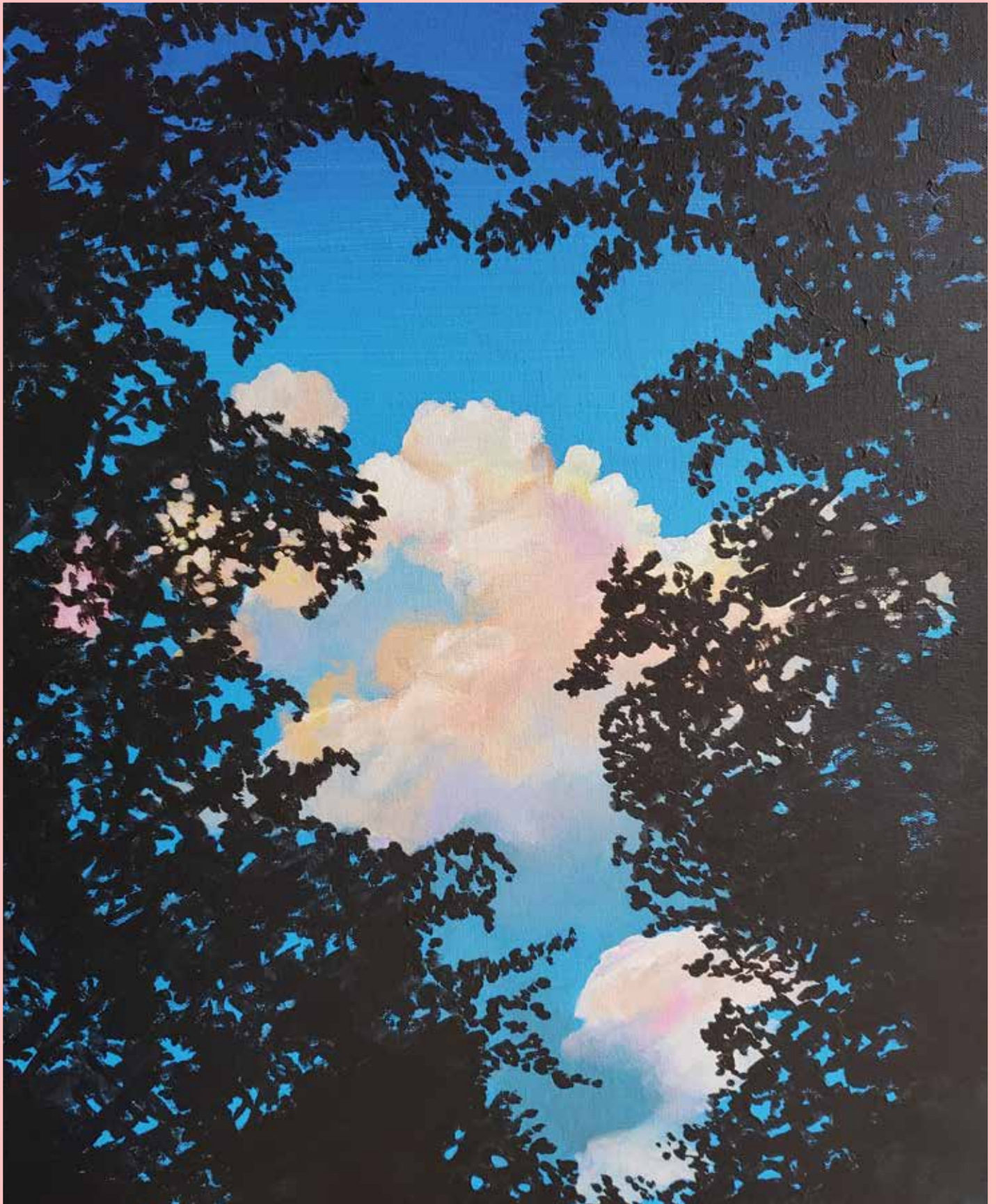


The **MONTTEBELLO** Voice

an independent gazette

the calm before the storm

September 13, 2018



Cloud burst

By Rachael Bright

November group show seeks entries

By Joel Miller

The November 3 group show theme is *Montebello Inside-Out*. This means that the material for the show should be whatever the artists see within the area enclosed by that black perimeter fence – the trees, the flowers, the bugs, the beauties, the beasts, the board, the buildings, the parties, the interiors, the exteriors – there is so much to capture and all within walking distance.

So you ask, “With all of this subject range, is anything *unacceptable?*” and the answer is “*yes.*” I will not be accepting anything “ordinary.” I want to cover the café walls with originality and imagination. You have a lot of time to think about this and to work on it. If you want to discuss an idea or an im-

age, email me and include the image as an attachment. I hope to see 15 or 20 interesting Montebellos on the November café wall, but if there are only eight or nine that fit the criteria, I will be happy with that, too.

The process starts right now. Send images as attachments to an email with “November AIM Show” as the subject.

Why so early? You are all very busy and need

time to fit this into your calendars and my time will be shortened by a number of travel weeks between now and the November 3 show.

All communication will be via email at maxmax491@aol.com; I promise fast replies.

The deadline for submissions is September 21. 📧



Joel Miller

The Montebello Voice wants to hear from you: musings, travels, announcements, photos, book 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
an independent gazette
Alexandria, Virginia

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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Contributors.....Chuck Amorosino,
D. Cumbee, Gregory Bender, Azita Mashayekhi, Dian McDonald, Joel Miller, Earl Roberts, Anna Schalk, Paul Zeisset

voices on the 37



RusUz *Russian and Uzbek Authentic Cuisine*



Do you have a yen for blini, piroshki, borscht, pelmeni, shishkabob, stuffed cabbage, manti or pilaf? These and other favorite dishes from the cuisines of Russia and Uzbekistan are available at RusUz, a new restaurant in our area. RusUz is located adjacent to the AMC Hoffman Center 22 in the Eisenhower neighborhood.

210 Swamp Fox Road, Alexandria 703-567-7020 <https://rusuz.com/> – *Dian McDonald*



Joel Miller
September 13, 2018

Residents rescue plants before erosion construction

By Paul Zeisset,
Grounds Committee

On September 5, three Montebello residents were part of a work party that transplanted selected native plants from woodland areas that will be disturbed by the erosion control construction in coming months. Yoli Del Bueno, of Natural Resources Design (NRD), led the group. The resident participants were Chuck Amorosino, Brian Hayden, and Paul Zeisset.

Top priority was given to rescuing plants in the area downhill from the

erosion control work is not scheduled to begin until October. Nonetheless, we got a start on the work there for the purpose of getting experience to allow independent work later. We transplanted two skunk cabbage plants from inside the construction zone to places just outside that zone and we transplanted one arrowwood viburnum from the area north of the trail near Post 14 to an open area along the fence between posts 9 and 10, far from any construction zone. While other plants moved that day were dormant for the season and wouldn't need supplementary wa-

ter, we transplanted more skunk cabbage and viburnums on our own, using what we had learned and the fact that the target plants had been marked out by Ms. Del Bueno in advance.

On October 4, we will organize another plant rescue with NRD's supervision, this time attempting to move a hazelnut seedling, wild grape, and perhaps other woody plants that will survive transplanting better after the weather turns cooler, but, we hope, in time to be done before construction below Building 1 begins.

While we did not move all the plants we had hoped to, participants felt that the session was interesting and a good learning experience.

We did, incidentally, find the well-rusted blade of a very old pitchfork, and can speculate about the story it could tell of things that happened here before this property became Montebello. 📷



From left: Paul Zeisset, Brian Hayden, and Chuck Amorosino

stone bridge on long Mount Eagle Drive because erosion control work was projected to begin there in mid-September. We transplanted five Jack-in-the-pulpits and over 30 Mayapples from inside the disturbance zone (marked with white flags and ribbon) to spots nearby that have similar moisture characteristics and will also be more visible from the trail.

A much larger area downhill from Building 1 was lower priority because

tering, the viburnum was not dormant, so we watered it in with more than a gallon of water.

September 5 was beastly hot, with temperatures in the mid-90s and humidity making it feel even hotter, so the work session continued only for a few hours. The plant rescue project had already been rescheduled from the previous week because of the heat. Given the difficulty of scheduling times with our leader, we decided to try to contin-



Have you ever found artifacts on the grounds that may have been here since before Montebello? If so, please get in touch with The Voice.

Please reinstate the monthly vehicle ticketing program

By D. Cumbee

I have noticed in the past two years more cars are being “dumped” on the property with expired tags, no tags, expired inspection stickers, no Montebello sticker, flat tires, and other obviously damaged parts (mirrors hanging off the side of the car, severe damage from an accident, etc). Some of these cars sit for months in the same parking spot as the tires go flat and the tags and inspection sticker end up having expired months or even years earlier.

I always report these cars to the association in an email and ask them to ticket or remove the car. I don't walk the entire property, so I only report vehicles parked near the front of Building 2. I recently sent an email to Earl Roberts and copied George Gardner and the board president and a few board members asking that a practice that had been in place at Montebello until a few years ago be reinstated. When security was ticketing cars once per month, the residents seemed to follow the rules and did not dump cars on the property. Parking spots were open to residents and their guests – rather than being taken by people who dump multiple vehicles on the property with expired tags, expired inspection stickers, no Montebello sticker, etc. The answer to my request to restart ticketing cars with violations monthly from the security manager is below [right] – it appears to be indicating that the security staff will not reinstate the monthly ticketing program. Junked cars on the property are seen by potential buyers or renters and makes this property look like a less than desirable home – trashy is a word I like to use to describe complexes that allow this type of parking problem.

I am asking that all residents start reporting cars to management with expired tags, expired inspection stickers, no Montebello sticker, no visitor pass on the car, an expired visitor's pass, or other violations. If you see a car with a flat tire or inside light on or damage

that the owner may be unaware of, please report this to management in writing. Make sure you describe the car and include the tag number (state and number).

Many residents are happy to find out their vehicle has a flat tire before they need the vehicle to get to work or go to an appointment; cars with interior lights left on can end up with a dead battery. Reporting these issues gives the residents a chance to fix the vehicle before they need to drive it.

Please report ALL issues with parking and vehicle violations (or issues like a flat tire) to the association in writing by email. Keep the email in the event you have to report the same violation multiple times to get actions taken. I and others in building 2 have occasionally had to report the same violation on the same vehicle more than once to get action taken.

If a vehicle has out-of-state tags and appears to belong to a resident who is not in the military, you can report that by email to the VA DMV. There was a story on the local news a week or so ago asking the public to report these vehicles – they are not paying taxes in Virginia and the DMV has a task force that will investigate and make the resident register the car in Virginia and pay taxes. I have reported a vehicle in the past to the DMV with good results. They responded to me and the car soon had the appropriate tag. I don't think our local security can do anything about this issue if the car is properly registered with Montebello, so it is best not to report this issue to Montebello staff.

Let's help make the parking lots look better and have available parking spots for residents who follow the rules by reporting vehicles that are violating our rules. Residents will likely start to take better care of their vehicles and our community parking lot will not have multiple vehicles taking up parking spots that could be available for you and your registered guests. 🏠

By Earl Roberts, Safety and Access Control Manager

Ms. Cumbee,

We do not have a designated day to issue violation notices (tickets). SAC Officers issue violations as they see them while conducting their day-to-day tasks. Those day-to-day tasks include move-in/out pre-inspections, move in/out post-inspections, escorting Amazon deliveries (9am-6pm Mon-Sat), escorting EMS/fire, inspecting/ensuring contractors are constantly following the rules and regulations, riding the shuttle bus, patrolling the woods, patrolling the garages, patrolling the buildings, investigating odors (30 separate complaints in August), investigating noise complaints, investigating suspicious activity, assisting children at the school bus stop, hourly intercom checks in each building and gate, conducting daily light bulb inspections, fire extinguisher checks, closing & alarm procedures at the pool, café, tennis courts, community center, conducting resident lock-outs, conducting traffic control during construction/maintenance projects, and so on.

I only list this snapshot of tasks to show that the SAC Officers are out and about on the property and when they see windows down or a light left on in a vehicle, they pull the owners information and contact the owner (sometimes even staying with an unsecure vehicle until the owner arrives) – just this past week alone this act was performed 5 times by SAC Officers. As they see violations, they issue a notice –“ticket” (more than 20 issued this month) – our rules and regulations state that, in most cases, 3 separate violations be issued for a violation before progressing to the next step – a letter from Management. In the letter, a 10-day period to correct the violation is allotted. At the end of that period, the violator may have their vehicle towed or the matter referred to Covenants Committee depending on the case (as you can see, this process occurs over a period of time). 🏠

Response to Earl Roberts

By D. Cumbee

Thanks for the information. John Edmonds [*former head of SAC, ed.*] told me when I first arrived that at some point monthly, the SAC staff walked the parking lot areas and ticketed cars with violations. If it was never official policy, it still sounds like a good idea. It doesn't have to be a specific day every month, but could be done over a week every 5-6 weeks. Violations in front of Building 2 have significantly increased in the past 2-3 years and residents are reporting the offenses after they see the same vehicle with the same issues week after week. Parking spots are being taken by a few repeat offenders (the resident in Building 1 with a 12-year history of dumping older cars here, letting the tire go flat, letting tags and registration expire) that could be available to residents with properly registered vehicles who take care of their vehicles.

I think it would be a great idea to start this program if it was never officially a program. There are several vehicles parked in the front of Building 2 now that need to be ticketed. 📌

Response from board president

*By Greg Bender
President, MCUOA*

We have checked our records and have discussed this with the longest-serving member of our SAC staff who has been in our continuous employ since 1995.

That employee confirmed what we found in our records. Going back to at least 1995, we have never had a "monthly ticket day."

Our SAC staff looks for and reports violation and problems nearly every day. I know because I see the shift logs where they are reported.

We do appreciate problems being called to the attention of Management, so please continue to report abandoned and damaged vehicles. 📌

governance

Board discusses road closures, soil projects, and contract approvals

By Mikhailina Karina

During a typical board of directors meeting on September 11, there were a dozen attendees and more than 40 empty seats in the Community Center lounge. Once again, director Raymond Goodrich was absent.

Public works and committee work continue to hum along. General Manager George Gardner said that both erosion control and exterior lighting projects should be completed by the end of the year. Erosion control will likely create some traffic inconveniences: the long Mount Eagle Drive going toward the gate will be closed between September 26 and October 11; the other lane will be closed between October 12 and December 23. In addition, chunks of the trail will be closed at various times during the project.

To address damage that occurred during the fitness center construction,

the land around the gazebo will be spruced up with removal of weeds, new topsoil, and reseeding, Gardner said.

Board president Greg Bender said the turf restoration program, which will cost \$11,625, involved extensive soil testing at different locations and will provide appropriate treatments specific to the needs of each area.

The board approved a contract for a yet-unnamed shuttle bus company starting on November 30. The first year of the three-year contract will be \$183,561 and \$169,441 each for the subsequent years.

Sometime in the next two weeks, the Quality Improvement Committee will send out a 30-second survey on the key recommendations for updating party rooms. These recommendations came out of the discussions by the five focus groups this summer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. 📌



Azita Mashayekhi

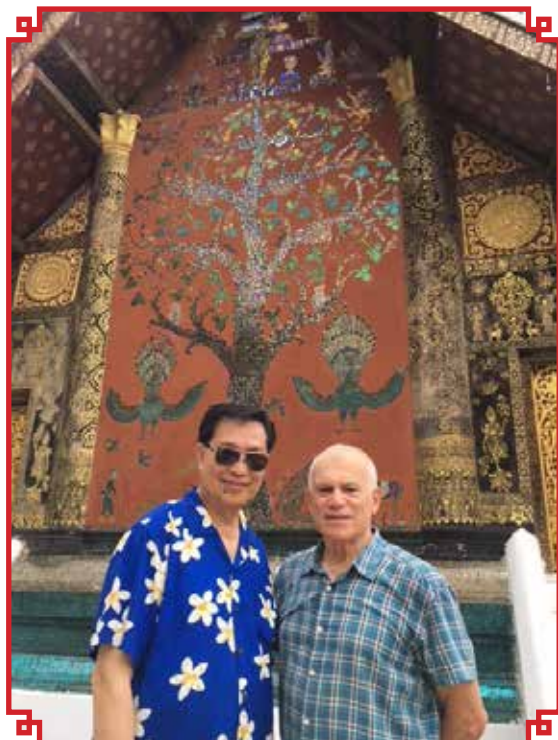
Buddhist Stupa Phra That Luana, Vientiane

Sa-bai-dee = Hello!

Last winter I began finalizing my June visit to Southeast Asia. I was focused on returning to the mountain town in the Philippines where I had been a Peace Corps Volunteer in the '60s.

While planning the trip, I chatted with Montebello General Manager George Gardner, telling him of my interest to spend some time in Laos before heading to the Philippines. I told George that I had enjoyed interacting in the classroom with the attentive Lao housekeeping staff in the English Language Program set up by residents Donald and Karen Barnes and Carole Appel.

Fast forward – George introduced me to Khamveng Somchanmavong, Montebello's manager of housekeeping. Veng asked me, "When, how long, what do you want to see?" My response, "June, six days, the people."



The Montebello Voice



Veng rearranged the dates for his own summer vacation in Laos. Fast forward again – Veng greeted me on June 6 on my arrival at the Vientiane International Airport. From there, Veng guided me through six packed days of Laos countrywide sights and sounds, introductions to his extended family, friends, and people-in-the-know.

Introduction to Laos

Laos (The Laos People's Democratic Republic, population approx. 7 million) is a landlocked country bordered by Myanmar, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand.

Through our travels mostly by car with Veng's patient, accommodating nephew, Sook, I observed a country made up of villages and networks of rivers harnessed by hydroelectric dams that powered the small country's

Veng Somchanmavong and Chuck Amorosino at Wat Xiang Thong Monastery, Luang Praband

source of electricity and also for several bordering countries.

Vientiane (population approx. 200,000), capital of Laos, was my first introduction to village quaintness and the quiet hum of people going about their business. The welcoming hospitality, neighborhood outdoor markets, the night market, drew me right in. Buddhist temples, monks, monasteries, and the awesome gold-covered stupa Phra That Luana gave colorful backdrops for many photos and for Veng's spirited selfies.

Two hours outside Vientiane going north, the terrain begins to change to a mountainous country atmosphere. We entered the region of Vangvieng and the Nam Song River, where we had an overnight stay with the enjoyment of open market food of fish, vegetables, soup and rice. Meals end with varied fruits and sticky rice. The region is filled with views of mountains, caves, networks of rivers, and always greetings from the villagers.



Village of Phonsavath

Day four brought us to an up-close observation of a hydroelectric dam that included a private boat excursion on a vast man-made lake. On board, we had a simple delicious lunch of fish, soup,

and fruit followed by a short nap during anchor. Then we had to move on; Veng had more to show.

An hour later, we arrived at Phonsavath, Veng's family village. First stop was the home of Veng's sister, Boon-

Reclining Buddha, Vientiane

tom, and brother-in-law, Khamhaeng. Immediately, we were greeted with warm smiles and a bowl of fruit and sticky rice. A few minutes later, brother Bong and sister-in-law Boutsaba arrived (parents of Veng's nephew, Sook) and then Veng's brother, Pane, and his wife, Khampane. More fruit, sticky rice and refreshing drinks. I enjoyed listening to the melodious hushed tones of Lao while the close family engaged in conversation. I was not privy to all that was said.

With a quick glance to his family, Veng informed me that we must go quickly to the nearby retreat owned by the family of Sook's wife, Noodaeng. I wanted to linger longer with Veng's family, believing that I would not see them again. A half hour later, we arrived at the retreat. I was immediately shown to a guest room and told to rest,



Veng (middle) with his brother Bong and sister Boontom, Phonsavath Village



Pha Khuan Centerpiece for Sou Kwan (Baci) Ceremony, Phonsavath

*Chuck and village elder
Noon, tying string on wrist
to wish good luck and
good health. Phonsavath
Village*

because in two hours we would have dinner. I became suspicious, but not sure of what.

Sou Khuan (Baci) Ceremony

Two hours later, we walked down the rustic path to the resort's dining hall. As we entered, I noticed an elaborate centerpiece, easily five feet high, made of orange and yellow blossoms with streamers of cotton threads and food items at the base, which included boiled chickens.

Villagers approached me with *nop* gestures (hands clasped together) and softly uttering *sa-bai-dee*. Among the greeters were Veng's family with whom we had visited earlier in the day. The women were dressed in elegant attire. I was pleased to see them again.

Veng quietly explained that I was the honored guest of the welcome Sou Khuan Ceremony. He referred to the centerpiece as the Pha Khuan, a hand-



made marigold pyramid. The boiled chicken and sticky rice among the food items have a cultural and spiritual significance. The colorful centerpiece and varied foods were prepared and supervised over by Sook's wife, Noodaeng.

About 100 guests sat around the Pha Khuan while a village elder, as master of ceremony, offered a chant of greeting and well wishes. Soon individuals

tied pieces of cotton string around my wrists with words of welcome and well-being. Then there was the banquet, drinks, live music, and nonstop, hypnotic, traditional Lao line dancing. Fun and emotional evening!

Luang Prabang City

The next morning, after much dancing and a few shots of Beerlao, I was up before sunrise for a short drive to the new regional airport for the 40-minute flight further north to the ancient city of Luang Prabang. The city dates back to the 16th century and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The overnight visit to the first capital of Laos brought me to the beautiful surroundings of the Mekong and Nam Kan rivers. The history of the formal royal capital was present with the preservation of the Wat Xiang Thong Temple, an example of Lao traditional art and religion. Nestled among the narrow streets were colorful antiquities along with French architecture from the colonial days.

*The Mekong River and the
Nam Kan River meet in Luang
Prabang*



In Luang Prabang I learned of the art of handmade paper, jewelry made from silver and local gems, and custom clothing design. The open markets kept me busy bargaining for various items for my grandkids.

Time to Say Good-Bye

Early evening, we flew back to Vientiane. I was ready to crash, but Veng received a phone call that his niece, Somboon, and her husband, Phout, expected us for dinner at their family home. We rallied for the outdoor, relaxing dinner. Family and friends were entertained as the young children conversed with me in English, which they were learning in school and from the Internet.

Veng had one more treat on the final day of my six days in Laos. We had lunch with two matriarchs of several Montebello staff, Thongmee Singharath and Mai Vongs. The abundant luncheon was at the home of Thongmee. The array of food was prepared with the help of family members who included one of Thongmee's daughters, grandchildren, and relatives.

Thongmee is the mother of One V. (assistant manager of housekeeping), Kamsay K. (housekeeper), Saly S. (engineer), mother-in-law of Lampang K. (engineer), Keomay S. (housekeeper) and grandmother of Jonathan V. (housekeeper), Brandon S. (housekeeper), Annie V. (front desk). Mai Vongs is the mother of Souk V. (engineer).

With pride, Veng also informed me of his family's connection with Montebello. His sons Viraxay, Virasouk, and Sak; son-in-law Sisavat; Veng's brother, Thongdam, and sister-in-law, Simmaly, cousins Nith and Brandon, and nephew Paul S. (chief engineer) and Paul's wife, Vatsana, have all contributed to the well-being of Montebello's surroundings.

Veng accompanied me to the Vientiane airport for my night flight to the Philippines. Of course, he arranged for dinner before the flight. Veng's lifelong friend, Sivath, joined us. Sivath



Lunch with Thongmee Singharath and Mai Vongs at home of Thongmee in Vientiane



Veng Somchanmavong, Mai Vongs, Thongmee Singharath, and Chuck Amorosino in Vientiane

had been generous with his assistance in the planning and details of my Laos adventure. We three septuagenarians hugged each other good-bye and kept waving until the last security point,

when I yelled out, "Veng, see you back at Montebello!"

Khawp jai (thank you) Veng! *Khawp jai* to my Lao friends! 🙏

coming attractions



Art in Montebello
presents

And Now, Flowers!

BY REBECCA MCNEELY

And Now, Flowers! is a completely different subject than I have exhibited here in the past as I focus on the beauty of flowers.



Although most of these paintings are created with acrylic in the abstract expressionist style I have developed over the years, I recently challenged myself to paint flowers expressively in watercolor.

Watercolor has further developed my sense of color and value. I look deep into individual flowers and portray them with graphite and delicate washes.

Although it is quite a departure from my primary style, I've had so much fun learning this new medium. I hope you find my flowers joyful and peaceful.

September 22 - November 2

Opening Reception on

Saturday, September 22, 4 to 6 p.m.

Montebello Café



and



Invite you to our film & discussion



TATTOO THE WORLD

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 27 7:30 P.M. PARTY ROOM 2

Ed Hardy TATTOO THE WORLD

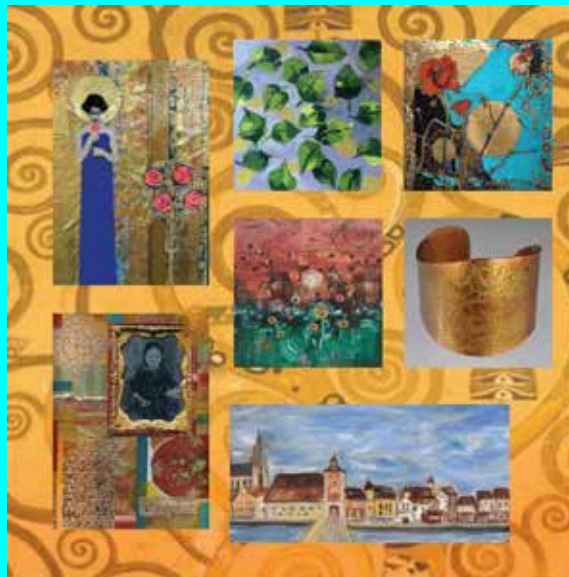


When does craft become art? I don't know... maybe it's like beauty, and is in the eyes of the beholder; or maybe it's like pornography... you know it when you see it. Regardless – come see *Tattoo the World*, a biography of master craftsman and artist Ed Hardy.

Born in Southern California in 1945, Ed graduated from San Francisco Art Institute with a degree in printmaking. He applied his training and skill to a childhood fascination, and claimed tattoos as his preferred medium.

Though tattoos may not be “your thing,” the evolution of Ed Hardy as a craftsman, an artist, and an entrepreneur is as interesting as it is dazzling.

Marsha Weiner will introduce the film and lead the post-movie discussion.



Front images clockwise from top left: Ritter, Taylor, Schalk, Jamieson, Afram, Hudgins. Center: Maldonado

OCTOBER 1-26, 2018

Opening Reception to Meet the Artists:
Friday, October 5 from 5-8pm

You're invited to a sumptuous show featuring the art of Jackie Afram, Elizabeth Hudgins, Kat Jamieson, Linda Maldonado, Elise Ritter, Anna Schalk, and Deborah Taylor.

Gallery Underground

2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA 22202
571-483-0652 galleryunderground.org

Gallery hours: M-F 10am-6pm; Special opening hours for this show include talks and demos on Saturdays Oct. 6, 13, 20 from 10am-2pm

VIENNA GOLD:
INSPIRED BY KLIMT

final glance



Moments

By Azita Mashayekhi