

THE Villager

◦ NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS ◦

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IN THIS ISSUE

Anniversary Brunch 1

Renewable Energy Sources 1

Smithsonian Craft Show..... 3

Philadelphia Flower Show..... 4

Book Review: The Judge’s List..... 5

Books We Liked 5

AI Experiment 6

Apps for Nature Lovers 8

Interview with Nazir Bhagat..... 9



Save the Date for Our Tenth Anniversary

Cindy Waters

DID YOU KNOW THAT OLDER AMERICANS MONTH is celebrated annually during the month of May? Although in truth, the Lake Barcroft Village celebrates Older Americans every day! And, the Lake Barcroft Village is celebrating its tenth anniversary all year long, honoring our official opening in January 2013. Remember to mark your calendars for June 3 when our Village will be celebrating its members at a brunch to be held at 2941 Restaurant. Invitations will be arriving soon.



Becky Cranna Presentation on Renewable Energy Sources

Cathy Williams

BECKY CRANNA, Lake Barcroft neighbor and Chief Operating Officer of Cypress Creek Renewables, gave a fascinating presentation on renewable energy sources during the Lake Barcroft Village Quarterly Meeting. Cypress Creek is a solar renewables developer and independent power producer that develops, finances, owns, and operates utility-scale and distributed solar and energy storage projects across the U.S.

Becky noted that the 1978 Public Utilities Regulation Act allowed independently owned entities to provide electric power for public utilities. The industry is still very

regulated but is open to new producers including renewable energy companies that focus on solar, wind, and battery storage power. The recently passed Inflation Reduction Act provides additional incentives for renewable energy producers, including tax credits for building solar and storage capacity. In addition, nearly 40 states have adopted policies that encourage renewable energy build-out.

Renewables supplied nearly 75 percent of new U.S. electrical generating capacity in 2022, according to the Federal Regulatory Commission, and solar accounted for 40

Continued on page 2

Renewable Energy Sources

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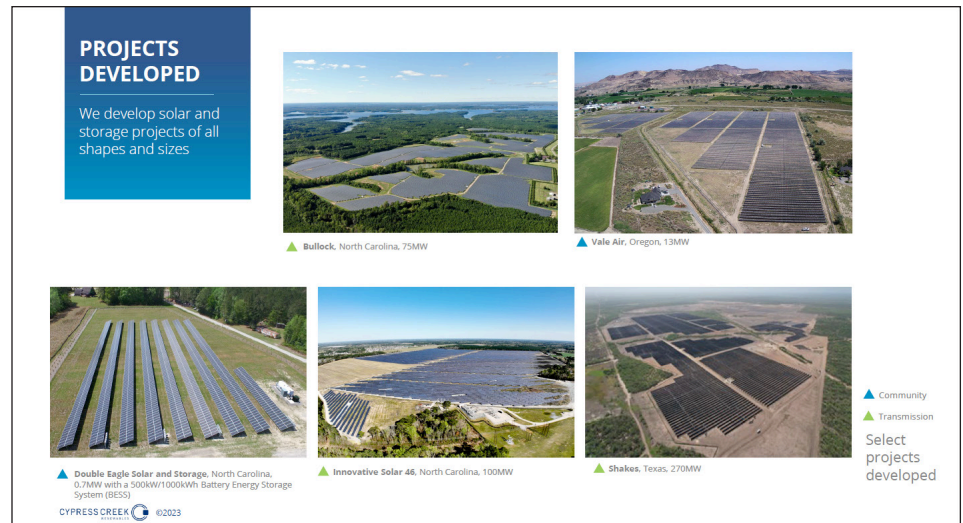
percent of new capacity. Solar is the most cost-effective form of new generation, with leveled cost of production decreasing by about 90 percent since 2009. There are more than 250,000 solar jobs in the U.S. now and that number is expected to more than triple within 10 years.

Renewables expect to grow from 18 percent of total U.S. power generation in 2021 to approximately 66 percent in 2032, creating a need for battery storage to provide grid resiliency and flexibility. Battery storage is growing rapidly in the U.S. and battery storage technology costs decreased 80 percent from 2010 to 2022. Most renewable energy is generated outside the hours of peak demand (wind at night, solar in mid-day), and storing that energy in batteries allows for optimum reliability in service provision to customers during peak usage.

Most of us are familiar with solar panels that can be seen on

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rooftops of individual homes. Becky noted that while this can be helpful, it can take 10-15 years to get a return on the investment. Another option is to invest in Community Solar – a distributed solar energy deployment model that allows customers to buy or lease part of a larger, off-site shared solar facility. Subscribers generally receive a monthly bill credit for electricity generated by their share of the system. As community solar systems are built offsite, multiple residential and small commercial customers can be served from a single system versus the one-off approach of rooftop and behind-the-meter (“BTM”) solar.

Virginia is one of 20 states that allow Community Solar programs; however the amount of electricity these groups are allowed to generate and sell is currently capped at 200 megawatts. New regulations are being developed and should be completed in about a year.

Audience members had lots of questions for Becky about her company and how it works with communities in developing solar projects. She explained that the permitting process can be

complex because many factors have to be considered, including environmental impact, stakeholder input, and policies within a particular state. Getting connected to the power grid can be a big challenge.

Cypress Creek Renewables was founded in 2014. The company:

- has more than 330 team members.
- has developed more than 840 solar projects totaling 12 gigawatts of solar energy to date.
- has an operating fleet of solar projects that produces enough energy each year for 208,000 homes and avoids 1.65 million metric tons of carbon dioxide production annually, the equivalent of taking more than 355,000 cars off the road.
- paid more than \$13 million to communities via annual property taxes and land lease payments in 2021 for its operating fleet.

New projects are financed with a combination of tax equity and debt in connection with construction. CCR operates the projects as the owner/manager. Typically, after 5–6 years, tax

Continued on page 3

equity is bought out leaving CCR as the sole owner.

The solar panels the CCR uses are modular. They are generally built in rows, but they don't have to completely cover a tract of land; they can be installed around the edge of farmland or wildlife corridors. The panels provide single access tracking, i.e., they move to follow the sun. They can be built close to the ground or higher up to allow for animal grazing or crops beneath them. Eighty to 90 percent of the panels come from China. The assumption is that panels degrade by 0.5 percent each year. New panels can be placed on existing steel frames, and the old panels are recycled with suppliers who break them down into their component parts and reuse them.

Becky noted that solar plants work best when the sun is shining and the panels are most efficient at higher altitudes and cooler temperatures. To estimate power production in a particular location the planning team analyzes satellite weather data for the region.

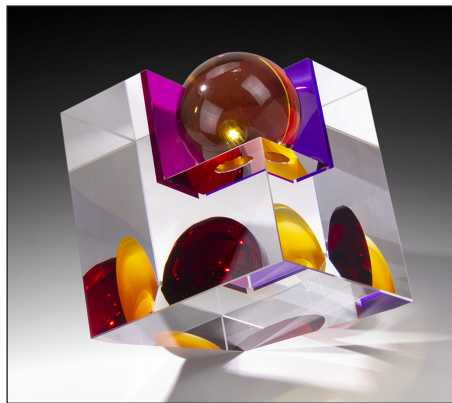
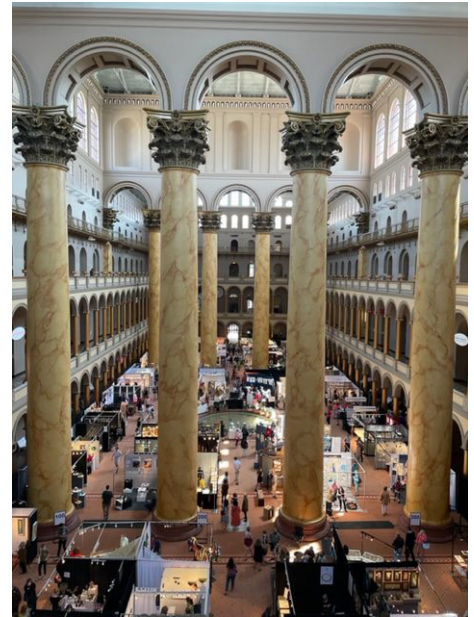
CCR is building 4-5-acre battery farms with thousands of batteries to store power. The batteries last 10-20 years. As they decline they are sold to other companies for reuse until they are no longer usable. ■

The pictures accompanying this article were taken from Becky Cranna's handout.

Smithsonian Craft Show Trip

Walt Cooper

ON MAY 5, five Village members (Walt Cooper, Jan Barrett, Clyde and Cathy Williams and Sam Rothman) traveled into Washington, D.C., to visit the Smithsonian Crafts Show at the national Building Museum. The craft show featured dozens of exhibitors working in basketry, ceramics, decorative fiber, furniture, glass, jewelry, leather, metal,



mixed media, paper wearable art and wood. This is definitely one of the premier craft shows in the country, and the Villagers were amazed at the quality and workmanship. After viewing the exhibits, the Villagers went to Taffer's Tavern for lunch before returning to Lake Barcroft. ■

All the images are from smithsoniancraftshow.org

Over 250,000 solar jobs in U.S. now – expected to more than triple within 10 years

CYPRESS CREEK ©2023

Philadelphia Flower Show

Judy Hilton

FOLLOWING TWO YEARS OF OUTDOOR SHOWS, the Philadelphia Flower Show, the nation's largest and longest-running horticultural event, returned to the Pennsylvania Convention Center in early March. Having attended several pre-pandemic shows, we were eager to recapture the thrill of being there amid the exquisite landscape creations and floral displays.

The chosen theme this year was "The Garden Electric", and was designed to bring sparks of joy, creativity and excitement, allowing designers to explore bold colors, fragrances and textures in new and unexpected ways. Somehow, exhilarating as that may sound, it didn't appear to come off with much success. The one exhibit directly related to the theme was a bed of very pretty flowers surrounded by a ring of telegraph poles. Another production showed a mass of flowers highlighted with continually changing garish colored lights and was, frankly, rather ugly.

Perhaps the theme failed to inspire landscapers because there were far fewer landscape creations than there had been in the past. This lack was made up by the far greater number of vendors of food and drink, and of souvenirs. I guess the planners had to do something with all that space.

On the plus side, there were many lovely and unusual entries competing for "best in show" prizes. And some of the vendors did have quite beautiful but expensive wares, many garden related.

I came home with a dish towel imprinted with the head of a golden retriever for the daughter who has one, and an alpaca booty who should have had blue feet but were orange for the other daughter. We eschewed the green plants with plastic leaves although they looked fine from a distance. ■



Photo by Judy Hilton

Botany

*There should be no monotony
In studying your botany;
It helps to train
And spur the brain—
Unless you haven't gotany.
It teaches you, does Botany,
To know the plants and spotany,
And learn just why
They live or die—
In case you plant or potany.
You learn, from reading Botany,
Of wooly plants and cottony,
That grow on earth,
And what they're worth,
And why some spots have notany.
You sketch the plants in Botany,
You learn to chart and plotany
Like corn or oats—
You jot down notes,
If you know how to jotany,
Your time, if you'll allotany,
Will teach you how and what any
Old plant or tree
Can do or be—
And that's the use of Botany!*

—Berton Braley
Science News Letter
March 9, 1929



Photo by Judy Hilton



Book Review: *The Judge's List* by John Grisham

Laura Fox

FOR 34 YEARS, John Grisham has been entertaining readers with his legal thrillers. According to Abbie Jukes, writing in the *Greenwich Exchange*, “thrillers are successful because they have a hook to grip the reader’s imagination from the very beginning, thus ensuring a page-turning read.”

Grisham, an award-winning author, has mastered the legal thriller genre, having written forty-seven consecutive #1 bestsellers. “I seriously doubt I would ever have written the first story had I not been lawyer. I never dreamed of being a writer. I wrote only after witnessing a trial,” he said.

The Judge's List does not disappoint. Lucy Stolz, an attorney for the Florida Board on Judicial Conduct, is approaching forty and ready for a career change. She’s tired of the run-of-the-mill cases she investigates. One day, a mysterious woman named Jeri Crosby contacts Lacy requesting she investigate a sitting judge who Jeri alleges killed her father 20 years earlier.

The story Jeri tells Lacy is shocking and Jeri fears for her life as well. The judge is brilliant, patient, and it seems, always one step ahead of law enforcement. Lacy encourages Jeri to go to the local police or the FBI. Jeri doesn’t trust them. Jeri believes Lacy can help her find out what happened to her father as well as to other possible victims.

Lacy is not an experienced criminal investigator. She knows her ability to collect the type

of evidence needed to prove a murder case is limited. And yet, against her better judgment, Lacy agrees to review the case and the information Jeri has gathered during the past 20 years. Lacy battles her belief that a well-respected judge could not possibly commit the crimes she discovers. As she learns more about the judge’s list, Lacy faces the reality that she and Jeri may find themselves on it. Through perseverance and her ability to creatively use her knowledge of administrative processes gained

through her years of experience investigating judges, Lacy takes on the judge.

Once you start reading you won’t be able to put the book down. In a very positive conclusion, this is a terrific summer book.

For those who are avid Grisham readers, Lucy first appears in *The Whistler*, where she investigates a corrupt judge who is taking millions in bribes from a crime syndicate. It is not necessary to read *The Whistler* before reading *The Judge's List*. ■



Books we liked

April 2023 Favorites

Atwood, Margaret, *Old Babes in the Wood* (Walt)

Cadbury, Deborah, *Queen Victoria's Matchmaking: The Royal Marriages that Shaped Europe* (Natalie)

Dickens, Charles, *Oliver Twist* (Cathy)

Fagone, Jason, *The Woman Who Smashed Codes: A True Story* (Sam)

French, Tana, *In the Woods* (Ellen)

Hardy, Thomas, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (Ellen)

Jackson, Jennie, *Pineapple Street* (Sunny)

Joshi, Alka, *The Jaipur Trilogy*, (*The Hand Artist*, *The Secret*

Keeper of Jaipur, *The Perfumist of Paris*) (Nancy)

Richardson, Ruth, *Dickens & The Workhouse* (Cathy)

Welty, Eudora, *The Optimist's Daughter* (Sunny)

Walt Cooper, who is a member of the Congressional Chorus, treated us to excerpts from one of the songs that will be performed by the group May 13: Jocelyn Hagen’s multimedia choral-orchestral work, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*. The program, at Church of the Epiphany in Washington, D.C., will feature the latest in video syncing technology to bring da Vinci’s work to life through his words and drawings. Walt will provide more information via Lakelink and *The Villager*. ■

Introduction to Jan Barrett's experiment with Artificial Intelligence (AI)

I've been reading a lot about artificial intelligence (AI) and its ability to create term papers, essays, etc. This piqued my curiosity and I wondered how it would do at an assignment given to us recently in the Village Memoir Group. Our leader, Shirley Timashev, asked us to write on a technology that had an influence on our life. My essay has more details that I did not provide the AI, but it still came up with a very credible story!

—Jan Barrett

Memoir Group—New Technology 2-23

By Jan Barrett

Family Food Zone

I was rushing through my office one day, absorbed in thought, when a techie friend in a near-by office called me over to his desk. I grudgingly sat in the chair next to him while he fiddled with his computer. Eventually he showed me something unusual on his computer....his screen displayed an internet connection, but I had no idea what this was. I was busy and a bit annoyed by his interruption. What was he showing me? Right there on his small black and white screen there was a display of websites for major corporations, airline flight schedules, restaurant promotions, and so much more. These were the first websites I had ever seen on the World Wide Web. I had never even heard of a website, and I had no idea that I was looking into the future.

My friend offered to let me explore the information on his computer, and I searched for a hotel in San Francisco, as my parents were planning a visit there. That was my very first internet search. My parents were amazed with the information I found and had no idea how I obtained it.

Soon I wondered if this new technology could be used by my nutrition education organization. We had a computer consultant who helped us with routine word processing problems, and he encouraged me to develop a nutrition website with helpful information for parents. This was an intriguing idea, and I quickly contacted our national organization in Chicago to see if they would be interested in partnering with us to develop such a website. They practically scoffed at the idea, as they did not

Assignment for Chat GPI: Write a 200 word essay on my discovery of the world wide web and how I worked with a group of 10 nutritionists from across the nation to develop one of the first websites for parents of young children called family food zone, while our national office scoffed at the idea

Discovery of the World Wide Web

By Chat GPI

The discovery of the World Wide Web changed my life forever. As a young nutritionist, I was fascinated by the endless possibilities of this new tool and how it could be used to help people lead healthier lives. I had a vision of creating a resource for parents of young children that would provide them with easy-to-understand information about healthy eating and nutrition.

So, I reached out to a group of 10 other nutritionists from across the nation who shared my passion and together we formed the "Family Food Zone" project. Our goal was to develop one of the first websites for parents of young children that would provide them with the information they needed to make informed decisions about what their children were eating.

Unfortunately, our national office was skeptical of the idea and dismissed it as a waste of time and resources. However, we were determined to prove them wrong. We worked tirelessly to gather information, create content, and design

see the value in a nutrition website and were certainly not willing to help with funding. They were not aware of any other nutrition websites, and they thought it was a rather crazy idea. After all, in 1996 there were only 100,000 websites on the internet, compared with 2 billion today, and only a few of the early websites even mentioned nutrition. I was discouraged by the lack of enthusiasm from our national office, as I knew that my organization could not afford to take on the project by ourselves. But I was undeterred. I made many phone calls extoling the benefits of a nutrition website to other nutrition organizations and eventually I gained buy-in from ten other partners across the country to take on the project.

It was a challenge! We wanted to create something that never existed before. It wasn't easy to get 11 nutritionists from across the country to agree on a set of nutrition messages for parents. We ironed out our different opinions through many phone calls and eventually agreed on our key messages. Then we organized the information into an interesting, usable format with the help of a website development firm. It took us almost a year, but by the end of 1997 we had launched one of the first nutrition education websites for parents. Naming our site was a challenge, too, as we had no models for reference, so we came up with "Family Food Zone". This was short and snappy, and it quickly told users what they would find in our site.

When Family Food Zone launched in 1997 few people went to the internet for information. Heck, Google didn't even exist until that year. Today there are over 400 million websites with nutrition information for parents. In the late 1990s there were only a few. Among them, Family Food Zone stood out and we gained national attention. We were truly on the cutting edge! We were proud and honored when Family Food Zone won an award for the "Best Nutrition Website" from *Parents Magazine*. Our eleven partners continued to work together, promoting the website and updating it monthly. Imagine our surprise the next year when our national organization informed us that they wanted to take over the website. They offered to reimburse us for our out-of-pocket expenses, but not for any of our time. All of the partners felt a bit annoyed that we had done

all the work and now they wanted the credit, but we did not have much choice. We admitted that they would be in a better position to promote Family Food Zone on a national level, so we agreed.

The women from our eleven organizations had never met in person during the development process since all our work was done through phone calls and the mail. We didn't even know what some of our work partners looked like. Finally in 1998 most of us planned to attend the same national meeting, so we decided to get together in person and celebrate our success. We had ordered purple shirts with familyfoodzone.com sewed onto them and we wore them proudly as we found each other in the crowd. We had a wonderful celebration, but we did not invite any national office staff to our party! ■

AI {continued}

the website. The end result was a beautifully designed and user-friendly website that provided parents with the information they needed to make informed decisions about their children's diets.

In the end, our efforts were rewarded as the website became a massive success. It was visited by thousands of parents every day and was even featured in several national magazines. The success of the website proved that the power of the World Wide Web could be harnessed to create a positive impact on people's lives and that even the most skeptical of people can be won over with the right idea and execution.

In conclusion, my discovery of the World Wide Web and the creation of the "Family Food Zone" website taught me the importance of perseverance and the power of collaboration. It also showed me that the World Wide Web is a tool that can be used to make a positive difference in the world, and I will continue to work towards that goal for the rest of my life.

Free Apps for Nature Lovers

Jane Guttman

LEARNING ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT is a great deal of fun with two free new apps, Merlin and Seek. They work on both iPhones and Android phones.

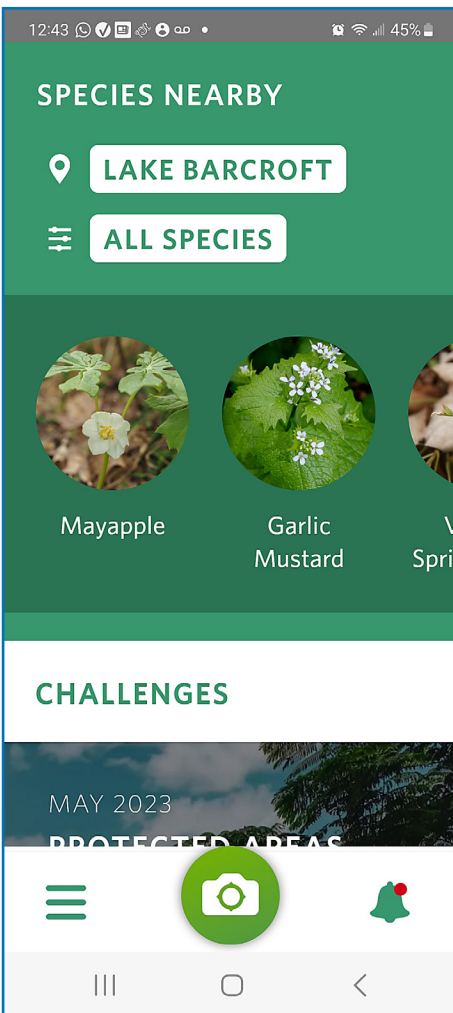
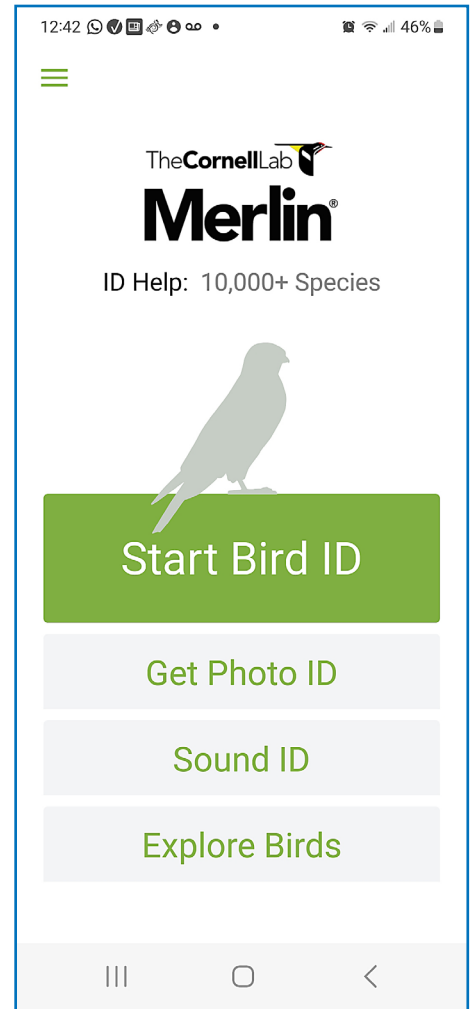
Merlin identifies birds by their photo or their song. I've used it mainly for the latter and will sit on the porch with the app recording what it hears and listing the bird species. When the same bird sings again, the name of the bird is highlighted. I've found it still difficult to memorize the calls, but I am addicted to listening. I sat in two different places in my yard and got some different bird calls. Here is what I got on one afternoon: Carolina Wren, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Towhee, Baltimore Oriole, Amer-

ican Robin, Tufted Titmouse, Song Sparrow, House Sparrow, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Common Grackle.

You can listen to the recording at any time or explore birds in the vicinity or anywhere else. Linda Woodrow recently traveled to Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and heard the following birds on her iPhone: American Robin, Tufted Titmouse, White-eyed Vireo, Carolina Chickadee, White-winged Dove, Carolina Wren and Mourning Dove. Linda commented: "This is a fun way to enjoy birds by recording their songs and playing the sounds back at a later time."

Merlin was designed by the Cornell Lab and Seek is from iNaturalist, getting data from the National Geographic and California Academy of Sciences. I downloaded Seek mainly for identifying plants, since Merlin is the better bird app and I know most of the mammals around here. I was able to fool the app at home by taking a photo of the back of my calico cat's head, which the app decided was a Northern Guinea Pig. Good thing my cat can't read.

Seek takes your photos and brings up an identifier for plants,



amphibians, fungi, fish, reptiles, arachnids, birds, insects, mollusks and mammals. It features a challenge—you can choose the challenge you want, such as Lakes and Ponds Challenge which asks you to "Seek out ponds, streams, rivers, and lakes in your area and see what freshwater species you can spot." I haven't had the chance to play with it much yet. If you have a house plant you have been caring for but can't identify, Seek is for you. ■

At Home with Nazir

Marcia Grabowski

“All my life I’m always challenging the status quo from the outside.”

—Nazir Bhagat

While having a very pleasant chat with Nazir Bhagat of Lakeview Drive, the newest member of the Lake Barcroft Village Board, I found that he was born in a poor middle-class family and grew up in Mumbai in a very cosmopolitan neighborhood with people of all faiths as friends and neighbors. He went to a Jesuit school from kindergarten through freshman year and then spent one year at the Indian Institute of Technology before transferring to MIT.

After MIT, he was offered a job as a consulting engineer at a large chemical company, American Cyanamid, in NJ. Two years later, he won the American Cyanamid Employee of the Year Award. The award gave him paid leave and expenses to get a Ph.D. Nazir wanted to study religion at Berkeley, but Cyanamid convinced him to go to the Harvard Business School to get a Doctorate in statistics and investment finance.

On earning his degree, he taught Business Research and Problem Solving to MBAs at Rutgers University. He took a sabbatical to work as the Technical Director of a national policy study on Scholarly Communications in the Humanities, at Princeton. Soon after he finished the study, he was asked by his thesis advisor, who was then the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Science and Technology, to work

on creating U.S. centers of excellence in various emerging technologies. It was during that time that his mom sent him a picture of a girl so beautiful that he went to Mumbai to check her out. He married Ashraf a year later.

At the U.S. Department of Commerce, Nazir was awarded a Science Fellowship, which entitled him to visit other agencies, study science policy at a national level, and to work for a year at another agency; Nazir chose USAID. Among his successes at USAID were a project to bring water and sanitation to Bolivian villages and a program to accelerate commercial technology in India (PACT). As Nazir states, “My greatest piece of work was something called the PACT Program (Program to Accelerate Commercial Technology) in India.” The World Bank increased the funding for the program tenfold and the PACT ran for 10 years, funding millions of dollars of joint ventures between the U.S. and India, especially in IT (information technology). On return to Commerce, Nazir became a Division Director for Trade Policy relating to consumer goods. When he had a moral conflict working to help give the cigarette industry the right to advertise in Asian countries, he was reassigned to be a senior trade policy advisor on heavy industries, including



Photo by Marcia Grabowski

chemicals and pharmaceuticals. Nazir stayed at Commerce for 23 years altogether, providing economic and policy analyses on technology and trade issues, on international environmental treaties, such as global warming, on genetically modified foods, and on US-India commercial relations. Working with politicians, he learned early that you can do a lot in life if you give others the credit.

This leads to how Nazir came to Lake Barcroft and what he might do for the Village. Nazir and Ashraf were living in a home in Northwest DC. In 1987, at the invitation of a friend, he and Ashraf were attending a Hawaiian luau (organized by the Penlands) at beach 5 where his daughter, Alisha, was very happy playing in the sand. On the way home, they noticed an open house sign on Fiddlers Green, and they bought the house. Nazir and Ashraf also raised their son, Zohar, there before moving to their current lakefront home, which they redesigned as a contemporary home (showcased in an annual Barcroft house tour).

Continued on page 9

Interview with Nazir

continued from page 8

While working for Commerce, Nazir started investing in real estate, and he bought a historic home in Franconia, the Ashland. He often gave historic tours of the house and its Civil War resident. Subsequently, in 1990, he bought a 13-acre junk yard in Franconia, on a no-money-down basis, addressed all the issues, subdivided the property into 94 lots, and sold them to Pulte. More recently, he was offered a similarly challenged property in Franconia, which he developed and subdivided as an active adult community of 32 homes. During this time, he was appointed Commissioner on Aging for Mason District, a position he held for four years. In this capacity, he wrote “A

Plan for Aging and Not,” which advised that, at our age, by planning for our legacy and end-of-life issues now, we will be unburdened and better focused on our bucket list and on living well.

Nazir retired from Commerce in 2008 but is still involved in real estate and managing his securities portfolio. He is also a member of the MIT Club and the Harvard Business Club. He loves Lake Barcroft and thinks it is a great intergenerational community in which to grow old. Someday, it may have more centenarians than anywhere else in the country. For the Village, he would like to start an investment chat group or a longevity chat group that also encourages one another to form healthy diet and exercise habits. He would also like the Village to form closer relationships with other nearby

villages and elder communities and share more events. He and Ashraf plan to stay in the Lake as long as both are able and make frequent trips to their children and grandchildren in NYC.

His major focus for the last two years has been to improve student performance and job success at a very large educational institution which provides kindergarten to graduate education to the marginalized and the very poor in Mumbai. He is working with the president of the institution and has involved MIT in the process. He hopes that he can liquidate his real estate portfolio by 2024 and devote all his time to family, friends and neighbors, giving back both here and to the religious minorities facing repression in India. ■



Family photo

Nazir's brother and sister wishing him goodbye in 1964.