



The **MONTEBELLO** Voice

an independent gazette

Tishrei 5782

September 7, 2021

Helping Afghan refugees

Just a little note about our great effort here at Montebello. I heard about the need for donations through a Facebook group I am part of (connect young working women in the DMV area). Over a week we collected bags filled with new and gently used clothes and shoes, baby supplies and toiletries for our Afghan brothers and sisters. We then drove with the donations (I would say roughly 15 Montebello residents donated) and dropped them off near a drop off center at the Dulles Expo Center.

Here's how to help further:

<https://www.npr.org/local/305/2021/08/23/1030276100/here-s-how-to-help-afghan-refugees-in-the-d-c-area>. – **Joanna Anderko** 🐦



The Montebello Voice wants to hear from you: musings, travels, announcements, photos, book reviews, commentary, memoirs, essays, analysis, poems, suggestions, club news, recipes, and free ads. A twice-monthly publication for the residents, by the residents

Spreading the message

I first got the idea of putting VACN8 on my license plate about 10 years ago. I was frustrated that celebrities like Jenny McCarthy made the anti-vaxxer movement more visible. Fast forward to today, a vaccine can mean life or death, and substantially increase your rate of survival during the Covid pandemic. My sister is an ER nurse and spends 12-hour shifts in poorly ventilated rooms in Texas, with sick people, where many people don't vaccinate. I worry about her and all the other healthcare workers. Sometimes I worry about people being aggressive towards me on the road, but mostly I just get smiles at stop lights. – **Fred Schwartz** 🐦



Cover photoillustration by **Miriam Rosenthal**

Women and militant Islam

While a grad student, I once was seated at a party with three women from Iran. My friend was working toward a doctorate in genetics at Harvard; another woman was doing a doctorate in chemical engineering at MIT; and the third was in a master's program in chemistry at Boston University.

Today, we're all anxious over what will happen to women in Afghanistan under the Taliban, which raises the question: where do their ideas about women come from?

Reportedly, Prophet Muhammad had 13 wives, some of whom played important roles in his life. Siddhartha also had a wife, who played a very important role in his life. The exception here is Jesus: he had no wives and his parents supposedly never had sex.

To go farther back in history, in Pharaonic Egypt, widows would inherit and the status of women in general was better there than elsewhere at the time.

So where do the Taliban get their ideas about women? Does the answer lie somewhere in the Koran? I am not a student of that document, perhaps another Voice reader can help? –

Richard Titus 🐦

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an independent gazette
Alexandria, Virginia

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Twenty years ago this week

By Bruce Powers

I was working in the Pentagon when the hijacked airliner hit it. I was about 100 yards from the point of strike, but off to the side – so not hurt. But in the ensuing firefighting, my office was destroyed by smoke and water.

I was aware of what had happened in

[16-Years-Since-911-Attacks_Washington-DC-443902073.html](https://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks/videos/stories-from-911-pentagon-employee-bruce-powers?m=528e394da93ae&s=undefined&f=1&free=false)

A History Channel interview in NYC from 2016.

<http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks/videos/stories-from-911-pentagon-employee-bruce-powers?m=528e394da93ae&s=undefined&f=1&free=false>

Auditorium presentation in 2018 at the National 9/11 Museum in NYC.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DG-db-vnh9qo&t=2s>

Voice of America interview in their DC studios. (It was translated for broadcast into Albania.)

<https://www.voanews.com/episode/survivor-recalls-terror-attack-pentagon-3730006>



Montebello Zoom Music Club seeks members

Some months ago, the Montebello Activities Committee proposed a new Club, to be called the Google Music Club. The original plan was for the group to assemble in a party room with a laptop and good speakers, select music from the infinite source of Google, play it, and then talk about it.

This idea was approved by the Activities Committee, and by the Board of Directors. We were ready to try it out. However, the pandemic returned and Montebello had to shut down again. But perhaps Montebello can still have a music appreciation club, if we can do it on Zoom.

We would like to invite you to a meeting on Zoom to see what people think about a Zoom Music Club. We can examine questions such as what day and time of day would be best, what types of music do people want to hear, would people all listen at the same time or independently, would there be a discussion while the music is playing or only chat, and how much structure people want. And for a start-off question: what's a good day and time for an initial meeting to get started?

I would love to hear from you. Please share this information with anyone you think might be interested – they don't have to be in Montebello, or even in America! Contact me at 571-217-6095 or at meagain37@cox.net. – **Richard Titus** 🐦



New York: two big buildings hit by two aircraft. But it was confusing. Nonetheless, because of that knowledge, I knew the effects inside the Pentagon – a shudder of the building, very loud sound, and black smoke rising into the clear blue sky – meant it too had been struck.

Evacuating the Pentagon was easy and quick. Traffic in the DC region had frozen, so I set out on foot for home at Lake Barcroft. I ended up walking 7 miles to get there.

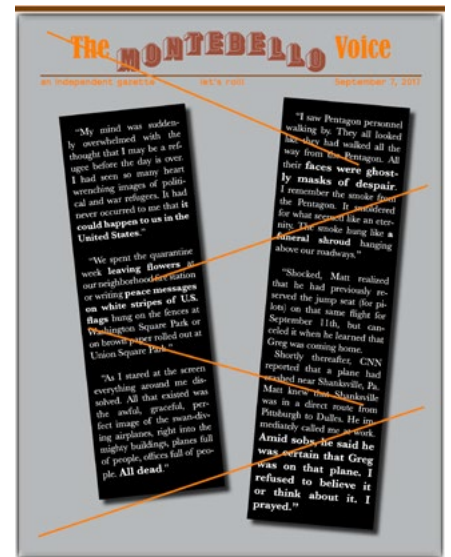
Each year since, I repeat that walk on 9/11. A member of my family usually joins me. I use the walk to remember the 10 people I knew who died at the Pentagon that day.

For a dozen years before Covid, I have gone to New York monthly to lead walking tours of the World Trade Center site, where I tell my personal story of what happened at the Pentagon 20 years ago.

Here are broadcast film recordings about my 9/11 experiences:

A DC TV station's film used on local news in 2017:

<http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/Memorial-Service-Marks->



In 2017, Montebello neighbors contributed poignant, powerful stories of September 11 to this special edition of the Voice.

http://montebellovoice.com/TheMontebelloVoice_17_09_07.pdf

A box full of memories

By Raymond Houck

It's Back to School time! Do you remember carrying your lunch to school in a lunchbox? Metal lunchboxes and the Thermos bottles tucked inside them performed a practical function for schoolchildren. They kept sandwiches fresh, soup hot, and beverages cold. For millions of Baby Boomers and beyond, they did so much more for their young owners – while also serving as conversation starters among peers and, in many cases, entry to the “cool kids” table in the cafeteria.

Is it any wonder that these pieces of the past are among today's most popular collectibles?

As children return to school this month, toting their nondescript insulated lunch bags, it's fun to think back on the colorful metal containers that were an apt reflection of pop culture.

I think the appeal of these metal gems is that they remind us of when we were young, watching Saturday morning cartoons or prime-time TV before bedtime. Their popularity has even led to the creation of a Vintage Lunchbox Collectors Facebook group that has grown to a membership approaching 1,000.

Metal lunchboxes are growing in popularity with good reason. They are widely available in a range of prices at garage sales, flea markets, and antique malls. Allen Woodall, Jr. is the curator of the Lunch Box Museum [http://](http://www.lunchboxmuseum.com)

www.lunchboxmuseum.com in Columbus, Georgia, where he has over 5,000 on display. “It should be called the Memory Museum,” he says. “I’ve been to the Louvre and many museums around the world, but I’ve never experienced the kind of emotional response I witness right here!”

He continues, “Visitors might not remember exactly which lunch box they had as a student, but as they scour the displays, their eyes light up when they spot it. It’s really something!”

I think vintage lunchboxes from yesteryear are still in demand today thanks to their bold, colorful images from our past. And most importantly – they are just plain fun. 🍷



Grounds Committee seeks entries for annual photo contest

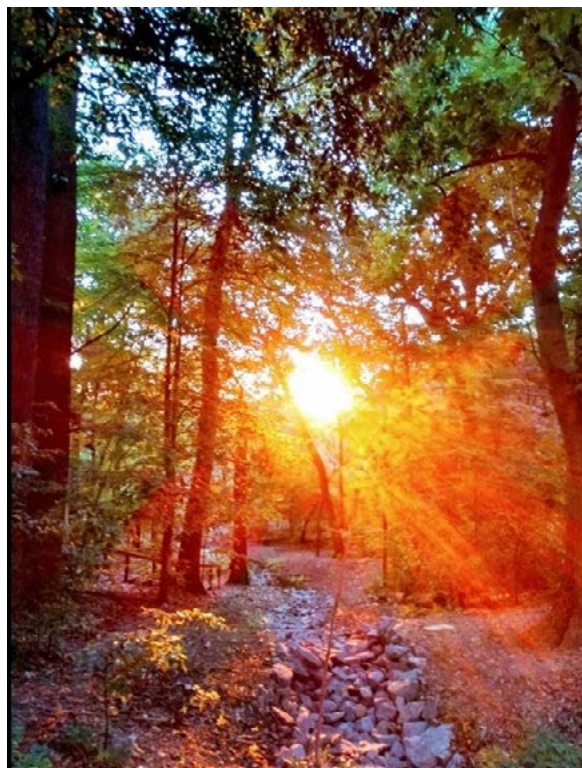
By Rebecca McNeely

The third annual Grounds Committee photo contest is well underway and it is time to send your best work to ourmontebellogrounds@gmail.com. **Deadline for entering is November 1, 2021.**

Any Montebello resident (except GC members) may submit up to five images of the beautiful flora and fauna on Montebello grounds taken between Nov. 2, 2020 and Nov. 1, 2021.

Enter your photos as .jpg files with your name, building/unit, and phone number. Professional photographer Michael Oberman will judge the contest

First, second, and third place winners will receive \$100, \$75 and \$50, respectively. Prints, ready for framing, will be made of all the winning



photos, including those receiving Honorable Mentions, and any others that are included in the Café exhibit in early 2022.

The mission of the GC photo contest is to enhance residents' awareness of the beauty of nature here and to create a library of images of life at Montebello. The photos may be used by the Association or the GC for promotional and educational purposes.

Be a part of creating our history and maybe win an award. 🍷

Photo by Mary Sabulsky

The roads less traveled

When the world shut down and sharing indoor spaces became dangerous, many people laced up their walking shoes and hit the streets and the trails. Tired of walking in circles around Montebello, neighbors started venturing out the front and the back gates in search of safe, quiet areas for some exercise and mental clarity. During a recent Cup of Joe, inveterate walkers Karen and Donald Barnes solicited and compiled some of the favorite pedestrian destinations reachable on foot or a short drive away. As we enter Virginia's best season with cooler temperatures, here is a good starting point for your local pedestrian adventures. – MK

Alexandria parks

Alexandria African American Heritage Park

500 Holland Lane off Duke-
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/historic/blackhistory/default.aspx?id=37348>

All Veterans Park

4725 Duke
<https://alexandrialivingmagazine.com/locations/all-veterans-park/>

Ben Brenman Park

off Duke near Beatley Library
<https://www.yelp.com/biz/ben-brenman-park-alexandria>

Fort Ward

4301 W Braddock Rd
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/FortHeritageTrailBrochure.pdf>

Fairfax County parks

Burke Lake Park

7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake>

Huntley Meadows

3701 Lockheed
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows>

Huntington Park Levee

North of Huntington Avenue, behind and east of The Parker

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/huntington-levee>

Lake Accotink

7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield-
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/>

Lee District Park

6601 Telegraph
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/reccenter/lee-district>

National Park Service

Dyke Marsh on GW Pkwy

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/plan-yourvisit/dykemarsh.htm>

Fort Hunt off GW Pkwy

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/plan-yourvisit/forthunt.htm>

Jones Point under Wilson Bridge

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/plan-yourvisit/jonespoint.htm>

Occoquan Regional Park

<https://www.novaparks.com/parks/occoquan-regional-park>

Residential and urban areas

Belle Haven, Hollin Hills, and Mason Hill off Fort Hunt Rd

Jefferson Manor, across North Kings Highway

The District has a plethora of walkable neighborhoods

<https://www.gpsmycity.com/gps-tour-guides/washington-dc-613.html>

Nature walks

All Trails

<https://www.alltrails.com/>

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

http://www.patc.net/PATC/Our_Store/PATC_Guides.aspx

Mr. Robert's neighborhood

Bob and Lisa McClure average 4 miles on their daily brisk walks around the neighborhoods that surround Montebello. Some their main roads include Quander, North Kings, South Kings, Eisenhower, Telegraph, Ft. Hunt, Belle Haven, and Duke with lots of side trips into side streets.

Jim Bechtel, Gayle and Rolf Dietrich, Paul Foldes, Leslee Levy, Bob McClure, John Powers, Richard Titus, and Paul Zeisset contributed to this list. ♡



Mount Vernon District Park

Next to Martha Washington Library
 6801 Fort Hunt Rd, Alexandria
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/mtvernon/>

George Washington Parkway

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/plan-yourvisit/mtvernontrail.htm>

Walk across Woodrow Wilson Bridge

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/virginia/woodrow-wilson-bridge-trail>

blooms



Photos by Miriam Rosenthal



A time to cry

By Chester Taylor

The Potomac River flowed quietly by as I gazed at it from outside of the House of Sweden. I was waiting for my guests to arrive. There was a special exhibit and award ceremony there commemorating the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to Raoul Wallenberg. I checked my watch and looked across the road. I saw them slowly walking up towards me. There were five of us, all retired from naval service. Two were Jewish. We had seen a lot of the world in our lifetime but were unprepared for this day.

We walked up the steps, through the doors, and into the exhibit room. A young Swedish girl, probably an intern working at the Embassy, politely checked our names and let us pass to the exhibit. We began looking at the displays of pictures and artifacts that told the story of Raoul Wallenberg's efforts in saving tens of thousands of Jews in Nazi-occupied Hungary during the later stages of World War II. We looked at black and white photos of Adolf Eichmann and his henchmen and the freight trains packed with Jewish men, women, and children. The sign underneath the photos explained that Eichmann had deported over 400,000 Jews by the time Wallenberg had arrived, all but 15,000 went directly to the German Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in southern Poland. Still, 230,000 Jews remained in Hungary.

Wallenberg had to work fast. He had to create power. On another display board were some examples, "protective passports" or as the Germans called them Schutz-Pass. The passes identified the bearers as Swedish subjects awaiting repatriation. Wallenberg

succeeded in negotiating with the German authorities that those that had the protective passes would be treated as Swedish citizens and not required to the yellow badge required for Jews. They worked.

Next, we saw pictures of the 32 buildings that Wallenberg had rented and declared to be extraterritorial and protected by diplomatic immunity. Signs on the buildings that said The Swedish Library or The Swedish Research Institute with large Swedish flags displayed. These building eventually housed 10,000 people.

Finally, we looked at the photograph

one, introduced his special guests, and spoke about the diplomatic leadership of Raoul Wallenberg. Next, Annette Lantos, the wife of U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos, spoke on behalf of her husband. Annette told how Tom, at age 17, had come home and found his mother and the rest of his family killed by the Germans and how Tom had been saved by Wallenberg.

Several young Swedish relatives of Wallenberg spoke. Then an elderly woman spoke in a soft voice. She, too, had been in Budapest. She recalled how on that horrific day when she and her family were loaded in a freight car



of Lubyanka, the KGB headquarters and prison in Moscow. Scholars knew that when Wallenberg disappeared after the war, this was the place he was taken. When Swedish diplomats were negotiating the return to normalize relations with Russia, they told the Russian diplomats that the "Wallenberg problem" needed to disappear, meaning returning him to Sweden. The Russians misunderstood. The next morning, it is believed, Wallenberg was shot in the head in the courtyard of Lubyanka.

At around 11:30, we were asked to gather around a podium. Ambassador Jonas Hafström, welcomed every-

bound for Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, Wallenberg had come down to the train. She described how the guards harassed him by shooting over his head and laughing at him as he gave out passports to save as many as he could. Then her voice began to crack as she said that she is alive today because she got one of those passports. The rest of her family didn't make it. At this point, the tears began to flow. It was a time to cry. 🍷

By any other name, it's still bread

By Bob Shea

My uncle, Buddy, would have probably felt very much at home at Fort Hood, Texas when I arrived there in 1961 as a newly commissioned second lieutenant. He had trained at what was then Camp Hood in 1942 when it was activated to train tank-destroyer units for World War II.

Located in central Texas, Fort Hood had over 235,000 acres of scrub brush, insects, snakes, and unbearable summer heat. Except for a few brick buildings, Uncle Bud would have felt right at home amid the endless rows of drafty, non-air conditioned two-story barracks buildings, built for World War II with a projected life span of three or four years. In 1961, most of them were still standing, housing the 1st Armored Division (Old Ironsides) and the 2nd Armored Division (Hell On Wheels) to which I was assigned. The base hospital, where my oldest daughter was born, served over 40,000 soldiers plus their dependents, covered 16 acres, a maze of one-story wooden buildings connected by covered wooden walkways. Nestled between the barracks were one-story mess halls and orderly rooms. The barracks were open bay with each soldier's total space being a bunk, a wall locker, and a foot locker with gang latrines and showers. Being a lower-ranking enlisted soldier at Fort Hood in 1961 was not a plush life.

The 2nd Armored Division, until just before my arrival, had had the mission of training recruits after they finished basic training to serve in most of the military occupational specialties (MOSs) found in mechanized infantry and tank units. The last groups of

trainees were not shipped off as replacements to other units, but were retained to fill the division's ranks. We were declared to be part of the Cold War's Strategic Army Corps (STRAC). Many thought STRAC stood for Scram The Russians Are Coming. But that is another story.

As a commander of a company of 152 soldiers, I soon learned the trials and tribulations of leadership. About one half of my company were draftees, some of whom wanted to be anywhere but in uniform at Fort Hood and acted like it. Fortunately, the other draftees, also unhappy, still did their very best to do the job we asked them to do. Bless them!



One of the many problems of a company commander was what was known as A CONGRESSIONAL. All CAPS! This happened when a GI, or maybe his mom, dad, or girlfriend wrote a letter to a senator or congressman with a complaint, real or imagined. Division policy was that the company commander had to investigate the complaint, prepare a letter in reply to the elected official, and hand-carry it up through the chain of command to the two-star division commander for his signature.

all within 48 hours of receipt. Whether the complaint was justified or not, the process was the same. Also, the letter had to be typed error-free by the young company clerk on an old manual typewriter. We all knew that the letter had probably been forwarded to the Army by some young, low-level congressional staffer, unfamiliar with the military, and probably had never even been seen by the elected official. But that made no difference.

In those days we still had kitchen police (KP), usually three soldiers, different ones each day, assisting the trained cooks and mess sergeant who prepared three meals a day, seven days a week. The KPs, in about a 13-hour-day, did clean-up work, peeled potatoes, worked on the line serving meals, and any other duty the mess hall staff deemed appropriate. It was one of the least favorite rotating duties for E-4s and below.

I was fortunate to have a mess hall staff who took pride in what they did. The cooks loved their jobs, content to prepare meals in garrison and in the field, many not wanting to be considered for promotion to mess sergeant, for that involved paperwork, management skills, and administrative duties. My lower-ranking cooks just loved what they did and were damn good at it. Twice we received Best Mess Hall awards, and our peach pie was famous, causing many senior officers to stop by for mid-morning mess inspections.

One day I received a dreaded CONGRESSIONAL written by the mother of one of my soldiers, a draftee, inspired by his rotation on KP. The 48-hour clock was ticking.

The basis of her complaint was that

a grain of

we were feeding the troops leftovers, as evidenced by the fact that the large mess hall bread boxes were labeled Yesterday's Bread and Today's Bread. It was good food management and was probably just exactly what that mom did at home, but without labels. That was not important. What was very important was how to answer her letter and walk it up to the division's commanding general.

It was relatively easy after I discussed it with Staff Sergeant Glenn Coburn, my mess sergeant. He had an answer

to our collective problem. I wrote a letter stressing how important good nutrition was to our troops, the pride the mess personnel displayed in serving balanced, well-prepared meals, and our many culinary awards. I stated that in no way would we serve leftovers to the troops. I was tap dancing with words. Actually what we did was to re-label the two offending bread boxes. They became Today's Bread and Tomorrow's Bread. No more leftovers! I held my breath, walked it through my battalion commander and my brigade commander

to the division headquarters. The gray-haired two-star asked a couple of questions, winked, and smiled at the terrified second lieutenant standing in his office. He signed the letter for dispatch to Washington, DC.

A lesson in leadership, labeling, and concerned moms. We were STRAC! 🍞



zoomin'



Meet Your Neighbors



Board of Directors in action

outside



*Photos by Dian McDonald and
Mary Cris Kohn
September 7, 2021*

* VOTER REGISTRATION *



The League of Women Voters will provide voter registration opportunities and voter information for residents who have recently moved to Montebello.

Members of the *League* will register neighbors, make voting materials available, and provide directions to the precinct location. This information will be useful to EVERYONE.

Thursday, September 16th
3:00–7:00 p.m.
Building 3 Lobby

The League of Women Voters of Virginia was formed November 10, 1920, out of the suffrage movement. The *League* encourages informed and active participation in government to increase understanding of major public policy issues and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

Sponsored by the Activities Committee

final glance



Photo by Azita Mashayekhi