

The **MONTABELLO** Voice

an independent gazette

hazy shade of winter

February 8, 2021



A shot in the arm

By Carol Coyle-Shea

This is intended to be encouragement if you're qualified for, but have not yet scheduled, covid-19 vaccination. Once category 1B was approved for covid-19 vaccination, we registered, but were getting very frustrated that there were no appointments available at the Mount Vernon center (or any of the other local centers). A friend had found out that vaccinations were available at Fairfax County Government Center and had no trouble scheduling. So I bit the bullet. In case you've been hesitant, I thought I would tell you how easy it was.

find a space. Then follow the instructions that the county has sent out with your appointment confirmation.

When they call you, check in at one of the 8 stations right inside the door and then follow the yellow arrows on the floor. There are "flow directors" in red vests who will meet you about every 10 steps along the way and, finally, give you a number.

Stay in the socially distanced waiting area until your number is called. Inoculation room has six (or more) stations. The inoculator verifies your identity, asks the usual questions, gives you your shot, records it on a card for you to keep, and sends you across the hall to wait for



First step is to go online to <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/> and sign up. They want your cell phone number, not land line. They will email you with approval for the vaccination and a link to two scheduling pages (weekday or weekend) where you select the time you would like. You'll get a confirmation with instructions. Our appointment was for the next day (!) – a weekday. Don't forget to take your cell phone and driver's license or other ID.

There are several ways to get to the Government Center, but I prefer the most straightforward, least convoluted. Take your favorite route to the Fairfax County Parkway North. At second exit past Popes Head Road take the exit for US 29N/West Ox Rd. Stay right onto US 29N. Just under 1 mile, through a couple of lights, make a left onto Forum Drive. Then a quick left onto Government Center Parkway. The building is on your right.

Take a right into the parking lot and

15 minutes to make sure you don't have a reaction and where they record that you got your shot so they can contact you for your next shot. Then you follow the arrows out the back door of the room and around to the door.

As I write this, it has been 24 hours since my shot and I am entirely without after-effects, not even soreness at the injection site.

I am incredibly impressed! The whole operation was so smooth, so friendly, so professional that it's hard to believe it is our government at work! And no insurance information, credit card, or cash required. What's more, from the time we left here until we got back, it was under 3 hours! It's enough to restore our faith. 🙏

Cover photos by Linda Brownlee

Covid PSA

I notice that Montebello's Covid working group has shared information about Fairfax County's vaccination program, including who is now eligible and how to sign up for it. The county's process is pretty simple and straightforward, careful with precautions, and friendly.

Kathleen Murphy (VA House District 34/McLean) posts regular, helpful updates on her Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/KathleenMurphyforDelegate>. – Bonnie Jacob 🙏

The MONTEBELLO Voice
 an independent gazette
 Alexandria, Virginia

This publication accepts no funding or oversight from advertisers, residents, or the Montebello Condominium Unit Owners Association. All opinions are encouraged and reflect the diversity of views in the community. All articles and photographs come from Montebello residents. To receive or contribute to this email-only gazette, contact montebellovoice@cox.net or visit on the web at www.montebellovoice.com.

Editor & Designer
 Mikhailina Karina

Contributors
 Rachael Bright, Linda Brownlee, Bo Clemmons, Holden Coy, Casey Hartman, Dustin Hegwood, Raymond Houck, Bonnie Jacob, Azita Mashayekhi, Dian McDonald, Patricia Moran, Joel Miller, Carol Coyle-Shea, Bob Shea, Marsha Weiner, Christine Winter

Dark night

Follow up to Erwin Jacobs' essay *Blackout* about the blackout in New York City, July, 1977.

By Marsha Weiner

I moved to New York City on July 13, 1977.

With the opportunity to work with two world-class modern dance companies, and a teaching gig at New York University, it seemed like a good idea to move to New York. Also, my brother was there. He loved living in “the city”

Jersey (Ventnor) and arrived at the lower level of the Port Authority just after the blackout occurred.

Realize, this was before cell phones. If the blackout were today, the darkness would be obliterated by the light of phone screens and built-in flashlights. But in 1977, the darkness was dense, sparsely peppered by flashes of light from Bic cigarette lighters.

I knew my way around the station from previous visits, so as my eyes adjusted to the dark, I found the staircase and walked up to the main level.

ple were streaming in, some panicking, others lost. While waiting for my turn to purchase a ticket, a woman behind me said, “Young man, who are you looking for?” I turned to look in her direction, and then heard a familiar voice, “My sister, and here she is.” It was quite an amazing moment.

Oh, years later I took a job that moved me to San Francisco. I arrived in that city the day of the earthquake in 1989. 🏠



and urged me to come, “New York is terrific. You can get a great corned beef sandwich any time of day!”

He was living on W 20th Street, between 6th and 7th Avenues, in the Chelsea neighborhood, before it was gentrified. He was living in a condemned building, which meant no heat after 5 p.m. or on weekends. The first floor where he lived had been renovated by the previous tenant, an artist. I could have the more rustic second floor. The rent was right, \$125 a month, so I got a one-way bus ticket from South

People were pouring into the building, wanting to get out of the city, immediately. It occurred to me that maybe I, too, should leave, and return in a few days.

As I made my way to the Jersey Transit ticket counter, chaos was growing while more and more peo-



Robert of Arabia, part II

Rethinking goals

By Bob Shea

“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” – Thomas A. Edison (1847-1931)

A mentor to a teenager? A Peace Corps volunteer? A Little League coach? A military advisor?

What do they all have in common? When beginning the process, they all have a stated goal. It may not be written down, but somewhere, maybe only in the recesses of the mind, one says, “this is what I am going to accomplish.” If you were comfortable with the status quo, you might not take on the challenge. You hope that in some way you can make a positive difference.

As an advisor to the Royal Saudi Arabia Ordnance Corps in 1971 (see an earlier edition of *The Voice*), I set goals for myself for my 12-month tour in a lonely place called Khamis Mushait, hundreds of miles away from my bosses. How could I fail? I had a master’s degree in logistics management, a talented master sergeant, over 30 retired Army personnel working for a U.S. contractor, a brand new 50,000-square foot maintenance and supply facility, and 350 Saudi soldiers who wanted to learn. What could go wrong?

Plans and goals are always just a starting point, something from which you probably will have to deviate. In a battle, the enemy always has a vote. When camping, the weather is a factor. On a road trip, there may be detours. In Saudi Arabia, as I soon learned, the culture and resistance to change were always perched on my shoulder, grinning and whispering in my ear, “you can’t do that.”



I quickly learned two words in Arabic: “Buchera enshalla.” That is a phonetic spelling, but roughly translated it means “Tomorrow, God willing.” But “tomorrow” is not the day after today. It is more likely sometime in the future, a date yet to be determined. It is not a phase easily accepted by Type A personalities who want to get the job done.

I soon allowed myself to scale back my immediate goals. I learned to see myself as more like a farmer who plants a seed, adds fertilizer, waters the soil, hopes for sunshine, and patiently waits. After probably weeks of suggesting, “maybe we should try this or that to improve our operations,” a seedling appears when your counterpart one day says, “What do you think if we try this or that?” Your immediate response cannot be “what took you so damn long?” Irish tempers do not work well when advising. Rather I’d say, “I am glad you thought of that, maybe we should try it.” Check another box on the “to do” list.

I hasten to say that I am not being critical of my Royal Saudi Ordnance

An arch we built next to our shop to welcome King Faisal when he opened the new cantonment area. October 1971.

Corps counterparts. I simply had to become acclimated to the way things were, a sometimes painful and very powerful thing called reality. The average Saudi soldier was a master technician. Give him a pile of parts, and he could repair anything. However in 1971 about 40% of the wrench turners and supply technicians were not able to read in Arabic. The most challenging task was teaching middle managers how to identify what repair parts were needed by stock number, how to order such parts from the supply system, and then match the part when it arrived to the vehicle or weapons system needing it. This was complicated by a supply chain that was at opposite ends of a 550-mile network of unpaved roads that required both requisitions and parts to travel overland. While we stocked many parts in our warehouse, about 1,500 common items, the warehouse also needed pa-

personal history

per requisitions for special parts and replenishment, accountability, and the need to identify specific shipments from the depot. Are we challenged yet?

Another complication was the local customs. Our Saudi soldiers were religious and answered every mass prayer call during the duty day. “Chia” or tea breaks were common, and during the holy month of Ramadan, no soldiers showed up to work for almost 30 days. That was a time for the contractor personnel to work on priority projects in the maintenance bays and warehouse. Their contract required them to work regardless of whether we had Saudi Army personnel in the facility. It was much like the fairy tale of the shoemaker and elves. After Ramadan, the Saudi soldiers were surprised to find many projects had been completed and were on the “ready line.” The talented elves do good work when left alone.

Additionally, family connections sometimes were more powerful than military rank. I soon learned that my counterpart, a Saudi major, was from another part of the Kingdom. However, his senior non-commissioned officer, a sergeant major, was local and when he spoke, the troops listened. I hesitate to use the word “tribal,” but the most significant influence did not always follow the normal military hierarchy.

Was it possible to do the job? Of course it was, once you figured out which buttons to push. Did we make all the progress I had hoped for? No way, far from it! I learned the art of the possible, developed patience, put aside my natural tendency to want to make it happen right now, and was proud of the accomplishments we did make.

When the new cantonment area was formally opened, King Faisal flew to the Asir Region for the grand opening ac-

companied by most of the Ministry of Defense and Aviation (MODA) staff in addition to all my bosses from Riyadh. The highlight was a military parade with marching troops, a Saudi military bagpipe band (recall the historical influence of the UK in Arabia), and a couple of hundred military trucks and tanks passing in review, all supported by our shop. The Saudi Arabian Mobility Program (SAMP) literally had a degree of mobility in the fourth year of a five-year program. I was standing tall.

Set backs, frustrations, and glacial progress notwithstanding, I finally went home after 12 months with a sense of accomplishment. I had adapted, learned local customs, and made a difference. In the end, that is all I could have hoped for, despite my initial lofty and somewhat impractical goals.

I had learned a lesson as well. Stay tuned for tales from Arabia. 🏠



Photo by Dian McDonald

February 8, 2021

Hooked on Goldfish

How little crackers crossed the ocean

By Raymond Houck

Admirers of Swiss ingenuity, nibble on this: In 1958, Oscar Kambly, a biscuit maker in Switzerland invented a fish-shaped snack he named Goldfischli in honor of his wife who was born under the sign of the fish, Pisces.

Entrepreneur Margaret (Maggie) Rudkin, founder of Pepperidge Farm, tasted the little crackers when touring Switzerland. A foodie who got into the bakery business when she developed a homemade bread for her son with food allergies, Rudkin sought out Old World recipes and premium products to add to the Pepperidge Farm line.

It was back in 1937 when Rudkin founded Pepperidge Farm. She baked her first loaves in her Connecticut farmhouse kitchen and then expanded into the family's garage.

Rudkin lowered production during WWII so she would not have to compromise on the quality of the ingredients. By the time the company moved into a custom-designed plant in Norwalk, after a decade in business, Pepperidge Farm was baking 40,000 loaves an hour.

Maggie introduced Goldfish to the United States in 1962, where they became a top-selling snack, munched on by everyone from kindergarteners to the Happy Hour set.

Let's dive into the numbers:

3

The number of medals U.S. Allies awarded to Ralph Hauenstein, a Nazi codebreaker and Goldfish cracker equipment manufacturer! Hauenstein wanted to help countries rebuild after WWII. Inspired by a German baker he saw creating fish-shaped crackers, he developed equipment to mass produce the little snacks. He shared the cracker-making equipment with the baker,

35

That is how many years it took before Goldfish cracked a smile. In every bag about 40% of the little guys are smiling.

25 cents

The cost for a loaf of Pepperidge Farm bread at a time when the going rate for bread was just 10 cents. Despite its steeper price, the "health bread" made with stone ground wheat and local honey had an instant following.

1.7 million

The distance in miles Goldfish traveled in 1988 when the crew of the space shuttle Discovery took the little crackers along to become an "out-of-this-world" snack.

\$608.3 million

Sales for Goldfish crackers in 2019. The "flavor blasted" versions such as "Bursting BBQ" and "Xtra Cheddar" were hot sellers at 175.6 million.

\$28 million

The amount Rudkin got for selling Pepperidge Farm to the Campbell Soup Company in 1960. Rudkin became the company's first female board member.

Dozens

Goldfish come in many flavors, such as Original, Cheddar, Graham, Explosive Pizza and more, including special limited and seasonal editions.

Now you know the fish tale! 🐟



and they sold it to Pepperidge Farm for millions.

2

The number of items on Julia Child's pre-meal Thanksgiving menu included Goldfish crackers and her own version of martinis.

snow day



#GhentitePhotography

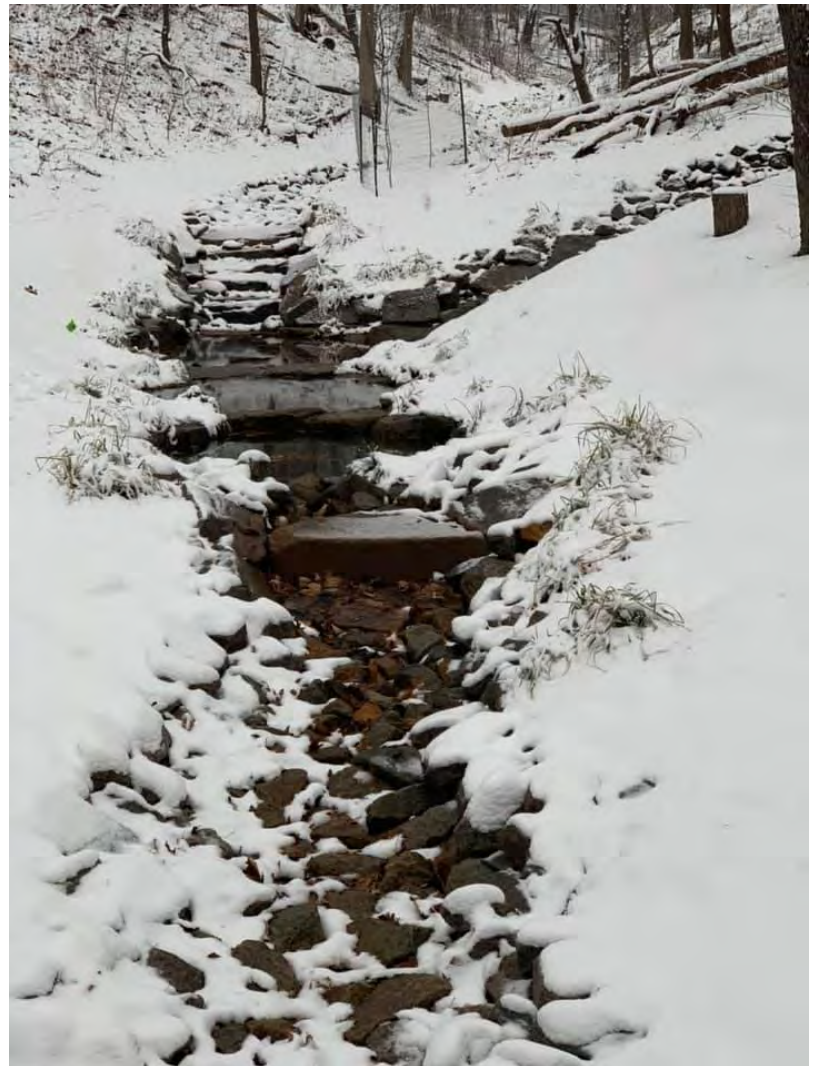
snow day



Prachi Sharma and Dustin Hegwood with their heatable elephant, Ellie, on picnic hill. Ellie is holding Cub, which they adopted at their first Chicago Cubs game together at Wrigley Field.

Photo by Dustin Hegwood

Photos (left) by Casey Hartman and Bo Clemmons



snow day



*Photos by Linda Brownlee, Christine Winter,
and Rachael Bright
February 8, 2021*

snow day

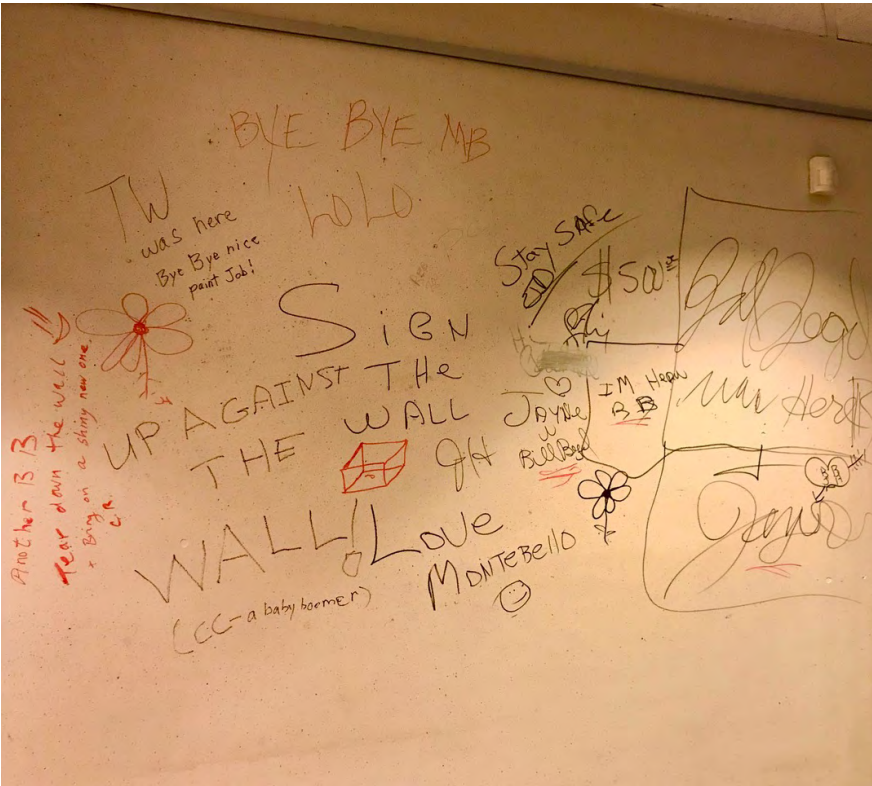


snow day



Photos by Linda Brownlee and Patricia Moran

under construction



Photos by Dian McDonald
The Montebello Voice

happenin'



Antiquities . Architecture . Mountains . Gelato

Sicily

By Paul Zeisset

A place to dream about
until we can travel again!



Montebello Travel Information Club
Thursday, Feb 11 . 7:30pm . by Zoom



final glance



Photo by Azita Mashayekhi