

Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors (NAN) Annual Report 2015

Governance/Meetings: Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors has completed its 8th year. The Board had 3 meetings during 2015, including an Annual Meeting of the Board in January. Miriam Kelty (President), Steve Baldwin (Vice President/Treasurer), and Doris Brody (Secretary) were elected by acclamation for two-year terms. Lynn Springer, JoAnn Krecke's and Diego Hernandez's terms end in December 2015. Helene Granof and Richard Boltuck were elected to the Board with term ending in 2017.

During 2015, Steve Baldwin resigned as Vice President but agreed to continue as Treasurer. Doris Brody resigned as Secretary and Diego Hernandez resigned from the Board because of their travel schedules. Eric Nichols and Sandra Von Fassen have agreed to join the Board.

The Board discussed and adopted a conflict-of-interest policy recommended by our legal advisor and signed a statement of compliance with the policy. The policy must be reviewed annually and members of the Board must sign that they agree to comply with it. Ms. Jennifer Hough, a lawyer with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom, acting pro bono, worked with NAN on its conflict-of-interest policy.

Major business at Board meetings included recruiting Board members and Block Coordinators and discussion of how best to support neighbors who need assistance. Other topics of discussion included NAN programs, how best to communicate resources available from NAN and from other organizations, including Montgomery County, the increased level of needs of our oldest residents, training volunteers and the rapid growth of Villages and similar organizations for aging in place in the community.

After approval from the Board last year, NAN has been an active participant in the pilot Village Rides program. The program coordinates ride scheduling for volunteer riders and drivers, using a software program licensed from Ride Scheduler. Village Rides, funded by a federal grant, had been administered by the Jewish Council on the Aging and The Senior Connection. In mid-year, following the appointment of a new Executive Director, The Senior Connection severed its partnership. The program is currently administered by The Jewish Council on the Aging. In voting to participate, the Board accepted its requirement relating to driver record check, insurance confirmation and background checks on volunteer drivers. Village Rides had staff changes during 2015. JoAnn Krecke and Miriam Kelty have been working closely with Trey Johansen, VR's program manager to publicize the program and on training volunteer drivers. JCoA has recruited a new marketing staffer who is scheduled to meet with NAN Board members in January 2016 to revise and update the

NAN brochure. VR has designed and paid for fridge magnets for NAN that provide information about rides and that will be distributed to all interested Bannockburn households. The Village Rides software includes a database and for the first time this year, NAN has received quarterly reports on its transportation activities. However, many Bannockburn residents make informal arrangements with volunteers who have given them rides before and those rides are not entered into the database unless the rider or driver lets JoAnn or Miriam know of the activity. We estimate that about 40% more rides have been given than have been recorded.

An instruction sheet about the required filing for the State of Maryland and for the Federal IRS filing was prepared by the Treasurer so that future treasurers will know what is required for Maryland and federal filing

Block Coordinator Recruitment and Meetings: Some Block Coordinators have moved and others resigned. New Block Coordinators recruited by JoAnn Krecke include Marisol Blanchard, Tanya Sisler of E. Halbert, and Richard Pollard on Selkirk. JoAnn hosted a gathering for continuing and new BCs to get to know one another and for the Board to thank BCs for their work. More than twenty attended.

Volunteer Training: Volunteer Training Guidelines were developed by JoAnn Krecke and Miriam Kelty and were distributed to BCs who were asked to share them with volunteers on their blocks. Drivers were offered training by Yonnette Williams of the Jewish Council on the Aging in use of Village Rides scheduling software and in the requirements of the Village Rides program

Direct Services: A priority for NAN is to assist Bannockburn seniors who wish to age in place. Areas in which help is needed were identified on the initial and subsequent surveys. Bannockburn and virtually all the villages that have conducted surveys identify transportation, social-educational activities and social visiting as their top priorities. Assistance with household chores is next with equipment loans and help with organization, finances, computers and other specific tasks following.

Since requests for assistance often are made directly to neighbors, to Block Coordinators and through the list-serv, tracking the number of services performed continues to be difficult. Transportation is the most requested service. Most requests have been met, including rides to medical and other appointments, as well as rides to stores, classes and/or meetings on a regular schedule. Several households that needed help related to medical situations contacted NAN Board members and BCs directly. Assistance was provided for transportation, equipment, food and/or information about geriatric case managers and professional home-care companies.

Assistance with household chores includes a variety of activities: changing a light bulb, fixing a faucet washer, resetting circuit breakers, etc.; being present when commercial help comes to the home to deter taking advantage or over-charging or inappropriate behavior; advice on whether professional help is needed or whether a neighbor or family member can do the job that needs to be done.

A variety of equipment has been loaned ranging from baby car seats, cribs and high chairs to canes, walker and crutches. Most of these transactions take place via the list-serv.

NAN provides information and services to assist the community at large as well as individuals with specific needs. For example, NAN has distributed and posted a list of pet sitters, snow shovelers, resources targeted at older residents, and sample emergency preparedness plans. Information relevant to seniors, including upcoming events, is distributed via the listserv.

NAN continues to receive requests to assist some the oldest residents in our community. About half the requests came directly from neighbors, others from neighbors of these residents who were concerned about their welfare and contacted NAN. Adult children who are nearby or out of town also contacted NAN to inquire about or request services for parents. The needs ranged from transportation to a series of medical appointments, identifying professional services providers, checking in with caregivers, information about County services, visiting, shopping, reading, and reassurance. Although most of these requests were filled easily, some situations observed in the home raise questions about safety and ability to manage independently. Similar situations have been observed by other Villages that have been operating for several years as their residents become older and need more help.

Social visiting and activities that foster socialization are appreciated by Bannockburn seniors. BCs and other neighbors visited some seniors on a regular basis. In other situations, visits were in response to specific needs. Monthly programs and socials provided an opportunity for seniors to interact with neighbors of all ages. Visits to neighbors who employ full-time or part-time caregivers or in which a family member is a caregiver raised awareness of caregiver social isolation and stress.

Social/Educational Programs: NAN sponsored a variety of programs/social activities of broad interest and some geared more to interests of older persons and/or their adult children. Some programs were co-sponsored with other community organizations. 2015 programs included:

January: Arts and Aging with Anthony Hyatt; Newcomers' dinner
February: Guided tour of Katzen Museum exhibits with Jack Rasmussen

March: Talk about Justice Brennan with Steve Wermei
April: Fix It: How to Work With/Evaluate a Contractor with Little Falls Village
May: Spring Show (with first night NAN focus)
June: Social Hour
July: Water Exercise with Marianne Ross
September: Ice Cream Social
October: Music Festival
November: Crafts Fair; Washington World Chorus with Burning Tree Village
December: Panel discussion: Syria Today with Senior Leadership Montgomery; Holiday Activities

Book Clubs: Three book clubs initiated at a NAN community meeting continue to meet.

Wise Elders: The Wise Elder Program, suspended in 2013 and 2014 because nobody volunteered to take the lead in coordinating with the school and recruiting and training seniors and students, was revived in 2015. Marianne Ross and a new Bannockburn, Kara Myers, volunteered to organize and stimulate the program. Training documents and guidelines were reviewed, meetings were held with the high school teacher-sponsor and students and older neighbors were recruited to participate. A presentation will be scheduled for early in 2016.

Communications and Outreach: Block Coordinators recommended that communication and outreach activities are needed to inform Bannockburn neighbors about NAN, its mission and services. The NAN page on the Bannockburn Community website was updated. A printable copy of the NAN brochure is posted on the NAN page of the Bannockburn Community website was updated.

NAN distributed periodic notices of upcoming events including county activities, programs of other villages, cultural event and service events. These have been well-received and some residents report that they have attended some events.

NAN Board members worked with a neighbor to identify Bannockburn residents who are seniors, using the public voter registration database. Approximately 22% of residents in the NAN geographic boundary (River to MacArthur and Wilson to Goldsboro) are over 65 years old.

In January, there was a presentation about NAN at the Newcomer' Dinner. In May, NAN attended the joint meeting of all Boards and reported on status of the organization, activities and future plans and priorities. Some relatively new residents expressed interest in becoming involved.

Outreach activities included interaction with groups in Montgomery County and in the greater Washington area. NAN was invited to participate in county and other meetings about 'villages' and to share experiences with other groups that promote aging in place in the community. One outcome of NAN's participation in county educational/information sessions is that the county is continuing its membership in Village to Village Network and has given NAN access to webinars, list-serv and other resources. Issues raised at these meetings include: administrative management; data systems and support; planning for turnover and succession of leadership; negotiating preferred provider pricing for villages; keeping up to date on community resources; membership (fee based) or no membership; geographic boundaries; student service learning hours and the role of faith based organizations in villages. Similar issues have been discussed in the quarterly meetings of Washington Area Villages Exchange, a group that meets quarterly to share information and to support village development. NAN keeps in touch with close-by 'villages' such as Chevy Chase at Home, Burning Tree, Neighbors2Neighbors and Cabin John. Currently, there are eight operating and developing villages in Bethesda that meet with one another quarterly and share information more frequently. NAN continued participating in Maryland villages statewide community of practice. This year the Village Coordinator, a full-time Montgomery County employee, has facilitated interaction among villages.

Miriam Kelty made eight presentations about villages in general and about NAN specifically to communities organizing to start villages.

Fund-raising: In 2015, BCA donated \$200 to NAN.

Priorities for 2016: NAN's priorities for the coming year remain similar to last year's :

1. Provide services to Bannockburnians, particularly to assist seniors who want to age in place.
2. Invite neighbors to Board meetings to familiarize them with NAN and to see if they are willing to become more involved, perhaps as Board members and then officers.
3. Hold a community meeting to get feedback on NAN and to listen to community recommendations for services and programs. Explore interest in a walking group, caregiver support group, movie group, etc.
4. Recruit and retain block coordinators, make sure they are well informed about NAN purposes and services, and offer them training and opportunities to interact.
5. Increase social/educational programs and community participation in them.

6. Recruit volunteers to provide services and to help with programs.
7. Increase rider and driver participation in Village Rides program
8. Expand and update the NAN webpage.

Miriam Kelty, December 2015