

# The MONTEBELLO Voice

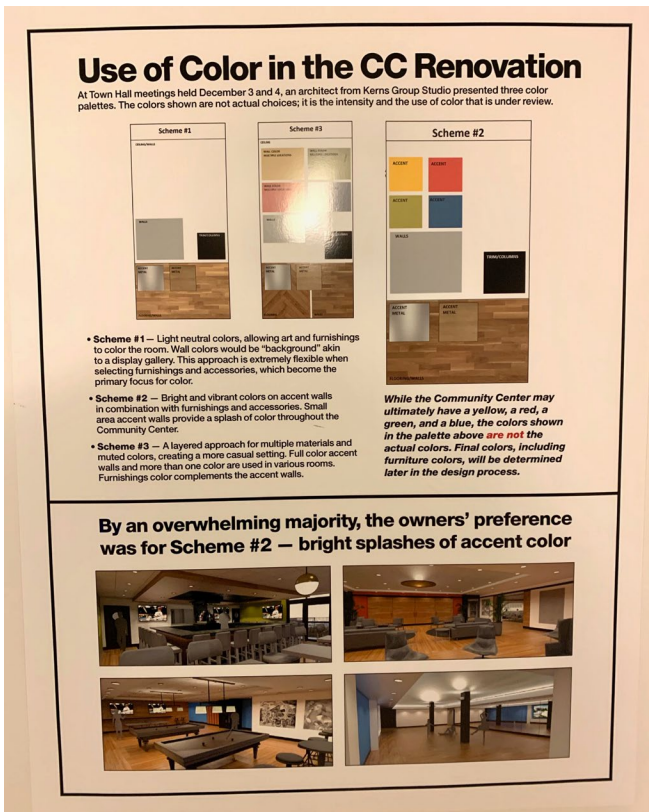
an independent gazette

happy new year

December 20, 2019

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## Fact check

Each building's elevator lobby has a poster that announces the preference for the most liked color scheme for the new Community Center. "By an overwhelming majority," it states, "the owners' preference was for Scheme #2 - bright splashes of accent color."

What does "an overwhelming majority" mean? Let's say about 2,000 people live at Montebello, so an overwhelming majority would be well over 1,000 people. In fact, the overwhelming majority alluded to in this poster is 63 individuals who cast their décor preference ballots during two interactive town halls two weeks ago - 26 people during the December 3 afternoon session and 37 people at the evening presentation the following day. A total of 87 people attended both sessions, but only the owners were permitted to choose from among three color schemes.

So technically, yes, an overwhelming majority out of 87 attendees - not the entire Montebello population - preferred the second scheme. The poster's statement is misleading as it omits this important fact. - *Mikhailina Karina* 📧

## Computer repair resources

From the requests we have received from our Internet 101 consultations, it is apparent that there are a lot of people here in Montebello who have no idea where to turn for quality computer repair. I am, therefore, recommending any of the below companies that are check rated for both quality and price by Consumers Checkbook ([checkbook.org](http://checkbook.org)).

If you are using an Apple product call them first as they may be able to guide you through the process to find a fix at no cost. The companies listed below will charge a fee.

Some of these companies offer remote dial in repair service in which the technician connects to your computer and makes repairs remotely. I can attest to the value provided by one of them over several years. You can contact me at [jrpowers@us.net](mailto:jrpowers@us.net) for more information. - *John Powers* 📧

A Mike Rios Computer Care  
 930 N Arlington Mill Dr  
 Arlington, VA 22205  
 703-536-9190  
<http://rios.org/index.html>

Manassas Computer Service  
 8126 Sudley Rd  
 Manassas, VA 20109  
 703-367-8709  
<https://www.manassascomputerrepair.com/>

CTSS  
 8309 Richmond Hwy  
 Alexandria, VA 22309  
 703-360-5552  
<https://ctssinc.com/>

Platinum Micro Electronics  
 7237 Nathan Ct  
 Manassas, VA 20109  
 703-368-4584  
<http://www.pmesystem.com/>

Landmark Computer Laboratories  
 101 S Whiting St #320  
 Alexandria, VA 22304  
 703-370-2242  
<http://www.landmarkcomputer.com/>

Cover photo by *Azita Mashayekhi*

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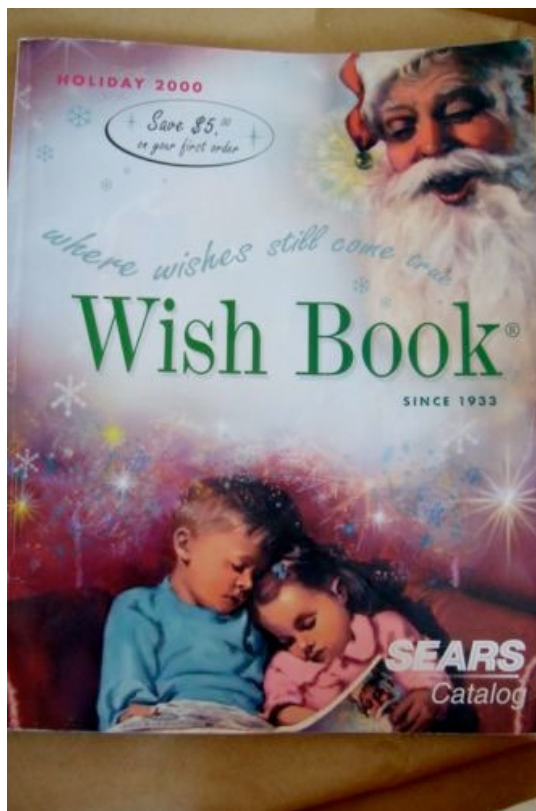
# The big Christmas Wish Book from Sears

By Raymond Houck

Long before there was a Cyber Monday and an Amazon.com, there was the holiday edition of the Sears Wish Book. This special Sears catalog had a hand in shaping America's Christmas traditions, and its influence endures in surprising ways.

Sears' early general catalogs took hold in places with few shops and stores. Filled with merchandise for rural families, the catalog became a staple in American homes. The company's products weren't fashion-forward but their presentation was influential. Catalog designs reflected popular looks and put city style within reach.

Turn of the 20th century catalogs sold Christmas items such as ornaments, cards, wax candles for trees. As technology advanced, it offered artificial trees and electric tree lights. Shoppers began to think of the catalog as a source for gift giving, and the first just-for-Christmas catalog came out in 1933.



Richard Sears was competing with other established catalogs like those from Montgomery Ward and John Wanamaker. Mr. Sears knew that customers held onto their catalogs and he decided to make his book a little bit smaller so it would stack neatly on top

of the competition. Lauren Bacall, Susan Hayward and Gloria Swanson all modeled for Sears. Roy Rogers, Ted Williams and Gene Autry also popped up on its pages.

The tradition of the North American Aerospace Defense Command's (NORAD) Santa Tracker actually began with a Sears advertisement that published Santa's phone number. Who could have predicted that an excited child who saw that ad would misdial and instead end up on the phone with an officer on duty at the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD, a predecessor of NORAD)? The kind officer played along and reported the progress of Santa's sleigh – and that began what is now an enduring Christmas Eve practice.

Whenever a busy mom needed some quiet time, she would give her children each a different colored crayon and tell them to mark what they wanted Santa to bring them. The catalog grew to include hundreds of pages of necessities and luxuries of life – and plenty for little boys and girls to dream of in the big Sears Christmas Wish Book. 📖



*The Montebello Music Club performs classics at the holiday party.*

*Photo by Dian McDonald*

## Technology Club reboots with an information workshop

By Cheryl Jobe

At our first meeting, we talked about mobile phones as the modern computer of today, mainly because of all the apps a mobile device will run, and because we always have it with us. We discussed the two types of mobile phones, Apple iPhones and Android phones, and how to download applications, commonly called apps (once just called programs). Using an iPhone device, we opened up the iPhone Maps app. We then described the App Store to find/pull down apps. We opened the App Store with the App Store app and looked through some of the apps. We looked specifically at the Libby app, which allows one to borrow e-books from libraries. We looked at the Kindle app, which will display e-books. We looked briefly at the Arlington National Cemetery app.

We talked about podcasts and opened up the podcast app to look at the many offerings. We looked at health apps and talked about the growing use of mobile health apps in the health care field.

We talked about mobile phone plans, and discounts they may offer to the 55+ customer. We talked about using WiFi service when it is available, as in the Montebello Community Center (but not in the party rooms). We discussed the Bluetooth wireless pairing technology to pair your phone with your car or with a speaker.

Lastly, we discussed voice assistants, a capability that can interpret human speech and respond with answers to questions via synthesized voices. We demonstrated Apple iPhone's Siri voice assistant. We mentioned that other assistants are Amazon's Alexa and Google's Okay Google.

Suggestions for future meetings:

- Similar demonstration for Android phones and the Google Play Store with practice time for everyone while sitting with our phones and simultaneously downloading the app and exploring its uses.
- Bluetooth, especially car connections
- BuildingLink app
- Messenger app(s)
- Waze/GPS apps & usage in car
- How to transfer apps/info from an old phone to a new one
- Uses for old phones
- Compare tablets and pads
- Podcasts
- Instagram: the good and the bad

For information about the club, please contact Paul Foldes and Cheryl Jobe at [mbtechclub1@gmail.com](mailto:mbtechclub1@gmail.com). 📧

## Environmental Club promotes a greener Montebello

By Amy Garcia

The Montebello Environment Club had a very successful year in 2019. Club members rolled up their sleeves to help move the needle toward an environmentally sustainable Montebello. This year, club activities covered three priority areas: reusable flatware, recycling, and outreach.

Club member Karen Barnes undertook the Herculean task of heading up the reusable flatware program where members coordinate and provide silverware to monthly events and special activities. Montebello's efforts to reduce the use of plastic flatware resulted in approximately 1,500 uses of plastic ware not going to Lorton's waste facility.

Club members Don Barnes and Don Hinman worked with management to explore how our recycling provider processes our recycling waste. They visited our contractor, Republic, to see for themselves how things are sorted. One of the outcomes of the visit was

to bring back the message of "Empty, Clean, Dry" that encourages residents to not contaminate the recycling waste and keep it marketable instead of being hauled to the landfill.

In 2019, Fairfax County responded to the glass recycling problem by offering Purple Bins to communities across the county where they can dispose of their empty, clean, dry glass items. Several Environment Club members have started to talk about how the club can help residents get their glass to the bins. Keeping glass out of B3 blue bins would indicate measurable progress toward the quality of our recycle waste headed into the supply chain.

Club members explored with management recycling compostable waste, which in turn would reduce the amount of garbage we generate. Management declined to consider the proposal, but not to say that the issue can't be brought up in the future; third-party composting service providers is a relatively new market in our area. Hats off to Carole

Appel for encouraging this approach to a more sustainable environment for Montebello.

Paul Zeisset kept us enjoying outside activities by encouraging club members to join in on Grounds Committee activities – Weed Wrangles, Bird Counts, and Toil in the Soil circle planters events.

Club members regularly contributed articles for publication in *The Times of Montebello*. A prolific writer, Sue Allen provided substantive background on water usage at Montebello. New members found their way to club meetings to hear more about how they can be involved in helping Montebello improve recycling efforts.

I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the support of awesome club members, but as "the regulars" know I am unable to continue as club chairperson. The club has an urgent need for new leadership. If you are interested, please reach out to Brittany Harrell in the front office. 📧

## Let's get together and feel all right

By Sarah Newcomb

We all know that the most successful and satisfied among us are supported by strong social relationships. We have friends.

But it is hard to make and keep adult friends in our area because of the transitory nature of people living here. New language about “friending” online doesn’t often create real platonic relationships that support daily living.

*The Washington Post* recently reported a [2018 Kaiser Family Foundation survey](#) showing that 2 in 10 Americans reported they often or always feel lonely. Surprisingly, adults under 50 were more likely to report feeling lonely than those 50 and older.

Now here’s a new wrinkle. You can pay someone to find friends for you.

Romantic matchmakers, online apps and co-living spaces are selling a stronger social life. But bring your charge card. A Washington matchmaker can

charge \$720 and more to fix you up with a potential platonic friend, the Post says.

Building a lasting friendship isn’t just about seeming compatible. It requires shared experiences and being there for each other. *The Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* indicates that it takes 50 to 60 hours together, many shared activities, and everyday talks to convert an acquaintance to a friend.

Here are a few online suggestions *The Washington Post* found (keep in mind that I am *not* endorsing them—you’re on your own!):

Dating apps Bumble, Chappy and the League have added “friend” modes.

[WeLive](#) and [Roam](#), combine co-working and co-living to offer 24/7 togetherness.

[Meet My Dog](#) is designed for canine lovers.

[Hey! VINA](#) and [Monarq](#) are for women seeking BFFs.

[Peanut](#) (<https://www.peanut-app.io/>) connects mothers by each other’s

profiles. Since its launch about one year ago, Peanut has built a user base of 300,000 moms.

If you are really desperate for companionship, you can use [RentAFriend](#) and hire someone to join you for a movie or a game. If you visit LA, try [People Walker](#) and its network of hundreds of walkers. A 30 -minute walk will cost you about \$21, according to the Post. Clients the Post described include teleworkers who need to get out of the house, unemployed actors who need distractions, and people who need a man to accompany them from their car late at night.

Luckily for Montebello residents, friends can be found in our myriad of clubs, on the dog walk, hiking our trails or sweating it out to the oldies in our exercise classes or learning the Samba. If you want company for a movie, it is as easy for us as ringing a neighbor’s doorbell. And your neighbor won’t charge you a dime. 🍷

## Stretch class helps with New Year’s resolutions

Have you resolved to get fit in 2020? Maybe lose a few pounds? Our free Stretch Class in Montebello’s Community Center can help. And it’s setting records.

Join the more than 25 people who jam into the exercise room (and into the hallway) to sweat to the oldies in our new Wednesday Stretch class led by Diane Fitzgerald of Building 2. Up to nine of our participants are men. It is a great opportunity to get healthy and meet your neighbors.

And speaking of exercise records, our long-time Stretch class leader, exercise guru Jean Smith of Building 2, recently celebrated her 89th birthday! With leaders like Jean, what excuse can you use?

Free classes are held Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week from 9 to 10 a.m. Come early to get a good spot and keep that New Years’ Resolution! – Sarah Newcomb



## celebration of life



*Tillie Cassidy (top) welcomed the community to her annual Celebration of Life party with live music and dancing. Photos by Dian McDonald*

## final glance



*Photo by Azita Mashayekhi*