



THE OVERLOOK

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SNOWDEN OVERLOOK

EDITORIAL

“Words matter.” Whether they are motivational or mundane, written or spoken, words are consequential. The line from one of Emily Dickinson’s poems “I know nothing in the world that has as much power as a word” says it all!

The goal for *The Overlook* is straightforward: to inform residents about SOCA and condominium activities and to highlight the interests, skills, and talents of community members.

This issue features Villas II residents Marcy and Warren Gitt sharing information about their family and their wish for a return to normalcy. Neil Gordon reflects on the medical emergency he experienced as a teenager. The book club selections have been chosen for their potential to appeal to a wide audience. Richard Blackman provides an update on two local delis and Dennis Eichenlaub describes changes to usb ports!

Jan Brady suggests using the time spent at home to organize your

book collection and if you feel the need for a change of scene, Diane Eidelman and Nathan Baum recommend an outing to a nearby seashore!

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is not yet under control, the SOCA staff continues to conduct ‘business as usual’ and supports videoconferencing as an alternative to in person-meetings and gatherings.

Mel Schwartz, the author of *The Possibility Principle*, wrote “... words are the heartbeat of our relationships.” We hope you agree.

— Pamela Bluh Van Oosten
Christy Wilson
Editors

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- [SOCA News..... 2](#)
- [Condo News..... 3 - 4](#)
- [For Your Entertainment.....5- 7](#)
- [For Your Health 8 - 9](#)
- [Book Nook.....10-11](#)
- [Travel12](#)
- [Meet Your Neighbor.....13-15](#)
- [Miscellany.....16](#)
- [Tech Tips..... 17](#)
- [Rich’s Corner..... 18](#)

NEXT ISSUE
April 15, 2021

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS
April 8, 2021

QUOTE TO LIVE BY

Words are containers of power. Words matter.

— *Joy Baldrige*

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Painting of Clubhouse – This project is complete, inside and out. Now, all we need is a good supply of vaccinated residents to show it off.

Holiday Decorations – Many thanks to the volunteers who decorated (and later undecorated) the clubhouse. During the holidays, the staff and volunteers led small groups of residents through our beautiful clubhouse, some of whom had never before been in the building.

Entrance Landscaping – You may have noticed major changes to the landscaping by the entrance gate. Several trees were removed and more planted. All perennial plants were replaced in the beds along both sides of Dried Earth, and the annual planting beds were rearranged. A few changes were also made to the plantings in the central island. In the process of such a thorough redesign, some damage was done to both the low voltage landscaping lighting and the underground irrigation system. The lighting repairs are complete and the irrigation system will be checked and repaired next spring.

Speed Control – The board is still considering the installation of speed-calming devices on Dried Earth Blvd. Thanks to the residents who submitted comments on the idea. All will be considered.

Budget – The 2021 SOCA budget was adopted. There is no change to the monthly assessment of \$167 per unit.

Use of Clubhouse Deck – Small groups of residents are now permitted to use the clubhouse deck, including the area under the awning. The area may be used during office hours, and the staff may be asked to turn on the electric overhead heaters for such get-togethers. Residents must wear masks and maintain social distancing. The furniture has been arranged to comply with distancing recommendations, so please do

not rearrange it. Residents should wear their orange wristbands indicating that they have signed the liability waiver. If you don't yet have a wristband, the staff can provide it once the form is signed.

Dog Waste – Please remember that both Snowden Overlook covenants and Howard County ordinances require that owners pickup after their pets immediately. We have provided four waste collection stations along Dried Earth for this purpose, each with a supply of bags. Please respect your neighbors by picking up after your pets.

Snow – When snow is expected, any vehicles parked on the clubhouse (exit) side of Dried Earth must be removed to permit efficient snow clearing.

Walking – Many of us are doing more of that than usual. And we recognize that some walk in the street to maintain distance from other approaching walkers. But please, when you are past other walkers, return to the sidewalks to reduce traffic hazards. Failing to do so is inconsistent with Maryland law and a foolhardy risk.

Stay safe and get vaccinated as soon as you can.

— *Lou True, President*



CONDO NEWS

KENDALL II

Do we really need to make any new year's resolutions for 2021 other than doing anything we can to make it better than 2020? Personally, I'm glad 2020 is hindsight! But I want to reflect a bit on the last quarter of 2020 for us in Kendall II.

Some of us were thrilled that the pool stayed open longer, and our own President, Rich Turner, was responsible for making it work organizationally during the pandemic, including extending it well past our "normal" closing dates. Many of us also volunteered to staff the check-in table, and the plan wouldn't have worked without the volunteers, so thanks to all who did!

Similarly, some of us were thrilled with the efforts of our SOCA staff to provide some kind of social programs via the various food trucks that came to serve the community. They really showed some creativity to keep us active and happy.

As all of you KII residents know (from either the zoom meetings or MMG communications), we had to increase the monthly condo association dues (by only \$15) because of a large number of roof and gutter issues, and repairs to homes from those issues. Please rest assured that our volunteer board is looking at a long-term way to address these concerns.

Of course, we had the various seasonal holidays (Christmas, Kwanzaa, Chanukah, etc.) to help us through the darkness of the winter solstice. While our religions may be different, there are always similarities we can find when we look for them. Certainly, for these holidays, the common theme is bringing light to the darkness. Whatever darkness you may have faced this past quarter, as we struggled with a pandemic, political disunity, and misin-

formation around both issues, I hope that you feel the light of this lovely community to help you through it.

This didn't affect the influx of new residents to our Kendall II neighborhood. So we want to extend a warm welcome to new residents since August:

Tugluke Abdurazak	8840 Shining Oceans Way
Anita Bush	8859 Shining Oceans Way
Lawrence & Rita Franklin	8847 Shining Oceans Way
Paula G. Millard	8886 Shining Oceans Way

Wishing you all on the best of health and happiness for 2021! By the way, did you know that we'll have 10 straight days of palindromic dates this month? From 1/20/21 through 1/29/21, the date reads the same backwards as forwards!

Peace and blessings,

— Gordon Fuller, At-large KII board member

VILLAS I

Board Election – At our annual meeting on November 5, Dave Perin and Bob Vogel were reelected to the Villas I board for new 3-year terms. Thanks to all who voted and to Dave and Bob for volunteering to serve our community.

2021 Budget – At the same November meeting, the board adopted the budget for this year. It reflects a \$5 increase in the monthly assessment due to increases in the master insurance policy and other items.

Home Maintenance – A few reminders from the Villas I Maintenance Checklist that can be found at snowden-overlook.com under Condos, Villas I, Information:

- Page 2, under Periodic Maintenance, Heating and Air Conditioning – Remember to replace both filters periodically.
- Page 2, Plumbing – All exterior spigots should now be cut off until spring using valves inside your home, to prevent freeze damage and flooding. Also note the guidance on rarely-used fixtures in your home, which can be damaged or allow sewer gases to enter.
- Page 3, Storm Water – Be sure to check drains at the bottom exterior basement steps, if you have them. If this drain is blocked by ice or debris, water can rise and enter your basement. The same is true of drains at the bottom of any basement window wells your home may have.
- Page 4, Rainwater – Check for and repair soil erosion and adjust splash blocks as necessary.
- Page 5, Smoke Detectors – If you haven't checked yours lately, now might be a good occasion to do so. If you are like many of us, you may well have the time.

Drainage Improvement – A contractor recently com-

pleted another project to improve drainage into the community storm water system. This one was behind 8729, 31 and 33 Warm Waves. Several unit owners here also opted to install new drainpipes from their units to a new pipe installed by the association. They also had additional soil added near their homes to help ensure that rainwater does not pool near the foundations.

Snow – When snow is expected, please move any vehicles you can into your garage. Vehicles in driveways, and guest vehicles in visitor parking, impede snow clearing.

— Lou True, President

VILLAS II

Welcome to our new neighbors Anne Buening, Norma Nieves and Karl Koenigs, and Susan Nieves. We know you will enjoy the neighborhood.

It has been nice seeing so many neighbors walking around for exercise, safely socializing, and reaching out to each other to ask if anyone needs help.

The Board has continued to hold meetings via Zoom and has addressed insurance issues, foundation repairs and roof/gutter repairs. A major ongoing project which was mentioned in the last newsletter is an inventory by an arborist of all the trees in Villas II (excluding the front yard trees which are the homeowner's responsibility). The builder chose the cheapest varieties and the most inappropriate configuration for the trees that were planted and the Board is interested in receiving recommendations for a long-term planting plan.

The Board would really like to see more resident participation in our work sessions and Board meetings. Show an interest - we value your inputs.

— Mark Bloom, President



FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

Friday, January 15 - **January Food Truck Event
Featuring [Greek on the Street](#) 4-7pm. Location:
Clubhouse parking lot. Back by popular demand!

Thursday, January 21 - *[Security Workshop](#) (Via
Zoom) 7-8pm Guest Speakers: *Bill Kreitzer*
(Howard County Police) & *Resident, Dennis*
Eichenlaub.

Saturday, January 23 - *[Game Night: Trivia Quiz!](#)
(Via Zoom) 7-8pm.

Wednesday, January 27 - *[Coffee with Carol](#) (Via
Zoom) 11am - 12pm.
Guest speaker: *Jenna Crawley, Howard County Of-*
fice on Aging and Independence

Wednesday, January 27 - **[StonyMan Coffee &](#)
[Food Truck](#) Location: Clubhouse parking lot. 9am –
12pm. Grab a coffee and a treat!

Thursday, January 28 - *[Lunch & Learn](#) (Via
Zoom) 12:30pm
Guest Speaker: *Margaret Vincent*
Ovation resident Margaret Vincent will share infor-
mation about her multi-talented career in costume cre-
ation and design, along with presenting her Power
Point 'Scrapbook' showing her varied and most inter-
esting career before moving to Maryland.

**Sunday, 1/31 (Rescheduled New Year's Day
Event)** – **[Chesapeake Food Works](#) Food Truck. 4-
7pm. Location: Clubhouse parking lot.

Wednesday, February 17 – Coffee with Carol (via
Zoom)
Guest speaker: [Charlotte Wallace, Luminus](#)
[Healthcare](#)
Topic: Staying Healthy During a Pandemic

Wednesday, March 17 – Coffee with Carol (via
Zoom),
Guest speaker: *Dr. Sachin Kalyani: [Kalyani Eye](#)*
[Care](#)
Topic: Eye Care

Thursday, March 25 – Lunch & Learn (via Zoom)
12:30pm
Guest speaker: *Chuck Semich*
Chuck will talk about his work as a China expert for
the House Appropriations Committee, and as a mar-
riage counselor and psychotherapist.

Wednesday, April 21 – Coffee with Carol (via
Zoom)
Guest speaker: *Carmen Roberts ([Kindred Nutrition](#)*
and [Howard County Office on Aging & Independ-](#)
ence)
Topic: Promoting Good Health with Nutrition

***For virtual events, no sign up is necessary. You
will automatically receive an email with Zoom
([link](#)) and event details a few days before the
event.**

****For more information regarding Clubhouse
event rules and food truck menus, please vis-
it [https://www.snowdenoverlook.com/activities/
soca-activities/](https://www.snowdenoverlook.com/activities/soca-activities/).**

**Help with Zoom is available but should be scheduled
prior to participating in an event. Contact the Club-
house office (410-872-9311 or
office@snowdenoverlook.com) to request help from a
Snowden Overlook resident who is knowledgeable
about Zoom. Please include your name, phone num-
ber, email address, and a few alternative dates/times
when you would be available to receive help.**



FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

GAME NIGHT AT SNOWDEN OVERLOOK

For the New Year, SOCA's Social Committee is launching a Virtual Game Night as a monthly event until the Clubhouse re-opens. The first event will be a Trivia Night at 7pm on Saturday, January 23, with prizes. Residents will need to use [Zoom](#) and [Kahoot](#), a free quiz app. Have fun from home and get help answering questions from members of your household. Participants will need a smartphone to answer the questions using Kahoot and a computer with Zoom to view the Quizmaster and other players.

Please RSVP by January 18 by contacting the Clubhouse Office at 410-872-9311 or sending an email to office@snowdenoverlook.com.

When you sign up, please mention your phone number and a few alternative dates and times when you would be available for a short phone call from a volunteer who will call each participant to demonstrate how to play using Kahoot and Zoom and provide a quick demonstration of how to use Kahoot.

— Mike Goldblatt

SECURITY WORKSHOP

SOCA's Security Committee will Zoom a Security Workshop from 7pm to 8pm on Thursday, January 21. Speakers include Bill Kreitzer (Howard County Police), Dennis Eichenlaub, and Mike Goldblatt. Topics are cybersecurity, personal security, and safe driving.

Response to the presentation on safe driving, will, it is hoped, determine whether there is enough interest to invite AARP to hold its 4-hour [Safe Driving Course](#) at Snowden's Clubhouse next Fall. (AARP requires 10 participants and the cost is about \$25

per participant).

A question-and-answer session will follow the presentations. RSVP by January 18 by contacting the Clubhouse Office (call 410-872-9311 or email office@snowdenoverlook.com).

When you RSVP, let the Clubhouse Office know if you need help using Zoom so that a Snowden volunteer can assist you before the event.

— Mike Goldblatt

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR USING ZOOM

[Zoom](#) is a popular communications tool that enables residents to stay connected with their Snowden friends and participate in Snowden virtual activities such as Coffee with Carol, Game Night, Mah Jongg, Poker, and a variety of workshops. Experienced users can learn tips and tricks for Zoom by reading AARP's article [How to Use Zoom](#) or viewing their [video](#).

Newcomers to Zoom can contact the Clubhouse Office by calling 410-872-9311 or e-mailing snowdenoverlook.com to request help from Snowden volunteers including Dennis Eichenlaub and Mike Goldblatt. If you call the office to request assistance, please mention a few alternative dates and times that you are available for help. You should receive a reply within a few days after you contact the Office.

— Mike Goldblatt



FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

LUNCH & LEARN IS BACK

Snowden Overlook is starting the New Year with an attempt to bring back some normalcy by scheduling a number of monthly events that usually take place at the Clubhouse. That being said, for the time being “ZOOM” is our go-to ‘place’ where we can continue our wonderful Clubhouse events.

Back by popular demand, we welcome our much-missed **Lunch & Learn** events which take place at 12:30 pm on the 4th Thursday of September, November, January, March, and May.

This month, on **Thursday, January 28th at 12:30** we will be entertained—via ZOOM—by Ovation resident **Margaret Vincent**. She will recap her extremely varied career through the years using a Power Point presentation which she describes as “a presentation that resembles a scrapbook of my professional life.” Margaret’s career included not only working in the theatre, especially with costume design, collecting and arranging artifacts for museums, but also educating students in the art and history of clothing.

On **March 25th at 12:30**, you will want to tune in via ZOOM to hear resident **Chuck Semich** who will recap for us his varied careers which were spent in government ‘on the Hill’ as a China expert for the House Appropriations Committee. Chuck also was a practicing Marriage Counselor and Psychotherapist.

So, bring your lunch to your iPad or computer desk and enjoy two marvelous presentations for our first Lunch & Learn events of 2021. An announcement about these events will be sent by your HOA presidents approximately one week prior to the above

dates. Most likely you will receive a link to the event the day prior to the presentations.

Happy New Year to all; I hope you will be able to attend these great events.

— Jan Brady, *Chair*
Lunch & Learn

POKER NIGHT RETURNS

Mark Bloom, Charlie Overly, and Jeff Perriens have organized a Virtual Poker Night with an easy to use website called PokerNow.com.

Features include automatic dealing, counting, and scoring. Audio-video is built into PokerNow so Zoom is not needed. Virtual Poker Night will temporarily take the place of the weekly game at the Clubhouse. Virtual Poker is held every Wednesday at 7pm. A few days before each game, an email will request an RSVP and a \$10 contribution to the Poker Pot. The weekly emails include the link needed to play. The games are fun and a good way to stay connected.

To be added to the mailing list for the weekly game, contact [Mark Bloom](https://PokerNow.com).

— *Mike Goldblatt*



FOR YOUR HEALTH

COVID VACCINE INFORMATION

The following information was provided by Jim Gutman (Villas I).

Maryland has established a vaccinations text-alerts system that people can register for and get notifications of major developments, such as when the state is about to enter the next phase (e.g., category 1B or 1C) of the vaccinations. To get these notifications, text "Mdready" to 898211, and you will get a confirmation that you're enrolled. Some of this information is also available by going to covidlink.maryland.gov and clicking on "vaccine." When it is time for the next group to set up appointments to get vaccinated, Maryland residents apparently will be able to do so via marylandvax.org

That site will not enable anyone to do so yet since the state is still in the initial 1A stage and will be there for some time.

If you have questions about COVID-19 that are not answered on the website, **contact your local health department** (410-313-6300) or dial 2-1-1. **Please do not contact Mr. Gutman.**

MY LEFT HAND

The year 1956 was considered a good time to be a fifteen-year-old teenager in Baltimore, Maryland. Rock and Roll was dominating the music scene, we were three years past the Korean War, President Eisenhower's interstate highway plan was already paying dividends in reducing travel times by car, and I was just getting my learners' permit to start testing my skills behind the wheel of Dad's Buick Roadmaster.

It was a typical fall day in November. As a sophomore at the Castle on the Hill, better known as [Baltimore City College](#), I got off the bus after a 45-minute commute from 33rd Street and The Alameda to my stop at Clarks Lane at Park Heights Avenue. Sore and tired from a JV football practice, I hurried

down the two-block walk to our apartment house unit. Just months before, glass storm doors were installed on the front doors of the complex. As I ran up the stairs, I stumbled and began to fall forward. My reflex reaction was to reach out to break the fall. Instead of breaking my fall, my open left hand broke the glass of the front door and I then fell to the ground.

I remember a scrape on my left knee but was not aware of any pain to my hand. As I began to get up, I saw a pool of blood where my hand had been which was coming from an open wound that ran from my middle finger to the pinky. At that point, I ran to my door and yelled for my mother to open it. Fortunately, she was home and opened the door. I ran past her to the kitchen sink and ran cold water over the wound. I grabbed a linen towel and pressed it against the wound. My mother's initial reaction was to call her sister-in-law who was a pharmacist and served as her medical expert.

My aunt had me get an ice pack on the wound ASAP, and have my mother drive me to [Sinai Hospital](#), which was about two miles away. She would call a doctor to meet us at the ER. About an hour later, after the wound had been cleaned and the bleeding controlled, a Dr. Mark Gann introduced himself. He was the head of surgery at the hospital, which meant my aunt did have some influence. He sat us down and was straight forward with us. He said that all he could do for this was either sew the wound up or amputate the three fingers. Every nerve and tendon had been completely severed. But, he said, there was one local surgeon who was a pioneer in saving and rehabilitating these types of wounds. If he was available, he could possibly give me a better prognosis. Dr. Gann called his office and he was in at the time.

Two hours later, we were at Union Memorial Hospital talking with [Dr. Raymond Curtis](#). He was small in stature, spoke softly, and had a very commanding presence. He said because the wound was clean and precise for easier access, he felt good about the chances of saving my fingers. At around 11:00 p.m.,



FOR YOUR HEALTH

I was wheeled into the OR and a 6-hour surgery commenced. When I woke up, Dr. Curtis was talking with several other MDs describing what he had done. To me it could have been a foreign language since I was not familiar with any of the names of the nerves and the instruments he was referring to. I had a cast on my lower left arm and the three fingers were attached to heavy rubber bands that were anchored to what appeared to be a hanger-type attachment. The swelling was very noticeable, and for the next few days I was moved around the hospital in a wheelchair and examined by many doctors. I felt like a celebrity.

What I never realized at the time was just how new and revolutionary this type of orthopedic surgery was. I was discharged after three days and went back to school the next week. In another few weeks, I had the stitches removed. I had pain sensations in my fingers which was a good sign. Next on my list of things to do involved a regimen I remember as close to torture. I was assigned a physical therapist at Union Memorial three days a week for the next six months. The good thing was it was only a 10-minute walk from my school and on the same bus route. The therapist was named Stan, a burly 200 lb. man of about 35. I'd come into his room and dip my hand in hot paraffin wax which formed a glove around the hand and made the manipulation more effective. He used cocoa butter and would rub it into my fingers. Then the fun started as he would pull my fingers back to break the scar tissue. It would be a game of how long I could hold out before crying "Uncle." Without this pain, Dr. Curtis told me, his work on my hand would not achieve the maximum results that he claimed could be 90% return to normal use and feeling. Over the next two years, I continued to see him at his office every three months.

On a few occasions, Dr. Curtis asked me to attend seminars where he made presentations of his work, and when he called me up to the dais, I saw multiple color shots of the pre-surgery wound, the surgery itself, and the post-surgery. He would then have me demonstrate the dexterity and strength of the fingers. Afterwards, a

procession of hand surgeons would talk to me about things I could and could not do. The only limitation was my ring finger had a slight bend at the joint of the fingertip, and during my last years of high school, I was held out of contact sports, but resumed sports activities in college.

Let's move the clock up sixty years and speak of the cathartic experience which led to this story. Two years ago, a very close friend of ours died unexpectedly and her daughter happens to be a doctor on the staff of [Union Memorial Hospital](#). For some reason, I googled Union Memorial and saw the [Curtis National Hand Center](#) prominently featured. It opened up a stream of memories of my past that I hadn't thought about in years. [Dr. Raymond Curtis](#), by the grace of God, happened to be in the right place at the right time and saved my left hand. I began to think of how fortunate I was. I've always tried to be generous in my charitable giving and volunteer with non-profits, but I asked myself "have I really repaid the debt of my good fortune in terms of personal growth?" My answer is that I can do much better in the remaining time that I have on this earth.

— Neil F. Gordon

Epilogue: It's not speculation that my life would have been different had I lost those fingers, especially my athletic pursuits that led to a football scholarship to a major college. Before the mid-1950s nerve regeneration had not been successful. Fortunately, the head of surgery at Sinai Hospital, who was an orthopedist, knew of Dr. Curtis' work, and that he was one of the few surgeons in the country who had successfully reattached nerves as well as tendons, a procedure that was new at the time. By writing this essay, I would like to honor the memory and work of Dr. Raymond Curtis.



BOOK NOOK

MORNING BOOK CLUB

JANUARY

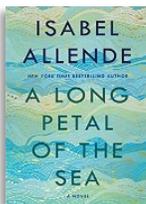
Such a Fun Age, by Kiley Reid



In the midst of a family crisis late one evening, white blogger Alix Chamberlain calls her African American babysitter, Emira, asking her to take toddler Briar to the local market for distraction. There, the security guard accuses Emira of kidnapping Briar, and Alix's efforts to right the situation turn out to be good intentions selfishly mismanaged.

FEBRUARY

A Long Petal of the Sea: A Novel, by Isabel Allende

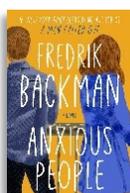


In the late 1930s, civil war grips Spain. When General Franco and his Fascists succeed in overthrowing the government, hundreds of thousands are forced to flee in a treacherous journey over the mountains to the French border. Among them is Roser, a pregnant young widow, and Victor Dalmau, an army doctor and the brother of her deceased love.

Together with two thousand other refugees, they embark on the SS Winnipeg, a ship chartered by the poet Pablo Neruda, to Chile: "the long petal of sea and wine and snow." [Waiting for] the day they ... will be exiles no more their hope of returning to Spain keeps them going. Destined to witness the battle between freedom and repression as it plays out across the world, Roser and Victor will find that home might have been closer than they thought all along.

MARCH

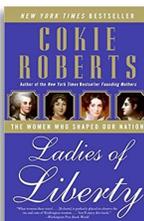
Anxious People, by Fredrik Backman



From the author of *A Man Called Ove* comes a charming, poignant novel about a crime that never took place, a would-be bank robber who disappears into thin air, and eight extremely anxious strangers who find they have more in common than they ever imagined.

APRIL

Ladies of Liberty: the Women Who Shaped Our Nation, by Cokie Roberts



Bestselling author and renowned political commentator Cokie Roberts brings to life the extraordinary accomplishments of women who laid the groundwork for a better society. Recounted with insight and humor, and drawing on personal correspondence, private journals, and other primary sources, many of them previously unpublished, here are the fascinating and inspiring true stories of first ladies and freethinkers, educators and explorers.

Featuring an exceptional group of women ... [the book] sheds new light on the generation of heroines, reformers, and visionaries who helped shape our nation, finally giving these extraordinary ladies the recognition they so greatly deserve.

Please note, until further notice, the Book Clubs will meet virtually, using ZOOM, at the same time as they have been scheduled in person. Contact the coordinators for details about each session. Day time: Barbara Maloney - barbaramaloney@comcast.net; Evening: Pat Harrington - pharrington61@verizon.net

BOOK NOOK

EVENING BOOK CLUB

JANUARY

[Wuthering Heights](#), by Emily Brontë

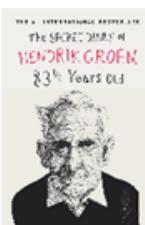


Wuthering Heights is Emily Brontë's only novel. Originally published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell, the name of the novel comes from the manor on the Yorkshire moors (*wuthering* is a Yorkshire word meaning 'turbulent weather').

It is the story of two families both joined and riven by love and hate. Catherine is a "beautiful and willful young woman torn between her soft-hearted husband and Heathcliff, the passionate and resentful man who has loved her since childhood. The power of their bond creates a maelstrom of cruelty and violence which will leave one of them dead and cast a shadow over the lives of their children. The novel is a stunningly original and shocking exploration of obsessive passion."

FEBRUARY

[The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen, 83 1/4 years old](#), by Hendrik Groen



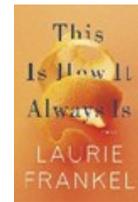
Technically speaking, Hendrik Groen is ... elderly. But at age 83 1/4, this feisty, indomitable curmudgeon has no plans to go out quietly. Bored of weak tea and potted geraniums, exasperated by the indignities of aging, Hendrik has decided to rebel - on his own terms. He begins writing an exposé: secretly recording the antics of day-to-day life in his retirement home, where he refuses to take himself, or his fellow "inmates," too seriously.

With an eccentric group of friends, he founds the

wickedly anarchic Old-But-Not-Dead Club, and he and his best friend, Evert, gleefully stir up trouble, enraging the home's humorless director and turning themselves into unlikely heroes. And when a sweet and sassy widow moves in next door, he polishes his shoes, grooms what's left of his hair, and determines to savor every ounce of joy in the time he has left, with hilarious and tender consequences.

MARCH

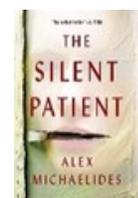
[This is How it Always Is](#), by Laurie Frankel



This is a novel about revelations, transformations, fairy tales, and family. And it's about the ways this is how it always is: Change is always hard and miraculous and hard again, parenting is always a leap into the unknown with crossed fingers and full hearts, children grow but not always according to plan. And families with secrets don't get to keep them forever.

APRIL

[The Silent Patient](#), by Alex Michaelides



This is a shocking psychological thriller of a woman's act of violence against her husband and of the therapist obsessed with uncovering her motive.

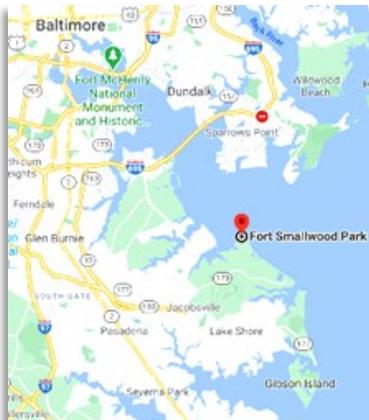
Please note, until further notice, the Book Clubs will meet virtually, using ZOOM, at the same time as they have been scheduled in person. Contact the coordinators for details about each session. Day time: Barbara Maloney - barbaramaloney@comcast.net; Evening: Pat Harrington - pharrington61@verizon.net

This essay is another in the series about local sites to explore.

FORT SMALLWOOD PARK

Several weeks ago, some friends invited Nathan and me to meet them at [Fort Smallwood Park](#). It was one of those unusually warm and sunny December days, and we eagerly agreed to go. The park is located at the tip of a peninsula in northeastern Anne Arundel County and is less than half an hour away from Columbia. Having moved from Long Island not that long ago, we are always happy to visit a beach and look for shore birds and smell the salt air. The park includes a fishing pier, children's playground, historic gun battery, walking trails, beaches, and a pond. The site was constructed for seacoast defense during the Spanish-American war era and used from 1890 to 1927. You can see its strategic importance when you look across the Bay to the Baltimore harbor. It is quite the view.

After parking our car, we walked a little way along the shore enjoying the view and the fresh air but did not see many birds so we decided to move to another parking area and try our luck there. Suddenly, the Bay opened up and all we saw was open water! There was a lovely little beach to take in the sun, and I couldn't help but think about the summers to come for a return visit. Since the waters around Maryland are such important wintering sites for many shore birds, we pulled out our binoculars to have a look. Far out in the Bay we caught sight



of a flock of [Coots](#) as well as a beautiful [Ruddy Duck](#), a species we had never seen before. This blue billed compact duck is common around here, but not so on Long Island. What a treat it was for us to add a new bird to our life list. We look forward to returning to Ft. Smallwood when the weather improves and seeing what other treats are in store for us.

— Diane Eidelman and Nathan Baum

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

MARCY & WARREN GITT

Cornhuskers (Nebraska natives) Marcy and Warren Gitt grew up in Hastings, a small town in south-central Nebraska, roughly 100 miles west of Lincoln. They met and dated during high school, attracted by their interest in music, a passion for discovering new places and their curiosity about diverse cultures, but then lost contact with each other. More than a decade later, their enthusiasm for exploration undiminished, they were re-united.

Marcy attended Colorado College in Colorado Springs and after completing her undergraduate studies she worked in Human Resources for a diverse group of businesses ranging from clothing manufacturing and banking to brewing (Colorado is Coors Country!) and oil. However, to satisfy her first love,



Warren's rock band, 1967

Marcy enrolled in the [School of Social Work at Arizona State University](#) to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Throughout her work in Human Resources and Social Work, she was able to utilize the fluency in Spanish she acquired during a year abroad

at the University of Madrid as well as several refresher courses in Mexico, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.

Warren majored in German at [Hastings College](#) and financed his studies by playing saxophone in the travelling rock band [Spider and the Crabs](#) throughout the central US. After completing his undergraduate degree, Warren served as a linguist with the US Army Security Agency and upon completion of his military service, taught German at an Omaha high school for several years. In 1976, he decided to go back to school for a master's degree and enrolled at ASU's [Thunderbird School of Global Management](#) in Phoenix to study for an MBA in marketing and inter-

national business.

By chance, Marcy and Warren discovered that they had both moved to Phoenix, and a year after renewing their friendship, they were married!

With degrees in hand, the Gitts moved to Los Angeles for Warren's job. However, the move to LA was short-lived, and they relocated to Colorado to be closer to family and friends. In addition, the cost of living in Denver was much more reasonable than in California and they purchased their dream home in the mountains outside Denver. They adopted two children from South Korea - their infant son Martin in 1984 and two years later, baby daughter Vanessa. In order to spend more time with the children without giving up her Human Resources work entirely, Marcy opted to work on a part-time basis.

Warren's work in marketing and management for several medical device companies required extensive travel, both domestically and internationally which allowed him to satisfy his love of travel and discovery and maintain his German language skills. Over the course of his career, he achieved the dubious distinction of having visited at least one hospital in all fifty states and in fifteen foreign countries!

In 1991, the family relocated to Maryland for Warren's work, and after researching various locations, settled in Columbia and later, in Ellicott City. As a mixed race family, the city's founding principle of diversity and its focus on racial and economic integration reflected the Gitt's values and priorities. An outstanding public school system and opportunities to connect with the growing Korean American community also appealed to them.

During their Howard County years, Warren's work in the medical device field continued as did his globe-trotting but his first priority was always his family. Marcy embarked on a second career focusing on adoption, as the Program Manager for International



MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Adoptions for South Korea, China, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Colombia for several Maryland-based adoption agencies. She gave adoption education workshops, spoke nationwide on transracial adoption, and travelled with families and visited orphanages. She led “Homeland Tours” for adoptive families interested in taking their children to visit the country of their birth and she, herself, visited South Korea times, including three trips with her own children. She has stayed in touch with many of the hundreds of adoptive families she worked with over the years and feels fortunate to have loved her career.



Marcy leading a Homeland Tour to China for adoptive families

Although they appreciated raising their children in Howard County and had a close circle of friends, they missed being away from their families and once their children graduated from high school, Marcy and Warren returned to Phoenix. However, five years later, they came back to Columbia, feeling it was their true “home.”



Vanessa and her family enjoying trick or treating in Villas II

They moved to Snowden Overlook in 2010, close to their daughter Vanessa and her family who live in Catonsville.

Their son Martin lives



Martin & Buffy

with them in Snowden Overlook and he and his dog Buffy are a familiar sight to dog-lovers throughout the neighborhood. The Gitts enjoy Snowden Overlook’s sense of community!

The Gitts have always been active in the communities in which they lived, so it was not surprising that, on their return to Columbia they resumed some of their previous activities and sought

out new volunteer opportunities. They participated in the planning for Columbia’s newest sister city, Liyang, China and travelled to China twice, most recently in April 2019 when they were invited to attend the International Tea Festival in Liyang and, as representatives of CA, ratified the [educational and cultural agreement between Columbia and Liyang](#). Marcy and Warren both serve on the Columbia Association’s Liyang Sister City Committee, developing exchange programs and hosting international visitors. Marcy chairs CA’s International & Multicultural Advisory Committee, which oversees the work of all five of Columbia’s sister city committees and where her effective collaboration with members of the international community and her twenty years of experience working with China are highly valued.



In China, Warren photographing children during a visit to a school

At Snowden Overlook, “an active adult community,” the emphasis is on “active.” The Gitts are both retired, but not at all retiring! Aside from their volunteer work, their greatest pleasure continues to be spending time with their two little grandsons, Gavin and Austin! Since March 2020, when the pandemic forced daycare programs to close, Marcy and Warren have provided “in loco” daycare for the boys, ages four and two, and now can confidently claim that they have mastered an infinite number of ways to entertain small boys.

Marcy belongs to a Global Book Club, sings in a community choir, and loves the Snowden pool. Warren plays golf and nurtures his passion for photography as may be seen at [Warren Gitt Photography](#). With his brother, also an amateur photographer, Warren has embarked on several ‘photo safaris’ including to Wyoming’s Grand Tetons, to observe the [Sandhill Crane Migration](#) in Nebraska, and most recently, to photograph animals in South Africa’s [Blue Canyon Private Game Reserve](#) while staying at the



MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Vuyani Safari Lodge.

Over the years, the Gitts favorite travel experiences have been those where they veered off the typical tourist path, in what they call “untour” style, exploring local neighborhoods and dining in private homes. Memorable recent trips include riding horseback into the forest in Mexico to see the [monarch butterfly migration](#); visiting Buenos Aires to meet a gentleman who had been an exchange student with Marcy’s family in Nebraska fifty years ago; staying in unique lodgings such as [pousadas](#) while exploring Spain and Portugal; and Warren’s Vietnam experience touring Hanoi riding on a college student’s motorbike while Marcy took adoptive families to see the villages where their children were born. Frequent (eleven so far) trips to Costa Rica sustain the bond with a Costa Rican family which began when a young AFS (American Field Service) exchange student, now referred to as their “Costa Rican daughter” lived with the Gitts for a year and attended Centennial High School with their children. On one six-week Costa Rican trip Warren spent his mornings taking Spanish lessons at a local school while Marcy volunteered at the preschool attended by the son of their “Costa Rican daughter.”



Marcy & Warren, their daughter & her husband,

Because COVID 19 has put a damper on travel, Warren and Marcy sought alternatives to satisfy their wanderlust by seeking venues closer to home. Excursions to [St. Mary’s City](#), roughly two hours from Columbia, and to a horse farm in Virginia, were relaxing and provided opportunities for exploring the surrounding countryside. For now, though, they are staying very close to home.



With their grandchildren, Gavin & Austin, on a warm winter day by



Marcy’s favorite sunrise photo at the end of Sage Brush Way

and Warren will resume their travels. In the meantime, they find joy by spending time with their children and grandchildren (in their family COVID pod) while waiting patiently to take advantage of all that Columbia and Snowden Overlook have to offer.

— Pamela Bluh Van Oosten

Once they feel it is safe to travel and their grandchildren have returned to preschool, no doubt, Marcy

'ORGANIZING...ROOM TO ROOM'

Happy New Year to all S.O. residents. Welcome to Year 2021, and we will not even give that 'other year just past' the dignity of a title. Let's just say it's time to move on to better days, and what better way to start the new year than organizing the home in which we have spent oh-so-many hours these past nine months.

To get into the 'decluttering groove' you should know that every JANUARY is "GO" month to Professional Organizers: **Get Organized!** This issue will concentrate on not just one particular room, but on one item that seems to appear in every room in our home—**BOOKS**.

In most homes there seems to be an overstock of books, whether purchased or given as gifts. Books are comforting; nothing eases our minds and souls better than a good read. But *how* did we come upon the hundreds of books in our possession? And *where* can we store and organize them so we know how to find a particular book without playing Sherlock Holmes? Let's organize our books this month at the start of a brand new year.

Have supplies ready: thick Sharpie marker, blank paper to write book categories, several sturdy boxes for transporting, and a step stool if necessary. Make categories of books you want to keep, i.e., Art, Biography, Fiction, Health, History, Politics, Self-Help, Travel. Print your categories on a blank sheet of paper and place it on the floor where those books will be piled.

Start with one shelf in one particular room; choose a category for that shelf, placing books *not in that category* in the proper pile on the floor. The most frequently used books should be on a shelf at an easily accessible level.

Weed out those books no longer wanted/needed. Be firm with yourself! These books will go into a donation box (hospital, thrift shop, Goodwill, nursing home, etc.). Continue through each shelf, book by book. The book piles on the floor will 'grow.'

If possible, gather the books from around your home into one separate area on the floor where your main bookcases are located. After those bookcases are organized then go to this large 'around the house' pile and also sort these books, putting them on their proper shelves. Paperbacks can be lined up two rows deep. These, too, must be weeded out.

Label the shelves according to category to facilitate locating a book. Remember to leave room for additional books on a shelf in each category.

Some book lovers enjoy the aesthetics of placing 'collectibles' (figurines, metal/crystal items) in empty spaces scattered on the shelves to break up the appearance, while others prefer a dedicated 'library look.'

Locations for book storage are endless: the living room, the dining room and hallways are excellent spots for filling empty walls with bookcases. Don't neglect looking up: shelving for books 1.5 feet from the ceiling, around a room, is great storage for seldom used and collectors' books.

Do not purchase new bookcases/shelving until you have weeded your collection. You just might find you have donated enough books to give yourself ample room for your new library!

— Jan Brady

THE ALL NEW USB PORT

We figured out Email. We learned how to shop online. We can Zoom with the pros. Life is good ... or is it? While we weren't looking, the computer industry completely changed the humble USB port, both physically and electrically. Even the names of the port have changed. We see the terms USB, USB-2, USB-3, USB-C, Thunderbolt, and soon USB-4. Many computers have more than one USB port, sometimes with some ports being more capable than others. It sounds like a hopeless mash-up. Nevertheless, there are significant improvements available. It can benefit us to know what superpowers this port offers.

Changes to USB are driven by super-thin laptops. There is no longer room for an Ethernet connector or an HDMI connector. The industry's answer is an improved USB port. Changes designed for high-end laptops are slowly appearing in less expensive computers and devices. To make some sense of all this, let's focus on the computers.

The physical changes are not difficult. There are only two connectors. The first is the regular old USB connector. This rectangular connector can't be plugged in if it is upside down. The new connector, called USB-C, is a small oval that can be plugged in either way. There are also USB mini and USB micro connectors. These are often found on phones and such, but never on computers.

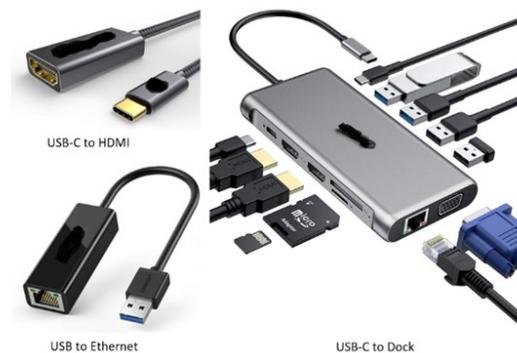


What the connector can do electrically is defined by the protocol. The old protocols are USB and USB-2. These are used for mice, thumb drives, and other simple devices. Besides data, the port can provide 5 volts to power the device.

The new protocols are USB-3, Thunderbolt, and USB-4. Fortunately for us, we don't have to know which protocol the computer uses. The new protocols still work with traditional devices, but also include HDMI connections for external monitors and Ethernet con-

nections for fast internet. The port voltage starts at 5 volts, but it can go up as high as 20 volts. Some ports can accept power, which means sometimes you can charge a laptop through the USB-C connector. One port can do all of these things at the same time, or it might do just some of these things. It depends on the manufacturer of the laptop.

How do you know if your USB port has the new superpowers? If it's a USB-C connector, it has at least



some of the superpowers. If it's the old USB connector, look at the color of the insert. Usually a black or white insert indicates no superpowers. Any other color means you have at least some superpowers. If you want the details, check with the data sheet that came with your computer, or download it from the internet.

How do you use the superpowers? Simply purchase an adapter or a dock. Before buying, here are some hints. Match your adapter or dock to the connector on your laptop (USB or USB-C). If it's the old USB connector, make sure the insert is not black or white. If your laptop has more than one USB port, some ports might not support all capabilities. If your adapter doesn't work, try another port. If your laptop can be charged through the port, you can buy a dock with a power supply to charge your laptop while you are using an external display, an Ethernet cable, a thumb drive, mouse, and more – all at the same time.

Woo-hoo!

— Dennis Eichenlaub

UPDATE ON NEW LOCAL DELIS

THB Bagels (Towson Hot Bagels)

Between Target and Old Navy

I'm impressed. From their website, "The Columbia store will be the largest THB yet, with seating for as many as 74 customers." Yes, the seating and atmosphere will be nice, but that's not relevant in COVID times. Four things I like a lot about my experiences with THB:

1. The bagels are good. My favorite is the wheat everything bagel.
2. On Monday and Tuesday, order a baker's dozen (13) for \$11.95 and **get 3 free bagels**. That's a good deal.
3. I'm hesitant to go into any restaurant, even to get carryout during the pandemic. While THB does not offer curbside pickup, I was comfortable with their pickup system. I ordered online (I could pick pretty much any time). When I submitted the order, I received an order number. At the time I chose, I walked into the store, went to the carryout shelf (about halfway into the store and not near the cash registers), found my order (there was only one other), picked it up and headed out the exit. Twenty seconds, no contact with anyone. I guess they trust their customers. One time, I forgot to bring my order number, but gave a staffer my name and he handed me my bag. That was 30 seconds total.

4. They care about their customers. My first order (just after they opened), wasn't quite right. I sent them a note and they gave me a generous gift certificate which covered the order and more.

Mikey and Mel's Famous Deli

8191 Maple Lawn Blvd, just off the main road

I still haven't been there and have heard mixed reviews especially right after they opened. But today, my dentist, who lives around the corner from the deli and is a true New Yorker, stated that he is pleased with the new deli. Issues he encountered the first couple weeks seem to be gone. "Meats are good," he said." His only beef? He didn't think the sandwiches should be labeled "overstuffed." He's from New York and knows what a real overstuffed sandwich looks like!



— Richard Blackman