

# The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent gazette

spot on

July 30, 2021







*Current and former Montebello residents meet up on Mackinac Island in Michigan. Cody Olander and Laura Calderon with their daughter Zia, formerly of Montebello and now living in Denver, and Montebelloans Susan and Turo Dexter visited for a long weekend with Montebello friends Sue Allen and Don Hinman at their summer home on Mackinac.*

*[For more about the enchantment of Mackinac Island, read Sue Allen's terrific novel, Water Beyond the Bridge. Ed.]*

<https://www.mackinacislandmemories.com/product-page/water-beyond-the-bridge> 

## Simone Biles

Female figure skaters and gymnasts are so incredibly skilled, and look so pretty, that we forget how difficult and dangerous this stuff can be. In figure skating there are pairs routines where her head can be ten feet high, she's not wearing a helmet, and the ice is as hard as concrete. He's flinging her in the air while spinning her like a top.

People have already commented on Biles and on female gymnasts. To me that's all scary, but especially the uneven bars. It would be so easy to crack one's head open. And she not only has to come through it alive, but has to look perfect while doing so.


Someone on Fox was complaining that Biles owed them more advance notice. Like a career-ending catastrophic loss of confidence will always give lots of forewarning. In her case, it didn't, and the rest is none of our business. –

*Richard Titus* 



## Jam session

I'm looking to get together with musicians who live in Montebello. I generally play blues and classic rock, but interested in just about any type of acoustic or electric music. I would be interested in putting some set lists out and maybe writing and recording some music.

I play guitar and harmonica and sing. Get in touch with me at [coreywalters@yahoo.com](mailto:coreywalters@yahoo.com). – *Corey Walters* 

*Cover photo by Steve Valdivia*

## 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](mailto:montebellovoice@cox.net) or visit on the web at [www.montebellovoice.com](http://www.montebellovoice.com).*

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## ride like an egyptian

*Words and images by Jeanne Tift*

*JLD Tift Images*



## GIZA PLAYGROUND



## ride like an egyptian

*Our family (Mom, Dad, and three kids) lived in Cairo from 1977 to 1981, during the years Anwar Sadat was president. Those kids, now middle-aged, still regard Egypt as the place where they mostly grew up. One of our favorite pastimes was to drive out to Giza and rent horses to ride in the desert. There were two stables in town: MG and AB. If you started renting from one, you could never rent from the other. It was all very personal. And we never thought of wearing riding helmets.*



*Though the pyramids are indeed solid presence on Earth, they reflect changing lights and colors according to the time of day and weather. Sometimes they can seem quite insubstantial and magical. Meanwhile, residents of the adjoining town of Giza went about their business.*

*On the photos: In those days, I was bulk-loading 100 ft. reels of Tri-X film into 36-shot canisters and made a darkroom from the pantry in the Maadi villa where we lived. Dust filled the air, so some of the negatives are scratched and spotted. I've cleaned some, but not all.*



## ride like an egyptian



*Once we started with MG stables, we continued with them. It was owned by a bunch of brothers. The head was Mohammed (back turned, long flowing turban) who I discovered had six toes on each foot when he was shaking the sand out of his shoes. When I exclaimed, he seemed quite proud. I usually rode this nice chestnut mare named Princess. She was a very good horse whom I remember fondly.*





## ride like an egyptian



*You cannot climb Cheops any longer, but in those days it was de rigueur. Every year a few tourists would climb up and fall down with unfortunate consequences. You could even spend the night on its flat top, as my teen son did once (without my permission).*

*Even local goats liked to climb.*

*Six kids and four parents inside the tomb chamber of Cheops.*





## ride like an egyptian



*Riding back to Giza after a day's outing to Saqqara, 12 miles away. It was a lovely ride along the border between the desert and the plantation.*



*MG stablehands took our mounts out for a roll and a scratch after we had dismounted and turned them in.*

## Food and movement for successful aging

By Chester Taylor

Swedish doctor Tommy Cederholm, Professor Emeritus, Clinical Nutrition & Metabolism, Uppsala University, and Senior Consultant, Inflammation & Ageing, Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, in a talk via ZOOM to a group in Washington, D.C. this past spring, stated that research has significantly improved our knowledge of the importance of nutrition and exercise for our bodies, particularly as we age. We have been able to reduce infant mortality through improved nutrition and lower mortality from chronic disease due to better lifestyles, including better food choices.

Dr. Cederholm noted a couple of longevity hotspots, Okinawa and Sardinia, that have been termed the Blue Zones, areas of the world where people are healthier and living longer. He stated that in both places people were physically active, social, and ate wisely. While the foods are different on

the two islands, they are characterized by less consumption of red meat, more fish, complex carbohydrates, and unsaturated fat.

He pointed to the typical Mediterranean diet with ample olive oil and nuts as a healthy one. Studies have shown that eating this diet reduced cancer by



as much as a third, reduced type 2 diabetes risk by one half, and extended average life span by 10 percent. This diet, along with a serving or two of fish each week, boosted mental capacity and helped reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson diseases.

Movement is also important as we age to prevent the debilitating effects of sarcopenia. Dr. Cederholm cited research that showed that within just a couple of weeks of reducing their number of daily steps from 6,000 to 1,500, study subjects could lose 400 grams of leg muscle. As you lose muscle, you lose strength and become less mobile.

Resistance training is also important to seniors. It improves muscle strength, increases bone mineral density (and prevents bone loss), helps maintain balance that can prevent falls and lower blood pressure. Physical activity helps the brain get the oxygen and nutrients it needs, making it possible to think more clearly, concentrate better, and improve memory.

Dr. Cederholm concluded that we might not all live to be 122 years old – like the French woman Jean Louise Calment, who holds the record for documented longevity – but we can significantly improve our quality of life by eating healthily and exercising. 🍴

## Stand more and sit less

By Chester Taylor

Dr. Mai-Lis Hellénus, world renowned medical doctor and lifestyle coach from Karolinska University Hospital, recently spoke to members and guests at the Swedish American Cultural Union in Washington, D.C. The title of her talk was “The Latest News About Lifestyle and Health – What the Research Says.”

Dr. Hellénus was instrumental in establishing the Lifestyle Center at the Cardiology Clinic, Karolinska University Hospital, Solna, in 2007. She has spent her career researching and gathering evidence that supports lifestyle changes needed for preventing cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease

is the leading cause of death in the United States and includes high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, coronary heart disease, and other related diseases.

Many Americans have fallen into the trap of a sedentary lifestyle. Dr. Hellénus says we need more movement in our lives. We need to stand more and sit less. She emphasized that diet and physical activity decisions to minimize the risk of cardiovascular disease should be based on scientific evidence. The study of physical activity and its impact on the body is a complex phenomenon.

In her research, she discovered that physical activity seemed to have less of an impact than reductions in sitting time. “There is growing concern that not only low physical activity, but prob-

ably also sitting and sedentary behavior, is an important and new health hazard of our time.” Dr. Hellénus said. “We hypothesize that a reduction in sitting hours is of greater importance than an increase in exercise time for elderly risk individuals.”

Dr. Hellénus briefly described a project she helped to start in Sollentuna in the mid-1980s. They offered the control group of 7,500 participants free health checks and a prevention program with individual lifestyle, counselling, presentation and group activities. After 20 years the control group were compared to reference people outside Sollentuna. Those who participated in the study were at less risk of having a heart attack and reduced all-cause mortality. 🍴



## Two generations too late

By Bob Shea

As the first member of my family to go to college, my questions were endless. Where to apply, what to major in, have a roommate or not, what are the funding sources, surviving dorm life, how to develop study habits, GPA, and on and on? I was a confused young man despite some well-meaning adults' best efforts.

My parents' standard answer was "You know best." Wrong! I did not! They had more faith in me than I had in myself to make those hard choices, and they had no frame of reference.

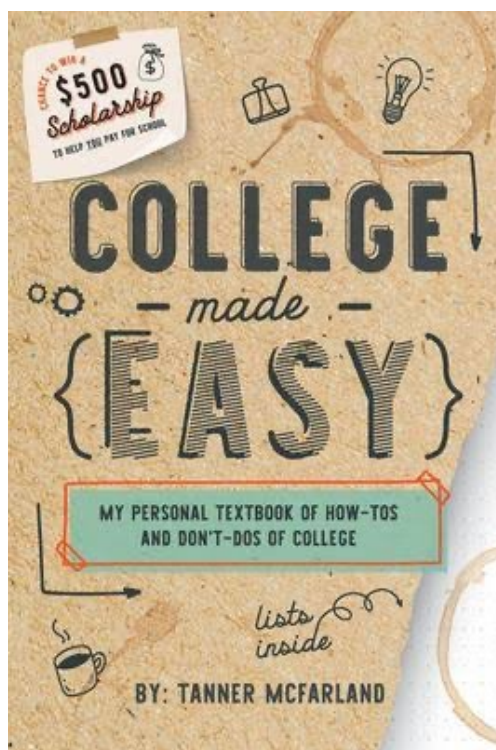
I have recently found a soft-cover book that I wish I had owned when I was wrestling with these tough questions. It is written by a 25-year-old recent college graduate who gave it the subtitle of *My Personal Textbook of How-Tos and Don't Dos of College*. The author is a recent college graduate, and it is timely and written in a conversational style as if the author were sitting around with 7 or 8 young people having a bull session about college in the language of young people seeking advice.

The author has a BS in Biomedical Engineering and an MBA, and works for a large national corporation. So, his advice is based on recent real world experience in today's world of higher education and what lies beyond the diploma. It is current and spot on.

There are 21 well-laid out chapters covering the gamut of questions from before school, packing up, money, college myths, dining halls, friends to your major and what is possible. If every individual question is not answered in the book, the discussions cause the reader to think through the whole process and find answers to questions he or she might not have even considered. In the words of the late Donald Rumsfeld, the former Secretary of Defence, it is the "unknown unknowns" that are the

killers in any plan. The author emphasizes that "success is the culmination of countless small preparations," and he spells out in detail what these small preparations are prior to and during four years in college.

This book causes the reader to think about the spectrum of the college experience from the viewpoint of someone who can actually say "been there and done that recently, and I was successful." He stresses that going to college is not a cookie cutter experience. Different aspirations, different campuses, different levels of preparation, and different available funding collectively make the experience unique for each student and each university, but many



<https://www.tannermcfarland.com/collegemadeeasy>

of the questions are universal. Despite the variations, I would suggest that this book is an invaluable resource for any young person who is struggling with dreams of a college education and for the parents or grandparents who might want to help the decision-making process. Believe me, the confused young



Tanner McFarland

person "does not know best."

Despite my parents' belief that I did know best, I did not. I had far more questions than valid answers. I wish today that I had had this book as a tutorial as I debated with myself about how to prepare for and succeed as a college student. It is two generations late for me.

The book is available from Amazon: *College Made Easy* by Tanner McFarland. The author also has established an annual scholarship with details of how to apply for it buried in the text. This in and of itself is another good reason to devour the book.

A disclaimer: Tanner McFarland is my grandson and lives in Maine. He would probably be embarrassed that I wrote this, but his approach to college preparation and success is too valuable to not be shared with others who could benefit from his sage and timely wisdom. Unfortunately, it is two generations too late for me.

Sorry Tanner. Grampa is proud of you! 🍷



# Life with my Ziggy car

By Sarah Newcomb

I did not imagine my life was going to change that December morning in 2016. I threaded my way in my 2002 Ziggy car through our Old Town back streets toward the Farmers' Market. A young driver ran into me. My insurance company totaled my well-loved, carefully maintained, low-mileage SUV due simply to its age. I had planned to drive it forever. So no car. And no rental.

A wonderful Montebello neighbor volunteered to drive me to Maryland to visit a large Ziggy car dealership. I planned to buy a reduced price 2016 Ziggy, since December marked the end of that model year. The 2016 Ziggys did not meet my most important, in fact my only, purchasing criterion: the back seats would not fold completely flat. I needed a totally flat surface to install crates for my dogs to safely ride with me.

The 2017 Ziggys had just come out. Reluctantly, I drove a rental back to Maryland to look at them. The dealership had exactly three new Ziggys. The new models were kept in a shed stationed behind the dealership. Salesmen were escorting interested buyers into the shed to look at the three models, as if the cars were classified guided missiles. No driving anything. And no, I am not making this up.

Anyone who wanted a car could buy one of these three 2017 Ziggys in the shed. One was a top-of-the-line family cruiser, the next was a totally stripped down regular model with minimum ba-

sics, and the third seemed a middle-of-the-road choice to me. Of course, buyers could wait several weeks for more 2017 Ziggys to come in. No driving any of the actual vehicles here, even after buyers had purchased them.

The Ziggy company was conducting a nationwide media campaign to introduce the new 2017 Ziggys. It emphasized all the new safety systems the 2017 Ziggys offered along with improved styling and luxury. Visits to the shed created a lot of buzz with prospective buyers trying to get one of the three available vehicles that day. Desperate, I bought the middle option from very obnoxious salesmen. I had to keep my



rental car while the dealership prepped my new Ziggy.

Driving my new Ziggy home was a real trip. I quickly realized it was a boat. All the high-tech extras did not compensate for the driver's lost ability just to look around. Over the next several years, the Ziggy played tricks on me. Its favorite trick was not starting. I would come out desperate to go somewhere (like the grocery store) and find no activity from its engine.

Thanks to yet another Montebello neighbor, who owned a portable jump-

start contraption, I was rescued multiple times. I cannot imagine why this man did not murder me. I finally gave up asking him and suffered through the interminable waits for the auto club. I was just too embarrassed to ask him to help me again.

I can tell you, my mechanical knowledge is zero. Maybe even minus. Still, it did not seem logical over several visits to our Alexandria Ziggy dealership – including two replacement batteries – why this would be happening in a new car. Ziggy's people put the responsibility on me. They said I must drive the car every single day. This was all my fault.

That did not make sense to me.

How many people park at the airport, go on a week's vacation, return and drive home without having to call the auto club to get them started again?

So I contacted my friend in New York who is a (brilliant) mechanic. He listened attentively to my description of the Ziggy's tricks. The mechanic concluded that loading the 2017s with new electrical systems created a "parasitic draw" somewhere in the

car. Some system running drew down the battery when the car was sitting parked between trips to the store.

Now the question has become what to do with my Ziggy. Pushing it into the Potomac seems the best option at times. It probably is not the best solution. Maybe I should try to fix this using a service bulletin my friend gave me. But dealers say this is all my fault. So I ponder trying to afford another vehicle. You can be sure of this: it *won't* be a Ziggy. 🐾



## spectacular wetlands

# New book captures pictorial and local history

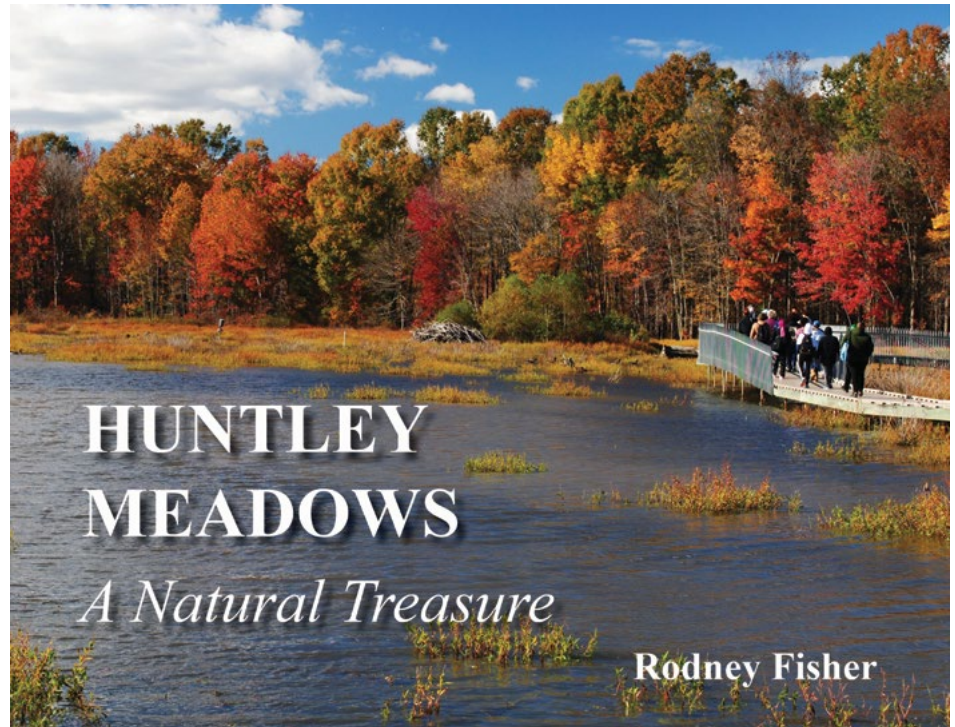
By *Rodney Fisher*

### *How this book idea come about*

My wife, Candace, and I started walking at HM regularly a few years ago. Since we love forest bathing, we just fell in love with the park. In August of 2018 we were talking and I decided to do a pictorial of HM. What surprised me was that no one had created a pictorial of Huntley Meadows already. It reminded me of a story about USC professor Leo Buscaglia who wrote a book on love. He thought that certainly the copyright for the title “Love” had long ago been taken because scores books on love had been written. But to his delight, he found he was the first. And I was equally happy.

Since then, it has been one trip after another in searing heat, bone chilling cold, many perfect days and 8,000 photos to show for it. Each visit is unique and worth the effort. The landscape changes over the year as water levels rise and drop and beavers modify the course of water flow. Recently, a wading bird, a Roseate Spoonbill, has been drawing crowds of photographers and others who appreciate beautiful birds.

There is a polite camaraderie among regular visitors. Often, when there is a bird sighting for example, someone in the group will point out its location to those passing by and photographers quietly move to get the best shot. One day recently, a mother and her daughter were observing the easily overlooked, such as moth larvae. Her daughter saw us walking in her direction on the boardwalk and she thoughtfully pointed out a very small green tree frog that we would have missed. And regularly, you will come across visitors who are on focused walks, not engaging with others but enjoying private moments in the safe and open space. We are so glad that this park is for anyone’s enjoyment and edification.



### *Passion for photography*

I have been taking photographs for fun for a long time. During a high school summer job, a coworker came in so excited about a 35mm camera he just purchased. He made it sound so good, especially when it described the quality of photos it would take. He couldn't get over the ability of the camera to take a photo in 1/1500 of a second. Although I knew nothing about 35mm photography, he was some salesman and I went out to get my own. Disappointingly, most of my photos came out bland until one day I had them developed at a Ritz Camera. The difference in quality was jaw-dropping. I once recalled hearing someone describe his summer job working at one of the discount fast film processing stores. He said they always cut corners and were told to turn around orders fast, regardless of quality. Recalling that story, and out of curiosity, I brought in some negatives to be reprinted. The drab photos had new life, and although more expensive, were consistently much higher quality. And so worth it.

### *What I was seeking*

The widest range of images from broader landscapes (which have always been my favorites) to individual animals. I wanted a representative cross-section of images and subject in order to tell a good general story. The park's history had already been told. I wanted to add a few background details to the narrative.

### *Choosing from 8,000 photos*

I always had my favorites organized by season and subject. I often managed to take another that was an improvement over the original. Even when I thought I was done, a new visit would provide another image for me to include.

The book is available for pre-orders on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Books A Million, and Target. 📖



## spectacular wetlands



*Photos by Rodney Fisher*





## walks 'n wags



*Photos by Dian McDonald  
and Steve Valdivia*



# happenin'





Sponsored by the Activities Committee

Join the community on  
Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup> from  
6:30pm to 9:30pm on Picnic Hill







Come join the next Music On The Hill Night. This evening will feature classis Soul/Funk music. Bring your tablecloths and citronella candles.  
\*\*No traffic, tolls, or admission fee\*\*



## REVERENT FILMS SERIES

Picnic Hill 7:30 p.m.



**July 30**

**Life of Brian**

**August 6**

**Cat Ballou**

**August 13**

**Dr. Strangelove**

**August 27**

**Monty Python and the Holy Grail**

**September 3**

**Best in Show**





final glance

