

The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent gazette

46 days

September 18, 2020



A semblance of normalcy

Montebello 2020 changin' with the times

By Tillie Cassidy

As God is my judge, I want all to know I was pretty annoyed when I received notice that the planned activities on March 17 for St Patrick's Day were being curtailed. Distancing tables, no Music Club entertainment, and no "wearing of the green" contest. What a bummer! As Activities Committee chair I felt obligated to do something. So a friend and I got up and asked the people at dinner to do a sing-a-long if they wished with just a few Irish tunes for some levity and fun.

Later as things got a bit more involved I congratulated the board for being forward thinkers and putting things in place to be sure we followed the guidelines of Fairfax County and the state of Virginia pursuant to the governor's directions. Phase 1, then phase 2, and now Fairfax County and the state of Virginia set July 1 as phase 3. It is now September. So please correct me if I am wrong: is Montebello Condominium part of Fairfax County?

We are citizens of USA, Commonwealth of Virginia, and Fairfax County. None of our condominium rules and regulations say we can't live by the newly mandated phase 3 rules. If we all read those rules and abide by them, we will be safe and healthy and happy.

I have witnessed some of my neighbors afraid to say "good morning" or look at me walking outside in the woodlands as if a 30- or 40-second moment will cause the virus. The elevator with masks is creating another fearful moment even though it is such a short ride to our floors. Two or three people should be perfectly fine with masks. One gentleman said, "Oh no, I might give you something" or "Oh no, I might have something!"

Really? Two people with masks riding the elevator – less than a minute? I feel sorry for those people who are healthy but so afraid and upset they

are threatening to take pictures of their neighbors! Chastising your neighbors sitting outside talking with friends at a distance with their masks down. What is next?

This is not an assisted-living facility and therefore we should not treat our neighbors as such. If someone is afraid, ill or has issues, then stay home. But it is not correct for the other healthy neighbors who abide by the mask and social distancing rules to be curtailed in their enjoyment of life here at Montebello. One renter here is asking if she made a mistake moving here.

It is time to come back to life with adjustments. We can have socially distant tables inside and on the deck, masks coming in and going out. Café will wipe down tables between customers. While seated with beverage and food, have masks on table and use them if someone comes to say hello. We have to learn how to live with this because it is just another trial of nature that our country has lived through before and will live through again. We are adults and as such can take charge of our lives and respect our neighbors' wishes. Get back to a positive way of living and thinking. Care for our neighbors who need help and allow our neighbors who choose a different way of looking at things the right to do so without chastising and making negative remarks. There is a storm cloud over Montebello – where is the breath of reason to blow away that cloud and let sunshine, smiles, friendships, and fun back here again?

Let the children with their parents or caretakers play on slide and swings without fear of someone coming over and yelling at them.

Again thank you for reading and listening – I am not sure who is writing the emails under our door, but the last one said "no groups" and I wondered what constitutes a group. 📧

Petition for River Farm

Below is a link to a petition on Delegate Scott Surovell's website to keep River Farm open to the public. Apparently it just went up for sale.

If you know others who would be interested in this, please forward.

<https://scottsurovell.org/petition-to-save-river-farm/?fbclid=IwAR0rj-ny6EkxlvfPv1B-2Br8pkiFxoIgj1JONXdpBRBKancEz6sWU2zc1x7A> – Submitted by Miriam Rosenthal 📧

Deer in the woodlands

Cover photo by Jenifer Ehrlich

The MONTEBELLO **Voice**

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Alexandria, Virginia

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Mink coat for sale

By Lisa J. Stedje

I inherited this stunning mink coat from my beloved and meticulous grandmother, who passed away, very young, of breast cancer. Unfortunately, her gorgeous coat no longer fits me. I don't condone the killing of animals simply for their fur. However, this lush mink coat exists, and it deserves a new person to appreciate its grandeur and history. I hope someone will buy it from me and either wear it in its original glamorous style, or have it modernized. I know some people have had their fur coats restyled and covered in such a way as to not look like a full fur coat, yet preserve the fur's warmth.

This mink coat is of mid-to-long-length, has a huge stand-up collar, and is in beautiful condition (except for one rip, my fault) along the seam of its rear-left shoulder).

I am asking \$6,000, but will be happy to entertain any reasonable offers. If you're interested, please call me at 703-868-1466, and leave a voicemail. I will return your call. 📞



Montebello Pet Club to host a fashion show

"...on the catwalk yeah I shake my little toosh on the catwalk"

The Activities Committee has invited the Pet Club to put on a Pet Fashion Show. This could be a high-flying hoot during the social-distancing time at the 'Bello. So let's get our wings flapping, paws tapping, and show our pets' high fashion!

Please add your name in this link [Montebello Pet Fashion Show Sign-Up](#) by Friday, September 19, to indicate



your willingness to participate and then please spread the word to our other pet families. I will send future coordination emails to participants thereafter. Feel free to send me any inquiries. Lauren Pierce, coordinator, MontebelloPet-Club@gmail.com 📞

*The Montebello
Voice
uncut, uncensored,
unofficial*

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NOVA welcomes lifelong learners! Earn a degree or learn something new.

IN THIS SECTION

If you are a legal resident of Virginia for one year, age 60 or older, you are encouraged to take advantage of free tuition provided by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Senior Citizens Higher Education Act of 1974. For more information from SCHEV about the senior citizen tuition waiver, please click [here](#).

Submitted by Guin Jones

Captain Kangaroo always says, "Schwinn bikes are the best"

By Raymond Houck

As a young boy, when summer break arrived, just like many other 20th-century children, I discovered a sense of freedom riding my shiny red Schwinn bike. I made millions of memories riding along leafy hometown streets to the corner store, to a friend's house, a ballpark, or just simply around the block on my Schwinn. The Schwinn name alone conjures up a cascade of adventures of cycling home from school, or on summer days or evenings, enjoying the range and speed of travel which this bicycle gave to this rider. For me, the name Schwinn is synonymous with those recollections.

Schwinn was the premier American bicycle manufacturer for decades, its bikes famous for their craftsmanship and lasting quality. This American company was founded and headed by a German immigrant who brought his German know-how and engineering excellence to the development and manufacture of these bicycles

Ignaz Schwinn was born in Baden, Germany in 1860. He became a mechanical engineer for penny-farthing bicycles (an early type of bicycle without gears that had an enormous front

wheel). Ignaz immigrated to the U.S. in 1891, and founded the Arnold, Schwinn & Company in Chicago together with German investor Frederick William Arnold. The establishment of Schwinn's company coincided with the bicycle boom in America. The production of bicycles grew to 1 million units a year in 1900 but soon the market be-

came saturated. In this climate of furious competition, bike manufacturers scrambled to survive. Arnold lost interest in the company and sold his share, leaving Schwinn to direct the company on his own. Ignaz, ever determined, bought up several smaller bicycle makers and built a modern production plant – and where there had once been over 300 American manufacturers, now there were fewer than a dozen, with Schwinn leading the way. Then came the Schwinn B-10E Motorbike, later called the Streamline Aerocycle. This was a kids' bike designed to look like a motorcycle with a faux fuel tank, balloon tires, fenders, headlight, reflectors, and a pushbutton bell. This successful model would later be referred to as a cruiser or paperboy bike. The Aerocycle helped Schwinn withstand and later recover from the Depression.



for more bicycles for transportation. While boosting production of bicycles to meet this demand, Schwinn also devoted additional factory operations to the defense effort. When the war ended, he received an "E" Ward for excellence in stepping up production of materials and products that included top-secret electrical devices, shells, ammunition,

came saturated. In this climate of furious competition, bike manufacturers scrambled to survive. Arnold lost interest in the company and sold his share, leaving Schwinn to direct the company on his own. Ignaz, ever determined, bought up several smaller bicycle makers and built a modern production plant – and where there had once been over 300 American manufacturers, now there were fewer than a dozen, with Schwinn leading the way. Then came the Schwinn B-10E Motorbike, later called the Streamline Aerocycle. This was a kids' bike designed to look like a motorcycle with a faux fuel tank, balloon tires, fenders, headlight, reflectors, and a pushbutton bell. This successful model would later be referred to as a cruiser or paperboy bike. The Aerocycle helped Schwinn withstand and later recover from the Depression.

In 1941, with America soon to enter the war, Schwinn sold 1.8 million bicycles. At the beginning of WWII Americans became fearful of the increased rationing of tires and fuel for their automobiles, and in response they called

plane parts, and numerous other items.

Over the next decades, Schwinn hired a slew of movie star spokespeople like Joan Crawford, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Humphrey Bogart, Roy Rogers, Captain Kangaroo, and others. He introduced a lineup of new models that included Cruisers (simple and comfortable bikes for casual riding in town or at the beach), Hybrids (for casual fitness riding, on or off road), Bike Path (casual all-purpose bikes), Mountain (all-terrain bikes), Urban (for casual riding or commuting), Kids (bikes for all ages of children).

Today the economy line of Schwinn bikes is sold through retail chain stores, while the company sells its high-end line on its website and in specialty stores. I proudly won my first Schwinn in the early '60s coming in first with the best decorated bike in our community day parade. Schwinn veterans will be happy to know that the Schwinn brand name still carries very favorable ratings for quality.

Schwinn rides on! 



Commodore Perry's flag

By Joe de Angelis

D on 14 July 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry, with his American flag flying high, sailed into Tokyo Bay in command of a U.S. Naval Squadron sent to secure a treaty with Japan. Commodore Perry took the flag with him and raised it on Japanese soil outside of Yokohama during the conduct of the treaty negotiations. His success led to formal diplomatic ties with Japan, access to Japanese ports by American ships, aid for shipwrecked American sailors, commercial trade, and most importantly, the opening of Japan to Western nations. Shortly after his return to America, Commodore Perry presented the 31-starred American flag from his expedition to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, where it was put on display. The flag is still there today, a treasured piece of Naval history.

On 15 August 1945, some 92 years later, Japanese Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Imperial Japan, thus bringing hostilities between Japan and America to a close. However, the formal surrender of Japan occurred on 2 September 1945, thus ending WWII. The surrender ceremony, orchestrated by General Douglas MacArthur, was to be held on the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. General MacArthur insisted, among other things, that the flag flown by Commodore Perry in 1853 in Tokyo Harbor be present for the upcoming surrender ceremony. MacArthur felt that it would be a fitting artifact to display aboard the USS Missouri, especially considering that Commodore Perry was a distant relative of his.

Whereupon Fleet Admiral William Frederick Halsey, Jr. ordered that the flag, which was at the U.S. Naval Academy, be brought to Japan in time for the surrender ceremony. Consequently, the flag was rushed from the Naval Acad-

emy to Washington, D.C. and on 23 August 1945 it was given to Lt. John K. Bremyer of the Navy's courier system with instructions to "proceed immediately" and deliver it to Fleet Admiral Halsey aboard the battleship USS Missouri, which was somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, in time for the surrender ceremony. Lt. Bremyer left Washington National Airport, with the flag, at 7 p.m. that same evening. His flight stopped in Columbus, Ohio, Olathe, Kansas, Winslow, Arizona, and reached San Francisco, California the next afternoon, 24 August. From there it was on to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Johnston Island, Kwajalein Atoll, Guam, and Iwo Jima. At Iwo Jima he hitched a ride on an Army-Navy search and rescue seaplane. The next day, 29 August, the seaplane took off and landed late in the afternoon in Sagami Bay where the USS Missouri was anchored. A boat was sent to get Bremyer and he was then ferried to the battleship where he handed the flag over to Admiral Halsey's aide. Lt. Bremyer had carried Commodore Perry's flag 9,500 miles, across 12 time zones, from Washington, D.C. to Tokyo in just six days. The flag arrived in time for the signing ceremony.

The next day, the USS Missouri steamed into Tokyo Bay and anchored where Commodore Perry had in 1853. The flag was back in Tokyo Harbor, this time it was with Commodore Perry's distant cousin, General Douglas MacArthur. Initially, the plan was to fly the flag from a mast, but when the courier bag was opened and the flag retrieved from its wooden box, they discovered an old and worn flag that had a linen backing sewed to it for support. Because the flag was old, tattered and mildewed, the museum conservators added the backing to prevent the flag from breaking apart any further. There



was also a note with the flag from the Naval Academy's museum curator stating that the flag was too delicate to be flown under any circumstances. Consequently, it was put in wood frame protected with a glass cover and mounted prominently on the bulkhead of the veranda deck where the ceremonial signing was to occur and where it would be visible to all. However, due to the linen backing sewed onto the flag, it was mounted with the blue field of stars to the right rather than to the left.

On the morning of 2 September 1945, MacArthur strode to a microphone and commenced his speech with the following words:

"We are gathered here, representatives of the major warring powers, to conclude a solemn agreement whereby peace may be restored."

In his remarks General MacArthur also addressed the connection between Commodore Perry's visit in 1853 and America's victorious return to Tokyo Bay in 1945.

"We stand in Tokyo today, reminiscent of our countryman, Commodore Perry, 92 years ago. His purpose was to bring to Japan an era of enlightenment and progress by lifting the veil of isolation to the friendship, trade, and commerce of the world. But alas, the knowledge thereby gained of Western science was forged into an instrument of oppression and human enslavement." 📖

The boy in the boat

By Bob Shea

Daniel James Brown's 2013 best seller, *The Boys In The Boat*, told the true story of nine Depression-era athletes from the University of Washington who beat the odds and their inner demons to win the gold medal in crew at Hitler's 1936 Olympics. The book told the story of a unique sport that was all but unknown in the 1930s except at a few universities on the East and West coasts, and at a few select eastern prep schools. Today, the sport is more well known with even some high schools in our area fielding crew squads.

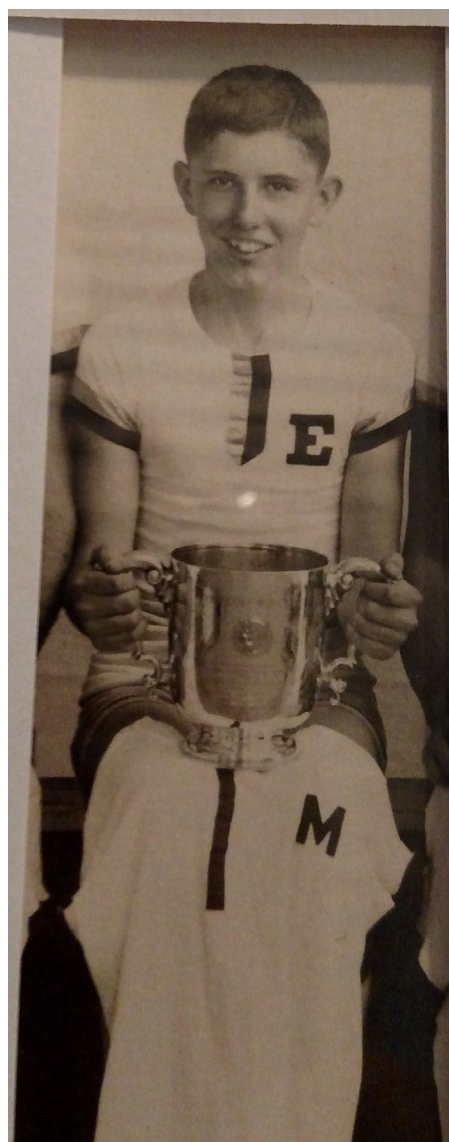
All students at Phillips Exeter Academy were required to participate in organized athletics four afternoons a week throughout the school year. In the early 1950s, there were 21 different sports depending on the season of the year at every level from intramural to varsity – from the traditional football, basketball, and baseball to the less familiar squash, lacrosse, or crew.

At 5'2" and weighing about 110 pounds as a freshman, I was not football material, and some fall sports such as golf and tennis required personally-owned equipment. My choices were limited. On a whim, I signed up to try my hand as a coxswain at the Academy boathouse on the Squamscott River.

Unlike universities, we used 4-oared shells, four tall oarsmen, and a small guy in the back of the boat. A four-oared boat, called a shell, is about 42 feet long, weighs about 320 pounds, and is 23 inches wide. Before the days of exotic materials such as carbon fibers, the shell was made out of 3/8 inch thick cedar molded on a frame of maple. All our boats were the Lexus of shells, made by George Pocock of Seattle who had a key role in Dan Brown's book. The oarsman's feet were laced into fixed wooden pads while he sat on a seat mounted on rollers. In his hands he held one end of a 13-foot oar

which weighed about 15 pounds. The oar's fulcrum was an outrigger bolted to the side of the shell, two on each side of the shell. The coxswain or "cox" sat in the rear of the crew portion, facing forward, steering the boat with ropes attached to a rear-mounted rudder. The only equipment I needed were a head-mounted megaphone and a stopwatch taped to my leg, both provided by the school.

I soon learned that the cox played a



unique role. While the coach observed and coached in practice from a motor-driven launch, the cox was the up-close-and-personal coach, motivator, and strategist. By my second year I was

the cox of the first boat of three varsity shells. In the fall we rowed to develop skills and test boat combinations with all inter-school competitions held in the spring. The Squamscott River was tidal; so our time on the water was based on the tides, unlike other sports that met four afternoons a week. Some days we rowed at first light, and other days we were limited to conditioning runs along a country road. We could not row in the very late afternoon as the Academy had classes four days a week from 4:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Our coach, Charles Swift, a math teacher, stated that "a pound of coxswain cost us a foot at the finish line of a race." Thus, he monitored the cox's weight weekly. In his book, Brown states that "from the moment the shell is launched, the coxswain is the captain of the boat." We had to know the physical and psychological make-up of each oarsman and which oarsman's buttons to push to get the extra effort from each when the race was close. Crew is unique in that the best four oarsmen did not automatically make the first boat. The coach would try different combinations until he found the best set of four who rowed as one.

On race day, we would discuss strategy based on what we know about the other schools, the weather, the course width, racing lanes, and the river we raced on. Unlike the Olympics, which has a straight course, we, with one exception, always raced on rivers with bends, currents, and wind. The rivers did not have lane markers. Some races were between 3 schools, and others were dual meets with distances ranging from 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile. Once the starting gun fired, the coach was just an observer. The cox is the only one in the boat looking forward, aware of where the competition was, judging wind and current, setting how fast we rowed (thus the stopwatch taped to my leg), and exhorting the oarsmen. We had an "eyes in the boat" policy. The oarsman's focus

boater



was to make us go as fast as possible. It was my job to be aware of everything else. In a close race, the oarsmen, unless we were boat lengths ahead, rarely knew who had won the race.

A four-oared shell probably weighed about 1,300 pounds; 4 oarsmen with oars, the shell, and the little guy in the back. Our best half-mile time was in our final race of the year against our arch rival, Middlesex School. We won the Columbia Cup in a time of 2 minutes and 38 seconds. That is almost 11 miles an hour from a motionless start on a river with 3 curves and a current against us. During the race we would normally row at about 36 strokes per minute, although I had pushed a crew

to almost 44 strokes a minute in a close finish. To do that, the four oarsmen have to act as one incredibly complicated human machine.

Consider the choreography of an oarsman: seat all the way forward, bend at the waist, arms straight, head up, oar tip into the water at 90 degrees to the surface, straighten the legs rolling the seat backward, pull the hands to the chest as one leans backward, roll the wrists to take the oar cleanly out of the water and feather the blade tip, seat rolls forward, repeat that again at least 36 times a minute in sync with 3 other oarsmen while maintaining balance in a 23-inch wide shell. At the same time a guy in the back of the boat is screaming that you are not working hard enough. One mistake could actually catapult an oarsman out of the boat when an oar went too deep. It was called “catching a crab.”

At the U.S. Scholastic Regatta during my sophomore year, I managed to gain enough weight eating at the hotel’s training table to incur the coach’s wrath at my next on-campus weigh in. I spent a week barely eating, running,

and wearing a plastic sweat suit while exercising in a room where the steam pipes entered a dormitory. I made my weight, raced my last race as a coxswain, and hung up my megaphone and stopwatch. The following spring and fall I played intramural soccer and lacrosse. Normal growth had ended my career as a cox.

My stroke, the oarsman who is face-to-face with the cox and who gets yelled at as he sets the stroke count that is called, was Bob Morey, who later rowed the number 6 position on the Yale University crew that won the Olympic gold medal at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. He endured me screaming in his face for a year and later made us proud.

In crew, tradition says that the winning crew gets the shirts of the losers, and that the oarsmen throw the cox into the body of water where they raced once the shell is secured. I collected many other cox’s shirts, and usually was swimming after a race. It was a glorious time for a young man who fortunately was the right size at that time to be the lucky boy in Exeter’s first boat. 🍷

Taste of Montebello on YouTube



Pesto (salmon and orzo) with Kearsley Rand

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5vqeUQqh9k&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR095zAWLL9K14dKHi-WEePNBakEGvsi76EB6wgDt-8pNl2rJIh9wWT10rfQc>

Lemon Rosemary “Naked” cake with Kearsley Rand

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbwP2pjn5Yc&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3R3xokPdc2QbmuHowlctLEJ_OLMCbTNypAhtAohyK6MzEdqnrjwg23TuU

September 11, 2001

By Carol Comlish

On that fateful day sixteen years ago, I was sitting at my desk at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, when my son Matthew called. Matt was listening to the car radio on the way to Dulles Airport. His voice shaking, he told me that a plane had hit the World Trade Center in New York but nothing else was known. Matt is a commercial airline pilot and he thought the plane must have been a Cessna because there was no way a commercial airplane could accidentally hit the towers. The route from both airports doesn't go near the city. In those first few moments he, like everyone else who heard the news, waited anxiously to hear more.

Matt was on his way to Dulles to pick up his brother Greg who was flying home from San Francisco, changing the planes in Pittsburgh, to celebrate his birthday with our family. Greg's birthday is on September 11. When Matt arrived at the airport he joined a crowd watching CNN news on the terminal TV. Minutes later, screams pierced the silence as they learned that a second plane had hit the towers. The crowd, desperate to learn which airline had crashed, began accosting the gate agents with their cries for more information. Pandemonium! All flights in the air were then ordered to land and stay put.

Trying to remain calm as he waited for Greg's flight, the steady stream of news was suddenly interrupted by still another horrifying revelation. American Airlines flight 77 had crashed

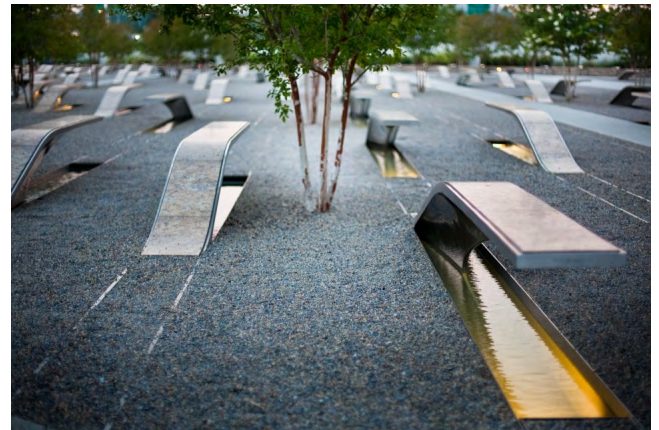
into the Pentagon! Shocked, Matt realized that he had previously reserved the jump seat (for pilots) on that same flight for September 11, but canceled it when he learned that Greg was coming home. Whew!

Then, CNN announced that a plane scheduled to land at Dulles had not yet landed and may have been hijacked.

and his brother had spent traveling the world together. Where was he?

Sometime later, he glanced toward the jet way and saw Greg walking calmly through the crowd, completely oblivious to the chaos surrounding him. Running toward him, weaving through the crowds as fast as he could, he grabbed his brother and hugged him tightly, not wanting to ever let him go.

I have two other children who were living in New York City on September 11, 2001. Michael, who witnessed the horror as it progressed, has tried to erase the memories of that terrifying day, but still they linger. And Chrissy, who was working at Calvin Klein in Manhattan. Everyone at Calvin Klein was told that they could either shelter in place or try to make their way home. Chrissy decided



More worry. Where was Greg's plane? Matt could get no information on his flight. The gate agents had disappeared.

Shortly thereafter, CNN reported that a plane had crashed near Shanksville, Pa. Matt knew that Shanksville was in a direct route from Pittsburgh to Dulles. He immediately called me at work. Amid sobs, he said he was certain that Greg was on that plane. I refused to believe it or think about it. I prayed.

Waiting in agony for more news about the Pittsburgh flight, Matt replayed in his mind all the good times he

to walk the eighty blocks home amidst toxic, fuel-permeated smoke and particles of flying debris. She arrived home safely. My worry was that breathing the contaminated air might, in time, affect her lungs. So far, she's fine.

I am grateful that my children survived their experiences on 9/11. Many did not. 🙏

Weed be gone!



By Patricia Jacobec and Christine Blair, Grounds Committee

Keen observers of our gardens may have noticed that the butterfly gardens are missing their tallest residents. Those tall plants were Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*). This species is North America's most common goldenrod, some of which can grow up to 10 feet tall. While it's native to our part of the world (northeastern and north-central North America), it is aggressively and notoriously (or successfully, from the plant's perspective) invasive. It can easily crowd out more desired plants because it seeds a great deal and spreads rapidly by tough underground roots (rhizomes). Other parts of the world take active measures to prevent its invasion. Some gardening sites advise that it must be eradicated at all costs.

On the positive side, bees, wasps, and other pollinators appreciate Canada goldenrod's nectar. Native Americans

and herbalists use various parts of the plants as a diuretic, to treat wounds, to reduce inflammation and hypertension, and to treat kidney disorders. And because it is so hardy and resistant to almost all pests and diseases, it's a perfect plant for gardeners with brown thumbs.

Two other species of goldenrod continue to thrive in the gardens as planned: wrinkle-leaf goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*) and autumn goldenrod (*Solidago sphacelata*). Both species are used in cultivated spaces, where their blossoms provide pollen and nectar for pollinators. They, too, were used medicinally by Native Americans. Happily, neither species spreads as voraciously as Canada goldenrod. Presumably, the Canada goldenrod got its start in the butterfly gardens from seeds that arrived by wind, bird or some four-legged visitor.

Grounds volunteer Chuck Amorosino prepares to remove the invasive Canadian goldenrod from the butterfly garden. Photo by Christine Blair

Just look at those roots! Photo of Christine Blair by Chuck Amorosino



it takes a village

Mount Vernon at Home, a special village in our community

By Jan Buchanan, Executive Director, MVAH, and Hugh Schwartz

Senior villages are cropping up more and more around the country, as the aging population realizes that staying at home is one of the safest and best ways to maintain a high quality of living in familiar surroundings. These grassroots villages have grown to hundreds throughout the country and are expanding overseas. Each village is unique in its structure, some completely volunteer driven, others have paid staff and volunteers.

There are many villages in and around the Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia region, and one right here in our backyard. In fact, about one-quarter of the U.S. villages are in this region. Mount Vernon at Home is our local village, established over 10 years ago by passionate neighbors who wished to support each other as they got older and desired to remain in their homes and community. There is no minimum or maximum age requirement.

We are a nonprofit, membership-based organization with an executive director and robust crew of volunteers who are dedicated to ensuring the safety, security and smiles of its members! There are over 150 members that live in and around the region, in ZIP code regions that include parts of 22303, 22306, 22307, 22308 and 22309. So, it's a wide geography.

Its offices are normally housed in the Sherwood Public Library, but with the closures due to the pandemic, the executive director and volunteers are still working remotely.

How has Mount Vernon at Home dealt with the COVID-19 crisis?

In the early stages of the pandemic, transportation services as well as social gatherings were stopped. But the organization quickly pivoted to make important grocery runs and medication pick-ups as well as help members with computer use for online events and gatherings. "It was hard at first for all of us, but so many members are finding this connection more critical than they thought and are willing to try," says executive director, Jan Buchanan. "Members shifted and adapted and are grateful for our efforts to check in on them and help them with whatever we can do remotely," Buchanan added.

Mount Vernon at Home has longstanding relationships with our area governmental leadership, as well as business associations, the faith-based community, and other non-profits. Being part of the region's infrastructure maintains a voice for seniors in Fairfax County and promotes the value of villages and aging related issues in our region and the country.

The benefits of Mount Vernon at Home membership go well beyond the programs and support. "Our members tell us that connections, friendships and services they find here are invaluable," says Buchanan. Mount Vernon at Home matches the skills of staff and volunteers to the needs of its membership. Offerings include:

- ✓ Transportation to appointments and events
- ✓ Light handyman services

- ✓ Home technology assistance
- ✓ Participation in monthly educational, cultural, and wellness activities; social events and gatherings which are now done remotely
- ✓ Navigation of health care and home services options

They publish a bi-weekly e-newsletter as well as a more detailed monthly newsletter and calendar of events that keep members up-to-date on services and activities.

Becoming a member

Mount Vernon at Home is open to all residents in its service area. There is no minimum or maximum age, and Mount Vernon at Home seeks and serves members from every ethnic and cultural group that make up the diverse Mount Vernon area community. There are two levels of membership depending on the level of service desired by the joining individual or couple.

"Aging in community means that an older adult is able to stay in their place of residence instead of relocating to institutional housing. In light of the current pandemic, now more than ever our aging population want to remain in their homes and community," says Buchanan.

Neighbors helping neighbors

"Our village wouldn't exist if we didn't have the support of our volunteers. Helping our members with errands, taking them to medical appointments, using the volunteers' skills in IT, handyman work, and so many other ways to support," says Buchanan. "Kids home for the summer from high school and college have found great satisfaction in helping our members. Connecting generations is just one more benefit of our village community," she added.

Volunteers participate in many different ways depending on their availability and interests. "Whether our volunteers



<http://www.mountvernonathome.org>

it takes a village

dedicate just a few hours each month or help more frequently, volunteers find their experiences at Mount Vernon at Home rewarding as they develop stronger ties and friendships in their community,” Buchanan says. “We welcome those interested in helping and appreciate whatever time and talent they can contribute,” she added.

In this unprecedented time of dealing with a national health crisis, it is more important than ever to remain connected in community. Mount Vernon at Home is a critical lifeline to its members as they continue to promote safety, security and connection. Now more than ever villages fill an important role in our communities

For more information about Mount Vernon at Home, membership and volunteering, please call at 703-303-4060 or send an email to info@mountvernonathome.org. The website is www.mountvernonathome.org. Jan Buchanan can be reached at director@mountvernonathome.org or at 703-473-2892.

P.S. from Montebello resident and board member, Hugh Schwartz. A description of the services offered by Mount Vernon at Home was first offered at Montebello many years ago when the organization was first established on an occasional basis in both the *The Times of Montebello* and *The Montebello Voice*. There are approximately a dozen Montebello residents who are currently members of MVAH, notably Virginia Hodgkinson, who was president of the organization for many years. Note that some of the services offered by MVAH are provided by Montebello's Neighbors Helping Neighbors arrangement during the coronavirus crisis. For further information about MVAH, contact me or Jan Buchanan, who prepared the article above. 📧

Submitted by Guin Jones



New Partner Relationship Opportunity with Aunt Bertha

Aunt Bertha has created a social care network that connects people and programs — making it easy for people to find social services in their local communities and for the Red Cross to further integrate social care into the work we already do.

Aunt Bertha Services

Aunt Bertha takes pride in enabling the connection of people with local nonprofits offering needed social services. Making human services information accessible to people in need means that anybody, anywhere can find free and reduced-cost services locally available. Aunt Bertha validates their offerings on a regular basis and keeps the site current.

Connecting programs to people in need means that the Red Cross and other community-based organizations are able to spend more time helping people and less time searching for and validating services and support. This tool will also help us to understand the populations we serve and the needs in the community.

Accessing and Using Aunt Bertha

To visit the site, go to <https://redcrossdisasterresources.auntbertha.com>

With Aunt Bertha, the American Red Cross is making this search engine available so that our clients have access to local free or reduced-cost recovery services.

To search for assistance the client or the worker should simply enter the zip code. The following are areas of free or reduced-cost recovery services:

Area	Some of the Categories
Food	Meals; Delivery; Food pantry
Housing	Help to pay for; Maintenance and repair; Temporary
Transportation	Bus passes; Help pay for car; Help pay for gas
Health	Dental care; Pay for health care; Medical care; Medical health
Money	Education; Government benefits; Loans
Care	Animal; Daytime care
Education	Pre-School; Skill and training; Help to pay for school
Work	Work expenses; Employment
Legal	Translation and interpretation; Representation

Inclusion of Local Partners and Agencies

Red Cross local partners and community agencies are welcome to be listed on this site. Periodically, Aunt Bertha offers a one-hour orientation and training webinars for new users. In those webinars, attendees will learn:

1. How to use the site to search for solutions
2. How to connect to community resources
3. About additional free efficiency tools

For more information and to sign up, visit: <https://company.auntbertha.com/training/community-training/>

Local partners and community agencies may request to be included in the listing by doing the following:

1. Log in to: <https://redcrossdisasterresources.auntbertha.com>
2. Click the *Suggest Program* link in the footer on the bottom right of the home page
3. Enter the name of the program into the form and click *Search*.
4. The platform will search for your program, and if not found, will give you a slightly longer form to complete.
5. Fill out the form and click the *Suggest Program* button at the bottom.

The Aunt Bertha data team will verify the program. If the program meets the requirements as *direct social services* offered at a free or reduced cost, it will be added to the platform and the requester will be notified by e-mail. Please expect at least a 48-hour turnaround time.

Red Cross-National Points of Contact:

Flo Hencken
Recovery Services
American Red Cross
928.830.9288
Flo.Hencken@redcross.org

Earl R. Brown
Partnerships and Agreements
American Red Cross
202.303.5181
Earl.brown2@Redcross.org

dog days



dog days



The Grounds Committee's 2020 Nature Photo Contest

The contest is open to all residents, except Grounds Committee members, and will have two divisions: youth 15 and under, and all residents 16 and over. Grandchildren of residents may submit their photos for the youth category.

Contest Rules

1. Each photographer may submit a maximum of five entries and photos must have been taken on the grounds of Montebello between January 1 and November 1, 2020. **The contest closes on November 1.**



Photo by Dian McDonald

2. Email your photos as .jpg files by November 1 to ***ourmontebellogrounds@gmail.com***. Include your name, building/unit, phone number, and age for persons under 16.
3. No identifying marks should appear on the photograph to preserve anonymity for fair judging.
4. Only photographs with a nature theme (natural plants and animals) will be considered.
5. The photographer agrees that submitted photos may be used by the Association or the Grounds Committee for promotional purposes.
6. The best photos in each category will be selected by a professional photographer and the decision of the judge is final.

MontebelloGrounds.com

final glance



Painting by Azita Mashayekhi