



The BANNOCKBURN *Back 9*

Published by the Bannockburn Civic Association since 1953

March 2025

Newcomers' Dinner Returns After Five Years

By Terri Payne

Newcomers' Dinner will return to the Clubhouse on Saturday, March 8th from 7 to 9 PM. For decades, the Bannockburn Community celebrated this annual potluck dinner to welcome new arrivals into the fold of our cooperative community. It was a beloved tradition, full of the spirit of joyful connections, music, and laughter. Like so many traditions in so many spaces, the Newcomers' Dinner was paused during the pandemic, and then reintroduced in more tentative formats. As we've all tested the waters of communal gathering and largely regained comfort with dining indoors and trusting our neighbors to stay home if they're sick and take precautions if they're especially vulnerable, the Bannockburn Community Club (BCC) Board feels the time is right to renew the Newcomers' Dinner tradition at the Clubhouse.

Newcomers' Dinner offers new community members the benefits of three events in one:

- 1. Meet your neighbors!** This is an event for the whole geographic Bannockburn community, and the whole community is represented. You'll mingle with folks who've lived on your street for months, years, and decades; who grew up here and stayed to raise their own families or moved in recently for the schools; who are active in mahjong, or tennis, or gardening circles. If you're searching for a pool, a soccer team, a book club, or a spiritual home, we have recommendations for you! And because this is an adults-only event, parents of young children will actually retain some of this information thanks to uninterrupted adult conversations.
- 2. Learn about your new community!** Leaders from each of Bannockburn's primary community organizations provide a brief description of who they are, what they do, and how you can get



involved with them. Did you know we're a very musical community? You'll get a taste of that, too, during the event.

- 3. Eat dinner! You have to eat, right?** Might as well let our generous and culinarily-diverse Oldtimers feed you! The BCC provides wine, beer, and soft drinks for the event, so Newcomers should just bring themselves.

Are you an Oldtimer trying to remember how the alphabet potluck works? t's simple: based on the first letter of your last name, you're asked to bring a dish to feed 12-15 adults. Two last names in the family? You choose which one to use! Last names A-L bring a main dish; M-S bring a side dish or salad; T-Z bring a dessert. Room-temperature dishes work best, but we do have a few wall plugs available for those who bring a crockpot to keep something warm. The Clubhouse has a hodgepodge of platters

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Back9 Contributors

Brenda Hanning
 Terri Payne

The Bannockburn Civic Association (BCA) has published our neighborhood's newsletter since 1953. *The Back9* is published monthly September through June and currently reaches almost 700 households. To make sure you receive a copy of this newsletter, visit <http://bannockburn-community.org/newsletter/>.

Interested in submitting an article or running an advertisement? Please email contact-bca@bannockburncommunity.org

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Mark Your Calendar*

Sat 3/8– Newcomers' Dinner, 7-9 PM. The Newcomers' Dinner returns after five years. Come meet your new neighbors and feast on some of the area's finest cuisine. Newcomers get to learn about Bannockburn's traditions. Adults-only potluck. For details, please refer to the cover article.

* Events at the Clubhouse marked in bold.

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BCI owns the Clubhouse and adjoining property as well as the two properties in the Valley. BCI has an agreement with BCC (Bannockburn Community Club) to manage the Clubhouse property. It also cooperates with BCC, BCA, and NAN.

BCI has shareholders. 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, please contact Patty Howie, pbhowie@verizon.net.



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Newcomers' Dinner from page 1



Newcomers' Event 2023.

and serving utensils, but it's easiest if you can bring your dish ready-to-serve. Put your name on all your dishes and utensils if you want them back; Sharpie on painter's tape comes off cleanly but will last through the washing up our volunteers inevitably do at the end of the evening. Store-bought prepared foods are absolutely fine if you don't have time or skills to cook. All foods should be labeled so diners know what they are. We'll have tent cards and markers available in case you need those. If your

Bannockburn Community Club (BCC)

The BCC is the 501(c)(3) organization that manages the clubhouse and grounds on behalf of the BCI. As a result of this designation, any donations to BCC are tax deductible to the full extent allowable by law.

BCC promotes, supports, and sponsors educational and cultural activities at the Bannockburn Community Clubhouse, including a not-for-profit nursery school, a children's summer camp, theater (including the Spring Show), art, music, dance, forums, lectures, and discussion groups.

Membership:

Area residents, former area residents, and friends of Bannockburn.

Annual Dues:

Set by elected Board of Directors (currently \$250 for sponsors, \$50 for families and \$35 for single heads of households).

President: Christo Andonyadis

Vice President: Terri Payne

Treasurer: Greg Sherrard

Contact: contact-bcc@bannockburncommunity.org

dish contains any common allergens – peanuts, tree nuts, gluten, or dairy – please note that on your label for the benefit of neighbors with food sensitivities. If your food is fine sitting out for a few hours, you're welcome to drop it in the Grillroom between 4-6pm on Saturday, March 8th. Otherwise, please bring it with you to the event at 7 PM.

Attire for Newcomers' Dinner is cocktail casual (Google it). Presentations and entertainment will begin promptly at 7:30 PM so that our neighbors with babysitters can get home on time. New this year: all Newcomers who sign in at the door will be eligible to win a 4-hour free Clubhouse rental for use in 2025! Our emcee will draw names from a hat at the end of the evening.

If you have a new neighbor on your street, please reach out to them with a personal invitation and encouragement to attend! We hope to see lots of Oldtimers, too. After all, YOU are what makes Bannockburn so special.

Payne, of Benalder Drive, is Vice President of the Bannockburn Community Club (BCC) Board.



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Spring Is Coming!

By Brenda Hanning



Photo by Susan Wexler

Bannockburn Clubhouse rain garden.

There is nothing more productive or peaceful than tending one's own garden. So Voltaire said in *Candide*. It's an antidote to a life "bristling with thorns."

At the Bannockburn Clubhouse, which sits on 2.3 acres of land, you can admire the plants in bloom, stroll the grounds, go sledding or kick a soccer ball, sit on one of our memorial benches, walk your dog—and otherwise enjoy this oasis in the midst of our suburban community. It's a beautiful place for a wedding or a birthday party, too.

What's growing there, you might ask. Well, we have a collection of mature trees, and 14 native specimens donated and planted by Montgomery County: Kentucky coffee, river birch, swamp oak, white oak, red maple, black gum/tupelo, and loblolly pine. Come and see how many you can identify!

The native shrubs and plants in the gardens (we only plant natives) are working for us. The water flowing off the Clubhouse's 5,000+ square feet of impervious roof shingles was flowing into yards on West Halbert Road and down the old golf course driveway where it would discharge on West Halbert near the intersection with Bannockburn Drive, eroding soil and spreading leaves and debris. With grants from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, we planted shrubs and ferns along the east side of the backyard. Weirs were added, to slow the flow of water, along with a path to stroll along. Berms were built up on the west side and planted. In just a few years, the flow of water is under control.

So, what plants are taking care of all this? Below is a partial list. They might help with your own drainage challenges, especially if your yard is impacted

by the loss of one of the legacy trees that are being removed at an alarming rate all over Bannockburn. These are mostly plants that thrive in shade, too, under Bannockburn's tree canopy. Not all of them escape from hungry deer, but most do.

American beautyberry
Creek sedge
Spreading sedge
Sea oats
Pink turtlehead
Fringe tree
Summer sweet
Sensitive fern
Virginia sweetspire
Mountain mint

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NAN Is Looking for Block Coordinators

By JoAnn Krecke

Neighbors Assisting Neighbors ([NAN](#)) provides help and support to seniors in our neighborhood who would like to remain in their homes. Block coordinators are assigned to each block to help the seniors on their street. They assist them in various ways such as helping with transportation for medical appointments and grocery shopping as well by connecting them with relevant resources.

Right now we have several blocks with no coordinators. NAN works best with block coordinators on every block attuned to the needs of the people there.

Presently we need block coordinators on the following streets: Barr Road, Vorlich Lane, Lower East Halbert, the hook on East Halbert, West Halbert, Orkney Parkway, and Crathie Lane.

If you would like to get to know your neighbors and contribute to the community, this is a great way to do so. If you are interested and would like to learn more, please call Anne Quinlan (301) 908-0662 or JoAnn Krecke (301) 706-1384.

Krecke, of Bannockburn Drive, is NAN's coordinator of block coordinators.

Spring from page 4

Our Bannockburn Community Clubhouse (BCC) Landscaping Committee has master gardeners and devoted gardeners who contribute their time to tending the communal yard. We always welcome additional members! How else can you contribute?

Well, you can beautify your own gardens and help plant ours at the Clubhouse by ordering from Flower Power. Summer sales are active now, at <http://BCCLandscaping.fpfundraising.com>.

The organization, through the Holland Bulb Company, gives us 40% of its profits from sales made through our fundraising link. This past year, for example, we planted a dozen water-loving shrubs along the Clubhouse driveway with these funds. Soon, some new daffodils from a donation will be blooming.

We would love to add Adirondack chairs or teak benches to the grounds for everyone's enjoyment. If you pause on a bench during a walk, look at the names of long-time Bannockburnians on the memo-

rial plaques: Sam Silverman, Albert and Sylvia Small, Morris and Yetta Weisz, Madeleine and Stan Sigel, and Timothy Krecke. Think, too, about donating a tree, or some evergreens, or flowering bushes, in memory of a loved one. We want to remember our longtime neighbors and founders in this place that was so special to them.

You can donate native plants to the Clubhouse, as well! Or your time! In spring, we need help spreading mulch. In fall, our mature trees drop huge amounts of leaves that need raking.

You can contact the BCC Landscaping Committee about any of these by emailing contact-bcc@bannockburncommunity.org. Most of all, we invite you to drop by in the evening or on a weekend with your family, to discover what's growing at our community Clubhouse.

Hanning, of Braeburn Place, is Chair of the BCC Landscaping Committee.

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Visiting with Tanya Sisler and Karen Severy in Thailand

By Beth Rogers

In the middle of February, my husband Mike Zangwill and I met up with Tanya Sisler, formerly of East Halbert Road, who now lives in Bangkok. Sisler, a staff relations counselor with the World Bank supporting its South, Central, and East Asian offices, moved there in January of 2024. She committed to a three-year assignment but hopes to be able to keep renewing her contract there until she reaches retirement age in seven years. At that time it is highly likely that she will stay on in Thailand.



Tanya Sisler in Bangkok.

"I love the people, they are so friendly and kind," says Sisler. "I like living in Thailand because the quality of life is great and the cost of living is low. Medical care is inexpensive and top class. It's easy and inexpensive to travel to nearby countries like Cambodia, Vietnam, and Malaysia as well as to explore other parts of Thailand."

Sisler quickly created a sense of community and purpose for herself. She joined the American Women's Club for social connections and its philanthropic orientation and now serves as co-president. "We raise money for low-income girls in Thailand to go to school," Sisler explains. "In the past year we've raised money for scholarships that have allowed about 315 girls to go to school." This funding is crucial in Thailand where things like transportation and the cost of school uniforms are borne by families.



Tanya Sisler and Beth Rogers at Klong Muang Beach, Krabi, Thailand.

She also became a member of the Facebook group Host a Sister Over 50 which is a worldwide community of solo female travelers who are looking for connections for either a meetup or short-term lodging. She usually hosts about one or two women a month.

The main hardship for Sisler has been being away from her children Sam Smith, a freshman at Dickinson College, and Kyla Smith, a junior at the McLean School. She was able to meet up with them in Morocco and Spain during winter break but won't be seeing them again until the summer. (Kyla will be staying the entire summer.) Sisler has a spacious apartment for her children and notes that when they're not around she likes to host people for the company. "I like having a place filled with people, good conversations, and laughter, so when women come into my space we cook together and eat communally. Host a Sister helped me find women at a similar place in their lives; empty nesters traveling the world. I think it's really cool. I've made amazing women friends. "

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Where Are They Now from page 6



Karen Severy and Tanya Sisler in Ao Nang, Thailand.

Because of Bangkok’s central location, Sisler has had a steady stream of visitors, including, last May, her good friend Jeanine Greene of West Halbert Road.

“I miss my kids desperately,” says Sisler, “but now I’m introducing them to so many cool places and experiences. I find it interesting that Sam gravitates to the Asian kids at Dickinson and is good friends with someone from Nepal. I don’t think he would have done that had he not traveled here.”

From Bangkok the three of us flew south together to Ao Nang in Krabi Province for four days. There we all met up with Karen Severy who, coincidentally, was staying in the area. Severy and Sisler had known each other for years since their sons are the same age and went to the same schools. The two often volunteered together at Bannockburn Elementary School.

Severy also used to live in Bannockburn. She sold her house on Wagner Lane in February of 2023 and rented an apartment in Bethesda for a while.

Severy has long been interested in world travel, a passion that was cultivated by her father who worked with National Geographic and often took the family on assignment. The realities of work and parenting her son Ian Severy Gaul kept her closer to home but in August of 2024, when Ian, a Whit-

man graduate, started his freshman year at UCLA, Severy decided to downsize even more, consolidating everything she owned into a couple of suitcases.

She and Ian made a road trip out of the journey to Los Angeles, exploring national parks and visiting friends in Palm Springs and other points in California. After UCLA’s family weekend, Severy hopped on a plane to Luang Prabang in Laos. Ian joined her in Laos for winter break and then the two went to Chiang Mai in Thailand for New Year’s before heading to Krabi.

Severy has been in Ao Nang since early January. There she found a wellness retreat for women who are mostly empty nesters over 50. She will be staying in Thailand through the end of February before returning to Laos then traveling on to Kuala Lumpur. Then she plans on visiting friends in Spain’s Costa

del Sol before moving on to France. She has no plans to return to America except for Ian’s graduation.

Now mostly retired from corporate law, Severy is fully enjoying the ability to travel wherever and whenever the mood suits her. “I don’t know that I’ll find one place to settle because I’m looking for acceptable weather which is hard to find. I am an ocean person and really need to be near a coast. My ideal is to find places I can return to and still have a sense of community.”

While in Ao Nang we also got to meet Bronwen Kennedy, an old friend of Severy’s. The two met at the Mohican Hills Pool when both were nine months pregnant and formed a life-long friendship. Kennedy grew up in Glen Echo, went to Holton Arms, and

still lives in Bethesda off Massachusetts Avenue so we suspect that there are some *Back 9* readers who might know her as well.

The time spent with these women was full of laughter and numerous exclamations of “life is good.”



Mike Zangwill, Beth Rogers, Tanya Sisler, and Karen Severy at Ko Lao Lading Island, Andaman Sea, Thailand.



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Bannockburn in Action



Members of Bannockburn Reason for Action visit Senator Chris Van Hollen's field office in Rockville on February 5th to protest USAID being shut down. Under the seal is Emily Shaw with Marianne Ross and JoAnn Krecke to the right. Not shown, Anne Quinlan.

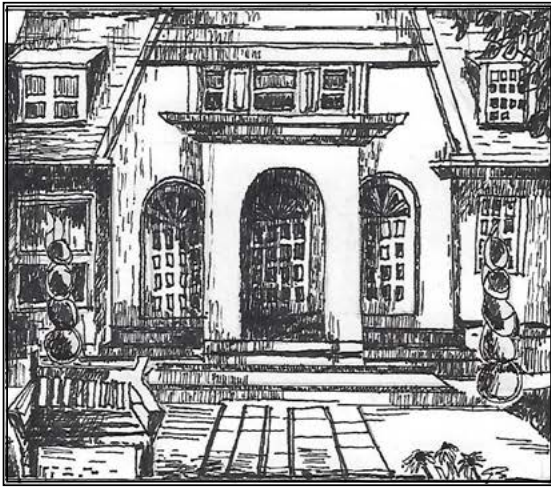


From left to right: Anne Quinlan, Randall Ingate, Pamela Toole, Susan Wexler, and Hans Engler went to the Capitol on February 17th to protest government shutdowns.

Coyote spotted in Bannockburn on East Halbert Road. Photo by Sam Geesing.



Spring Show 69's first rehearsal at the Clubhouse on February 23rd.



Bannockburn Community Directory 2025

The Bannockburn Community Directory represents the loyal patronage of more than 600 households associated with the Bannockburn neighborhood bounded by Wilson Lane, River Road, MacArthur Boulevard, and Goldsboro Road. The directory is printed every three years by the Bannockburn Civic Association.

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