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ıgust 29, <mark>20</mark>19













### voices on the 37



Rachael Bright, a Montebello artist and business owner, announces her store's move from Old Town Alexandria to Historic Occoquan.

Local Colour is "a hip art boutique and working studio, featuring local artists and iewelers."

Check out her expanded new location at 408 Mill Street in Occoquan

http://Localcolouroldtown.com

### Fall Montebello bowling

The Monday and Wednesday Montebello Bowling Leagues are looking to add players on both nights. Male and female bowlers are needed and welcome. No experience necessary! Seriously, no experience is necessary. Can you smile? You can bowl! It's as simple as that. Used to bowl many years ago? You can still do it. We can even arrange for a refresher session or lesson. Shoes and balls are provided free of charge if you don't have your own. It's a handicap league so it doesn't matter if you bowl a 60 or a 300, there is a spot for you. Just call Mark Woods at 703-498-0143 or email mjddwoods@earthlink.net. leagues start right after Labor Day so do it now while you are thinking about it.

- Mark Woods

### Stacia Novy to lead hawk talk and field trip

Former Montebello resident Stacia Novy is giving a hawk talk at the National Wildlife Federation in Reston followed by field trip for the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. The registration fee covers both events: the instructional workshop and field trip, but registrants can choose to attend one or the other, or both, as their schedule allows. Use the link below to read Stacia's biography and register for the trips. The workshop is on September 26, followed by a field trip to Waggoner's Gap in Pennsylvania on September

http://audubonva.org/asnvevents/2019-9-26-east-coast-raptors

### - Stacia Novy

### On the cover:

A Warming Planet by Rebecca McNeely, a 22 x 30 acrylic juried into The Art League's September exhibit, Zietgeist. The opening reception is Thursday, September 12, 6:30 to 8 p.m., at the Torpedo Factory in Old Town Alexandria.



### In the hood

The humble beginnings of the ubiquotous hoodie:

Brothers William and Abe Feinbloom invented the hoodie for laborers in chilly Rochester, New York, thereby launching the \$1.5 billion Champion brand and creating a wardrobe staple.

- Raymond Houck

## Live long and prosper

Just out from MIT, it's The Longevity Issue at https://www.technologyreview.com/magazine/2019/09/

- Richard Titus

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

Alex Beiro, Jr., Peter Blackledge, Scott Compton, Brian Goldberg, Sherrill Hendricks, Virginia Hodgkinson, Raymond Houck, Ralph Johnson, Guin Jones, Dian McDonald, Rebecca McNeely, Joel Miller, Stacia Novy, Walter Peterson, Kim Santos, Richard Titus, Mark Woods

### out & about



## On the set at The Upside By Dian McDonald

Christine Winter, a new Montebello resident, offered some behind-the-scenes insight into the film, The Upside, before the film was shown in the Community Center on August 17. She revealed to the audience that her daughter, Alyssa Winter, was the set decorator for the film starring Kevin Hart, Bryan Cranston, and Nicole Kidman. Although New York City was the locale for the movie, Christine explained, all of the interior scenes were filmed in a facility outside Philadelphia.

Christine visited the Philadelphia set while the movie was being made in 2017. Arriving at the enormous warehouse, she was delighted to see the huge scrims painted with NYC street scenes hanging outside the windows of the mansion interior sets. She watched filming of one scene multiple times and was surprised to learn how many professionals were engaged with lighting, sound, set, makeup, computers, wardrobe, fans and temperature control. All were crammed into a small area with dozens of cables all tangled across the floor, but out of camera view. Christine

said that absolute silence was necessary, of course, making her sure she would need to sneeze.

Alyssa, a resident of New York, has been involved in various film projects over the years, including The Tempest, Morning Glory, Friends with Benefits, one of the Indiana Jones films with Harrison Ford, The Good Shepherd with Matt Damon, Quiz Show with Robert Redford, Dangerous Liaisons, and Interview with the Vampire. Alyssa's work in television includes Mr. Robot, The Big C with Laura Linney, and Person of Interest.

Christine and her husband, David Shapiro, moved to Montebello in July.



Back by popular demand, pianist Anna Nizhegorodtseva and violist David Pedraza performed music by Astor Piazzolla, José White, Adelmaro Romero, Consuelo Velasquez, José Pablo Moncayo, and Agustin Lara in the Community Center on August 25. Montebello Music Club sponsored the concert.

### down the line

### Board defers on tennis courts repairs

Note: The Board of Directors at their evening meeting on August 13 amended management's resolution to assess and determine the causes of the tennis courts surface failures to occur following the Community Center renovation, with contractors and costs yet to be determined. The following memo is supported by Walter Peterson, Ralph Johnson, Brian Goldberg and Alex Beiro, Jr.

August 13, 2019

Memorandum to: Board of Directors (BOD)

From: Montebello Tennis Club Subject: Tennis Courts Repair/Resurfacing

This is to inform you that the Tennis Club will no longer send a representative to the work group formed to investigate the problems of the tennis courts. It is clear that the work group has ignored the advice of the Tennis Club. This is consistent with the Tennis Club's advice being ignored in the past regarding the tennis court surfaces.

The Montebello Tennis Club on July 23, 2019 sent an email to the Montebello Board of Directors setting forth the reasons that the Tennis Club did not agree with the recommendations of the General Manager to the BOD to be voted on at the July 23, 2019 BOD meeting. The 'Tennis Court Conditions Assessment' was then removed from the Work Session Agenda. Mr. Walter Peterson, president of the Tennis Club, at the conclusion of the July 23 special meeting asked why this item was pulled from the agenda. He was told by Mr. Kandel that "it was not ready for prime time."

Following the special board meeting on July 23, the General Manager scheduled a meeting of the work group on August 1 to "consider the proposals now advanced by the tennis club." Prior to the meeting, an email was sent from Alex Beiro to the work group setting forth items to be discussed at August 1 meeting:

The work group was notified that the Tennis Club's objective in a meeting is to not repeat the egregious errors and blatant lack of oversight that occurred during prior court resurfacings. The best the Tennis Club can determine is that around \$350,000 has been spent for two surfacings, a past consultant, and likely attorney fees and has nothing to show for this money from owners.

This time we trust that management will investigate the proper alternatives and act in the best interests of stakeholders. As stated previously, the Tennis Club can play on the courts in its current condition but it's only a matter of time before the cracking, blistering, separation, bubbling of the surface makes tennis play insufferable. A patching or other temporary solution is not acceptable. We proposed that the work group discuss the following simple procedures at the August 1 meeting:

- 1. Facilities Management team contacts Tennis Court contractors who perform work in the DC area and document whom they contact. (One attempt at contacting them is insufficient). Tennis Courts, Inc. (804-769-3030) has indicated a willingness to inspect our courts at no cost. The American Sports Builders Association (https://sportsbuilders.org/) website includes names and contact information for tennis court builder in the area.
- 2. If Facilities Management team has difficulty identifying a significant number of Tennis Court contractors, then they should contact other local facilities in the area (Belle Haven/Mt. Vernon/Army Navy/Springfield/Westwood country clubs are a few in the area. Please document who and when you have contacted at the facilities.
- 3. For each contractor that's contacted, inquire and document whether

they would be willing to visit our courts and provide recommendations or a proposal for repair/replacement and whether they have any prior experience working on above-ground concrete slab courts.

- 4. Facilities Management compiles and provides a summary of their findings from contacting Tennis Court contractors to the Working Group **before** determining the next steps, which may include selecting one or more of the contractors to visit the courts and provide a proposal.
- 5. The above approach may save spending \$20,000 for four consultants that for reasons stated in our prior communication do not appear qualified."

Rather than consider the Tennis Club proposals listed above, the August 1st meeting turned out to be a premeditated character assassination of the Tennis Club representative Alex Beiro, apparently orchestrated by the General Manager and the BOD president. There was a total of 8 people at the meeting who collectively said Mr. Beiro was "unprofessional, inflammatory, vitriolic," and was told if you "don't come around" they will banish him as TC representative. The General Manager had the gall to call Mr. Beiro's pre-meeting email libelous! Clearly, their aim was to humiliate, attack, smear and make Mr. Beiro the bad guy.

The August 1 meeting failed to discuss the Tennis Club's reasonable proposals as an alternative to management's ill-conceived proposal to hire four consultants. For example, 1) The proposal includes hiring a tennis court consultant from New Jersey and paying thousands of dollars extra for their travel time and expenses when there are many tennis court companies

### down the line

closer. (2) The proposal includes hiring Bishops which is the company that performed the most recent work on the tennis courts that started to fail within two years and refuses to stand behind their original work.

The General Manager subsequently sent the exact same recommendations that were previously considered "not ready for prime time" for a vote at the August 13 BOD meeting! Furthermore, the General Manager's Memorandum to the BOD failed to disclose a material fact concerning the court resurfacings, namely management is conducting "a more extensive review of court topped games." A tennis court surface may not be suitable for another type of game. Also, any permanent change of a tennis court to an alternative use would require a 2/3s vote of unit owners according to the Montebello By-Laws.

### Recommendation

The Tennis Club recommends that the BOD defers a decision on hiring four consultants and first have Facilities Management perform the due diligence described above.

# Board discusses granting a parking waiver and an expanded building representative program

### By Mikhailina Karina

Twenty-five residents attended a 25-minute board work session on August 27. Director Doug Kennett participated via telephone and director Raymond Goodrich was absent.

After nearly four months of bureaucratic hassles, board and management came up with a simple and elegant solution to granting a family its third parking permit.

Lucas Colón, 22, a lifelong resident of Montebello, moved home after graduating from Virginia Tech. He works as a civil engineer and needs a car for his commute. Lucas's younger brother is a full-time student at George Mason University, who also lives at Montebello and needs a car for his commute. And their parents need a car because how else does one get around the area?

However, according to Montebello by-laws, a single unit can have no more than two outdoor parking spaces (this does not include purchased or rented garage spaces). Hence the problem with Lucas getting an outdoor parking space. Each day the gate gave him a daily permit to park on the property where he is a full-time resident.

At last night's meeting, board president Jon Kandel said the board would grant the family a waiver for a third vehicle on the property. Because some residents either don't own vehicles, have just one vehicle, or park in the garage, the Colón family needed to find someone willing to give Lucas their space.

Director Guido Zanni would be that gracious neighbor. He said he'd watched the Colón boys grow up and would be happy to allow Lucas use one of his outdoor spaces.

"We are grateful to Mr. Zanni for helping Lucas park his car at Montebello by kindly offering to temporarily use one of his parking spaces," said Lucas's mother, Antonella Chinellato.

Although Lucas's parking problem was solved, Kandel cautioned that "policy exemptions set precedent, which becomes harder to deny" when the next request for exemption comes up. Montebello's outdoor parking has physical limitations for 1,116 units. "In theory, we are out of space now if everyone wanted to use the asphalt space." While the board granted the Colón family a waiver, it may or may not revise parking space policy in anticipation of future requests, he said.

Bonnie Jacob, chair of the new Promoting Montebello Committee, presented plans for the expanded building representatives program (board packet page 12 at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TGTd6UqUGfkhglzwIm\_

CMo-OYBM08h-E/view) that creates "status, structure, and support" to provide the program with necessary "tools, information, and updates." It would operate like other board committees with Terms of Reference.

She said the program currently has four out of eight needed building reps. The program's goal is to give residents in each building the same resources and information.

Kandel said the building representative program would be a nice fit with the Promoting Montebello Committee to assist with new resident orientations and policies and procedures.

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

### money matters

## Necessary budget cuts to lessen Reserve Fund imbalance and avoid major increases to condo fees

## By Sherrill Hendricks long-time owner

In the August 15, 2019 edition of *The Montebello Voice*, Brian Goldberg comprehensively explained the impending financial crisis caused by the unanticipated draw down of the Reserve Fund below the wise policy-mandated minimum of \$4M. This will require a projected increase of our condo fees to 6.95% next year with a projection of at least 6% per year for the following 6 years.

To avoid the proposed excessive condo fees, which would likely cause many owners financial difficulty and detract buyers, there must be significant cuts to the budget. The most obvious cuts should come from the currently planned CC Renovation and "re-imagining" of Picnic Hill.

According to undated (circa Jan 2019) "The Imperative For Renovation of the CC (Part One of a series), Amenities Requested": "First, the plan for the renovation includes almost all of the upgraded and new amenities and specifications that were requested by you, the owners, and which were derived through meetings and surveys....Second, we foresee no need for an increase in condo fees beyond the usual few percent or for any special assessment."

According to undated (circa February 2019) "Final Words on Capital Improvements. Before You Cast Your Vote. The Vote Is Not The Final Word": "Details in the plan, including the Capital Improvement items, may be modified or even dropped during the upcoming design phase."

## 1. The proposed changes to Picnic Hill can be completely cut.

There is absolutely no need to spend any money now on the hill, with the exception of pruning the trees. The main desire expressed in surveys and/or in updated Montebello CC Master Plans for the hill is for better access, fire pit, gas grills, pavilion; but no staircase. When the capital improvements vote was put forth to the residents, it was an all or nothing vote much to the dismay and concern of many residents who had serious concerns regarding the picnic hill additions.

There is no discernible requirement or listing for the proposed grand staircase of any size. It first appears out of the blue in the December 2018 MB Times, then in the schematic for capital improvements in January 2019. During the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee for Capital Improvements, there was little interest in a staircase

Such a staircase would be completely out of place in the natural setting of the beautiful trees on the hill and all over the grounds which make Montebello so desirable. Most of the residents of buildings 3 and 4 would be aghast at the thought of a structure "defacing" the serenity of the front of the hill.

**The bottom line** is the current proposal is completely unnecessary and would be enjoyed by the few, comparatively speaking, to the thousands who live here.

## 2. Cuts can definitely be made to the CC Renovation Budget.

There are some unnecessary/"nice to have" plans which can be easily eliminated and still result in a beautiful, much improved, more user-friendly community center. I won't be presumptuous and list any specific items here. It should be decided with input from the Ad Hoc Committee for the Community Center Design. The board has the ultimate responsibility to reduce the potential costs of the community center renovations and not put our community at tremendous financial risk in our future operational and reserve budgets.

I realize and appreciate the untold numbers of resident owners, non-resident owners and board members who have selflessly spent innumerable hours over the span of several years in developing the CC Master Plan, then refining it and now shepherding it to finalization.

Unfortunately, we are facing unexpected and hard financial facts which have to be resolved. I don't think the board can in good conscience condemn potentially many owners to taking a significant financial bite out of monthly income for years to pay for unnecessary improvements to the CC and Picnic Hill. Likewise, it would be a travesty to levy a special assessment for the same reason.

### Other Important Considerations:

The unsustainable national debt which is the highest since the end of WWII. Sooner, rather than later, it is likely our country will face a significant upheaval, economically and/or socially. It could affect our individual/collective financial health, which in turn can affect the ability of some to pay condo fees. Owners of all ages could suffer whether it be young professionals, mid-careerists, those nearing or in retirement and even who have planned well for unanticipated or a long retirement. Many could lose their jobs. Taxes will go up, regardless of who is elected president next year.

To bolster my prediction, the following excerpts are taken from "Top 10 reasons Why the National Debt Matters," Pete Peterson Foundation (https://www.pgpf.org/) dated July 29, 2019. "At \$22 trillion and rising, the national debt threatens America's economic future."

Why the national debt matters:

- Growing federal debt reduces the amount of private capital for investments, which hurts economic growth and wages. A nation saddled with debt will have less to invest in its own future.
- Rising debt means lower incomes, fewer economic opportunities for Americans.
  - Less flexibility to respond to crises.

### money matters

On our current path, we are at greater risk of a fiscal crisis, and high amounts of debt leave policymakers with much less flexibility to deal with unexpected events. If we face another major recession like that of 2007-2009, it will

be more difficult to work our way out.

Montebello for years has had bad debt of approx \$35,000 due to non-payment of condo fees, some of which are written off as a loss. In light of the projected rise of condo fees, why further stress the potential ability for owners to pay condo fees due to a probable national upheaval? It doesn't matter that this may be a common situation with other condos.



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REEL to email us your QUESTIONS ahead of our event to ensure you get your ANSWERS!

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### vogue

### Women's Club luncheon & fashion show a huge success

### By Guin Jones, Women's Club President

From the manager and staff of Chico's in Old Town, the numerous emailed announcements, the neighbor-models (and special guest model Joyce Lipscomb), the many neighbor assistants (both upfront and backstage), Cafe's generous lunch, the photographers, the set-up of audiovisual equip-

ment and filming by office staff, the excellent housekeeping staff – it was quite magical.

Seventy-four residents and guests were in attendance at lunch and several others came to see the fashions.

To enthusiastic applause, neighbor as models demonstrated Chico's latest collection. I'm truly happy that it unfolded so beautifully. A ray of sunshine for all of us.

We live in a special place!

One model is considering a parttime position at Chico's! We never know what will develop when we step forward to participate.

Longevity affords us opportunities

to do things we've wanted to do earlier in life. I had wanted to be behind the scenes in theater – and now I've done so many times over by producing, directing, and stage managing programs at Montebello – special place, indeed.

### Photos by Dian McDonald







### stayin' alive

### Saturday Afternoon Fever kicks off a celebration of disco



### By Peter Blackledge

On Saturday afternoon, August 17, more than 20 of Montebello's former Dancin' Queens and Disco Dudes took a Rockin' Retro Ride on the Bodacious Building 1 Boogie Train to the 1970s Fabulous Funky Town. The event brought together Montebello neighbors ranging in age from the 50s to the 90s, showing the wonderful generational diversity of the Montebello community. And That's The Way (Uh Huh, Uh Huh) They Like It!

The auspicious occasion was Montebello's first-ever Saturday Afternoon Fever party hosted by myself, Building 1's Peter Blackledge (aka Tall Tex) and Laura Foy (Lady Tex), in celebration of the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the 1970s.

I set the 1970s "I Love The Night Life" mood with 200 of the greatest 70s/Disco hits of all time (streaming from my iPad through Bose BlueTooth speaker system) and bedecked the room with a variety of disco decor. Attendees wonderfully contributed by bringing their favorite dishes and libations.

It was great seeing so many old friends and making so many new ones,



and we were gloriously stunned by the luscious exotic dishes everyone brought to share. Such mutual support is one of the most precious gifts of our Montebello community.

Some of these dishes are seen in the foreground of the group above emulation of John Travolta's iconic pose from the classic Saturday Night Fever movie.

If you would like to "Make The

Scene" and maybe even "Shake Your Groove Thing" (or at least your tail feathers) at future Saturday Afternoon Fever events, e-mail me at LongTallTexan@icloud.com. The next disco party is tentatively scheduled for November 16 in the Community Center.

Photos by Kim Santos

### rowing honor

### U. S. Naval Academy special ceremony to name its newest crew racing shell in my honor

### By Peter Blackledge

On June 17, 1967, as a midshipman, USNA Class of 1969, I became a 2V8 Intercollegiate Rowing Association (IRA) National Champion. On Lake Onondaga in Syracuse, New York, in front of 15,000 crew fans, my USNA eight-man racing team dramatically and decisively won its IRA 2V8 Regatta of 14 top rowing colleges, beating nearest competitor Penn by a full two lengths, and having even more open water on Wisconsin, Cornell, Washington, Syracuse, California, Rutgers, Dartmouth, Princeton, UCLA, Brown,

Northeastern, and Stanford – thereby bringing the Kennedy Challenge Trophy back to USNA for the fifth time in history.

The Sports Illustrated photograph of that historic 1967 victory is below.

On October 25, USNA will hold a special ceremony at the landmark Hubbard Hall Boat House, on the USNA campus in Annapolis to christen and launch the PETER BLACKLEDGE, '69 Navy crew racing shell. This historic event will be presided over by a distinguished panel including the former assistant secretary of the Navy, former assistant secretary of Commerce, an

associate Appeals Court justice, a Marine Corps brigadier general, five Navy admirals, and the current mayor of Annapolis.

I have resided in building 1 since May 1983 and would like to invite all my Montebello neighbors to participate in the historic and joyful October 25 celebration. The event is free, but your response is necessary for planning purposes. Send your response directly to me (known around Montebello as Tall Tex) at LongTallTexan@icloud.com.



Spoils enroute to Crabtown lockers.



USNA Navy Crew Honor: On 17 June 1967, in front of 15,000 crew fans, the 1967 USNA 2V8 dramatically & decisively won its IRA Regatta of 14 top rowing colleges— beating nearest competitor Penn by a full two lengths, and having even more open water on Wisconsin, Cornell, Washington, Syracuse, California, Rutgers, Dartmouth, Princeton, UCLA, Brown, Northeastern, and Stanford—bringing the Kennedy Challenge Trophy back to USNA for the fifth time in history. (Intercollegiate Rowing Association and Syracuse Herald-American)



## pool side

### Photos by Dian McDonald











## pool side



Water aerobics photo by Scott Compton





photos by Dian McDonald

## pool side









photos by Dian McDonald

## poodles & polka dots

## '50s sock hop party

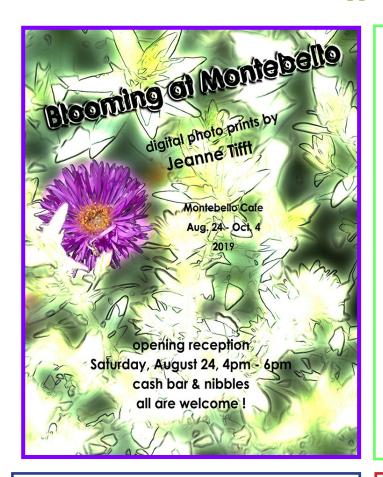






Photo by Kim Santos

### happenin'



## Montebello Classic Movie Night

Wednesday, September 18, 2019, at 7pm on the Big Screen in the Community Center



### Romance! Playfulness! Drama! Adventure!

Let Victor Herbert's exquisite music, sung by the incomparible Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, sweep you to smiling new heights.

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FREE popcorn, candies, and soft drinks for a great

classic movie night! Your host, Pamela Copley, will give you a pre-show briefing on the stars and the production, and then give you all the post-screening "back story" highlights. Pamela can be contacted at PvonGruber@acl.com.



FREE popcorn, candies, and soft drinks for a great

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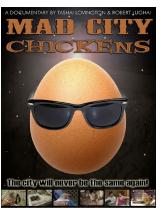


Invite you to our films & discussion



### FOWL FILM FESTIVAL

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



For a lighter double-feature, join us for two chicken documentaries, The **Jewish Chicken Farmers of Petaluma: Why Remember?** and Mad City Chickens. Find out which one came

Marsha Weiner and Joel Miller will introduce the films and lead the post-movie discussion.

### final glance



Everyone attending the Bob Brown Puppet Show on Feb. 7 was delighted, including Rita Spring (above) and her three granddaughters (I-r) Jessica, Nicole and Morgan.

Photos by Joan Sait and Shirley Trilling

The Times of Montebello, March 1998



Rita Spring with Jessica, Nicole, and Morgan at the pool this summer. The three granddaughters are now mothers to young children.

Photo by Dian McDonald