The Coronavirus Is a Stark Reminder We Are All One Global Family
By Andrew Kutt

What a difference a month makes. The whole world is reacting to a pandemic of a previously unknown virus. It’s an emergency on a global scale, dominating every news cycle. It was the subject of conversations at coffee shops in the mornings and at local watering holes in the evenings – until those gathering places, too, were shut down. Our lives are being disrupted. You can see concern and worry etched on people’s faces.

Is this a new phenomenon? Of course not, because the world has faced many devastating outbreaks of disease in human history, including the Black Death in the 1300’s, the flu pandemic of 1918, the Asian Flu of 1956-58, and the HIV/AIDS Pandemic of 2005-2012 – to name a few. The pandemics of the past have killed hundreds of millions, shaped history, shifted population demographics, and influenced art, music, literature, and theater, leaving an indelible imprint on our collective psyche.

Is this why the Coronavirus seems so suddenly terrifying – because the trauma of such a widespread disease is embedded in the ancient part of our brains and triggers feelings of vulnerability, helplessness, and fear? Or had we lulled ourselves into the illusion that such a pandemic is not possible in the era of modern medicine? And why is our reaction to this so much more visceral and vocal than our reaction to let’s say the crisis of climate change? Is it because the virus pandemic is less abstract, more personal, more immediate?

Whatever the answers to these questions, one thing is certain: when it comes to a potentially massive catastrophe like this, national boundaries will not protect us. Nor will wealth or status make us immune. Humans from all social strata and from every corner of the planet are faced with the same humbling thought: that at the moment our best protection from contagion is hand sanitizer, incessant hand washing, medical masks, and the avoidance of physical contact with others or even our own faces.

So here we are all at once in the same boat, and for some of us we are literally in the same boat – stuck on a cruise ship in quarantine and dealing with an even greater degree of confusion and hysteria. We are coming face to face with our human frailty and at the same time with our fundamental oneness. Regardless of religion, political affiliation, or mindset we are now starkly being reminded that we are all – every one of us – Homo sapiens, the species to which all modern humans belong (and the only member of the genus Homo that is not extinct).

It’s a reality check of epic proportions, at a time when it’s become so convenient to retreat into the comfort of online echo chambers that validate and amplify our viewpoints and make us comfortable designating others, whether consciously or not, as less civilized, less intelligent, or less moral than we are. We’ve become adept at “othering,” as we stri-
Letter from the Editor

As Andrew Kutt notes on the front page, what a difference a month makes. Much of what we took for granted has been cancelled, from school, to work, to sports and the Olympics, to the ability to dine out, to simpler things, like the ability to be with each other and to hug old friends.

One of the few things that hasn’t been cancelled is this issue of The Bannockburn Back9. Considering how many are staying home now, I suspect more of you are actually reading the newsletter! Sadly, this is the first issue, since the Back9 was redesigned in September of 2018, where there is absolutely nothing on the calendar.

In late February, with the spread of COVID-19, planned events started falling by the wayside. First was the annual Newcomers’ Dinner, scheduled for March 14th. The Bannockburn Spring Show, which was already a month into rehearsals, was the next victim (p. 9). The loss of this year’s show is a major blow because it is, by far, the biggest fundraiser for our beloved Clubhouse, which is always in need of repair. Please consider making an outright donation to support the Clubhouse by visiting http://bannockburncommunity.org/membership.php. On the other hand, we can all rejoice that a grant pursued by Ana Rasmussen and others (p. 5) to improve the Clubhouse grounds came through.

These are unsettling times, but we’re all trying to make do as best as we can.

One thing that’s been particularly challenging for some in this era of social distancing is the inability to worship communally. Places of worship, like the Church of the Redeemer, have moved sermons online (p. 7).

With so many things closed, nature has become the main sanctuary for many of us. The landscape, with its emerging spring growth, provides an anchor when everything else feels unmoored. Every day on the canal feels like a Saturday during peak fall foliage. I had committed to forging ahead with the annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup scheduled for April 18th (always an event that operates in accordance with “social distancing” guidelines) so we would at least have that event on the calendar, but canceled after discovering that the National Park Service wouldn’t support trash removal. (I’ve got some ideas for other smaller cleanups if you want to join me – contact me at bethmrogers@earthlink.net.)

Therefore, I’m asking you to be good custodians of this nature that provides solace. Carry a bag with you and pick up trash where you journey. It saddens me to see that plastic bags of dog waste are now proliferating on the canal. At a minimum, for heaven’s sake, if you walk your dog or yourself in nature, please don’t make things worse by leaving trash.

Social media is awash with positive things that came out of other pandemics, about writers and artists who created their best masterpieces during those times, and of ground-breaking scientific discoveries. In that same vein of finding a silver lining in this dark cloud, Cabin John resident Kevin Kearney proposes that idled college students could be used to augment an under-staffed Public Health System (p. 9). Terri Payne writes about how Angela Hirsch of Glen Echo established a tri-weekly newsletter written by and for neighborhood children (p. 4). Called CoronaKids, it reminds us that “corona” is also the word for the sun’s halo during a total solar eclipse – which means that even in times of darkness light still shines.

How we come out the other side of this pandemic will be up to us. Will we draw closer as a community and support those in need…or will we withdraw into our homes and act as if it’s every man for himself? I’ve seen some in this community with cars full of toilet paper, when some still confront barren shelves. I know a diabetic who worries about being able to clean her injection site because the stores have all been depleted of isopropyl alcohol.

We’ve all been schooled on the importance of social

continued on p. 3
distancing to keep this new virus from peaking and overwhelming hospitals, and to protect our vulnerable members, who include the elderly and the immunocompromised. What if we were to start thinking about how individual actions can harm the collective elsewhere? How about, when resources are stressed, we make sure that the links in the distribution chain don’t break thanks to a compulsion to hoard? Do we have the courage to take only what we need, so that others may also partake? Fear and panic are contagious. But so are kindness, courage, and empathy.

When this pandemic ends, where do we want to be as a world? As a country? Using this pandemic as a wakeup call, would we actually be able to come to a consensus and rally around the ongoing urgency of climate change? Now that we’ve experienced more deeply nature’s restorative power, will we demand that our national parks and monuments are protected and preserved? Will our newfound appreciation for those essential workers who have supported us throughout – the delivery drivers, grocery store clerks, sanitation workers, hospital orderlies, etc. – translate into advocating for them and ensuring that they, and other traditionally underpaid workers, deserve to earn a living wage? Will we make any changes or will we go back to business as usual?

When Bannockburn was formed in 1946, its founders wanted this to be a community that worked cooperatively and that cared for each other. It’s up to each one of us to keep that vision alive.

Most importantly, heed the words Andrew Kutt, who reminds us how important it is to focus on what connects us.

Beth Rogers, Editor

Haircuts in Bannockburn.

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The Bannockburn Civic Association (BCA) has published our neighborhood’s newsletter since 1953. The Back 9 is published monthly September through June and currently reaches almost 700 households. To make sure you receive a copy of this newsletter, visit http://bannockburncommunity.org/newsletter-forum-request.php.

Interested in submitting an article or running an advertisement? Please email bannockburnback9@gmail.com.

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Global Family from p.1

dently advocate for the positions we are passionate about. We’ve succumbed to the false narrative that social media is a forum of ideas, whereas in reality it is all too often a platform for venting our frustrations and anger, or for spewing hatred.

The Coronavirus outbreak is a harsh refresher of Humanity 101 – the most basic of courses. On a cellular level it begins with realizing that humans share 99.9 percent of the same DNA. On the macro level we share a common heritage as humans. Humanity 101 teaches that collectively we will shape our destiny on planet Earth, for better or for worse. As it is said from long ago, we will live together or we will die together. Faced so immediately and directly with our own fragility as a species, others become brothers (and sisters) who are dealing with the same set of dangerous and scary circumstances as we are. The barriers we’ve erected, whether physical or mental, between us as members of the human family, melt away as we face an existential crisis like the one we currently face.

Our illusions of separateness disappear in the light of the new realities we are confronting, which may be old realities that we have long forgotten. We will no doubt survive this latest onslaught upon our collective well-being, but not without great pain and tragedy. The bigger question is what will we learn from this experience? Will it jumpstart a new era of international cooperation, the development of new commonly agreed-upon protocols for safety, more efficient sharing of information across borders, the creation of more robust yet localized health delivery systems and clinics, or the innovation of new medicines at prices that everyday people can afford?

Hope springs eternal, and hope is what we cling to now. At dark times like these, let us hope that a vaccine is developed sooner than later. Let us hope that we can resist the “survival of the fittest” mentality that humans have descended to in pandemics past; that we can hold and support each other as we feel stress and fear. And at the same time let us hope for a new dawn – a renewed awareness of our interconnectedness – which could light our pathway toward a future of greater harmony and better collaboration.

Kutt is the founder and head of the Oneness-Family School, which has campuses in Chevy Chase and Kensington. He lives on Bannockburn Drive.

CoronaKids Brings a Ray of Sunshine
By Terri Payne

Younger members of our community are facing a number of challenges in our virus-induced temporary normal: the loss of comforting school-day structure; the absence of opportunities for in-person social interactions; the discontinuity in academic learning as families adapt from teacher-led to parent-led instruction; and often, the need to occupy oneself while one’s parents work from home. Angela Hirsch of Glen Echo came up with a way for her own children and her neighbors’ kids to fulfill some of those needs. The CoronaKids newsletter, written “by and for the kids of Glen Echo, Bannockburn, and beyond,” features kid-produced content on a wide variety of subjects. Creative writing, comics, riddles, interviews, and news all find a place within its electronic pages, as authors and readers practice reading and writing skills without it feeling like a chore. The newsletter will be published on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for as long as the schools are closed due to the virus. Each issue also includes “boredom busters” for kids to explore on the web during their home-school day.

The newsletter has fans among adults, too, who enjoy the joyful glimpse into these K-5 minds. Subscriptions are free and open to all. To subscribe, send a blank email to CoronaKids-subscribe@groups.io and follow the instructions in the reply email you receive.
I have a little bright news to share in these uncertain times. On March 4th, the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) awarded the Bannockburn Community Club $48,596 of an original ask of $73,735 of the storm water management grant we applied for on November 14, 2019.

The CBT, in conjunction with Montgomery County, has been sponsoring a program to support watershed restoration and outreach projects throughout the County. This program aims to promote initiatives and projects which will improve water quality in local streams and waterways through public engagement, education, and on-the-ground restoration.

I had heard about the grant two years ago but never thought we would have a chance at qualifying until my friend Ann English, who runs Montgomery County’s RainScapes program, encouraged me to take a shot at it.

The Clubhouse, due to its location at the top of a hill, abundance of hard surfaces, and steep roof pitches, has been flooding out adjacent neighbors for years, which has become worse over time due to record rainfalls.

Susan Wexler and Hans Engler of East Halbert Road were also instrumental in the success of this grant. We spent months of time-consuming research, vetting contractors, engineering firms and landscape architects, and visiting sites around the County that had also received grants, before ultimately coming up with a realistic budget and compelling narrative.

The timeframe to complete all the deliverables required to comply with the award requisites is 18 months. The clock started ticking on February 19, 2020 and will stop on September 1, 2021. The rendering on page 6 is from our landscape architect, Susan Altman, depicting landscape plans for the west side of the Bannockburn Clubhouse (the right side of the building as you approach it from the main driveway). We hope this will be the first of many projects to improve our grounds in years to come. We have been encouraged to reapply for the grant next year to address the east side of the grounds and the back first tier.

We are scheduled to begin installing the dry well, rain garden, and landscape conservation projects on April 16th. The landscape contractor will be Shorb Landscaping. One requirement of the grant is that we develop educational programming and lectures for the community which includes Glen Echo, Cabin John, Mohican Hills, and other surrounding areas that feed in to our watershed. At the moment we have partnered with Friends of Cabin John Creek to help us with those outreach programs, as well as with the Bannockburn Nursery School.

This was just a dream two years ago. We are lucky to live in a state that values the importance of nature and the environment and provides funding...
Rendering provided by landscape architect Susan Altman, depicting landscape plans for the west side of the Bannockburn Clubhouse.
Grant from p. 5

for worthy projects. My hope is that our Clubhouse, in turn, will provide our community with a beautiful sanctuary for humans and critters to enjoy in a sustainable and responsible way for at least another 100 years. I will gladly drink to that.

Please stay safe and connected.

Rasmussen, of West Halbert Road, serves on the boards of the Bannockburn Civic Association and the Bannockburn Community Club. She is the BCA’s environmental chairperson.

Amend Corner
The Web That Connects Us
By the Reverend Cricket Park, Rector
Episcopal Church of the Redeemer

The things they don’t teach you in seminary.

Webcasting 101 was not in the curriculum at Bexley Hall in 2003-2006. Who knew that technology would be the way we would be conducting church in 2020? Well, honestly, I had a clue.

When Facebook opened to the world’s population in 2005, my then-college student son became my first “friend.” I was amazed at what could be done there. I could see how I could stay in touch with all the high school students who were going off to college. No doubt in my mind that online communities were the wave of the future.

Today, we find ourselves dependent on them.

I’m so proud of the leadership of my bishop, Mariann Edgar Budde. Making the decision to close all the Episcopal Churches in the diocese took guts – and it was the right call. The National Cathedral will be our mothership for services and Redeemer plans to livestream TheFIVE, our newest service, each afternoon. I’m grateful that Nextdoor and other lists are available so that our neighbors can let each other know if they need assistance.

Communities, like Bannockburn and Redeemer, and their electronic means of communication are how society will cope with and heal from this pandemic. This is a moment for creativity and mindfulness: an opportunity not to be missed!

Blessings and healing prayers to all.

To view TheFive, visit www.redeemerbethesda.org/.

Episcopal Church of the Redeemer

Church Without Walls
Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we are unable to announce services at this time.

5:00pm/THE FIVE
This service is being live streamed. See our website for more information.

Concerts through April 10th are postponed.

Services for Holy Week and Easter will be announced via our website, Facebook page, and e-mail.

www.redeemerbethesda.org
www.MusicatRedeemer.org

Episcopal Church of the Redeemer
The Rev. Cricket Park, Rector
Geoffrey Silver, Director of Music Ministries
6201 Dunrobin Drive 301-229-3770
office@redeemerbethesda.org

Ana Rasmussen (left) and Susan Wexler toast each other on November 14th, 2019, minutes after clicking the “send” button to make the 4 PM deadline. The grant took months of preparation – Rasmussen notes that the martinis only took five minutes to make.
A Glimpse of the Carousel Under the Tent

The National Park Service shared pictures of the newly painted and repaired roof of the Glen Echo Park Carousel. The project is very close to completion, with just a few touchups that remain, and the tenting and scaffolding will start to come down soon.

Bannockburn Cooperators, Inc.

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BCI owns the Clubhouse and surrounding grounds, in addition to two small triangular pieces of property in the valley. It has a long-term agreement with BCC to manage the Clubhouse and grounds, and it cooperates with BCC, BCA, and NAN on community events and issues. The BCI Board would like to thank the property owners who surround the valley for mowing the lawn and keeping the grounds tidy.

Residents become shareholders of BCI either by transfer from the previous owner of their house or by paying a one-time $10 fee. Shareholders can participate in major decisions regarding BCI property. If you have received a notice of eligibility or would like to check your shareholder status, contact Patty Howie, pbhowie@verizon.net.

For every home I sell in the Bannockburn neighborhood, I donate $250 to the Bannockburn Clubhouse Renovation Fund.
The United States Public Health Service (USPHS), commanded by the Surgeon General, was initiated by Congress in 1798 to combat infectious diseases brought into America by merchant seamen. The role of USPHS has fluctuated over the years, but its mission remains the same: to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the people of the United States.

President Trump has declared a National Emergency and appropriated $1 trillion dollars to combat COVID-19. But other immediate smart steps are in order.

Currently there are 6000 uniformed USPHS officers – not enough to serve a population of 330 million.

At the same time, as we move into this period of “social distancing,” colleges are emptying, releasing millions of our least-vulnerable and best-educated citizens to return home to communities all across America and wait this out. Using a model similar to the Cadet Nurse Corps of WWII, our nation’s youth, currently idled, could be deployed, using appropriate Internet training, to take the battle for better health door to door. Enlisting these college students to do testing and support for the ill would be similar to a voluntary draft. For years we conscripted 18-to-25-year-olds to protect us in various wars. Using this same demographic, in our defense, we could begin fighting this pandemic almost immediately.

I propose that these young draftees be paid $20 per hour and an equivalent amount for college tuition support. Testing supplies and protective gear would be delivered by the National Guard to volunteers and supervised by USPHS officers. Trained students would go door to door in their communities and visit residences, which have indicated their willingness to be tested by simply hanging a white cloth from a window or door. Routine aftercare and support for those infected could be accomplished by idled medical students.

We have been through similar processes in times of crisis before. By recruiting those who are willing to serve we can accomplish more, more quickly.

Responding appropriately to this emergency requires collective participation, a patriotic effort, and local community action. Direct employment of our youth can help alleviate some of the growing fear of economic collapse, and would be a more immediate use of our resources than tax cuts and industry bailouts. Perhaps this voluntary service would kindle interest in students to help permanently strengthen our weakened public health system. It would certainly better equip us to prepare for the next pandemic.

Kearney lives in Cabin John Gardens. An abridged version of this letter was published in The Washington Post on March 18th.
This Coronavirus Is a Real Showstopper
By Terri Payne

Rehearsals were well underway for the 64th Annual Bannockburn Spring Show when the COVID-19 outbreak reached pandemic proportions. As school closures were announced and businesses began retreating to telework, the Production Team knew we could put off no longer the dreaded question of what to do about the Show.

It’s not that we didn’t recognize the threat the virus posed to our production early on. Members of the Production Team had acted quickly to postpone the annual Newcomers’ Dinner weeks earlier, and the Director had been actively engaging with cast members returning from business and pleasure travel to assess whether their attendance at rehearsals posed an unreasonable risk to the cast community. But whether the show would go on was a decision we didn’t want to rush into.

Even in the best of years, which 2020 certainly is not, Spring Show offers a therapeutic release from everyday stress. Frustrated with the news? Our writers channel it into a song. Stressed by demands at home or at work? Our performers let it all out in nightly rehearsals. The daily Sunday-through-Thurs-day dose of community and comedy during the rehearsal season has helped many Bannockburnians weather tough times. We’re grateful for the 20 rehearsals we were able to conduct in a mostly normal manner this February and March. Our cast have their lyric sheets and recordings of their songs to continue practicing in the shower over the next...well, over the next who-knows-how-long.

The Production Team has not cancelled this year’s Show. Being realists, we decided to pause our production schedule for six weeks; in late April, we’ll see what the world looks like and make some decisions. It may be that we can mount a show sometime later in the year. It may be that we need to shelve this year’s witty and entertaining content until 2021. We know members of our community depend on the laughter and togetherness as much as our cast members do, and if we have to interrupt our regularly scheduled spring programming, we have a few tricks up our sleeves to keep Bannockburn’s laugh track rolling (and hopefully, the Clubhouse’s bank account balanced) right through this showstopper of a year.

Are You a BCC and BCA Member?

Your annual dues to Bannockburn Community Club (BCC) support community events and Clubhouse maintenance and improvements. Member benefits include discounts for Clubhouse rentals and Music Festival tickets, access to members-only events, and early access to tickets for the popular Spring Show.

Dues to the Bannockburn Civic Association (BCA) help represent Bannockburn on civic issues and support neighborhood communications including this newsletter, the Bannockburn Community Directory, and the website.

Membership is now on a rolling basis. Unsure of whether you’re a member or if your membership is current? Go to http://bannockburncommunity.org/membershipCheck.php.

Looking for Old Photos/Film Footage of Bannockburn

The feature documentary, Ain’t No Back to a Merry-Go-Round, is looking for images and footage of young Bannockburn. Directed by Emmy-award winning filmmaker Ilana Trachtman, the film explores Bannockburn’s involvement in the integration of Glen Echo Amusement Park in 1960. To capture the spirit of the neighborhood, the film crew is looking for footage and images of Bannockburn’s earliest days until the early 1960’s. Please help them locate footage or images of birthday parties, Halloween parades, swim meets, clubhouse gatherings, snow days, picnics, etc. The shots can be of individuals, families, and/or the community at large. At their expense, the film crew will transfer your material to a digital format, and return to you both the original and the digital file. Email the film’s archival producer, Clare Redden, rubypicture-sarchival@gmail.com. For more information about the film and updates on its progress, please check out https://www.facebook.com/GlenEchoDocumentary/.
What to Do If You Get Sick

- Stay home.
- Call your healthcare provider and let them know about your symptoms. Tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help them take care of you and keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- If you are not sick enough to be hospitalized, you can recover at home. Follow CDC instructions for caring for yourself at home: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html
- Get medical attention immediately if you have any of the emergency warning signs listed below.
  - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion or inability to arouse
  - Bluish lips or face

Supporting Older Adults

Individuals over the age of 60 are considered to be more at risk if exposed to COVID-19. Community preparedness planning for COVID-19 should include older adults and people with disabilities, and the organizations that support them in their communities, to ensure their needs are taken into consideration. Many elderly depend on services and supports provided in their homes or in the community to maintain their health and independence. Help neighbors who are confined to their homes get food.

Family and Caregiver Support

- Know what medications your loved one is taking and see if you can help them have extra on hand.
- Monitor food and other medical supplies (oxygen, incontinence, dialysis, wound care) needed and create a back-up plan.
- Stock up on non-perishable food items to have on hand in your home to minimize trips to stores.
- If you care for a loved one living in a care facility, monitor the situation, ask about the health of the other residents frequently, and know the protocol if there is an outbreak.


Bannockburn in Action

On February 25th, members of Bannockburn Reason for Action met with other area Indivisible groups to write postcards supporting a Pennsylvania “Get Out the Vote” effort. More than 500 postcards were written. From left to right: Carol Weil (Helmsdale Road), Julie Noble (East Halbert Road), Judy Bauer (Selkirk Drive), and Pamela Toole (Rannoch Road).