

# The **MONTTEBELLO** Voice

an independent gazette

hazy shade of winter

February 22, 2021



## Water world

By John Powers

The events in Texas should serve as a wakeup call for everyone without a plan for dealing with a water emergency. While we cannot reasonably prepare for a week-long or greater outage, anyone who does not have three days or more potable water per person stored in glass (not plastic) containers is simply dumb. Do not depend on having electric power available to boil drinking water or even depend on having any water available.

This is so easy to do. A local retailer sells large glass containers at a pittance. I have 12 of the ones pictured (about 2 quarts each) at \$3.99 each and five slightly smaller at \$2.99. With careful management I would have enough drinking water for



at least a week with a little left over for washing and flushing (pan bathing can be remarkably effective with three pans – one wash and two rinse – and three wash clothes and a minimum amount of water. It can also be a social event).

Please don't think that a water emergency is that remote. All it takes is a serious wind storm to uproot trees that are anywhere close to parallel supply and sewage lines. Once these are broken, the sewage line will contaminate the supply line. An unprecedented freeze can also cause the lines to burst. While serving as the FEMA Regional Director in Chicago, a county in northern Michigan came to me for a disaster declaration when the freeze line went below 85 inches and destroyed the county's water system. I declined, but was overruled by the White House in exchange for one vote in the House for NAFTA.

It can happen here. 📍

## Adieu, Mrs. Salahi

When I saw that Mrs. Salahi had died (I could never call her Corinne), I immediately texted my sons. Her cozy Montessori School of Alexandria at the top of Florence Lane was our first preschool, our sons' first home away from home. We met Mrs. Salahi in February 2003 when she personally interviewed our family for enrollment. Unlike a fancy private preschool down the road that interviewed and tested toddlers (toddlers!), she was not concerned with a 2-year-old's nascent motor skills, language abilities, or cognitive development – every child held equal potential in her eyes. Instead, Mrs. Salahi warmly and patiently answered our questions, welcomed us to observe classes, and made us feel secure that we'd made the best choice for our son. She also gave us excellent potty training advice. Two years later, our younger son also became a preschooler at MSA.

Because most of the school's parents had not gone through a Montessori education and were familiar only with "traditional" schools, Mrs. Salahi frequently held information sessions, where we sat in teeny wooden chairs and were awed by the sheer brilliance of the Montessori method. When we unfolded ourselves from the teeny chairs, we shook our heads and said, "I wish I'd gone to a school like this. Our kids are so fortunate."

One of the rites of passage at MSA was riding the minuscule school bus that waited in the Jefferson Manor Park. In recent years, as I drove with my sons to Edison High School (where I worked in the morning), we passed by the familiar little bus and saw smiling preschoolers clad in white and blue uniforms climb into their seats and wave to their young parents. Without fail, I momentarily choked up as I remembered being one of the waving (young) parents. On the morning of my older son's final day in high school, we reenacted the 2005 photo of both boys in front of the familiar little bus.

Besides giving thousands of children a superb Montessori education for the past five decades, Mrs. Salahi's school also taught anxious parents to be patient, less judgmental, cooperative, and appreciative. MSA's former students are forever grateful to Mrs. Salahi for giving them "a foundation for a peaceful community of socially responsible, independent thinkers, and self-motivated lifelong learners." Rest in the power of great early education, dear Mrs. Salahi. – Mikhailina Karina 📍

Please see page 5 for Mrs. Salahi's obituary and Zoom memorial information

Cover photo by Linda Brownlee

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Alexandria, Virginia

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## Robert of Arabia, part III

# The good life

By Bob Shea

**“Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.” – Helen Keller**

### What is a “porta-kamp?”

It is a knock-down building, about the size of a shipping container, built by a company in Houston that has provided living spaces for folks all over the world, usually in oil fields and other remote areas. Its sides fold down and in, the roof becomes the top of the box, and it is all mounted on heavy skids so it can be pushed or towed before being erected. Its walls are pre-wired, and it has numerous configurations.

It is the Lego of project building in that it can be put together in various combinations to create living spaces, dining rooms, recreation halls, toilets and showers, kitchens, and even walk-in freezers. Porta-kamps formed our contractor compound in Khamis Mushayt, Saudi Arabia. My NCO and I, plus

three key contractor personnel lived in a cinder-block BOQ with private bathrooms adjacent to the compound.

The year I spent advising the Royal Saudi Ordnance Corps was the most unique in my military career, as I was totally dependent on the contractor for my meals, entertainment, mail, and even everyday human interaction. I lived outside the fence, but just a few steps from their compound.

Our climate was superb, yes, even in Saudi Arabia. Daytime temperatures

were usually between 70 and 80 degrees. It rained for a few days in April, and twice I found frost on my vehicle’s windshield in the morning. We were at about 6,500 feet above sea level.

Running our dining room was Otello, an Italian, assisted by a German sous-chef, and a Sudanese pastry chef, plus kitchen helpers. A real UN food team. A group of porta-kamps had been assembled to create a dining room-kitchen complex with a huge walk-in freezer.



The latter was important as most food was delivered by refrigerated truck every two months from Riyadh over 550 miles of unpaved roads. Otello did buy some fresh vegetables and eggs in the local market. He was simply a creative chef who fed us exceptional meals, cafeteria-style, seven days a week. We even had the only soft ice cream machine in Saudi Arabia. Life was good! Most days there were two entree choices, breads and rolls, and multiple desserts. Otello was also a creative landscaper and he

made the compound look like a garden with fountains, statues, and greenery with help from our Turkish facilities guys. He also constructed volleyball and shuffleboard courts, and even designed and constructed the lighted arch over the roadway near our shop to welcome King Faisal when he visited the area. Italian artistry!

The climate and soil, if irrigated, were a farmer’s dream, but produce grown in the nearby terraced mountain farms was limited to what could be consumed locally, as there was no way to ship agricultural products to the rest of the Kingdom.

The chief contractor was a 40-year-old Texan (no military experience) with a young French wife who spoke six languages. They had put together two porta-kamps to create a comfortable home. She was the only woman on the site. While women normally did not work in Saudi Arabia, the locals made an exception (or looked the other way); so Kika was our typist, clerical person, and radio operator. The latter was critical as a single side-

band radio was our only contact with the rest of the world. Our work week was Saturday through Thursday noon with the radio on during normal duty hours. However on Thursday afternoon and all day Friday, there were only two pre-set times when the hub radio would be on in Riyadh. This was critical, should there be a medical emergency that required a plane to be dispatched from Riyadh, 550 miles away. Saudi medical support was at best very primitive, and while we did have a British

## personal history

paramedic on site for normal aches and pains, trauma support was at best hours away, even if the radio network was up and functioning. A scary situation when you thought about it, especially all day Friday when the unlicensed Saudis in their new Toyota pickup trucks played Mad Max on the roadways.

It was a morale builder to eat each meal with the site manager and his wife. Master Sergeant Velez and I always shared a table with them. While she wore slacks and long-sleeved blouses in the office (no head covering), her presence at meals and the movie in normal attire was positive. In the Asir Region, the women did not wear what we might call head coverings. Instead they wore a black head-to-toe drape that they could see through, but which made them invisible to the world, like a dark-colored moving haystack with feet.

With summer temperatures at our headquarters in Riyadh near 110 degrees on many days, I had many staff visits from officials who wanted to “check out what we were doing,” usually stretching a simple staff visit into a four or five day stay. Even the US Ambassador, his wife, and an entourage from the embassy in Jiddah arranged to spend a few days with us. A feature of every visit was a picnic meal put together by Otello so we could visit the

mountains and terraced valleys to our west as well as a visit to the suq. There were times when I asked myself what my job really was: a military advisor or a tourist/R&R destination manager?

When the ambassador visited, we scheduled a banquet with the local Saudi Army area commander, a two-star general, and his key staff. Otello loved the pomp and circumstance of almost a state dinner with a wait staff in his porta-kamp dining room. When we were planning the seating, I called my boss to ask where an ambassador fit in the world of protocol. “Equivalent to a four-star general,” he said. Enough said. I guess I was a novice in protocol. The site manager’s wife, Kika, and the ambassador’s wife attended the lavish Western-style dinner, a novel experience for most Saudi Army officers who obviously did not bring their wives.

Four porta-kamps created our recreation hall where we had a pool table and enjoyed a first-run movie every evening after dinner. They were delivered on the weekly (?) mail plane, hopefully seven movies. The system was imperfect; some weeks we received eight or nine, thus creating double feature nights. If less than seven arrived, a vote was taken to see which films deserved re-run status. Otello would always have a large tray of cold cuts, cheese, crackers, and

desserts available when the reels were changed. Yes, a real movie projector with reels of film. Very low-tech, but recall that this was 1971.

The local prince, who had been educated in the UK, had a British wife, and both loved Hollywood movies. He visited me one day and asked if he could borrow our movies. There were at that time no movie theaters permitted in the entire Kingdom. Each night his driver would be waiting at the compound gate to pick up that day’s movie. It would be returned in the morning after a viewing at the prince’s villa. It was a small and economical way to foster positive ties with the local power structure.

Our weekend was from noon on Thursday and all day Friday due to the Saudi sabbath on Fridays. It was a time to explore the local mountains and wadis, go to the suq in town about 8 miles away, or write the weekly letter home that went out on the next mail plane. The one thing we had an abundance of was time. I stayed out of the town square on a few Fridays when Saudi justice was dispensed. Not for any political statement, but because I was squeamish. I built an intricate sailing ship model, read some of the great novels, created a flower garden, and learned that naps were good. 🍴

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## Pardon my French

By *Erwin Jacobs*

In 1977 I went to the World Congress of Neurology in Amsterdam. My wife and I were with 20 others from various parts of the United States. There was a couple much older than us from the Mayo Clinic. The husband told our group that his wife was having early dementia and to keep an eye on her in case she wandered away.

After the stay in Amsterdam, we were to visit hospitals in Paris, Madrid, and Lisbon with a stop in Marbella. In Paris

we stayed at a hotel near a rail station with a large shopping area. We were all having breakfast and getting ready to get a bus to the airport for a flight to Malaga. We were then advised that this woman could not be found to get ready to leave. The group broke up to look for her.

I went across the street to the rail station and looked around, but did not see her. When I came out I noticed a police truck. Inside were about 10 gendarmes and an officer standing outside the truck. I approached him and said, “Parlez vous anglais?” and he said no.

I wanted to say, “Could you look for an older lady with a raincoat like my London Fog (that I was wearing) who might be in the station?”

It came out as, “Je cherche une femme avec un (pointed to my raincoat) dans le gare avec blanc (I pointed to my hair) avec no memoire (I did not know the word for lost).”

He looked at me and said in English, “Oh, you want a whorehouse?”

I went back to the hotel and found she had come in and was having breakfast. 🍴

in memoriam

## Corinne Salahi

Corinne Salahi succumbed to COVID-19 on February 12, 2021 following a planned kidney procedure at the hospital. She was 75 years young.

Corinne was born in Brussels, Belgium and lived part of her life in the Congo of Africa. She immigrated to the United States at the age of 17 with her mother. She went to college in Oklahoma; thereafter, followed her mother's legacy and continued working in the diplomatic corps in Washington, D.C.

Corinne founded the Montessori School of Alexandria in 1970 and cherished the children and the day-to-day duties of running the school.

She was an elegant, classy, fun-loving, witty, and most of all a beautiful soul to everyone. Corinne will be forever remembered in the hearts and minds of those she touched.



She was also a force in the Virginia wine industry with Domaine de la Venne/Oasis Winery established by the family in 1977 and her role in the creation of the Virginia Farm Winery Act that made the Virginia wine industry

what it is today. The family took great pride in producing top-rated wines globally, including one of the first US wineries to be rated by the Wine Enthusiast magazine as top 10 in the world for its sparkling wine production, which helped forge the way for the entire Virginia wine industry.

In her free time Corinne liked to scuba dive, dance, cook, travel and spend time with her friends.

Corinne was known by some as Coco. Her family grieves her early departure to heaven, but they take comfort knowing that she and her husband Dirgham, who preceded her in death

by 10 years, are together again.

They are survived by their birth son Tareq and step-son Ismail and granddaughter Alexandra, all of Florida.

Source: <https://everloved.com/life-of/corinne-salahi/obituary/?flow=201>

We are having our Public Mass on Tuesday, February 23 at 1p.m. at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church at 120 W. Main Street, Front Royal, VA. 22630.

Thereafter following my mother's wishes, we will bury her next to her mother, Simone Proctor Hoffman, at Prospect Hill cemetery located at 200 West Prospect Street, Front Royal, VA. 22630 - planned for 2pm.

You are welcome to attend either one or both in person or use links we have created below:

Those of you unable to attend may watch, the Mass service on this link live:

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1353914544975440&ref=watch\\_permalink](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1353914544975440&ref=watch_permalink)

The burial service will be Zoomed using this open link here:

Time: Feb 23, 2021 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88503865978?pwd=ZIFDUjRhNE9uUUxEUEpkYWVtcmUQT09>

Meeting ID: 885 0386 5978

Passcode: 436098

One tap mobile

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Meeting ID: 885 0386 5978

Passcode: 436098

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88503865978?pwd=ZIFDUjRhNE9uUUxEUEpkYWVtcmUQT09>

# Board candidates answer residents' questions

By *Mikhailina Karina*

Questions about disaster and emergency preparedness, fiscal policies, rising condo fees, dog park, budget savings, rental units, maintaining facilities and grounds, solar panels and electric car charging, term limits, pandemic management, and community center reconstruction were addressed to the six candidates for the Board of Directors during a virtual town hall. The February 21 Zoom event was attended by



*Moderator Joel Miller and Rolf Dietrich*

120 residents and lasted two and a half hours. Election Committee member Joel Miller moderated the discussion with his usual panache and humor.

Three incumbents – Jane Anne Gleason, Doug Kennett, and Bruce Shaw – and three newcomers – Dr. Jerome Brown, Rolf Dietrich, and Virginia Hodgkinson – are vying for three open seats in the upcoming election. The Zoom town hall was adapted to the traditional Meet the Candidates event normally held in the community center. Residents submitted their questions to the moderator in advance and each candidate was asked to respond. The following are not direct quotes, but

paraphrased questions and condensed answers. The event was recorded and management will send out a link to the recording.

**Question: Hypothetically, what would be the one issue you'd work on as a board member?**

Rolf Dietrich: Improve how we look at financials and bids.

Bruce Shaw: As an engineer and project manager, would focus on facilities.

Doug Kennett: If we can get us beyond the pandemic, everything else will be possible.

Jerome Brown: The pandemic and continuing to be safe.

Virginia Hodgkinson: Continue to improve our trails, gardens, and gardens because they give people pleasure.

Jane Anne Gleason: Work on the pandemic, work hard to educate the community to keep us safe.

**Question: Why are condo fees rising when most of the amenities are closed?**

Bruce Shaw: The major part of the budget is staff salaries. The cost of operating our facilities is still there.

Doug Kennett: Our condo fee increase was 2.8 percent, lower than the 3 percent increase in comparable condos.

**Question: In view of power and water outages in Texas, should Montebello have a plan for disaster?**

Jerome Brown: As a member of the military, we always have a plan for the worst. We need to have a plan that is familiar to everyone in the community and would lessen the potential disaster and help those who need help.

Doug Kennett: Our Safety and Access Control has a list of people needing help in an emergency. It's a start.

Bruce Shaw: We already have a number of elements in place: fire alarm testing, emergency generators, secondary

exits. Our facilities are not comparable to the Texas situation.

Rolf Dietrich: It's a good idea to revisit the existing elements and develop a comprehensive plan.

Jane Anne Gleason: The CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training conducted at Montebello has neighbors ready to help evacuate and assist residents in an emergency.

**Question: Are you in favor of a dog run or park? How should it be financed?**

Virginia Hodgkinson: It's a project developed by the Pet Club under the auspices of the Grounds Committee. The proposal is to have it situated away from the walking pattern. Other condos have dog parks and dog spas. The proposal would have to go before the board for financing as a new amenity and have a lot of rules in place.

Doug Kennett: As a charter member of the Pet Club, I am in favor of the dog park.

Bruce Shaw: Montebello has always been pet-friendly and I am in strong favor of the dog park as another amenity.

Rolf Dietrich: Right now I am skeptical because of the concerns about



*Doug Kennett and Jane Anne Gleason*

## election

noise, loss of trees, dog urine, and cost estimates.

Jane Anne Gleason: Although I am a cat person, I am in favor of the dog park. My only concern is dogs biting someone.

### **Question: How to make Montebello more eco-friendly with solar panels and composting sites?**

Doug Kennett: Because of the air conditioning units on our roofs, it doesn't look like solar panels could be installed. But we're looking at installing electric car charging stations.

Jerome Brown: It would be a smart investment to reduce electric costs.

Virginia Hodgkinson: Agree about electric car charging stations, which more owners will have in the future. As a fan of solar heating, I would also consider geothermal heating. We have to think about our environment as we improve and restore our grounds.

Rolf Dietrich: Solar panels are very expensive, but composting sounds interesting.

Bruce Shaw: It's an admirable objective, but not feasible on our roofs. Electric cars would need separate meters and assigned spaces.

### **Question: Should the board have term limits?**

Jerome Brown: Yes, I would support three-year terms. It's always good to bring new ideas. After so many years on the board, things can get stagnant.

Doug Kennett: I have 24 years of service to Montebello. To quote a neighbor, the best term limit is the vote.

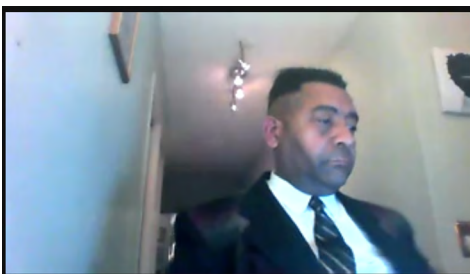
Bruce Shaw: We need enough people willing to serve, which hasn't always been the case. As long as we have enough volunteers doing the work, it's great. We have to balance experience with new ideas.

Rolf Dietrich: It's good to have new people. I agree with Doug about voting people out.

Jane Anne Gleason: I am opposed to term limits. It's important to have people knowledgeable about the history of what's going on, not starting from scratch.

Virginia Hodgkinson: There are arguments for and against term limits. Some people may be intimidated to run against someone who has served a long time. We could have sensible term limits with natural breaks before running again.

### **Question: What will you do to assure that required maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities are funded fully before considering funding additional projects that could lead to increased condo fees?**



### **Jerome Brown, Virginia Hodgkinson, and Bruce Shaw**

Bruce Shaw: I take exception to the premise of this question. We regularly do reserve studies to make sure all projects are funded. The system is in place.

Virginia Hodgkinson: We have to maintain what we have and plan for regular updating and replacing to keep the property in good condition.

Rolf Dietrich: The Reserve Study is exhaustive and well done. Will work for consensus.

### **Question: What about limits on rental units? Banks do not give mortgage loans for condos with a lot of rentals.**

Virginia Hodgkinson: I heard we are about 22 percent rental units, which is close to the edge.

Jerome Brown: There shouldn't be a limit because owners take better care of property than renters.

### **Question: In light of the pandemic and rising costs, should we have a second chance to vote for the community center renovation?**

Doug Kennett: The physical plant is very old and electrical systems need to be replaced. While the towers have 100 percent fresh air, the community center is only 30 percent fresh air, which is especially dangerous during the pandemic. The plan is in place and has begun.

Jane Anne Gleason: We're already in the process. The trailers are on the parking lot.

Rolf Dietrich: Stopping completely or doing it piece by piece? At this point, it's not feasible to stop.

### **Question: If pressed to make cutbacks on spending, what would it be and why?**

Jane Anne Gleason: Not sure what could be cut back. We have to pay our staff.

Virginia Hodgkinson: When we had cutbacks in the past, the land was not restored. A skid into deferred maintenance is a budget buster.

Management will send out information about voting in the March 11 election. This year, due to the pandemic, owners will have two ways to vote: in person at the annual meeting or by proxy. 🗳️

### Dr. Jerome Brown

**Voice:** *What community events did you attend?*

**Jerome Brown:** I attend and participate in the 4th of July Independence Day Parade yearly.

**Voice:** *Do you participate in Zoom sessions?*

**JB:** Yes, I participated in the interesting midnight Bingo sessions.

**Voice:** *What clubs did you join and on what committees you serve?*

**JB:** As a responsible citizen, I joined the neighborhood watch club, the swimming club, and the book reading club.

**Voice:** *What is your favorite spot at Montebello?*

**JB:** I enjoy the outdoors. Therefore, I found the swimming pool, tennis court and the small park where people walk their pets and exercise very enjoyable.

**Voice:** *What was the last vacation/trip you took?*

**JB:** I took a trip to the museum and the zoo.

**Voice:** *What will be the first one when it's safe to travel again?*

**JB:** Once it is safe to travel again, my first tour will be a relaxing ride on Amtrak, 3 to 4 days to Niagara Falls, Canada.

**Voice:** *Did you develop any new hobbies or skills during the pandemic?*

**JB:** The pandemic saw me gain many wholesome abilities. For one, I got fitter from walking throughout the community, acquired many DIY skills, as well as spent more time cooking wholesome meals.

**Voice:** *What shows/movies did you watch or what books did you read in the past year?*

**JB:** I did not spend too much on pop culture or mainstream

entertainment. Instead, I kept up with the news and politics, and watched documentaries on historical events.

**Voice:** *If money and space were no object, what amenities would you add to the grounds or the CC?*

**JB:** I would install a hall for the youth with professionals to train them in performing arts, a stadium, as well as a hospital for specialized care for the elderly.

**Voice:** *What songs make you get up and boogie?*

**JB:** I find it impossible to stay seated when there is rock and soul music on.

**Voice:** *What is your drink of choice?*

**JB:** An unapologetic teetotaler, I enjoy milk and coffee, and Arizona ice tea.



**Voice:** *Do you have any pets? If yes, who?*

**JB:** No.

**Voice:** *Who are your heroes in real life?*

**JB:** Vice President Kamala Harris is my hero. She is a trailblazer for all women in the world.

**Voice:** *What was your favorite job?*

**JB:** I really enjoyed teaching 5th grade, it was my most satisfying professional experience to date instructing 52 students in one classroom.

**Voice:** *Please describe Montebello in five words.*

**JB:** Picturesque environment, friendly community. 🏡



### Rolf Dietrich

**Voice:** *What brought you to Montebello?*

**Rolf Dietrich:** We were looking for a home in Fairfax County and had visited a lot of single-family homes before a colleague recommended Montebello. We quickly decided this was the place for us. The amenities were wonderful, the finances were solid, and the people were fantastic. After living here for six years, we still really enjoy it. It was the right choice.

**Voice:** *What amenities did you use (before pandemic and CC renovation)?*

**RD:** We enjoy most of the amenities at Montebello. We enjoy walks on the trail, the woodland view from our windows, the bowling alley, both pools, the restaurant, the store, both playgrounds, the fitness center, the multi-purpose room in the Community Center lower level, picnic hill, our party room, the billiard/ping pong room, the shuttle, and the courteous and helpful Montebello staff. We enjoy the sense of community and abundance of opportunities to participate – while at the same time allowing people to participate or not as they see fit.

**Voice:** *What community events did you attend? Do you participate in Zoom sessions?*

**RD:** Before COVID we routinely attended many of the wonderful events that are available at Montebello – from Board Meetings, to parades, to AiM art, to the Halloween Party – as our schedule allowed. Now, with Zoom, we attend even more since they are just a bit more convenient. Recently, I've particularly enjoyed "Meet your neighbors." Perhaps after COVID we should consider keeping a Zoom-like feature for many of our meetings to allow more people to participate.



**Voice:** *What clubs did you join and on what committees you serve?*

**RD:** I serve on the Finance and Budget Committee.

**Voice:** *What is your favorite spot at Montebello?*

**RD:** It's hard to pick a favorite spot at Montebello. During the summer it might be the outdoor pool. On a cold and snowy winter day, I'm partial to the spa at the indoor pool. With our grandchildren, we enjoy the playgrounds, the bowling alley, and the billiard/ping pong room. There are several spots on the walking trail where I occasionally pause my walk just to relax and decompress for a moment. Montebello offers a lot of "favorite spots" for a wide variety of personal preferences. That is one of the special things about where we live.

**Voice:** *What was the last vacation/trip you took? What will be the first one when it's safe to travel again?*

**RD:** In early summer 2019 we took a two-week drive across the United States – our second such trip. Our initial planning focused on National Parks, which were uniformly wonderful. We were pleasantly surprised at how fascinating the lesser-known sites were. We really enjoyed many State Parks, which tended to be more interactive. We also were fascinated by local museums, showing little-known facets of history and a different perspective. We even did a few simply touristy excursions just for fun – Four Corners, where we could stand in four states at one time, and even Roswell, NM, to see the UFO museums. Once it is safe to do so, we plan to do day trips to see similar sights that are within a few hours of Montebello. We've already got our eye on several intriguing sites.

**Voice:** *Do you have any pets? If yes, who?*

**RD:** We don't currently have a pet, but we had dogs for many years and enjoy meeting our four-legged neighbors as we come and go.

**Voice:** *What was your favorite job?*

**RD:** I've enjoyed all of my jobs. I was fortunate to work with some really great people and learned a lot in each job. However, since you asked for my favorite, I would say that it's hard to beat commanding a nuclear submarine.

**Voice:** *Please describe Montebello in five words.*

**RD:** A great place to live. 🏡

## Jane Anne Gleason (incumbent)

**Voice:** *What brought you to Montebello?*

**Jane Anne Gleason:** I moved to the city of Alexandria in 1975 after I married my husband, Kevin. We lived in the city until 2012 when it became apparent that we needed to move to one floor living. It was our Real Estate agent was the one who recommended MB as the ONLY best choice for us. Driving up the long road through the trees convinced us she was indeed right, hence we made the decision to buy here and make it our home.

**Voice:** *What amenities did you use (before pandemic and CC renovation)?*

**JAG:** First and always the pool! I joined Water Aerobics, used the gym when it was completed, the café, Community events and parties, some parts of the trails that are easy to walk. I am sure there are more but these are the ones that pop into my head immediately.

**Voice:** *Do you participate in Zoom sessions?*

**JAG:** I am enjoying the Saturday Morning Meet Your Neighbors, which is great fun and a wonderful way to meet folks during this time of limited contact with others. I also Zoom for Board Meetings and for the COVID Virus Committee meetings I am a member of.

**Voice:** *What committees have you served on?*

**JAG:** Prior to being appointed to the Board two years ago I was on the Election Committee and the Community Renovation Committee. I also was part of a committee that looked at which and where furnishings should be kept, sold, or discarded as we planned for the temporary office space and the café. Currently I am on the COVID Virus Committee. I am also completing a two-year term on the Board and my hope is to continue to serve the community as a member of the Board.



**Voice:** *What is your favorite spot at Montebello?*

**JAG:** I have two, first the outdoor pool, second Picnic Hill.

**Voice:** *What as the last vacation you took? What will be the first one when it's safe to travel again?*

**JAG:** My last vacation was to my family home in Little Compton, RI. That is my place of peace and will be the first trip Kevin and I will take when we are able to safely travel.

**Voice:** *Did you develop any new hobbies or skills during the pandemic?*

**JAG:** My husband and I have enjoyed playing Scrabble and Uno. Kevin and I have also added doing Morning and Evening Prayers together as part of our daily practice.

**Voice:** *What shows/movies did you watch or what books did you read in the past year?*

**JAG:** We have been watching movies on the Disney Channel. We have especially enjoyed Mandalorian. As so much of my reading time is spent reading articles and information about the COVID Virus as I am on the COVID Committee I have had limited time to read for pleasure. I do read spiritual/religious sites on a daily basis.

**Voice:** *If money and space were no object, what amenities would you add to the grounds or the CC?*

**JAG:** My dream would be to have an Olympic-size pool!

**Voice:** *What is your drink of choice?*

**JAG:** One cup of coffee every morning, then water. A glass of Chardonnay in the evening.

**Voice:** *Do you have any pets? If yes, who?*

**JAG:** I have two cats, Bebe – a dark haired lover, and Dewey – a shy orange tabby. They are sisters who love to play and chase each other, then curl up together in a chair in the sun room.

**Voice:** *Who are your heroes in real life?*

**JAG:** As corny as this will sound my hero in real life is my husband Kevin who stood by me after my stroke 12 years ago. He encouraged me when I was having difficulties and praised my progress. He has challenged me to be a better person and to look at the many sides of an argument.

**Voice:** *What was your favorite job?*

**JAG:** This is a hard choice as I have had so many jobs all related to nursing and teaching. If I must choose one it will have to be teaching childbirth classes to expectant parents and the joy of then having the honor of being their labor and delivery nurse when they were my patient in the hospital.

**Voice:** *Please describe Montebello in five words.*

**JAG:** Home. Friends. Caring. Nature. Beauty. 🏡

### Virginia Hodgkinson

**Voice:** *What brought you to Montebello?*

**Virginia Hodgkinson:** I moved to Montebello in 2015. I had visited friends here and was truly impressed with its beautiful grounds and buildings. When I knew I had to downsize because my husband was very ill, I knew that roaming around in a five-bedroom house with lots of memories and a half-acre series of gardens would not be healthy for me. Therefore, I chose Montebello because of its beautiful grounds and large living spaces in the condos.

**Voice:** *What amenities did you use (before pandemic and CC renovation)?*

**VH:** At Montebello, I initially used the transitional walking paths in the pet areas and the area around Picnic Hill with my dog Whitney, the café and fitness center. When my grandchildren visited, they used the bowling alley and the outdoor pool as well as the café.

**Voice:** *Do you participate in Zoom sessions?*

**VH:** I attended community lectures, board working sessions, board meetings, and the café in the Community Center before the pandemic. During the pandemic, I have ordered from the café, and attended board working sessions and board meetings as well as grounds committee meetings by Zoom.

**Voice:** *What committees have you served on?*

**VH:** I chaired the Grounds Committee from 2017 through 2020 and still

remain an active member. I believe in rotation of leadership. During the first few years of the Grounds Committee, we attracted an active group of members, most of whom could take various leadership positions and I stepped down as chair to enable others to take leadership. I also serve on the ad hoc committee for the community center redesign.

**Voice:** *Do you have any pets? If yes, who?*

**VH:** Once my beloved husband and my beloved dog Whitney died, I was fortunate enough to find a small Yorkie Miss Daisy, who has been my companion during the pandemic. She loves Montebello and makes friends with all the other dogs and the people who own them. I am very fortunate.

**Voice:** *Who are your heroes in real life?*

**VH:** My heroes in real life are the volunteers who help us all through good and challenging times. As one of the founders of Mount Vernon at Home, I served as president of the board twice and am currently president emeritus. This organization is one of the villages in a national movement to help seniors remain independent in their own



homes. Montebello also has been terrific in helping its residents during the pandemic with the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program. We have many Mount Vernon at Home members here and have been able to get them to doctors' appointments, shop for them, and provide several other activities over Zoom.

**Voice:** *What was your favorite job?*

**VH:** I have had a wonderful career. My joy has come through service through teaching, running several national programs to help nonprofit charitable organizations, and serving as a volunteer in multiple capacities. That is why I want to serve as board member and encourage others to participate in our wonderful diverse community. 🙏

### Doug Kennett (incumbent)



**Voice:** *What brought you to Montebello?*

**Doug Kennett:** Due to health issues my late wife endured, we needed to leave our 3-story town house for a single-floor living arrangement. And when we first drove up long Mount Eagle Drive we knew this was the place! We were honored to become original owners in Bldg. 4.

**Voice:** *What amenities did you use (before pandemic and CC renovation)?*

**DK:** We were regular users of the café, store, salon, fitness center and Picnic Hill.

**Voice:** *What community events did you attend? Do you participate in Zoom sessions?*

**DK:** We are strong supporters of the Activities Committee and attended most of their functions. Yes and Zoom has become a way of life!

**Voice:** *What clubs did you join and on what committees you serve?*

**DK:** I serve on Activities, the Montebello Corona Virus Work Group, Quality Improvement and served on all three of the Ad Hoc Committees on the Community Center Renovation.

**Voice:** *What is your favorite spot at Montebello?*

**DK:** Sitting peacefully on our balcony as the sun sets over the Potomac.

**Voice:** *What was the last vacation/trip you took? What will be the first one when it's safe to travel again?*

**DK:** We make an annual trek to Key West in February and have for years. But not this year. We hope to be back there for 2022!

**Voice:** *Did you develop any new hobbies or skills during the pandemic?*

**DK:** Because I have far-flung family and friends and serve on three boards, I have become quite a Zoomer out of self-preservation!

**Voice:** *What shows/movies did you watch or what books did you read in the past year?*

**DK:** As a self-admitted news junkie, I have been consumed all year with the pandemic and the election, as I guess most of us have been. That means daily scouring the Washington Post, New York Times, the Internet and TV coverage. As a result, Dana Millbank of the Post has become my favorite opinion writer, although I don't always agree with him.

**Voice:** *If money and space were no object, what amenities would you add to the grounds or the CC?*

**DK:** If money and space were no object, how about a golf course? In actuality, I love the amenities we now have and will have when the new CC is finished.

**Voice:** *What songs make you get up and boogie?*

**DK:** Just about any 1980s dance song can do the trick, but I've noticed here at Montebello whenever a DJ plays YMCA, the dance floor gets crowded!

**Voice:** *What is your drink of choice?*

**DK:** Coffee in the AM, ice water all day, and a nice cocktail in the evening.

**Voice:** *Do you have any pets? If yes, who?*

**DK:** I have had four different wonderful dogs during my thirty plus years here. For now we just live vicariously through our grand kids dog, a Norwich Terrier named Hazelnut.

**Voice:** *Who are your heroes in real life?*

**DK:** I have had many but one who really sticks out is retired Air Force General Bernard P. Randolph, the second African American to attain four-star rank in the Air Force. I worked for him for over three years. He was one of the smartest people I ever met and also one of the most gracious.

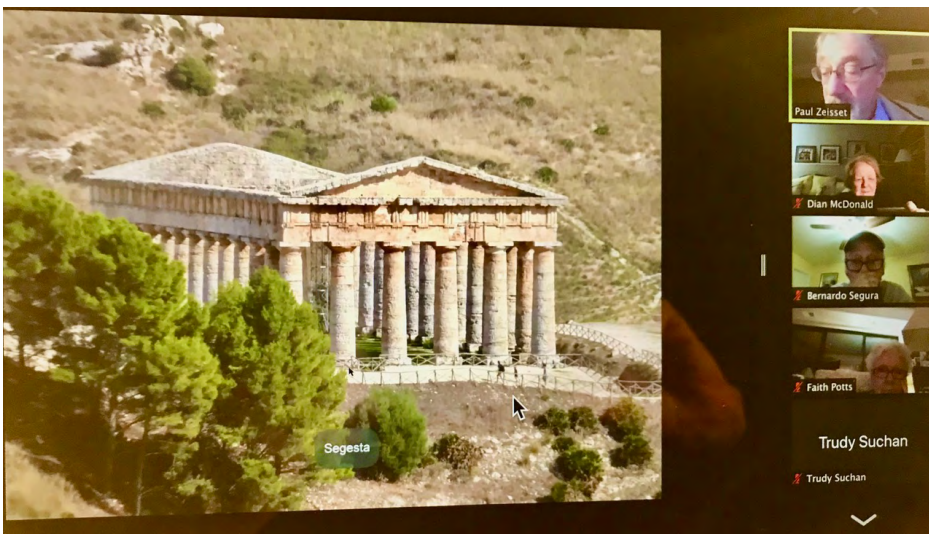
**Voice:** *What was your favorite job?*

**DK:** Being the Director of Press Operations for the Pentagon, serving as the senior military member of the Secretary of Defense's public affairs staff. It was a challenge but a real honor to serve.

**Voice:** *Please describe Montebello in five words.*

**DK:** True serenity amid the woodlands. 🌲

# zoom around the world



***The Speaker Series Presents:***

***Molly Smith***

**Artistic Director of the *ARENA STAGE***

In this pre-recorded talk on Politics and the Theater, she will share thoughts from her years at the Arena Stage.

Molly has served as Arena's Artistic Director since 1998 and has more than 30 directing credits at Arena, including *Carousel*, *Oklahoma*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Since this is pre-recorded from her talk via *Foggy Bottom West End Village*, there will not be an opportunity for Q & As. However, previous questions have been posed and answered.



**The ZOOM link will be sent on February 24th. Enjoy!**

**Day/Date: Thursday, February 25th**

**Time: 7:30 in the evening**

**Format: ZOOM**

**With appreciation to: Foggy Bottom West End Village**

***Sponsored by the Activities Committee***

## final glance



*Photo by Azita Mashayekhi*