

# The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent gazette

to life!

June 14, 2019



*Faces of New Orleans by Dian McDonald*



# Farewell to my friends, neighbors and fellow yogis

By Virginia Nickich

I have been in Montebello for 10 years; two and a half years as a renter and almost seven as an owner. I enjoyed sharing my passion for Hatha Yoga with so many for the past 10 years and three years leading Adaptive/Chair Yoga. As an exercise enthusiast, I enjoyed sharing healthy lifestyles with members of the Wellness Club. Although the Wellness Club was short-lived, I still hear from some that they continue to practice what they learned about exercise and nutrition.

Montebello gave me more than a community when I came to live in Virginia. Montebello gave me another Family. Through the many wonderful activities I attended, I found neighbors who became friends and strangers who became acquaintances, neighbors who helped one another in a time of need.

The Café was an amenity that totally surprised me...delicious food, great prices, and such nice people to meet. I would be remiss if I didn't say that both José and Ugur made my life so

much easier when I didn't or couldn't cook, but wanted a healthy meal. I appreciate all the times they accommodated my "fussy" eating requirements and treated my requests so easily.

Montebello is not just a condo I lived in, but a home that made me feel secure, comfortable and very happy. It is with great sadness that I leave at this time, but those who know me, know that I have been on the road too much traveling north and south to be with family for all the occasions and holidays. It is not because I want to put distance between Montebello and me, but because I want to shorten the distance between family and me. To those who have crossed my path in the days and years that I lived in Montebello, know that you will always be in my mind and heart wherever life's journey may take me.

Hugs and Smiles to You from Me.

P.S. – Not only will I miss you all, but I'll certainly miss the beautiful sunsets from my balcony. 🌅



Virginia Nickich

## The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent gazette  
Alexandria, Virginia

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

## Issues with the installation of Fios cables at Montebello

By Joe de Angelis

As we all know, Fios is coming to Montebello. However, what we may not all know is that there are problems with the installation of the fiber optic cables. On 9 June, 2019 I sent an email to the Montebello Board of Directors shedding light on the problems and asking for their assistance in resolving all the issues regarding the installation of the Fios cables [*photos on the next page, ed.*]. A copy of my letter is provided below.

I am writing this letter to the Montebello Board of Directors in the hope that you will take action to remedy the discrepancies identified with the installation of the Fios cables by Verizon and their subcontractor.

It was with great interest that I read emails from my Montebello friends and neighbors voicing their concerns about the installation of Fios cables at Montebello. There appear to be three major issues: First, the absence of a conduit to contain the fiber optic cables, which according to the Fairfax Fire Department, may be a violation of Fairfax County Fire Codes. Second, the unprofessional and inadequate caulking around cables at the floor juncture that would allow fire, smoke, and other odors as well as water and insects to travel along the bundle of cables to other units. Third, and most important, is the lack of proper procedures to contain the dust generated by drilling through concrete floors that contains crystalline silica particles. These particles are very hazardous to one's health. Inhaling crystalline silica can lead to serious, sometimes fatal illnesses including silicosis, lung cancer, tuberculosis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

The pictures and comments contained in their emails, which I believe you have all seen and read, were particularly disturbing to me because of

my wife's health. My wife has a severely challenged immune system and has acute reactions to all adverse scents such a perfumes, air fresheners, pollen and chemical odors; consequently, inhaling something like respirable crystalline silica dust can be fatal for her.

To the BOD's credit, prior to the commencement of the installation of the Fios cables, Montebello management addressed the above stated issues in the *Montebello Times* and in several information papers in the form of Q's and A's. I, therefore, must assume that these issues were addressed and included in the contract with Verizon. However, it appears that Verizon sub-contracted the drilling phase of the Fios installation and did not provide adequate supervision to insure compliance with the criteria set forth in the Statement Of Work (SOW) included in the contract.

Verizon has a legal contractual responsibility to adhere to the terms of the contract SOW and in not doing so they are in breach of contract. Montebello should immediately halt all Fios-related work and inform Verizon of these issues and demand that they ensure that proper procedure are followed vis-a-vis drilling as well as other contractual requirements. This should include adding conduits to the cables already installed.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides guidance for the containment of silica dust in the form of a fact sheet titled "Control of silica dust in construction – hand-held and stand-mounted drills." The first paragraph reads: "The use of hand-held and stand-mounted drills, impact and rotary hammer drills, and similar tools used to drill holes in concrete, masonry, or other silica containing materials can generate respirable crystalline silica dust. When inhaled over time, the small particles of silica can irreversibly damage the lung." The

fact sheet can be accessed at [https://www.osha.gov/Publications/silica/OSHA\\_FS-3630.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/Publications/silica/OSHA_FS-3630.pdf).

On 7 June I telephoned OSHA about the silica dust created by the drilling through the concrete floors. I was advised that since I was neither an employee nor employer, I could not file a complaint with OSHA. However, I was also advised that if there was a perceived health hazard due to the violation of OSHA regulations, then it might be possible to file a complaint on behalf of the workers involved. Additionally I was told that I could pursue this matter through local health channels, which I intend to do if this matter is not resolved quickly and satisfactorily.

Given the severity of the possible adverse health consequences to my wife, I cannot in good conscience allow any drilling in my unit or the unit above mine until the proper procedures and methods are in place to prevent the spread of crystalline silica particles within my unit. Rest assured that I will do everything in my power to ensure that said drilling does not occur until the proper and prescribed procedures are in place. Additionally, there are many Montebello residents who, like my wife, are not in good health, some of whom are in home hospice care and could be severely and adversely impacted by silica dust. Therefore, the BOD should ensure, by all means possible, that Verizon uphold its end of the contract and provide the product, workmanship, and services that were agreed upon. Anything less is unacceptable and should not be forced on or endured by Montebello residents or Montebello management.

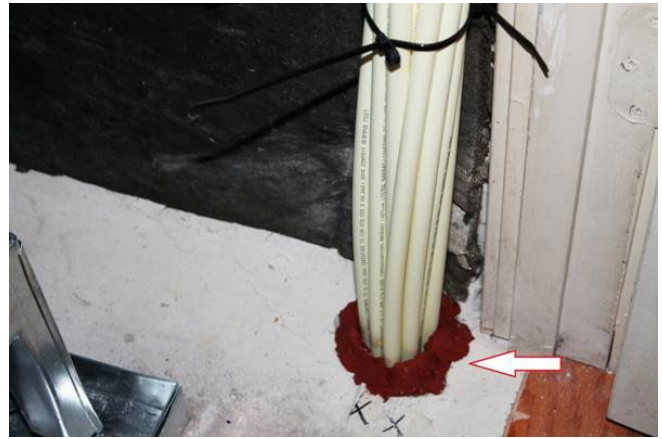
My wife and I thank you all in advance for your attention and supportive action. 🙏



## fios tsuris



*Fios cables enter HVAC closet via hole in ceiling. Note the jagged hole, no sealing around cables and no conduit pipe to protect cables.*



*Fios cables enter floor of HVAC closet with caulk around perimeter of hole. If there is a water leak, water could travel down the cable bundle into lower units and smoke/fumes/fire could travel up the bundled cables. Maybe even insects (such as roaches), because where the cables enter an HVAC closet ceiling, there is no sealing around the entry point.*



*The Fios cables bundled with cable ties, Fios cables not shielded inside conduit or even PVC pipe.*



*In another unit on a different floor, the drill team made multiple attempts to penetrate the core.*



*The drill team remediated their errors with the sealing compound. How permanent is this solution and is this level of performance the Montebello is paying for?*

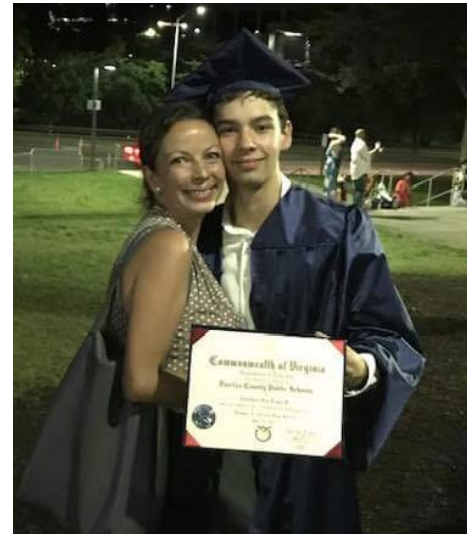
*Photos courtesy of Kim Santos and Robert Feickert*



## congratulations, graduates



*Life-long Montebello resident Lucas Colón graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering, magna cum laude, from Virginia Tech. This summer he will start his job as a junior engineer and surveyor at Dominion Surveyors, Inc. The new engineer is with his parents, Pedro Colón and Antonella Chinellato, and younger brother Marco, a junior at George Mason University.*



*Edison HS grad Johnathan Logan with his mother, Jenna. He will attend the West Virginia University Institute of Technology, where he plans to study cyber security and computer science. His grandparents are Gina and David Harley.*



*Edison HS grad Juliana Aloyo will attend NOVA to study child development. She is the daughter of Norma and Tony Barros.*



**Northern Virginia  
Community College**



*Edison HS grad Yoshie Antonovich will attend George Mason University, where she will pursue human rights and social justice. She is the daughter of Katie Antonovich and granddaughter of Jane and Jim Antonovich.*



## D-Day remembrance

*A sailor's daughter remembers*

# In honor of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day

*By Betsy Sprouse*

At age 28, my father James M. Sprouse (center front, photo below) was a lieutenant in the Navy and an experienced underwater diver, leading a group of six men in Naval Combat Demolition Unit #135, nicknamed "Sprouse's Surf Raiders." The role of these NCDUs (the precursors to the Navy Seals) on D-Day was to partner with the Army Combat Engineers to destroy the barricades erected along the beach by the Germans. The barricades were designed to be hidden at high tide, so that ships attempting a close-in beach landing would run into them.

The NCDUs were offloaded from the landing vehicles just after first light on the morning of June 6, 1944. The landing was at low tide, with the Navy men assigned to destroy barricades below the water line and the Army destroying those above the water line. They had only 25 minutes to



*Lt. James M. Sprouse in 1944*



clear the barricades for the infantry and the larger ships. However, low tide meant that most landing vehicles had to stop far from the shore, leaving men to walk long distances through knee-high water, completely exposed to German gun fire. Those barricades that couldn't be destroyed in time before the infantry landed provided a very small amount of cover for the soldiers trying to advance against the German lines, as this old photo shows.

The NCDUs were trying to destroy the barricades so the ships could get in closer and offload tanks as well as men. The tide started to turn and was coming in at a rate of one foot every eight minutes, and high tide would put the landing beaches under 26 feet of water. Some troop ships offloaded in deeper water, where the soldiers and sailors carrying heavy packs actually drowned in the strong current. The men who made it safely to shore still had to cross 200-300 feet of beachfront (similar to this present-day Omaha Beach at low tide) without cover until they got to the sea walls.

My father survived D-Day, but of the 175 NCDU sailors who landed on Omaha Beach, 91 were killed or wounded (although my father remembers this as losing 180 men out of 200). Overall, the Allied casualty rate on D-Day was 52 percent.

I keep thinking back to something my father said during an interview his family taped with him in 1982, which sums up his thoughts about D-Day so well:

*I was thinking going in that this is a very great point in American history, in world history. This is the greatest invasion ever staged, and I am a part of it. I'm here, I'm a part of it. And I'm so happy to be here, I could just bust. And I was. I'm just so happy to be here*



## D-Day remembrance



*James M. Sprouse in the 1990s*

*that I could just bust. Because I thought that all of my life, if I lived, I'm going to remember being here. I was just so pleased to be there, I would not have been anywhere else in the world. I was just delighted to be there. And before it was over – it was a bad day – I was still delighted to be there. I lost 90% of my forces, but I was still delighted to be there.*

Jim Sprouse went on to serve in the Office of Strategic Services (the precursor to the CIA) in Burma before he left the Navy and went to work for The Associated General Contractors of America in Washington, where he spent his career. He and his wife Edith were the first purchasers of a unit at Montebello, and lived there from 1982-2004. Jim died in 1995 at age 80. Both Jim and Edith are buried at Arlington National Cemetery. My mother was amused that their plot in their section of Arlington was #1514 – the same number as their unit in Building 1. 📍

*Pointe du Hoc,  
one of the Allies'  
landing sites on  
June 6, 1944.*

*June 6, 1996  
photo by Carole  
Appel*



## Montebelloville – a lighter look at community life

By Rebecca Long Hayden

“Welcome to Montebello – I’m sure you’ll be happy here,” said Joyce, the secretary in the management office when we moved in. My friend Rebecca McNeely had her own take on Montebello life. “Oh, you’ll love it, but remember, it’s life in a small town. There’s *stuff*.”

Now we’re residents of three years, and Joyce was right. We are happy here. Rebecca was right, too. It’s Montebelloville, a small town, with its own government, lots of committees, fun things, rules, all you might expect, including approximately 2,000 citizens, and yes, lots of *stuff*.

It’s inevitable when we live on top of each other, both literally and figuratively, we notice, we talk, we speculate, we complain. We scrutinize our neighbors as people always have, since someone stuck a shaft of wheat into the ground, it grew, people clustered, and civilization was born. I have no trouble imagining this conversation:

Kronk: Chee thinks he’s so special. Look at the awning he put over his cave entrance.

Blabjo: Must have cost him a pile of rocks.

Mrs. Blabjo: And his wife struts around in that fur bikini. It’s a scandal.

Blabjo: Yeah.

Kronk: Yeah.

There’s an unwieldy number of “rules” here, whether you like them or not, to help us deal with community vexations (*stuff*). Ah, the rules, as interpreted by the board of directors (BoD) and management.

I like our BoD and management, too. I base my affection on the simple fact they’re involved. Their efforts show. They don’t sit on their hands and hope for the best, and I’ve lived in communities where the so-called BoD stood for Better Off Dead. But I sometimes think the BoD and/or management miss the mark, although this is subjective. I

doubt they could save a dying sparrow without generating a revolt.

Which brings me to a piece of advice I’d like to examine. There’s been an increase in noise complaints, mostly falling into four categories: construction, loud speakers, barking dogs, and hard surface flooring. I know this because the powers that be are working hard at keeping us informed, and I appreciate that. There’s a thorough article about noise problems in the June issue of the Montebello *Times*.

But I swooned at this advice: “If you feel comfortable, knock on the neighbor’s door, introduce yourself, and identify the problem.” They did say IF . . .

I know exactly how NOT comfortable I am.

Construction noise is the easiest, and events such as the Fios installation. Both are annoying, but they will cease. Tolerance and patience are easier when there’s an end in sight. As for the others, I’ll invent bizarre excuses to tolerate anything, as long as I don’t have to confront my neighbor.

Loud speakers? *Maybe the party will be over in a week?*

Rambo the insane chihuahua who lives with my neighbor? *He looks pretty old to me. Maybe he will die soon? (Rambo, not the neighbor.)*

Hard surface flooring? *I hear the couple above me are on a diet. If they lose 250 pounds between them, the noise won’t be so bad, as they will no longer exist. I can wait it out.*

To be clear – these examples are hypothetical. I have no rock ’n roll party people near-by, no chihuahua, and I never hear noise from above, from the neighbors or God.

But confronting a neighbor goes haywire at the get-go for me, and I’m not the only one with this inclination. My reluctance to do so just leads to the ruckus getting worse and worse. There’s a party *every* night. Rambo lives on. The floors begin to sound like a shooting gallery.

I can’t take it anymore! I’m ready to “speak to my neighbor,” and it’s going to go like this:

Knock knock. No answer over a canine that would defeat the “Dog Whisperer.” I knock again, and finally, the door opens. Neighbor says a brief hello while trying to prevent Rambo from tearing my liver out. (Rambo knows exactly where my liver is, even if I don’t.)

Me: “I’ve been listening to Rambo the devil-dog for 72 days. Shut him down or I’m calling management, your employer, the FBI, and the dog catcher!”

Surprisingly, Neighbor doesn’t react in a friendly manner.

Neighbor: “I’ll shut Rambo down your butt, you worm. Management’s a tool, and the neighbors look like serial killers. And the FBI probably IS the dog catcher!”

A feud is born. Injuries. Vengeance. Lawsuits. Everyone moves, then stealthily moves back, because they love Montebelloville, even if they don’t love their neighbors.

But I have an open mind. Here’s what would happen if my spouse knocked on the neighbor’s door. My spouse will come back in 15 minutes with a smile on his face. Rambo will have been muzzled, a commitment made to doggy charm school, and we’re invited to Sunday brunch. Don’t ask me how this happens. He’s either St Francis or a Mafia Don. Or it’s magic.

I don’t know what the best answer is for most people, but I’ve lived in two other high-rise communities, and third-party intervention was the rule. On the other hand, perhaps meeting your neighbor is a good thing? But when the contact is a complaint? Personally, if I don’t want the problem to become Chernobyl-esque, I’ll channel any complaints through a third party.

Or the more simple solution – I’ll dump the issue in the lap of my charming spouse. 🐶



# Fifty years after Stonewall

By *Raymond Houck*

Stonewall riots, also called Stonewall uprising, was the name given to a series of violent confrontations that began in the early hours of June 28, 1969 between police and gay rights activists outside the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in the Greenwich Village section of New York City. As the riots progressed, an international gay rights movement was born.

In 1969 the solicitation of homosexual relations was an illegal act in New York City (and indeed virtually all other urban centers). Gay bars were places of refuge where gay men and lesbians and other individuals who were considered sexually suspect could socialize in relative safety from public harassment. Many of those bars were, however, subject to regular police harassment.

One such well-known gathering place for young gay men, lesbians, and transgender people was the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, a dark, seedy, crowded bar, reportedly operating without a liquor license. In the early morning hours of Saturday, June 28, 1969, nine policemen entered the Stonewall Inn, arrested the employees for selling alcohol without a license, roughed up many of its patrons, cleared the bar, and – in accordance with a New York criminal statute that authorized the arrest of anyone not wearing at least three articles of gender-appropriate clothing – took several people into custody. It was the third such raid on Greenwich Village gay bars in a short period.

This time the people milling outside the bar did not retreat or scatter as they almost always had in the past. Their anger was apparent and vocal as they watched bar patrons being forced into a police van. They began to jeer at and jostle the police, and then threw bottles and debris. Accustomed to more passive behavior, even from larger gay groups, the policemen called for reinforcements and barricaded themselves

inside the bar while some 400 people rioted. The police barricade was repeatedly breached, and the bar was set on fire. Police reinforcements arrived in time to extinguish the flames, and they eventually dispersed the crowd.

The riots outside the Stonewall Inn waxed and waned for the next five days. Many historians characterized the uprising as a spontaneous protest against the perpetual police harassment and social discrimination suffered by a variety of sexual minorities in the 1960s. Although there had been other protests by gay groups, the Stonewall incident was perhaps the first time lesbians, gays, and transgender people saw the value in uniting behind a common cause. Occurring as it did in the context of the civil rights and feminist movements, the Stonewall riots became a galvanizing force.

Stonewall soon became a symbol of resistance to social and political discrimination that would inspire solidarity among homosexual groups for decades. Although the Stonewall riots cannot be said to have initiated the gay rights movement as such, it did serve as a catalyst for a new generation of po-

litical activism. Acceptance and respect from the establishment were no longer being humbly requested but angrily and righteously demanded. The broad-based radical activism of many gay men and lesbians in the 1970s eventually set into motion a new, nondiscriminatory trend in government policies and helped educate society regarding this significant minority.

The event sparked the formation of scores of gay rights organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign, GLAAD (formerly the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), PFLAG (formerly Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). In 1999 the U.S. National Park Service placed the Stonewall Inn on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2016 President Barack Obama designated the site of the Stonewall uprising a national monument. The 7.7-acre monument included the Stonewall Inn, Christopher Park, and the surrounding streets and sidewalks.

Happy Pride Month!

<https://www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/the-stonewall-riots> 🏳️‍🌈



*Christopher St. Park, West Village*



## around town

### 2018-19 Montebello Bowling League awards

*By Mark Woods*

The Montebello Bowling Leagues recently held their end of season banquet and awards presentation to acknowledge the League Champions for Monday and Wednesday night leagues.

The Monday Champions proudly defended their championship from last year. The Monday Champions are Suzanne Beerthuis, Mark Woods, Nobuko Nakatsuka and Bill McNary. There is no talk of a three-peat as the league is too much fun.

The Wednesday Champions won both the first half and second half of the league but not without a stiff challenge from the rest of the league as the champions were not decided until the last few weeks. The Wednesday Champions are Bob Osterberg, Brian Goldberg, Michele Melik and Mark Woods.

We had a great time at the awards banquet at Fiona's in Kingstowne. Please consider joining us for the new



season starting in September. There are slots open for men and women. No talent is required. Seriously! The only talent needed is to smile and have

fun. Please call League President Mark Woods at 703-498-0143 or email him at [mjddwoods@earthlink.net](mailto:mjddwoods@earthlink.net) to discuss which night you would like to join. 🍷



*Mix & Mingle on June 7 on Bob and Carol Shea's outdoor deck between buildings 3 and 4.*

*Photos by Jackie Fleming*



## around town



*Paul Zeisset and Chuck Amorosino unveil the Mount Eagle Mansion historic marker on the Village Green. Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck with Paul and Chuck at the June 1 ceremony. Photos by Diane Bastin*



*B-I-N-G-O came to the Community Center on June 9 with Bingo mistresses Ruth Heineman, Pam Howell, and Nanette Frank. Photos by Leslie Rodriguez and Jackie Fleming*



*Rachael Bright at the opening of her first solo art exhibit in the Café. Aesteas's Garden will be on view until July 6*



## faces of New Orleans



Photos by Dian McDonald  
The Montebello Voice







# final glance



*Photos by Joel Miller*  
**The Montebello Voice**