

By Gyami Shrestha

Avani Shrestha *Blue Bird of Alexandria II* June 15, 2017

Avani is a true Montebello kid, like many of the small, but growing population of kids here. She has lived here all her life. She just graduated kindergarten from a school in Old Town. She is 5 now. She started education in that pre-school at age 2. She loves reading, dancing, singing, talking – expressing her opinions and asserting her rights to her parents, who are very often left speechless by her. She remembers moments from years ago and acts like she is our boss, mum, etc. But essentially, she likes being a leader. She often overlooks the fact that she is only 5 and is the youngest in the family. In her mind, it does not matter.

She wants to be a scientist when she grows up. She also wants to write books. She has vivid dreams, like her mom. Her imagination has no limit.

Getting ready for graduation:

This morning, as usual, as I am unsuccessfully trying to rush Avani for school, she needs to have her routine interrogation:

“Mommy, why can’t you become president?”

The suddenness of this question throws out a stupid answer from me, “Because I don’t want to. I am not a politician.” And then, recollecting myself, I say, “Because I was not born here.”

And she says, “I want to be president,” but then, with a worried expression says, “Can I be married if I want to be president?”



Avani with her parents, Gyami and Sudhir

“Yes,” I respond.

“Would my husband be called ‘First Man?’”

“:) yes,” I reply.

“Yay. How can I be president, mommy?”

“You need to be smart, nice to people, etc.”

“Ok. I will study hard, will be nice to everyone, will be intelligent, will go to college...”

She happily gets ready for school.

At kindergarten graduation, Avani’s class portrayed U.S. Presidents. Through lottery, the kids picked which president they have to play. She picked Jimmy Carter. She was begging for

a Jimmy Carter wig. She did not get one – not only because there is no such thing on Amazon. As she spoke her Jimmy Carter line during the ceremony, it was important for her and everyone else to know that she can represent the U.S. presidency as a female non-white U.S.-born kindergartner – as herself – despite the embarrassing reality we now face.

Avani has been enrolled in Blue Bird II in Alexandria since she turned 2 years old. The teachers are caring and the academics are impressive. She now rejoices in reading books and even seeks out harder chapter books. She has picked up some Spanish at school and her mom is teaching her some French. She already knows Nepali and understands some Newari.

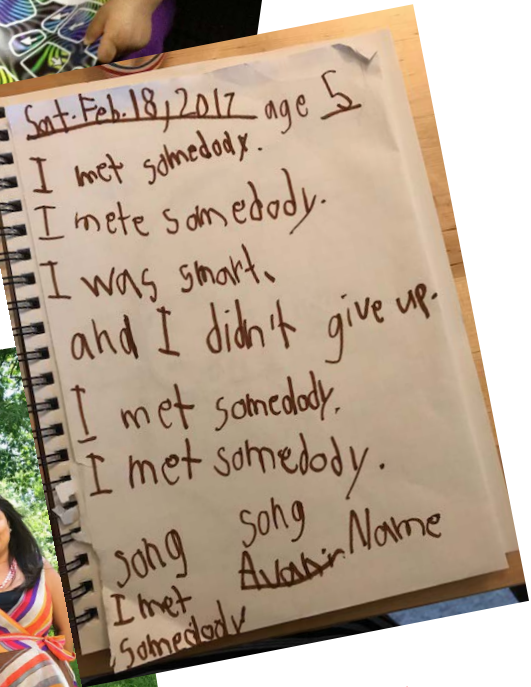
Her school has summer camp filled with library and theatre trips, among other fun activities such as swimming and art. That is now keeping her busy. She is moving on to first grade school in the same school. Her parents love the school and how convenient it is in the context of their professional lives as scientists – her dad is a land/soil scientist now focused on digital mapping technology at ESRI and her mom is an environmental scientist now focused on interagency carbon cycle science program management.

They made Montebello their home in 2010, after a move to the D.C. area for a job at NOAA, and finding a Craigslist ad for a Montebello condo, while in California, where they had resided for over five years. 🏠

graduation



Avani!



Avani!



Avani!

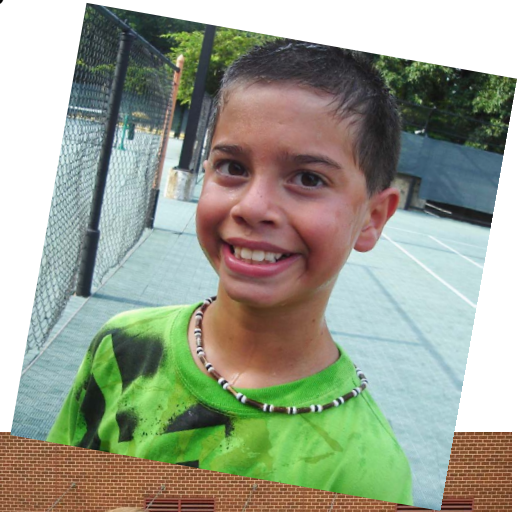
Avani!

Avani!



graduation

Marco Alessandro Colon Thomas A. Edison High School June 16, 2017



Marco with his parents, Pedro and Antonella

Marco with his brother, Lucas

By Mikhailina Karina

Another one of Montebello's "natives" is celebrating a major milestone: high school graduation.

Marco's parents, Pedro Colon and Antonella Chinellato, have lived in Building 4 since 1995. His older brother, Lucas, graduated from West Potomac High School and just completed his sophomore year at Virginia Tech.

Growing up at Montebello, Marco has explored every inch of this place and enjoyed every amenity with a tight group of friends.

Marco attended St. Mary's School through eighth grade; then he spent two years at West Potomac High School, where he discovered wrestling.

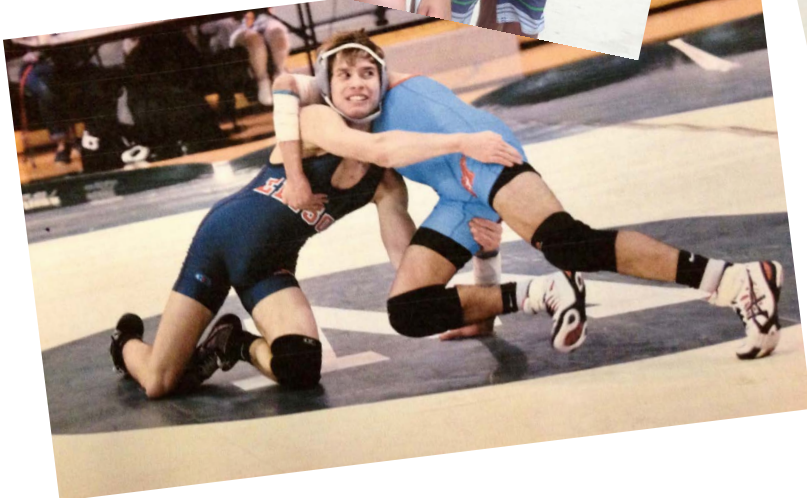
After transferring to Edison High School his junior year, he excelled in wrestling with a total of 14 medals. Competing at 113 pounds, some of his recent accomplishments include 1st place Rider Classic tournament at Jeb Stuart HS; 2nd place Lancer Invitational tournament; 2nd place Capitol Conference 13 tournament at Jeb Stuart HS; 2nd place Bishop Ireton Holiday Classic; 7th place at Northern Region Wrestling Classic at Fairfax High

School (32 high schools competed); and 8th place at Region 5A North tournament at Orange County HS.

In addition to wrestling, Marco earned a Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do at the Capitol Martial Arts Academy and studied piano for several years. He also speaks Spanish and Italian.

Marco earned an Advanced Diploma with honors in the National Technical Honor Society for excelling in the criminal justice class as one of the nation's top students. He was accepted at the Virginia Commonwealth University and plans to major in criminal justice. 📖

graduation



*Our town, our gang
Marco with his Montebello "cousins"
and lifelong friends*

Remembrance of Dr. Chris Low

By Thomas H. Lasch

As a friend who served on two committees with Christopher Low, Ph.D., most recently the Finance & Budget Committee, I would like to say a few words in remembrance of Dr. Christopher Low on his untimely demise.

Dr. Christopher Low (known as Chris) with his wife, Trish, had made his home at Montebello for more than twenty-five years. During this time Chris was significantly involved in the Montebello governance as a member of the former Operations Committee 1995-1997, and Chair of that Committee 1997-2000. Then with a vision to help make Montebello the beautiful community it is today, Chris was elected to the Board of Directors for four consecutive three-year terms, 12 years, and served as Secretary for six of those years and Vice President for the final two years.

Although the offices of Secretary and Vice President were time demanding administratively, he tirelessly and timely attended 10 to 12 scheduled

monthly board meetings, frequent Executive meetings and 10 to 12 committee meetings as the Liaison Director. During these meetings his comments were always insightful and thoughtful to provoke debate, often resulting in Directors and Committee members' needing to re-examine their position on the topic being discussed.

Then, after a brief hiatus, Chris still wanted to be involved in the governance of Montebello and became a member of the Finance and Budget, and the Neighborhood Improvement Committees and was the Chair of the often demanding and stressful Covenants Committee before his demise. While it is difficult to determine the exact number of years Chris was committed and dedicated in his effort to make Montebello as we know it today, I estimate it to be nearly twenty years of the twenty-five years he made his home at Montebello.

Dr. Low was a quiet, respectful, reflective, encouraging, cool, collected persona and always approached a challenge with the thought how he could

obtain a positive solution of the challenge for all persons concerned. He always gave of his time and intellect endlessly to the community we know today. I believe the past and present members of the Finance & Budget Committee and Directors of the past and present Boards of Directors hold Chris in high esteem.

In all these years, I do not recall Chris to raise his voice or be in a bad mood. He has been an exceptional person to be around and a servant to our community.

Being the person Christopher Low was, he contributed generously and exceptionally to the governance and professional culture at Montebello, to make it the envy of other condominiums in the area. Chris, you will be missed by the many friends you have made and at the Board and Committee meetings you attended the past twenty-five years

Finally, after all these words, Chris, it comes down to just seven words: "Thank You. God Bless. Rest in Peace."



out & about



Happy 96th, Bonnie!

Montebello resident Bonnie Rice (center) joined friends Joyce Elam (left) and Pam Howell (right) in celebrating her 96th birthday at Thomas Pandolfi's recital on June 11. Bonnie is a longtime member of the Music Club, a cosponsor, with the Activities Committee, of the pianist's performance.

Photo by Dian McDonald



Jerome Brown received the Male Educator of the Year award from Prince George County Public Schools. He teaches at the Samuel P. Massie Academy Middle School in Forestville, Md.

Back by popular demand, Thomas Pandolfi wowed the audience with his sublime and energetic performances of Mozart's Sonata No. 12 in F Major, Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12, Chopin's Nocturne, and his own arrangements of selections from West Side Story and Phantom of the Opera.



Photo by Dian McDonald



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of Alexandria

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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!



Thursday, June 22th
Community Center
Card Room
7:00pm to 9:30pm (latest)



Dear pe! Dear pe!
In honor of this Father's Day week, you are encouraged to bring your father. Or if you are a father, bring your child or a young person to partake in the joys of chess!

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. Stedje at lisa@stedje.com and/or Nick Nickerson at fxnixson@gmail.com for more information.



MONTABELLO
FILM SOCIETY

and

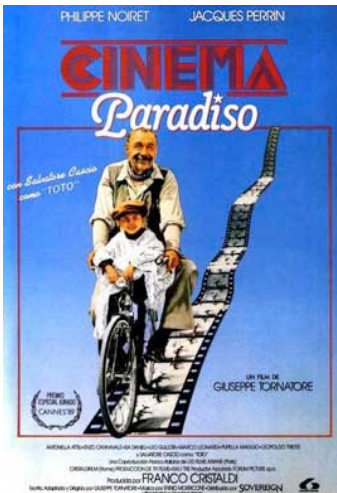


Invite you to our film & discussion



CINEMA PARADISO

THURSDAY JUNE 29 7:30 P.M. PARTY ROOM 2



A true motion picture masterpiece, Cinema Paradiso won the 1989 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, Golden Globe, and acclaim around the world. This extraordinary celebration of youth, friendship, and the everlasting magic of movies is sure to captivate your heart and send your spirit soaring. Join us for an uplifting evening.

Leslee Levy will introduce the film and lead the post-movie discussion

The MONTABELLO Voice

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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.

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final glance



Location, location...location?? This attractive holder for Wet Umbrella Bags is located in the hallway next to the fitness center. While I appreciate the safety and convenience of these bags, I don't understand their location. Normally, I encounter such helpful resources by the front entrances of buildings – you walk in the door, grab a bag, put your wet umbrella inside, and proceed into the building. But these lovely bags are deep inside the building, which means someone comes through one of the community center entrances with a dripping wet umbrella, walks down the hall (leaving a rainy trail), traipses through the locker room, passes the fitness center, and only then encounters one of these useful baggies. Perhaps the bags are meant for people coming in from the outdoor pool, which is still mystifying: people going to the outdoor pool don't normally carry umbrellas in their beach bags. If it's going to be a rainy day, then it's not a pool day for most people. But if it does rain, I wish pool users could find shelter under the green canopies, which are woefully inadequate with their cheese-cloth porousness that let in both sun and rain. – Mikhailina Karina