May 25, 2017

Photo by Rebecca McNeely

Full service By Amy Friedlander

As I was driving into Montebello this afternoon, I saw the temporary sign on the window of the front gate, saying: "Welcome to Montebello. How can we help you?" It is such a positive message. It made me feel very good. Such a nice new emphasis on customer service!

Another example of good, friendly customer service is the letter to residents from our general manager George Gardner distributed under our doors shortly after the 1 p.m. fire in Building 1, unit 205, was controlled at 3 p.m. The letter gave information about the fire, who responded, the extent of the damage caused by the fire, and the steps management took to find and address the damage of the fire to other units and common property. One welcome effect of the letter is that it puts an emphasis on facts, thus minimizing the need for transmitting information via conjecture and rumor. Particularly impressive was the "lessons learned" section of the letter, which showed a dedication to looking out for the well-being of residents and to continuous process improvement.

Seeking volunteer greeters for fiber arts By Gretchen Klimoski

I am a member of Studio Fiber Arts at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, Va. We are currently seeking volunteers to meet and greet visitors to our building #6. It would be a wonderful opportunity for you to get to know fiber artists and learn more about their techniques and to meet people. Volunteers work either 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. or 2:30 to 6 p.m. You would receive training from the Workhouse. Your schedule and frequency would be determined by you. The Workhouse is open 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Wednesday - Saturday and 12-5 p.m. on Sunday. Please let me know at glklimoski@verizon.net if you are interested.

voices on the 37

Founding a Mt. Vernon historical society By Karen Barnes

Fairfax County will celebrate its 275th birthday this year with a Banner Lecture at the Sherwood Center on June 15 and with a History Fair at the Old Courthouse Complex on June 17. For more information, go to www.Fairfax275.com.

In addition, a local group is hoping to start a historical society with semi-annual lectures and discussions on topics of local interest such as Old Mt. Vernon High School, flying field activities at Hybla Valley and at Beacon Hill, evolution and development of Rte. 1, and many aspects of the life and work of George Washington. The group is looking for more suggestions for topics (i.e., the story of Mt. Eagle) and more people to be part of launching the group.

If interested, please contact Dr. Glenn Fatzinger at fatzingergh@aol. com or telephone 703-780-4983.

Electronics recycling By Diane Bastin

As a free service to their Montebello neighbors, Sophie and Sarah Myers offer to haul and recycle old electronics, batteries and light bulbs from your units. They accept anything that Fairfax County recycles. Please refer to this website to ensure that the items will be accepted: http://www.fairfaxcounty. gov/dpwes/trash/dispaccept.htm.

They have already recycled more than 15 TVs, and many computers, cell phones, remote controls, boom boxes, etc.

The next recycling date is June 4th. Please send an e-mail to xanthippe@ mindspring.com if you would like to avail yourself of this service. Thank you.

Here we go round the mulberry bush By Mikhailina Karina

Montebello's mulberry orchard is back in season with white and red berries ripening at various locations.

Two white mulberry trees across from the B-3 entrance behind Building 4 are almost ripe. They have a milder flavor than the red variety. Going down the short Mt. Eagle Drive, two old trees are about to start dropping their offerings.

Two other easily accessible trees are across from the B-3 entrance of Building 1 and across from the wooden stairs with two benches.

A seriously trimmed tree is near the playground; several others are scattered around the woodlands. A terrific motherlode is near the parking lot of the demolished Metro police station.

The wild strawberry patches in the woodlands are not edible – just pretty.



This publication accepts no funding or oversight from advertisers, residents, or the Montebello Condominium Unit Owners Association. All opinions are encouraged and reflect the diversity of views in the community. All articles and photographs come from Montebello residents. To receive or contribute to this email-only gazette, contact montebellovoice@cox. net or visit on the web at www.montebellovoice.com.

Editor & Designer......Mikhailina Karina Contributors......Karen Barnes, Diane Bastin, Jackie Bralove, Amy Friedlander, Mark Goodman, Gretchen Klimoski, Bob McClure, Dian McDonald, Rebecca McNeely, Virginia Nickich, John Powers, Sarah-Mai Simon, Nancy Vogt

Welcome to the new Wellness Club By Virginia Nickich

Wish you had more information on fad diets or had a buddy to diet with? Join the Wellness Club to find that dieting buddy or hear the real story on the "now" fad diet.

Wish you knew how to use the gym equipment? Think you would walk more often with a partner?

All the above is possible when you join the Wellness Club. The goal of this club is to bring people together in a supportive community with a common interest of increasing healthy performance and sharing information on



health, wellness, and exercise. If you want a healthy lifestyle, or can share your knowledge,

come to one of our meetings on the following days:

Mornings: Each first Tuesday of the month starting June 6 at 9:30 a.m. in PR 1. Evenings: Each first Thursday of the month starting June 1 at 7 p.m.

There are no membership dues. Donations/fees may occur for special speakers or events.

Questions? Contact Virginia Nickich at virgyoga@verizon.net or call: 516-459-8504.

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

voices on the 37 Paul McClure celebrates his

college graduation

By Bob McClure

Paul McClure, a life-long resident at the Montebello and the son of Bob and Lisa McClure, graduated from the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va., on May 13.

Paul majored in Business Administration and minored in Spanish. In addition to his parents and his sister Melissa, a 2014 graduate of the University of Massachusetts, three of Paul's aunts and uncles joined in the graduation festivities.

Paul, an All-District selection his senior year as a pitcher at West Potomac High School, was recruited of Mary Washington by Mary Washington two int

to play for its team in the highly competitive Capital Athletic Conference. Paul played all four years as a righthanded relief pitcher and spot starter. In his final year on the mound, UMW made it to the CAC league finals, with Paul pitching in three of the five playoff games. For the year, Paul finished ninth in the league in total pitching appearances and threw the third-most innings on the team. He is most proud of graduating with a better than 3.0 GPA while playing a college sport.

Not all of Paul's college life revolved around sports. He took his major and minor seriously and gained international business experience to supplement his classroom learning by doing



Building 1 residents Bob, Paul, Lisa, and Melissa McClure on May 13 at the University of Mary Washington

two internships abroad – one in Beijing and one in Buenos Aires. "Working in different environments with a variety of different people was challenging, but it was very important to my development. They were both great experiences," he said.

On a side note, Paul's father, Bob, has lived at the Montebello longer than any other resident, having been a part of the first settlement on June 10, 1982 and moving in five days later the same year. He will be celebrating 35 years as a Montebello resident on June 15.

Paul has now moved back to the Montebello and has begun his job search in earnest.



FREE old-time Movie Night refreshments, popcorn, and candy!

GM submits customer service action plan, Building 5 to get landscaping overhaul, and a minor miracle

By Mikhailina Karina

The Tuesday Board of Directors work session was all good news: improved and less expensive insurance coverage, a robust plan to improve customer service, extensive landscaping improvements around Building 5, and the return of bulletin boards.

When George Gardner became the new general manager in early January, one of his first actions was to get new bids on the association's insurance. Last night he told the board that coverage with another (unnamed until approved) provider would include a higher cap, earthquake and wind-driven rain provisions, and save the association \$75,000 a year. This savings, he pointed out, is 1 percent of condo fees.

Gardner also discussed the proposed customer service action plan in a 10-page document on the association website at http://www. montebello.org/document_view. asp?id=2979&lr=1 that "aligns our customer service commitment with our customer service vision, guiding principles, resource allocation and the implementation plan. This document outlines a customer service roadmap with goals, objectives and related strategies for our staff to become customer-centric in the performance of their duties," the plan's introduction states.

Gardner said he will seek feedback on the plan from resident focus groups. "It's a staff-driven process," he emphasized. "Employees create, believe, and buy into it."

Several residents from Building 5 came to the meeting to ask for clarifications about the proposed nearly \$18,000 in landscaping restoration work. A complete list of planned improvements is on the aforementioned website.

In other landscaping restoration news, Gardner said the seven-year-long battle against invasive plant species in the woodlands ended at the end of last year. "Now we're at a point for renewal," he said, with recommendations for restoration. A test area will be set up in the corner of the woodlands to try out some possible solutions.

And then the long-hoped for miracle happened without much fanfare – the bulletin boards are coming back!

Considering all the complicated issues about governance the board has to study and implement, a handful of bulletin boards in garage lobbies sounds like the least of their concerns. Not quite...

Several board members are not thrilled about returning to the paperand-pen method, but they are willing to give it a six-month trial period before making the final decision. Each B-3 elevator lobby will have a cork board for resident-generated index cards. Each date-stamped announcement would have a 30-day limit. Ads will not broach politics or religion. (Since they were not explicitly forbidden, it appears that sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll are fair game).

Apparently, the purpose of the touch-screen monitors in building lobbies was to replace old-fashioned bulletin boards with a 21st-century gizmo that includes personal ads, real estate listings, clubs information, events, and menus. But the monitors' software does not appear to have a counter to track the number of users. Furthermore, it turns out that the this software "does not have enormous capability," said board president Greg Bender, "and can't link from the association website." In other words, the software operating monitors makes them four stand-alone screens without Internet capability.

Initially, Gardner proposed a sixmonth program to test bulletin boards in one building. A building rep or a volunteer would police the boards, he said.

Director Guido Zanni, who is not a fan of bulletin boards, said they had become "chaotic and messy" in the past. "It comes out to value judgment, he said, "cluttered bulletin boards or a more structured approach." Because of the monitors' ineffectualness, he supported the one-building solution with glass-encased boards to prevent inappropriate postings or potential touching by other people.

Director Bruce Shaw was also concerned about the boards' "neatness and appearance," as well as maintenance and monitoring.

But which building would get the pilot of something so many residents want?

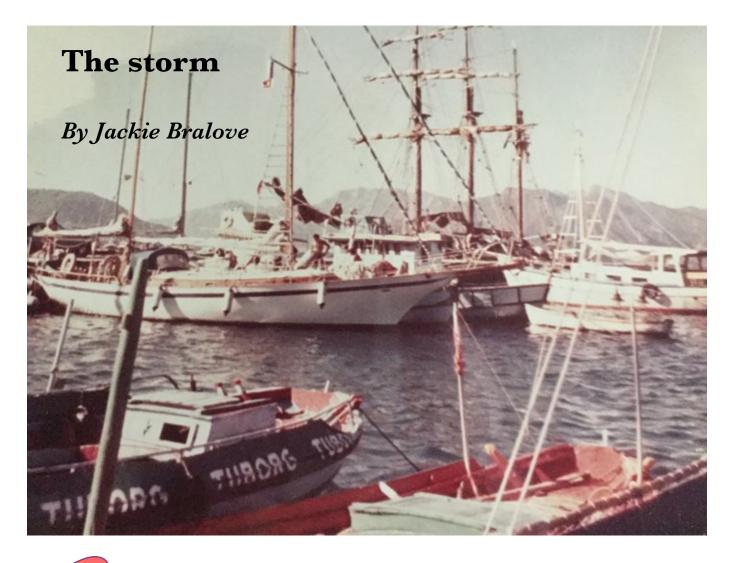
Director Lauren Pierce, who is in favor of the boards, agreed that each card should be date stamped. But she urged to implement the boards in all buildings. Chair of the Activities Committee, Barbara Bieger, agreed, "All buildings want bulletin boards."

"We have people in every building who want them," echoed director Lynn Tjeerdsma. "We are responsible adults." Volunteers will keep the boards in order, with the understanding that if they get sloppy, they will be taken down, he said.

Building representatives will meet next week to discuss the detailed logistics of board maintenance and get the four bulletin boards up as soon as possible.

At the end of the meeting, in a congratulatory tone, a neighbor said to this humble scribe, "This is your baby." Since submitting the petition last September, getting to this point has taken almost as long as to have one.

personal history



oming or going across the northern Atlantic, most small boat sailors used to stop at the island of Faial in the Azores

where there was a bar in the town of Horta that accepted and held mail from all over the world. This bar was not merely popular; only several decades ago it had been one of the few centers of communication for long-distance sailors. It was a little like the famous barrel on the Galapagos Islands, where the rare people who visited those remote laboratories of evolution retrieved and deposited mail for centuries, until even that place was developed enough to have a post office and now even hordes of tourists. We had been at sea for three weeks, out from the Caribbean island of St. Vincent in the Grenadines, having paused in Bermuda for water and supplies, and then sixteen days without seeing land. There are various rhythms of time in the ocean and we had settled into one of the long, slow stretches of deep quiet, made easy by good weather and usually gentle winds. I hated to go in.

Even so, the Azores were a wonderful adventure. The green mountains of Faial are densely crisscrossed with huge hedges of hydrangeas, an emerald tapestry overlaid by lavender lace, floating in the vivid blues and purples of deep ocean, all illuminated with gold and crimson and blue light, reflected by the clouds which cover the highest peaks. Approaching from the West, you see the clouds first, with some relief because you know you have made it this far. I say relief, but in truth my husband was an expert navigator, depending entirely on a sextant and when close to land a radio direction finder. No computers, no fancy technology on our boat in 1976.

Faial itself was such a surprise. The people are accomplished sea people and small boat sailors were welcomed as like kind. Also, of course, there was the great convenience of getting supplies, repairs and plenty of fresh water. (I washed my hair every day.) Boats in transit tied up at a dock on a promontory protected by piles of rock over a concrete wall. A crew member from each boat was given the privilege of painting the name of the boat and perhaps some small message on that wall. We wrote

"Tamerlaine" and painted an "OM" symbol. Adding our name to that wall was a solemn thing, covered as it was with the names of small boats who between them with their crews had weathered every combination of wind and sea from long dead calms to hurricane forces. Or, less fortunate, they had come in with their stories obvious in their broken masts and bent rudders. some even looking for lost comrades. It is still said that if you want to buy a boat cheap, the Azores and Gibraltar are good places to shop. Some people just want to go home and never step foot on a boat again. On the other hand, there are places in the long-distance sailing world where shared experience creates an almost instant comradery.

Faial was one of those places for us, the island of Rhodes in Greece another. We sailed only half way around the world, but true world sailors tell of other more remote places like that – where parts are given freely for repairs and work shared. The Azores were a luxury, a wonderful and safe party, still most everyone felt the pull to go back out. We kept looking out over that sea wall and in just a few days set off toward Gibraltar at the mouth of the Mediterranean, about 1000 nautical sea miles to the east.

ith good winds, a forty-two foot cruising ketch like ours should average 100 miles a day or more, about eight or so days to cover a thousand miles. We were sailing almost due east, actually east north east, still on the great circle route partly to account for the various southerly currents. (The bottom edge of the Gulf Stream here starts to turn southeast toward the Canary Current.) But we were not making good time. We were badly headed by an easterly wind pushing us south toward Madeira, meaning we were being gradually pushed south of our rhumb line. This was not good because we would eventually find ourselves caught up in the prevailing Northeast Trade winds along the coast of Africa. We would then have to tack,

personal history

or zigzag, against the wind and current back up the coast to Gibraltar, which for a split rigged deep keel boat like Tamerlaine would add many days to our trip. To avoid this, we decided to take a very long tack north where the prevailing winds were not only generally more northerly, but usually a little stronger

It took a few minutes to get quiet, but gradually my inner chaos subsided and I started to sink into the layers of calm we all seek. Surprisingly some words arose from that calm which I took to mean this: "Do not leave the storm out of your heart. Keep breathing and take it in and out with each breath." This message I accepted with utter conviction as my only option.

and where the currents would help us. We could then take another long tack back down to the mouth of the Med. This plan, too, would take a little longer, but not so much as getting caught in the Trades. Soon we were moving right along on a northeast course, having a great time for a few days. And then, suddenly, our whole world changed. After we made the turn for our long tack back, we got strong north winds all right! The wind eventually increased to plus Force Eight, a full gale of well over forty knots on the Beaufort Scale which would blow for more than two full days.

Just as it was starting, I was off watch after lunch, doing chores below. I had started to sweep the cabin floor, called the sole, made of beautifully constructed hardwoods. Since it was such a small area, I always used a whisk broom and dustpan. It was rather pleasant work because I had learned to move with the motion of the boat, what Allan called "being in league with the sea." I was kneeling down around the small gimbaled stove when something strange happened.

I became aware that my legs were shaking and my mouth was dry. I looked up at the barometer. It was very low, about 29.65 or a little more. The important thing was that it had dropped more than 5 millibars in the last three hours. This meant that a strong low pressure area would inevitably bring us a strong storm, and very soon. It was already clouding up fast, and the wave periods were increasing. My body had felt its approach before I had registered all this, and now it was really quaking. I started to feel panic. We were so far from land, the Azores were days away and Gibraltar just as far in the other direction.

o one who knows the sea wants a really bad storm. The inexorable power of wind and water is impersonal in its power. It does not cooperate. This was hard core reality, not abstract ideals or barroom bravado. So this was to be the dreaded "It": the storm that every sailor knows will really test her or him. Other storms may have been bad and there had been many of them. But somehow I knew this would be the one that would answer the questions: How will it be? How will I be? There is no choice but to face it and find out.

Knees still shaking, I knew I had to collect myself. Fortunately, very fortunately, I had cultivated the habit of meditation, a practice I kept very simple, just watching my breath, no astral phenomena permitted. It took a few minutes to get quiet, but gradually my inner chaos subsided and I started to sink into the layers of calm we all seek. Surprisingly some words arose from that calm which I took to mean this: "Do not leave the storm out of your heart. Keep breathing and take it in and out with each breath." This message I accepted with utter conviction as my only option. All this had occurred in about ten minutes. I put the whiskbroom away, in fact I stowed everything below as quickly as I could, put on my foul weather jacket and went above.

It was so dark by then that Allan had put on the spreader lights so he could see what he was doing while he took down the main sail. Allan never took the main down unless things were deteriorating badly. I am giving the impression that we were just the two of us on the crossing, but there were two other crew members who were both excellent sailors. Believe me, all four of us were kept very busy.

I kept breathing and looked around. The seas were growing exponentially. The wind was still only blowing about 30 knots but it was on the rise, beginning to make its own sounds, independent of its collision with the metal

personal history

almost without solid boundaries of form. We were part of it, me, watching, beholding this beauty. This lovely and strong vessel, and this incredible man, my husband, the best sailor I ever knew, moving in and through it all, all of us breathing together, part of the great breath of the universe, spirit and matter all one, as it always had been and always would be.

eautiful yes, but still we had to sail that boat if we wanted to remain a part of it. We could not abdicate our responsibility in passive surrender to the nearly overwhelming power and beauty. I looked down at the side of the sleek white hull, ³/₄ inch of fiberglass between us and the deep wet wild, watching its lovely lines cut-

He looked over at me and our eyes met. He was so beautiful. His movements were graceful even on that galloping deck. I thought, "He looks like a ballet dancer." I deliberately took in the whole scene, the wind, the sound, the salt of the breaking seas, where we were way out there far from land, and him. I breathed it all in and out a few times, and then suddenly it really was a ballet, a dance of energy, of light, of motion, of rhythm almost without solid boundaries of form. We were part of it, me, watching, beholding this beauty.

rigging. I looked back at Allan. He had set the self-steering gear to hold the boat into the wind while he took in the main, but it was straining hard to hold it there. I shouted to him that I would hold the helm manually. He looked over at me and our eyes met. He was so beautiful. His movements were graceful even on that galloping deck. I thought, "He looks like a ballet dancer." I deliberately took in the whole scene, the wind, the sound, the salt of the breaking seas, where we were way out there far from land, and him. I breathed it all in and out a few times, and then suddenly it really was a ballet, a dance of energy, of light, of motion, of rhythm

ting through the waves, and thought, "stay present, stay right here in the present moment, don't fall in, pay attention." The seas were nearing fifteen now and breaking as they do at the start of a storm; the wind had begun to scream its lonely cosmic wail. It was wet and cold. I secured the helm and went forward to help Allan capture the mainsail. His face was shining, glowing, a real human being, an adult man. I kept breathing it all in and out, careful not to lose concentration. I knew that if one of us fell overboard, he would drown, we could not breathe that wet energy. Stop thinking about that. Stay present. Stay on the boat! Do the next

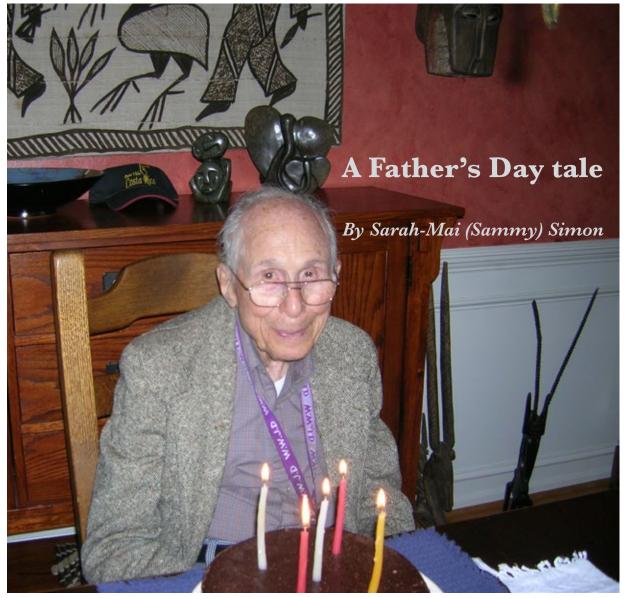
thing next and do it well. There was the paradox, not to be careless, and not to be afraid. If I fell in anyway, at least it wouldn't be as a reckless, frightened fool. I thought of the words of a valued friend: "Be Here Now." I think I started to grow up that day.

The storm lasted three days. Our world had turned into cold hard wet pewter. Hour after hour every boarding sea drenched us with its freezing, stinging, salty power. The wind shrieked in roaring majesty. It was exhausting. And it was magnificent, although I was not held in that original exultation except in the first few hours. But I kept breathing and I sailed better than I had ever sailed before. I managed to cook some nourishing meals of coffee, tea, oatmeal and boiled eggs to keep us all going. And I fell in love with my husband all over again. Allan's navigation in that storm was a marvel, guiding us while the winds drove us hard to Gibraltar. Eventually the storm blew itself out, and the seas smoothed from vicious craggy moving mountains into huge rolling hills. We all relaxed, and breathing once again became natural.

One night we saw the loom of light over Portugal, and knew that we would fetch the straits of Gibraltar in the daylight. At dawn we danced into the Mediterranean with Morocco on one side and Spain on the other, accompanied by dolphins with fair seas behind us and six years of life together in the Med off the forward bow. When we reached Marbella, I hated to go in.

This account has been slightly edited by the author from a family memoir.

father's day memory



welve years ago, my then 93-year-old father suffered "an episode" at breakfast in the dining room of his independent living facility. The staff summoned an ambulance that whisked him off to the nearest hospital. His 87-year-old wife telephoned his son, my brother, David, who drove at breakneck speed from his home in Long Island to Westchester, fearing the worst.

Ten years later, David wrote in an email that when he had arrived in the ER,

"There was a gaggle of nurses and technicians circled around Dad's gurney. I kept my distance to give the doctor and his entourage some space to do their work and take care of our father. "I heard the attending emergency room physician ask in a loud [Elderspeak] voice, What is your name?"

Dad: Marvin Propper.

The doctor, louder: Where are you?

Dad: White Plains Hospital.

The doctor, still louder: What is today's date?

My numerically gifted, CPA father, with a mischievous glint in his eye and punctuating each syllable with his right digit finger replied: 05-05-05!

David's email continued, "When Dad uttered that punchline, there was a loud chorus of laughter, an unusual occurrence in an emergency room. I may not even have laughed. At the time, I may have been thinking, I drove fifty miles in New York morning rush hour traffic, worried sick about my father, and he's in here doing his nightclub act!"

Our father lived another 8 years. After his wife's death in 2010, Marvin left New York and moved to Alexandria. We threw him a big 100th birthday party attended by 40 members of the family and friends. He celebrated one more birthday, dying at the age of 101, the Thursday before Father's Day 2013. Serving as his caregiver for his final three years was a privilege and a gift. I shall always be grateful to him and to my husband, Alan, for supporting my efforts.

Happy Father's Day to you both, Dad and Alan!

building 4 party





Photos by Kim Santos

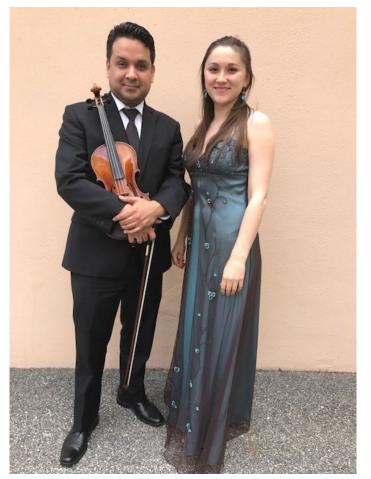








out & about



Pianist Anna Nizhegorodtseva and violinist Enrique Reynosa performed a Mother's Day program of Mozart, Debussy, Kreisler, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Satie, Ravel, and Monti. Dr. Erwin Jacobs and the Montebello Music Club sponsored the concert. Photo by Dian McDonald



Nearly a dozen fire engines encircled Building 1 last Friday afternoon during a kitchen fire on the second floor.

Dr. Carolyn Strano, USAF, Technical Sergeant speaks with Anthony Bauer, U.S. Army (Ret.), and Cerie Kimball, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret.), during the Armed Forces Day celebration on May 20. The program included the Montebello Music Club performing popular songs from World War I and World War II, as well as Tony Bauer's reminiscences about his service days. The Montebello Voice



oh, deer





Mark Goodman







John Powers

Several residents snapped photos of a deer strolling around Montebello on May 17. At press time, the deer was still on the property.

Morning walk in our woods. This guy was so tame. I was within 12-15 ft and he never flinched. My little dog stood up on a log in front of me and the deer ignored him. My dog did not bark or try to chase him. Great walk. – Mary Tjeerdsma

Mary Tjeerdsma



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Invite you to our film & discussion





The Third Man, generally acknowledged to be a cinematic masterpiece, film boasts a remarkable creative team headed by producer Alexander Korda, directed by Carol Reed, written, for the most part, by Graham Greene and starring Orson Welles, Joseph Cotton, Alida Valli and Trevor Howard with an unforgettable supporting cast. The intriguing, suspenseful action takes place in atmospheric, corrupt, post-WW II Vienna. Who is the third man? You will want to find out.

Caryl Curry will introduce the film and lead the post-movie discussion



The Montebello Voice

final glance



2017 Board of Directors election results: 34-31-27