

Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors (NAN) Annual Report 2013

Governance/Meetings: Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors has completed its 6th year. The Board had 6 meetings during 2013. At the Annual Meeting of the Board, Board members and Officers were elected as follows: Miriam Kelty and Jillaine Smith continue their two year terms, 2012-2014. Doris Brody and Steve Baldwin's terms end in December 2013. Lynn Springer, JoAnn Krecke's and Diego Hernandez's terms end in December 2015. Miriam Kelty (President), Steve Baldwin (Vice President), and Doris Brody (Secretary) were elected by acclamation for two year terms. Steve Baldwin agreed to take care of IRS ?????

Major business at Board meetings included discussion of the sustainability of NAN, recruiting Board members and Block Coordinators and how best to support neighbors who need assistance. Other topics of discussion included the 2012-2013 survey, NAN programs, sustainability, 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, and a problem with IRS filing..

There was a markedly decreased response rate to our neighborhood survey since it has been put on-line as compared to personal delivery of hard copy. The survey is important for identifying volunteer service providers and people who need services. The Board was asked to help distribute the new Bannockburn Directory and did so. As new volunteers join NAN, they need to be trained. Miriam and JoAnn reviewed a training manual for volunteers developed by Chevy Chase at Home. After review and discussion we decided that the material in The Village Blueprint is more appropriate for our community. In response to a request by volunteers at a meeting with them last year, we agreed to distribute resource books from the County and from Iona to BCs and to post resources on the NAN website.

The Board was notified that NAN had lost its 501©(3) non-profit status due to incorrect filing. Fortunately, the law firm that helped us prepare and filed for us originally graciously agreed to do it again. Needless to say, the Board is most appreciative and relieved. An instruction sheet about the required filing for the State of Maryland and for the Federal IRS filing has been prepared.

Block Coordinator Meetings: A meeting/training session on ethical issues that volunteers encounter and how to handle them was held in June. The discussion was well received. A second session to be held in the evening is scheduled so that BCs who prefer an evening meeting are able to attend.

Direct Services: A priority for NAN is to assist Bannockburn seniors who wish to age in place with those tasks or priorities that were identified on the initial survey in and on its updates. Bannockburn and virtually all the villages that have conducted surveys identify transportation and social-educational activities/social visiting as their top two or three 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 are made directly to neighbors, Block Coordinators and through the list-serv, tracking the number of services performed continues to be difficult. Requests for services are increasing; transportation is the most requested service. Most requests have been met, including rides to medical and other appointments, as well as rides to activities, classes and/or meetings on a regular schedule. NAN was able to refer the people who needed transportation beyond the Washington metro area to possible sources. These will be list on the resource list under development. 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 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.

This year NAN has several requests for assistance for some the oldest residents in our community. About half the requests came from neighbors of these residents who were concerned about their welfare and contacted NAN. The needs ranged from transportation to a series of medical appointments, to identifying professional services providers, to information about County services, to shopping, reading, and reassurance. Although most of these requests were filled easily, there are situation that raise questions about safety and ability to manage independently. Similar issues are being experienced by other Villages that have been operating for several years.

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

Social/Educational Programs: Burning Tree Village has a walking and a knitting

group that meet regularly. Bannockburn residents were invited to join. NAN, in response to community requests, planned 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. 2013 programs included:

Newcomers' dinner - January

Book Clubs – In 2011 NAN sponsored a community meeting at which 4 book clubs were organized. Three meet monthly or every 6 weeks.

Money Matters, Leah Nichaman – February

The Congress: What's Likely, What's Possible, What's Dead – April

Senior Leadership Montgomery – April

Spring Show - May

Water Aerobics – June/July .

Ice Cream Social- September

Falls Awareness: Home and Health - September

Cuba– October

Music Festival - October

Crafts Fair – November

Holiday Activities – December

The Wise Elder Program had a hiatus in 2012 because of timing difficulties. Dick Ramsey, with the help of Dave Brooks, has recruited Wise Elders for the 2013 program. They are: Steve Baldwin; Ellen Benson; Walter Benson; Helene Granof; Beverly Hummel; Dave Krecke (and maybe Helen Pelikan). Dave Brooks recruited 7 students from Whitman to pair with them. Information and orientation materials for students and elders, interview guidelines and an evaluation form are in place. An orientation session was held in early October. Arrangements with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, Montgomery County schools and Walt Whitman High School are planned to continue as before. Dick Ramsey has been out of contact and it appears as if the program was not completed. Efforts to contact Dick are continuing.

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

Outreach activities centered on 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 run by Beacon Hill Village in Boston 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. NAN continued participating in Maryland villages statewide community of practice for villages. Through the Montgomery County Commission on Aging, NAN was involved in a study to document Villages in the County. A report of that activity was shared with the Board and a summary was prepared for the Bannockburn Newsletter.

Priorities for 2014: 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.
3. Increase the size of the Board to involve more residents and to train people as Board members and Officers.
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. Publicize the NAN survey at Newcomers' dinner to increase response rate.
8. Expand and update the NAN webpage.
9. Develop a resource bank that will be accessible to BCs and to community members.
10. Reapply for and obtain 501C3 tax status from IRS.

Miriam Kelty, December 2013