

For now, carillon bells play only in our memories



John Kelly's Washington

For years, every day at noon, the Netherlands Carillon bells would play a medley of armed forces music. For the last few months, they have been silenced. I live in the Radnor district of Arlington, and several neighbors commented about missing the medley. Will the noontime bells ever return?

— Robert F. Ryan, Arlington, Va.

Do not ask for whom the bells toll. Right now, they're not tolling for anybody.

"We are attempting to reconcile the issue," the National Park Service's Matt Virta, cultural resources program manager at the George Washington Memorial Parkway, wrote in an e-mail to Answer Man. He explained that there is a problem with the machinery that allows automated concerts.

Those are the computer-driven Netherlands Carillon concerts that are usually heard daily at noon and 6. In the summer, human beings perform music live on Saturdays.

The carillon has been called the colossus of keyboard instruments. The Netherlands Carillon has 50 bells, ranging in size from eight inches high and weighing 42 pounds to six feet high and tipping the scales at 6½ tons. A carillonist sits at a wooden keyboard halfway up the metal tower, pummeling away at levers and pedals with hands and feet.

It strikes Answer Man that this particular carillon has always seemed a little snakebit. It was a gift from the people of the Netherlands, formally announced during a 1952 visit by Queen Juliana. She presented a model of the carillon that was



JAMIE ROSE/GETTY IMAGES

The bell tower in the Netherlands Carillon provided a lofty vantage point several years ago to watch fireworks on the Mall.

installed temporarily in Meridian Hill Park.

The bells were cast in Holland and arrived in 1954. But where exactly to put many tons' worth of bells? You can't just stick a carillon anywhere. While the Park Service pondered where they might go, the bells hung in a steel framework in the Polo Field in West Potomac Park.

Around the same time, the government was deciding what was to become of the Nevius tract, 25 acres on the Virginia side of the Potomac River near Arlington National Cemetery. It was owned by the federal government, but some Arlington politicians wanted it returned to local control so the land could be developed.

President Truman ordered it to stay in government hands. And that's where the carillon would go. Eventually.

After donating the bells, the Dutch also had to pony up funds for the tower in which to hang them. In 1958, Dutch Ambassador J.H. Van Roijen explained that the tower had been planned as a gift for some time, "but we have been having a minor recession in our country,

and it was a little difficult to get the money."

The 127-foot bell tower was finally completed in 1960. It sits on a granite platform, and its entrance is flanked by two bronze lions designed by Dutch sculptor Paul Koning.

When it works, the Netherlands Carillon — surrounded in spring by a sea of tulips — makes a joyous sound. As Answer Man read the news clips, it became apparent that a carillon works for about 10 or 20 years before it needs repair. What would you expect of a musical instrument that's kept out in the elements?

In 1970, The Post's Hank Burchard accompanied carillonist Frank P. Law to the carillon. The interior was speckled with pigeon droppings. The bells were corroded from pollution. As Law played, the clapper spring on the low C pedal bell broke. This happened frequently, he said, necessitating improvisation to avoid busted pedals and clappers. More alarming was the way the tower swayed when the larger bells were sounded. Law proclaimed the poor upkeep of the

Netherlands Carillon a "national disgrace."

Suitably chastened, the Park Service spent \$300,000 to restore the bells and the tower, including screening out pigeons. Carillonists from around the world could play the instrument with confidence.

By 1994, the carillon had again fallen on hard times. Some of the bells were so deteriorated that it would have been easier to cast new ones. But as the bells themselves were historic — a gift from Dutch citizens grateful for U.S. help during and after World War II — they were repaired. A group of Dutch businessmen raised \$1.4 million to retune the bells, shaving metal from the inside to achieve the correct pitch. In 1995, the carillon chimed again.

There's no estimate on when the computer controls will be fixed, allowing the carillon's automated performances to resume.

Helping Hand

On Monday, I kicked off the annual Washington Post Helping Hand fundraising drive. Between now and Jan. 8, I'll be sharing stories of three remarkable charities in the D.C. area: **Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Community of Hope and Homestretch**. Each works with homeless families or teens, getting them out of shelters, into stable homes and onto the path of self-sufficiency.

Last year, Post readers donated a total of \$213,262.82 to the three groups. I've set this year's goal at \$250,000. I hope you will help us get there. For more information, and to donate, visit posthelpinghand.com.

Twitter: @johnkelly

Send your questions about the Washington area to answerman@washpost.com.

For previous columns, visit washingtonpost.com/johnkelly.

College student thought he was being ridiculed

STUDENT FROM CI

hour and a half northwest of the Marberger family's home near Philadelphia.

Marberger's parents had phoned the college Nov. 16 to report that he had come home distraught and taken a rifle case and was not responding to text messages.

The call prompted a campus lockdown and a decision by the school to close for the month.

College administrators grew concerned that Marberger could present an imminent danger. Recent incidents of mass shootings and of threats at educational facilities had reinforced their apprehensions.

"The guidepost is student safety," said Sheila Bair, president of the college, a 1,400-student liberal arts institution on the Eastern Shore.

Authorities had been searching for the student, who was reported last seen in the Hamburg area at some point Nov. 16. That was the day he was believed to have purchased ammunition.

In an interview last week, Marberger's father, Jon, said he never saw his son as a threat but thought that notifying the college was the right thing to do.

He described his son as "an intellectual, conscientious young man" who loved his fraternity,



Jacob Marberger's parents said he had taken a rifle case from his home.

was a student government leader and was active in theater.

School officials have said that Marberger was upset by a prank played on him in early October. A trash can full of water was apparently placed against his dorm room's door so that when he opened it, the water spilled in.

A school official has said Marberger thought that a couple of students were ridiculing or persecuting him.

Later, Marberger allegedly brandished a pistol at his fraternity house, possibly while drunk, according to school officials. He was expelled from his fraternity and resigned as speaker of the Student Senate.

He was suspended by the college and faced expulsion.

On Tuesday, a warrant was issued for his arrest on weapons charges.

In a statement, the college called Marberger's death "a terrible blow to our community" and extended its "deepest sympathies" to the Marberger family "in their time of unimaginable grief."

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MARYLAND

Police release 911 call in suspected drug overdose of 500-pound man

BY KEITH L. ALEXANDER

Prince George's County police have released the recording of a 911 call about a 500-pound man who authorities said may have died of a PCP overdose in Cheltenham, Md.

Police were called to the man's house in the 10000 block of Westwood Drive about 10:25 p.m. Wednesday.

The mother and the uncle of the 41-year-old man, who has not been identified, separately called 911 asking for help, police said. On the mother's 911 call, which was released Friday night, the man could be heard in the background, screaming and pounding things in another room.

"He's acting all crazy," she said. The man's mother told the operator that her son had just arrived

at the house and had been smoking PCP before he got there. When she was asked for a description, she said her son was a "big boy."

The dispatcher advised the man's mother to stay away from her son for her own safety until police and paramedics arrived.

Authorities said the man was found naked, upstairs in the house. Six officers used two sets of handcuffs and placed the man on a stretcher and carried him downstairs, where they then put him on a stretcher.

Once the man was in the ambulance, paramedics were unable to find a pulse. The paramedics attempted to resuscitate the man, but he was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Calls to the man's mother for comment were not returned.

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On D.C. Adoption Day, families are created, expanded and celebrated

Andy and Sunita Groth, above, hold their young children in their arms after formally adopting Adelaide Julia Ella Groth, 1, in Andy's arms looking back at the cameras, at the 29th Annual D.C. Adoption Day. Andy is also holding Gabe, 2½, and Sunita is holding Ascha, 12 weeks. At right, Matthew Coleman, 18 months, releases a balloon as he waits with Gabriel, 8, to officially join the family of Kiani and Michael Coleman. D.C. Child and Family Services is looking for permanent homes for 86 of the children in the District's foster care system.



PHOTOS BY BILL O'LEARY/THE WASHINGTON POST

LOCAL DIGEST

MARYLAND

Pr. George's police probing man's death

A man died last week in the Langley Park area of Prince George's County, and the death is being investigated as a homicide, county police said.

Police said Jose Victor Lazaro, 37, of Tahona Drive in Langley Park, was found about 6:15 a.m. on Nov. 15 in the 7900 block of 14th Avenue. They said he was outdoors and had a wound to the upper body.

The death was reported Friday. It was not immediately clear why it was not disclosed sooner.

— Martin Weil

THE DISTRICT

Man fatally shot by officer is identified

The man who was fatally wounded by a police officer Thursday has been identified by D.C. police as Darick Napper, 34, of Southeast.

According to police, an officer was confronted by Napper in the 5300 block of Dix Street NE. Napper was armed with a large hunting-style knife and another edged weapon, police said.

They said the officer fired a single shot to defend himself, striking Napper in the chest.

Police said the investigation was continuing. Few other details were available.

— Keith L. Alexander

LOTTERIES

Results from Nov. 21

DISTRICT

Mid-Day Lucky Numbers: 0-4-9
Mid-Day DC-4: 7-7-7-8
Mid-Day DC-5: 3-1-2-5-6
Lucky Numbers (Fri.): 3-9-5
Lucky Numbers (Sat.): 2-6-8
DC-4 (Fri.): 6-1-8-4
DC-4 (Sat.): 0-0-0-5
DC-5 (Fri.): 8-4-5-9-2
DC-5 (Sat.): 6-6-1-2-5

VIRGINIA

Day/Pick-3: 7-9-6
Pick-4: 5-9-1-2
Cash-5: 1-8-9-19-25
Night/Pick-3 (Fri.): 6-0-4
Pick-3 (Sat.): 8-1-2
Pick-4 (Fri.): 3-7-8-3
Pick-4 (Sat.): 7-2-6-9
Cash-5 (Fri.): 6-15-17-19-21
Cash-5 (Sat.): 4-10-16-28-33
Bank a Million: 15-16-23-26-29-32 *28

MULTI-STATE GAMES

Powerball: 37-47-50-52-57 ***21
Power Play: 3X
Mega Millions: 9-12-29-37-67 **15
Megaplier: 2X
Hot Lotto: 2-3-7-10-32 †3
*Bonus Ball **Mega Ball
***Powerball †Hot Ball

For late drawings and out-of-area results, check washingtonpost.com/lottery

THE DAILY QUIZ

Brian Hamilton, co-pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, partnered with which jazz vocalist and former Washington Redskins player to bring jazz night to the church?

(Hint: The answer is in today's WP Magazine.)

EARN 5 POINTS: Find the answer, and then go to washingtonpost.com/postpoints. Quizzes to enter the correct response.

2015 TREASURE HUNT

For Andrea Bocelli plan to convene at Verizon Center on December 13. The master tenor is one of the best. Never heard him live? He'll surely impress.

Including this concert, how many times will singer Andrea Bocelli have performed at the Verizon Center in Washington, DC?

(Hint: Visit VerizonCenter.MonumentalNetwork.com and check out the press release for the Bocelli concert for the answer.)

EARN 5 POINTS AND A CHANCE TO WIN GREAT PRIZES! Answer our Treasure Hunt questions, then go to washingtonpost.com/postpoints and click "Quizzes" to enter your responses.

Back by demand, Studio Theatre's *Bad Jews*.

After a death, a fight ensues Over a relic a family holds dear. Says *The Post*, it's "the funniest play of the year."

How many years did it take author Joshua Harmon to write the savage comedy, *Bad Jews*?

(Hint: Visit StudioTheatre.org for the answer.)

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