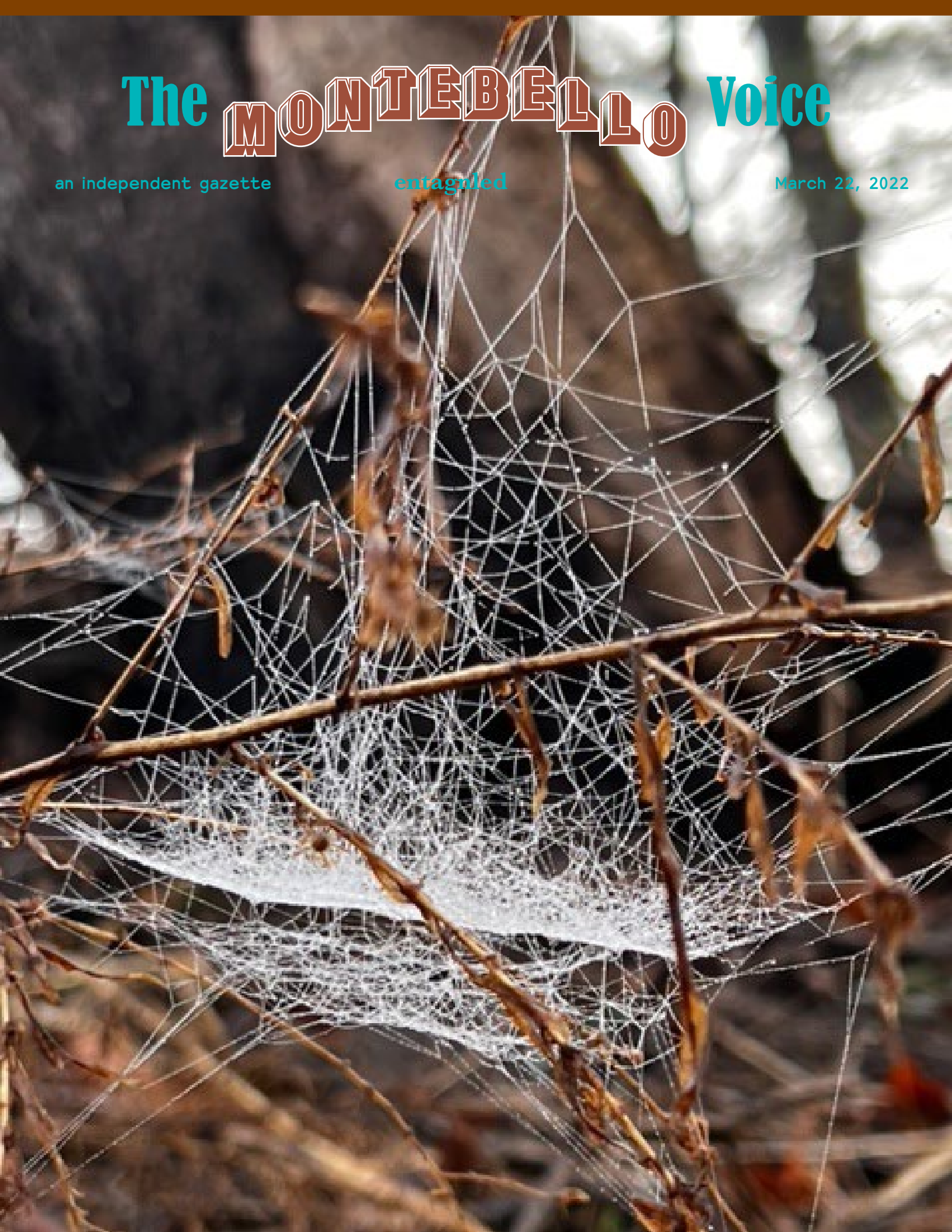


# The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent gazette

entangled

March 22, 2022



## Board Elections 2022

*By Guido R. Zanni, Former Board Treasurer, Vice-President, and President; and Former Chair of the Ad Hoc Committees on the Community Center Renovation and Design*

In the last issue of the *Montebello Voice*, Treasurer Rolf Dietrich noted the need for civility when commenting on the forthcoming annual election. While he did not mention me by name, he was clearly referencing my article in the previous edition of the *Voice*, noting the author maligned a board candidate. I fully agree with the need for civility which is why I was surprised to read a campaign statement that was a litany of complaints and misinformation. That missive contained allegations about statements I had supposedly made and actions I had supposedly taken that were clearly false. Correcting the historical record is not malignment.

He also stated that I made untrue statements when I stated that the Treasurer was on record indicating huge condo fee increases were necessary. More specifically, his January 11 Treas-

urer's stated, "Initial assessment is that the Board should anticipate a need to substantially increase condo fees over the next several years in order to replenish our reserves, largely due to the impact of significant unplanned expenditures since the 2019 Reserve Study." When confronted with this statement he maintained that he did not use the word "huge" and therefore I was being untruthful. Really? Did my paraphrasing alter the meaning of his statement? According to the Oxford Advanced American Dictionary, the definition of Substantial is, "amount, value and importance." A synonym for the word "substantial" is "large."

Putting semantics aside, the Treasurer's statement negatively impacts owner equity. The resale package contains Board meeting minutes, including the Treasurer's reports. While owners and listing agents do not have to disclose information that is already in the resale documents, prospective buyers always ask about condo fee increases. A buyer's agent would definitely use "a need to substantially increase condo fees over the next several years" to a buyer's advantage in negotiating the selling price,

assuming the buyer does not walk away.

I'm puzzled as to why Treasurer Dietrich would issue such a reckless statement prior to the completion of the Reserve Study. This recklessness prompted the General Manager to issue a MML noting the Treasurer was using the wrong estimate is his analysis of draft data along with a misunderstanding on the use of the Reserve Study in budget planning. A core fiduciary of the board is to maintain and/or improve owner equity. Until we have final data from the Reserve Study and proposed 2023 expenses, the Treasurer and Board of Directors should refrain from budget forecasting until detailed analyses, including the appropriate use of the Reserve Study's estimates, indicate "a need to substantially increase condo fees." 📌

## Managing covid-19 at Montebello

When Yogi Berra said, "It ain't over till it's over," he presumably was talking about baseball, but it could have been Covid-19. Rates are back up in Europe and experts expect the USA to follow. An eminent virologist said that with three billion unvaccinated, there will continue to be a succession of new variants, some of which will prove to be more lethal and more immune to our vaccines. And the beat goes on.

The USA had a "warp speed" effort for vaccines, but not for masks. We now see that in an environment of ever-new

variants, masks have a central role to play. Unfortunately, N95-level quality masks against microorganisms – not against dust – exist, but are not available to the general public. Since this is not being discussed, it is not likely to change.



Montebello needs a committee or task force to help residents identify and obtain the best of what's available to us in respirators, the need for which is not likely to go away any time soon. – *Richard M. Titus* 📌

*Cover photo by Patricia Ann Jacubec*

The **MONTEBELLO** Voice

an independent gazette  
Alexandria, Virginia

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## A few thoughts on controlling condo fees

By Nick Nickerson

As I have campaigned over the last several months, I have often been asked how we can keep Condo Fees under control. In these conversations, people have frequently picked out one project or another and commented that it was expensive and extravagant. They then linked that project directly to increased Condo Fees and suggested we cancel the project to get our money back. Unfortunately that is rarely possible. For example, the recent trail work is frequently brought up in this way. But that project is nearly complete and most of the funds are already spent or otherwise committed.

A better way to keep costs down is to pay attention to them from the start. When we are conducting surveys to gauge interest in a project, we should state a projected cost. So, not “Do you want X?,” but rather “Do you want X for \$Y?”. Every other purchase decision we make is stated this way. When I go to buy a new car, the price is on the sticker. One of the first questions we ask is “How much does it cost?” It should be no different here.

When we contemplate adding a new amenity at Montebello, or improving an old one, we need a quick and easy way to think about how that will affect our personal finances. We need the “sticker price” that applies to us (and our neighbors!). We have 1,016 units, so a quick estimate of what something will cost the average Montebello owner is to divide the cost by 1,000. Hence, a new amenity costing \$100,000 will require the average owner to contribute \$100 per unit. Similarly, a \$500,000 project will cost each of us about \$500 per unit. And, of course, these costs will also be passed eventually to those who are tenants. When we contemplate any expense, we should consider its impact on all of our residents.

Another observation is that costs go up rapidly as we go from excellent to outstanding. I recently experienced this when I went to buy a new TV. I could get a good LED TV for \$750. Jumping up to the best model, a nearly identical OLED TV, cost \$1,400. In the showroom you could see the difference between the TVs, but when you looked at them in isolation, the difference disappeared. Was the difference worth the cost? There are times when the answer is “Yes!” and other times when the answer is “No!” Similarly, we need to look at all of our projects in that light. Can we get an excellent solution at a lower price? Is the outstanding solution really worth the additional cost?

One reason that “outstanding” is more expensive than “excellent” is because “outstanding” often means “only available from one provider” – also known as a sole-source situation. When I worked for the government, my organization did an annual survey to determine the benefit we obtained from competitive bidding (involving several providers) over sole-source contracts. The answer was fairly consistently about a 20% reduction in price. So, we emphasized competitive bidding. Sole-source contracts required both justification and approval by several levels of leadership. We shouldn’t be nearly as bureaucratic here at Montebello, but we should strongly emphasize competitive bidding.

Another idea that we should borrow from the Government is the requirement for independent cost estimates. When I was working as a Project Manager for the Government, I was expected to understand what things “should cost.” Whenever we contemplated a new program or a new contract, we started out with a rigorous independent cost estimate. Initially, these estimates were used to budget for the project. Then they were refined and used to support contract evaluation.

The independent cost estimate became especially important in a sole-source contracting situation. In that case, the only way to know that we were getting an acceptable deal was by comparing the contractor’s bid to our cost estimate, which we called a “should-cost” estimate. When negotiating in a sole-source situation, I frequently found that the contractors I was dealing with had inflated their bid. The should-cost estimate allowed me to find that out and negotiate a better price on behalf of the taxpayers. The impact of a good should-cost analysis in a sole source situation may not save us as much as competitive bidding, but it should save us something comparable.

In this article I have focused on how we can get savings in the area of reserve projects and property improvements. In summary, we should: (1) focus on costs from the beginning; (2) understand and consider thoughtfully if the “best” is really worth the additional cost it incurs; (3) emphasize competitive bidding and avoid sole-source situations; and (4) prepare and use good “should cost” estimates.

There are other ways to find savings to keep Condo Fees under control. But, those will need to wait for another article. Thanks for reading. 📖

*The Montebello  
Voice  
uncut, uncensored,  
unofficial*



## Elevator rules for contractors and service providers

By Virginia McGee

Montebello is our home. Montebello sure has its perks: plenty of parking (both indoor and out), HVAC systems in each apartment, the ability to do laundry whenever the spirit moves you, a Café that delivers, amenities galore, beautifully-maintained grounds, and hiking trails for miles.

Living at Montebello is a dream for many. Attainable for those who appreciate the dream. But the Montebello dream may only be maintained by resident action.

In 10 years of Montebello owner-resident status, my husband and I have witnessed the following use the passenger/resident elevators:

- ◆ Brigades of maids, laden with vacuum cleaners, brooms, buckets and mops
- ◆ Contractors carrying tools, pieces of wood, dollies and scraps of carpet

- ◆ Plumbers and electricians with tools and equipment
- ◆ Grocery deliveries, on heavy rolling carts, pushed up the lobby stairs and through the lobbies
- ◆ Nightly food delivery – vehicles parked under the porticos – at the front of the buildings

Those listed above are neither owners nor renters – they are **contractors** and **service providers** – for whom an entrance and service elevator is specifically provided in each building.

Our Montebello move-in meeting included a page in the materials entitled, “Important Information, Proper entry procedures,” which stated:

“Service people (cleaning services, deliveries, etc.) arriving at your residence should enter the building via the **B3 LEVEL**.

“There is a buzzer available at the **B3 Level** which will notify the front gate.

“The guards will buzz people in.

According to the Montebello Condominium Unit Owners Association (MC-UOA), Rules & Regulations, (Effective November 10, 2015), Section 6, Page 17:

“Personal property, other than hand baggage and packages, must be transported in the service elevator. “In all cases where the passenger elevators are so used, the interior walls must be padded to prevent damage and marring.”

So, fellow residents, **please** instruct your contractors, maids, cleaning services, grocery deliveries, pizza deliveries, fast food,



etc. that they should **only** use the **B-3 Entrance** and the **Service Elevator**.

You wouldn't allow a contractor to leave muddy footprints across your living room floor, or a cleaning crew to drip dirty water all over your clean home? Would you? Why allow the same damage – or worse – in building lobbies and in passenger elevators?

Montebello is our home. Let's treat it as such. 🏠



*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.*

# Snowdrops

## Heralds of Spring

By Patricia Ann Jacobec

**D**elicate, ephemeral snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*) are one of two the early bloomers in our woodlands, appearing in late February through early March. Each plant, usually less than 10 inches tall, produces one snow-white, bell-shaped bloom that droops atop a slender stalk. Flowers have six petal-like structures, called tepals, in two whorls with the inner tepals marked with green. Bees love snowdrops' nectar and pollen, especially since other food may be hard to find in very early spring.

### Natural history of snowdrops

The genus *Galanthus* is native to southern Europe and the Middle East. *Galanthus nivalis* is the best-known and most widespread representative of this genus. It is native to a large area of Europe, stretching from the Pyrenees in the west, through France and Germany to Poland in the north, Italy, northern Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and European Turkey. It has been introduced and is widely naturalized elsewhere, including eastern North America.

Greek botanist and philosopher Theophrastus wrote about snowdrops as early as the 4th century BCE, calling them "white violets." More than 2,000 years later, Swedish botanist and taxonomist Carl Linnaeus classified the common snowdrop within the *Amaryllidaceae* (amaryllis) family, the genus *Galanthus*, and gave it the specific name *nivalis*. *Galanthus* is derived from the Greek gala meaning "milk" and *anthos* meaning "flower," alluding to the color of the flowers. *Nivalis* is derived from

the Latin, meaning "of the snow," referring either to the color of the flower or the time it emerges.

Because it is so widespread, this flower has many different names in many different cultures. Early names referred to the February 2 Christian religious feast of Candlemas, which is when snowdrops appeared. Or the names referred to the Purification of the Virgin, an alternative name for the February 2 feast day. The French name of *violette de la chandeleur* refers to Candlemas, while an Italian name, *fiore della purificazione*, refers



to purification. The English common name snowdrop may be derived from the German *Schneetropfen* (snow-drop), so called because of the flower's similarity in color, size, and shape to the teardrop shaped pearl earrings popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Germans also called these flowers *Schneeglöckchen* (little snow bells) referring to the shape of the flower.

Other common names for this charming little flower include, Candle-

mas bells, Christ's flower, death's flower, dew drops, dingle-dangle, drooping heads, drooping lily, fair maids of February, French snowdrop, Mary's taper, naked maiden, purification flower, snow bells, snow flower, snow-piercer, white bells, white cups, white ladies, white purification, and white queen.

### Snowdrops in folklore, art, and literature

As with the proliferation of its common names, many cultures have created stories around the snowdrop.

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Hermes gave moly (presumably a preparation of *Galanthus*; see "herbalism and medicine," below) to Odysseus to protect him from Circe's poison and magic.

An early Christian legend holds that after being cast out of the Garden of Eden, Eve sat sobbing in the cold, bitter wind. An angel took pity on her and breathed on a snowflake, sending it fluttering down to Earth. Where the snow landed, snowdrops grew.

In Romania, where the flowers are known as "daughter of the wind," a folktale is the basis for the traditional celebration of the first day of spring, held on March 1, and known as Mărtisor.

Each year, the Sun returns to Earth at winter's end in the form of a young girl. One year, Winter captured Sun, preventing her return to Earth. Hero, who loved Sun, fought Winter and set Sun free. In doing so, Hero was grievously wounded. Each drop of his blood that fell melted the snow beneath him and the first snowdrops began to grow, opening their white petals as Sun reached her zenith.

Moldovans have a similar folktale. One year, the Winter Witch refused to give up her reign, so Lady Spring fought her. The Lady pricked her finger





*G. nivalis* from John Gerard's *Herball*, 1597, p. 120. From U.S. Archives

and snowdrops grew where her blood fell.

In Germany, legend says that God sent snow to visit every flower in order to decide what color they would be. The flowers were rude, except for the snowdrop. As a reward, snowdrops were allowed to bloom first, but had to agree to give up their color.

Snowdrops have inspired many poets, including William Wordsworth ("To a Snowdrop"), Alfred Lord Tennyson ("The Snowdrop"), Ted Hughes ("Snowdrop"), Walter de la Mare ("The Snowdrop"), and Christina Rossetti ("February").

Johann Strauss wrote a waltz named after the flowers in his *Schneeglöckchen* opus 143.

In the language of flowers, snowdrops hold a number of meanings across cultures, from modesty and purity to sympathy, fertility, and renewal. To the Victorians, the snowdrop was seen as a symbol of death, perhaps because it often grew around graveyards. A snowdrop flower in the house was thought to be bad luck. Over time, the meaning of snowdrops changed and

today, snowdrops symbolize hope and sympathy in the language of flowers. As early heralds of spring, the blossoms have come to symbolize fertility, inspiration, renewal, and rebirth, while the white petals signify purity and modesty.

More recently, the snowdrop was adopted as a symbol of sorrow and of strength following the 1996 Dunblane massacre in Scotland. Snowdrops were the only spring flowers in bloom at the time. Dunblane's subsequent Snowdrop petition led to restrictions on the legal ownership of handguns in the UK.

### Snowdrops in herbalism and medicine

As noted above, the ancient Greeks believed preparations of *Galanthus* would alter consciousness. In Eastern Europe, preparations of snowdrops were used to treat headaches, regulate menstrual flow, and treat nervous system injuries.

Today, science recognizes that one of the compounds in *Galanthus nivalis*, an alkaloid known as galantamine (or galanthamine), affects cerebral function. This may have been the root of the ancient Greeks' experience with the way the plant could alter consciousness or the belief that it could protect one against magic. In 1983, two neurologists hypothesized that *Galanthus nivalis* was the mysterious magical herb, moly, that appears in

the *Odyssey*. Galantamine, could have acted as an antidote to central nervous system intoxication – poisons or Circe's magic.

Galantamine is currently used as a symptomatic treatment for Alzheimer's disease, although it is not a cure. This alkaloid makes snowdrops toxic for cats and dogs. If ingested in large quantities, snowdrops are toxic to humans, as well. The compound can also cause skin irritation when handled.

By the time you read this, all but one or two of our snowdrops will have finished blooming. They retain their promise, though, of renewal, inspiration, and rebirth for next spring.

*Photos by Patricia Jacobec*



## Ukrainians – “We stay and fight”

By Chester Taylor

Each morning, when I awake, I make a cup of coffee and then I check my iPhone for the weather in Kyiv. Was it below freezing again? I think about what Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote in his book, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, “How can you expect a man who’s warm to understand a man who’s cold?” True, you cannot understand how one must feel when they are cold, have little food, and only ice to melt for water while you are warm, eating a croissant, and drinking hot coffee.

It has been like a nightmare for people all over the world, as we watch the horrors of what’s happening in Ukraine. We watch women and children in bunkers, shelters and subways and hear bombs being dropped all around them. We see the faces of fear filled with tear drops. We watch as a little girl named Amelia sings “Let it Go” from the musical “Frozen” inside a crowded bomb shelter in Kyiv. It tugs at your heart strings. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mPTq54uKMk>

We have seen millions in desperation escape with their lives to refugee camps



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in Poland, Romania, or Hungary with little or no money, no house left, and their husbands and sons remaining to fight for their homeland. It’s haunting. It sucks the breath right out of you.

The Ukrainian people are in the survival mode like the character that Solzhenitsyn describes in his book, *Ivan Denisovich Shukhov*. For Ivan Denisovich, surviving one more day was to triumph. And for the people of Ukraine, surviving one more day is to triumph.

We are all worried about the outcome. It probably will not be the one we all hope for. It appears it will end with Russia with its sheer weight of numbers and material resources destroying most of the cities and infrastructure in Ukraine. Intentionally destroying homes, apartments, and hospitals; killing non-combatants (civilian men, women, and children). These are flagrant war crimes according to the Geneva Convention (which Russia has not signed). Vladimir Putin is bent on his mission to roll back the losses of prestige and territory that Russia lost after the Cold War, no matter the cost to Russia. Sanctions are starting to bite. The ruble has plunged nearly 30%, trading as low as 112 to the dollar (less than a cent). Russia has casualties, over 4,000 soldiers killed, many of them young conscripts. Some of the

Russian people are demonstrating for peace. The Russian police have arrested about 3,500 people, including 1,700 in Moscow, 750 in St. Petersburg, and 1,061 in other cities to quell them. We saw the brave young woman, Marina Ovsyannikova, run onto a Russian state TV broadcast with a sign that said, “Stop the War! Don’t believe the propaganda. They are lying to you.” She was arrested and could spend years in prison. Putin is shutting down the free press in Russia, blocking access to the websites of foreign news organizations like the BBC, Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and Deutsche Welle.

Most experts had written Ukraine off. They would collapse in three days or so. It didn’t happen. It will take a miracle for Ukraine to survive the military might being thrust upon them. They are in a desperate fight. It is upsetting that the United States and NATO have been so afraid to give the Ukrainians the Mig-29s they asked for or the S-300 surface-to-air missiles that would really help at this critical time in the battle. It is as though the United States and NATO are sitting on a set of bleachers on the sidelines of a soccer game watching Putin’s army slaughter the Ukrainian people. The Ukrainians have lost more than 2,800 soldiers. Over 3,700 have been





wounded and 600 captured. The UN estimates there are 1,834 Ukrainian civilian casualties so far, including 691 killed and 1,143 injured. Of that total, more than 19 children have been killed and 31 injured. These counts keep rising hourly.

Now, millions are faced without electricity or gas having no heat in the freezing temperatures at night. The Ukrainians are brave and determined. As their president, Volodymyr Zelensky told the United States when our embassy offered to evacuate him, “The fight is here; I need ammunition, not a ride.” A friend from Kyiv, Tetiana, who has a husband and son in the Ukrainian army, recently sent this message, “We stay and fight. Because this is our home and our land.”

Initially President Biden approached the matter with diplomacy and sanctions. He tried to reason with Putin. Then when things changed from a show of force to an all-out invasion, the President waffled and was timid against a bully. The United States and NATO did not have the political will to stand up for democracy and engage Russia

directly. Putin knew this and took advantage of it. He had a green light.

There is a point when you can no longer save the world from war. You cannot stand idly by and let thousands die, democracy be shattered, and free speech be snuffed. If we follow the President’s course of action, then every autocrat in the world with nuclear weapons will push us around. Now Ukrainians sit in ruin and the rest of us have their blood on our hands. Praise

be to Poland, Romania, Hungary, and others who have taken in three million Ukrainian refugees so far without hesitation and are sharing what limited resources they have. Today on March 16, 2022, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s speech before the U.S. Congress should have been our President’s speech to us and the world, what we stand for, what we believe in, and what we will fight for. 🇺🇸





# Rules for traveling with young daughters

By Bob Shea

**A** long time ago – so long that many probably cannot remember that time, there were no sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Really?

Families traveled in something called a station wagon with father, mother, the kids, maybe a dog, and a whole bunch of luggage in a vehicle that is probably only found today in junk yards, on second-rate used car lots, and in Chevy Chase vacation movies.

The families traveled without video games, DVD screens, cell phones, earbuds, and all the devices that today are mandatory, even essential. Staying between the lines of a coloring book is difficult when the car is moving, and some kids get car sick if they try to read. Singing “Ninety-nine bottles of beer on the wall” makes Dad slowly and completely lose his mind.

As a career military officer, my family enjoyed far too many hours in a series of station wagons as we drove cross-country from assignment to assignment with a few additional long trips to visit grandparents and family in New England. Over time, a family develops certain Rules of the Road that were necessary for peace, tranquility, and parental sanity,

Dad drove. Mom read the map and acted as referee for each backseat crisis. The three daughters, all under 10, did whatever they could to entertain themselves as state after state passed by their shared windows.

Some common-sense protocols evolved, and they include:

**1. Keep track of who had to sit in the middle seat.**

Obviously, the daughter in the center of the back seat felt disadvantaged. She did not have “her window;” she

had sisters’ elbows in both ribs, and she had the transmission hump at her feet. The latter became more serious as they grew taller. Mom kept track of seating arrangements and was the final arbitrator, no appeals allowed.

**2. When we could, we always stopped at Stuckey’s.**

Stuckey’s was a chain along interstates that had gas and very clean restrooms (essential for young girls), a tacky gift shop that was “look but don’t touch,” and the biggest bonus of all: if you bought \$10 worth of gas, you received a free box of peanut brittle. It was probably not the best for nutrition for children, but it certainly pleased



the back-seaters for a period of time. By the way, today \$10 for gas is just a splash in the tank, but in those days, it was close to a total fill-up.

**3. Everyone will go to the restroom.**

The most disconcerting sound to hear just as you get back up to the speed limit after a rest stop is “Daddy, I gotta go potty.” This is especially troublesome in the far West, where the next rest stop may be a 100 miles down the road. The rule became: even if you don’t have to go, you go to the restroom and “practice.” It works every time. Practice makes for more perfect trips.

**4. When stopped at a restaurant for lunch, always inventory all belongings before you pull out of the parking lot.**

Learning a child has left a favorite knit hat in a restaurant in Barstow, California when you are 75 miles west somewhere in the Mojave Desert is unsettling, especially when Dad says, “No, we are not turning around.” Life is filled with childhood trauma. “But Daddy!”

**5. Seat belts have a distinctive sound when they are unbuckled.**

In the days of just lap belts, no matter how quietly it was done, Mom or Dad always heard the distinctive click of unbuckling and were quick to issue orders on re-buckling. “But Daddy, I needed to stretch.” Sorry about that. Safety is important.

**6. Keep some secrets from the kids, especially if you are entering California with its Plant and Agriculture Border Stations.**

When asked if you have any fruits, plants, or vegetables at the border station, and you emphatically say, “No, Sir,” you do not want a small voice from the back seat reminding you about the bag of apples,

the grapes, or the philodendron stashed with the suitcases. Full disclosure is not always the best policy, especially with young but truthful daughters.

**7. Wait for breakfast.**

Young girls are not ready to eat breakfast when they are rolled out of bed and bundled into a station wagon at o’dark-thirty. Get up, get dressed, and get in the car. After about an hour on the road, there will always be a Denny’s, a pancake house, or a diner where breakfast is enjoyed. A good first break of the day and a hearty breakfast which will be enjoyed by all, even Mom and Dad who need their caffeine.

**8. Curse educational progress!**

When the kids are too young to read, one can drive by any number of roadside “attractions” with immunity. When

## on the road again

they can read each sign, Dad's world becomes a long dissertation on why we should not stop at the next Native American trading post with authentic souvenirs, monkey jungle, scenic overlook, or petting zoo. This is exacerbated when in South Dakota with miles of Wall Drug signs or in the Carolinas with endless South of the Border roadside signs. A bad combination of marketing and education. Dad must stay firm on stops.

### 9. After a day in the car, little girls are not in a mood to go to a restaurant and order from a menu.

They will not know what they want; they probably would just pick at whatever they do order, and kids full of energy (and peanut brittle) are not on their best behavior in a sit-down restaurant. Stop early at a motel with a playground and/or a pool. Give them a chance to run off energy and be kids. Afterwards, get them showered and in their PJs while Dad goes to gas up the car and makes a MacDonald's stop. Nothing beats a Big Mac and fries in front of a hotel room's television. Life can be good, even after a whole day in the station wagon. It works!

### 10. Mom has supernatural powers of sight.

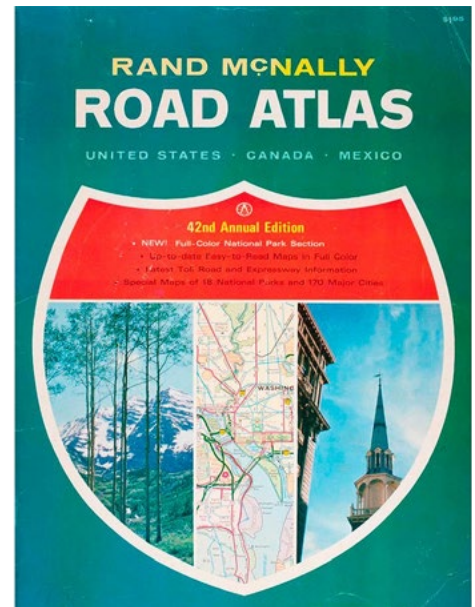
Between rear view mirrors and suspicious sounds, Mom will eventually convince the kids that she has eyes in the back of her head. Every poke, act of non-sharing, or other misdeeds will be seen and identified. Count on it!

### 11. After a long day in the station wagon, think up some small reward for the first daughter to spot the distinctive Holiday Inn sign.

Knowing the landscape, Dad can start the visual search miles before the planned overnight stop. The reward can be as minimal as who gets in the pool first or who does not have to make a second trip to the car to haul in luggage. Mom settles tie-breakers.

These rules would probably work even in SUVs, but they were totally essential when high-tech devices were not available to help keep peace and tranquility in the family station wagon. They were also essential to help Dad maintain sanity as he focused on the highway, other drivers, and safe arrival at the destination.

Call them Robert's Rules of Order (On the Road). Ask any one of my three daughters. 📖



The Speaker Series  
Presents

### An Observance of Women's History Month



### --The Phillips Collection--

The internationally recognized museum in Washington's vibrant Dupont Circle neighborhood will present the works of women artists and photographers who are featured in its current and past exhibitions.

In her talk, art historian Anne Taylor Brittingham includes Marjorie Phillips (wife of founder Duncan Philips), Helen Frankenthaler, Alma Thomas, Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence (wife of Jacob Lawrence), Simone Leigh, and Berenice Abbott.

**Day/Date:** Wednesday, March 30th

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

The Zoom link will be  
forwarded in advance

**Sponsored by:**

**the Activities Committee**





Photos by Dian McDonald  
The Montebello Voice



## On Putin

By Bruce R. Shaw

Putin is personified evil.  
His methods are worse than medieval.  
    He acts with disdain.  
    He's surely insane  
As he's caused a major upheaval.

He's advancing headlong through Ukraine.  
It's a nothing-is-sacred campaign.  
    But he's met with resistance  
    In so many an instants.  
The Ukrainians fight to remain.

Putin saves no mother or baby.  
A conscience? Not even maybe!  
    He is so sick,  
    A lunatic,  
Whose demeanor is well beyond shady.

But in cities such as in Kyiv  
The locals fight for what they believe.  
    "We love our homeland;  
    Don't let Russia expand.  
We must fight to get them to leave."

Zelensky fights the good fight.  
He inspires his people with might.  
    He's taken the lead  
    And will not concede  
Until Putin is put to flight.

Ukraine's seeking support from the West.  
There's been many an urgent request.  
    They need ammo and arms,  
    So from cities and farms  
They fight Putin's villainous quest.

But the U.S. and NATO seem scared.  
(At least that's a view that's been aired.)  
    Afraid to provoke  
    That crazy bloke  
Who says nukes may not be spared.

So what is it that we can do?  
What next steps can we pursue?  
    End Putin's rule.  
    Get rid of that fool.  
His demise is sure overdue.

