and the bee
Photo by Dian McDonald



Azaleas at their brilliant peak

Photo by Page Dreher Schreiner