

Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors (NAN) Annual Report 2017

Governance/Meetings: It is ten years since Helen Pelikan first inquired about whether our community might establish an organization to support older residents who want to remain in their homes and community. During these ten years, NAN has supported a number of Bannockburn founders and early residents. Currently, we are serving a second generation of older neighbors and younger neighbors who need services.

The Board held an Annual Meeting with the community at Bannockburn's joint board meeting in May and met in March, August and December. The Board reviewed and retained its 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.

Three major items of business at Board meetings included issues of communication resulting from retirement of our listserv, expanding NAN's boundaries and revisiting the issue of insurance for the Board and the organization and collaborating with other community organizations.

NextDoor was adopted as our new communications channel. There is a Bannockburn site that includes NAN's expanded boundaries and a NAN Group. We prepared a Newsletter article about NextDoor and how to use it and held a training session. Additional training sessions are planned.

The Bannockburn Estates Citizens' Association approached NAN about merging their Good Neighbors Committee with our 'village.' After a series of meetings, both Boards voted unanimously to expand NAN's boundaries to include Bannockburn Estates. The merger should be facilitated by the fact that our neighborhood NextDoor boundary includes Bannockburn Estates. The Board invited representatives from the Estates' Citizens' Association to meet with us during discussions and then to join the Board. Recruitment of volunteers and Board and Block Coordinators, informing residents of the Estates of our expanded organization and of the transition to NextDoor are ongoing activities. In addition to articles in the Bannockburn News, articles were published in The Bannockburn Banner describing the merger and NextDoor.

Montgomery County Villages meet quarterly to discuss common concerns and how all may benefit from collaboration. There was an exchange of information about insurance coverage: which villages have Board, liability and umbrella coverage, which are planning to purchase insurance, which are not, what coverage is essential and adequate, and whether a group purchase might lower costs. The possibility of forming a non-profit to facilitate group insurance purchase is under discussion by Montgomery County villages. As part of this process, villages identified services they provide and requested a quote from a broker who deals with non-profit organizations. Because NAN has a

lending closet of equipment (baby equipment and medical equipment, e.g. walkers, canes, crutches, etc) our quote resembled the insurance cost for a nursing facility. Such insurance clearly is not possible within our organizational model and operations plan. The Board voted that NAN continue to serve the community as we have been, but we will post a statement on our listserv that NAN is not owner of equipment offered on loan and that borrowers are fully responsible for consequences of its use. At the end of the year, NAN was informed that RSVP, the federal grant program that offered supplemental insurance to volunteer drivers, is discontinuing its insurance for village volunteers because volume of rides is low. The Board will continue to gather information and review insurance options.

How best to support neighbors who need assistance is a topic of continuing discussion. Most if not all of the first generation of elders served by NAN have passed away and those who are in early stages of needing assistance need to be made aware that support from NAN is available. We distributed information at community events but do not know how many of our target population has been reached. Several in the community perceive that a listserv, in addition to NextDoor, would facilitate communication and information sharing. The Board is considering the feasibility and practicality of establishing a new listserv or communication group for older residents and/or the entire community.

The Board also discussed NAN programs, how best to communicate resources available from NAN and from other organizations, the increased level of need of our oldest residents, training volunteers and the rapid growth of Villages and similar organizations for aging in place in the community. A volunteer training is planned for early next year;

NAN continued to participate in the Village Rides (VR) program. In addition to coordinating and tracking rides requested and provided by Bannockburnians, NAN has benefited from quarterly reports, a volunteer driver training curriculum and marketing materials. Some of our senior Bannockburn residents persist in making informal arrangements with volunteers who have given them rides and those rides are not entered into the database unless the rider or driver lets JoAnn or Miriam know of the activity. In 2017, 112 rides were requested through the Village Rides system. Of those, 10 were canceled by the requester. Although more rides were recorded in 2017 than in the past, we estimate that about 40% more rides have been given than have been recorded.

Participants in our Sunday Series programs had trouble hearing our speakers. Last year, the Board approved the purchase of wireless microphones and speakers. BCA purchased a sound system to be used by NAN and for other community functions. The Board appreciated this gift, thanked BCA and also members of the BCC Board, Ken Kuehn and Mike Parker who participated in the decision-making process and taught us how to use the sound and TV systems.

Block Coordinator Recruitment and Meetings: Some Block Coordinators (BCs) have moved, others resigned and new Block Coordinators were recruited by JoAnn Krecke: Sandra Van Fossen will share Rannoch Rd. with Lya Karm and Richard Pollard will cover Selkirk Drive and Court. Beth Rogers offered to interview and write occasional articles about our BCs for the newsletter. BCs have been asked to identify and contact older residents, particularly before and during winter storms. Miriam and JoAnn hosted a gathering for BCs to get to know one another and for the Board to thank BCs for their work. NAN's mission and activities were described to the community at Newcomers' Dinner and at the joint boards meeting. Volunteers were recruited at these events. We presented information to the Bannockburn Estates community about Block Coordinators and volunteers at two meetings and in an article published in The Bannockburn Banner magazine. Training for new BCs and volunteers will be held early in 2018.

Direct Services: NAN continues 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 listserv, 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. Our drivers have been very gracious about helping those in need.

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. These requests are infrequent.

A year ago, a senior suggested that we have a lending closet for medical equipment. She described her idea on the listserv and collected crutches, walkers, toileting aids and a few other things. They are in Miriam's basement and available for loan. Walkers, canes and crutches were borrowed most often; at times requests for walkers exceeded supply, particularly at holiday times when many families have older visitors. Requests for baby car seats, cribs and high chairs, toys, etc. pick up around holiday times.

As was the case last year, NAN continues to receive requests to assist some the oldest residents in our community. About half the requests came directly from neighbors who needed help, others from neighbors or adult children of these residents who were concerned about them. 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 reported by other Villages that have been operating for several years as their residents become older and need more help.

NAN maintains a resource file and posts some resources on its web page. For example, last year we posted a home safety check-list, an emergency plan and a list of snow shovelers that has been updated for 2018. We have provided information about rehabilitation and nursing centers and keep current on which are considered the best for different situations by recent users and/or experts. NAN also has put those looking for professional caregiving staff in touch with neighbors who are or have recently used such individuals. We keep in touch with several social workers and/or geriatric care managers who are excellent information resources.

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.

This year the Board discussed special interest groups in addition to our bookclubs. For example, a walking group or a movie group might interest our seniors.

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. Trips to local museums, historic houses and places of interest were organized . 2017 programs included:

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| January: | Newcomers' dinner, Community New Year's brunch |
| February: | Wise Elder presentations; choral performance |
| March: | Being Mortal: Film, facilitated discussion |
| April: | Yoga and Meditation |
| May: | Immigration Forum; NAN Night at Spring Show |
| June: | Water Exercise with Marianne Ross |

July: Water Exercise with Marianne Ross
September: Hospital Warriors (author talk); Community Ice Cream Social
October: Community Music Festival; Community Halloween Party; NextDoor
Training
November: Climate Change

Book Clubs:

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

Wise Elders: The Wise Elder Program, coordinated by Marianne Ross and Miriam Kelty, recruited Whitman students and older Bannockburnians to participate. Training documents and guidelines were reviewed, meetings were held with the high school teacher-sponsor and students. Five students and elders participated. The presentation was held in February and was attended by more than 50 people.

Partnership with Bannockburn Nursery School: BNS welcomes older residents to the nursery school on the last Friday of each month to engage in some activity with the children: reading, crafts, music, drama or something else that the elder can offer and the staff agree to. Two volunteers are regulars at the nursery school. A few more could fit into their schedule.

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. The one-page brochure about NAN and fridge magnets with information about Village Rides was hand delivered to seniors' homes and will be updated and distributed again to reflect our expanded boundaries and our increased efforts to identify older residents.

NAN distributed periodic notices of upcoming events including county activities, programs of other villages, cultural events and service events. There was a presentation about NAN at the Newcomers' 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 new residents expressed interest in becoming volunteers and a few have been recruited. Richard Boltuck, JoAnn Krecke and Miriam Kelty met with members of the Bannockburn Citizens' Association at their picnic, meeting and Board meetings to discuss merging their Good Neighbors Committee with NAN. Several smaller meetings followed to design outreach and implementation plans.

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. Miriam did an OASIS class on the all-volunteer village model. The county supports our membership in Village to Village Network and has given NAN access to webinars and other resources. Miriam and JoAnn attended the national Village to Village Network meeting in Baltimore. Issues common to all villages nationally 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 fees; 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 periodically to share information and to support village development. Currently, there are 29 operating and developing villages in the County that meet quarterly, share information more frequently and benefit from assistance from the Village Coordinator, a full-time Montgomery County employee.

Within our community, NAN, BCA and BCC collaborated on several activities that include collecting and distributing information, helping at community activities, participating in fund-raising discussions and events, and sharing resources.

NAN participated in a study on community engagement by older residents supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service and conducted under contract by George Washington University. It focused on vilages and involved interviews and focus groups.

Donations: In 2017, NAN received just over \$900 donations from the community plus many hours of donated services. NAN applied for and was informed it will receive \$500 from Suburban Hospital Foundation for expanding outreach and engagement activities.

Priorities for 2018: 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. Work with legal expert to develop waiver of liability and related statements
3. Familiarize our expanded community with NAN and recruit neighbors to become more involved.
4. Increase communication channels by publicizing and training on use of NextDoor and by creating a new listserv targeted at Bannockburn seniors.
5. 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. Recruit people to participate in the Wise Elder program
6. Recruit and retain block coordinators, make sure they are well informed about NAN purposes and services, and offer them training and opportunities to interact.
7. Recruit volunteers to provide services and to help with programs.
8. Increase rider and driver participation in Village Rides program
9. Expand NAN's trip program to sites in the DC area.

Miriam Kelty January 2018