

Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors (NAN) Annual Report 2018

NAN, established in late 2007 and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization in early 2009, is one of the more mature Montgomery County 'villages' founded to support older residents who want to remain in their homes and community. 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 assistance. In 2017, the latest year for which census data are available, 19.7% of our neighbors were older than 65. The older population is the fastest growing segment in our country.

NAN aims to achieve its mission by offering educational and social programs that strengthen community, prevent social isolation and provide individual support to residents who request it.

Governance/Meetings: In 2018, NAN held an Annual Meeting with the community at Bannockburn's joint board meeting. The Board conducted business meetings, reviewed and voted to retain its conflict-of-interest policy. Major items of business at Board meetings included: communication including publicizing and training older residents on use of NextDoor and working with other community organizations on development of a new listserv; expanding NAN's boundaries; revisiting the issue of insurance and liability for the Board and the organization; working cooperatively with other Bannockburn organizations; collaborating with nearby villages on programs, training and other common interests and participating in County-wide committees, programs and initiatives, e.g. Age-Friendly Montgomery and Villages/Hospital Relationships.

How best to support neighbors who need assistance is a topic of continuing Board discussion. Only a few of the first generation of elders served by NAN are still with us. They are the group that requests services most regularly. Those in early stages of needing assistance need to be made aware that support from NAN is available and encouraged to make use of our resources.

The Board considered the practicality of establishing a new listserv in response to requests. After conducting several group training sessions on how to use NextDoor, establishing a NAN group and doing some individual training, the Board decided to give NextDoor more time. During the past year, its usage seems to have increased, though it is not clear that our older residents are big users.

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. Training was conducted for new volunteers and specific training for drivers made use of materials prepared by Village Rides.

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.

Block Coordinator Recruitment and Meetings: Block Coordinators (BCs) 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. Training for new BCs and volunteers was held in June . The NAN Volunteer Guidelines were expanded and updated. BCs distributed a special newsletter edition with information about all community organizations in collaboration with BCC and BCA.

Direct Services: NAN continues to assist Bannockburn seniors who wish to age in place. Bannockburn and virtually all the villages find that transportation, social-educational activities and social visiting are their most requested services. Assistance with household chores is next with equipment loans and help with organization, finances, technology and other specific tasks following.

In 2018, over 70 rides were requested through the Village Rides system. Although fewer rides were recorded, we estimate that about 40% more rides have been given than have been recorded because several of our transportation users contact drivers directly rather than contact a coordinator who would enter the request in the Village Rides data system. Another factor is that several among our first generation of riders have died, moved or have live-in help that provides their transportation and tends to other needs. Most requests for rides have been met, including rides to medical and other appointments, as well as rides to stores, classes and/or meetings. Some neighbors' health care providers are located in downtown DC and our drivers have been willing and able to provide that transportation in most instances.

Several households that needed help related to medical situations contacted NAN Board members and BCs directly and others used NextDoor. In addition to transportation, assistance was provided for equipment, food and/or information about geriatric case managers and professional home-care companies.

Two years 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. Requests to borrow medical equipment are frequent. As this option has become known in our community, people who have such equipment and no longer need it donate it to NAN. Wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches and bathroom aids were borrowed most often; at times requests 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. To make it clear that equipment loans are made by neighbors to those who need a device, NAN worked with Hal Burman, a lawyer and neighbor, who drafted language for our website and for borrowers that makes it clear that NAN assumes no liability for loaned equipment's condition or use. Borrowers all have accepted this.

Assistance with household chores includes a variety of activities: changing a light bulb, fixing a faucet washer, resetting circuit breakers, installing and/or adjusting media devices, etc.; being present when commercial help comes to the home to prevent 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.

NAN maintains a resource library and posts some resources on its web page. For example, last year we posted information on making an aging plan, a home safety check-list, an emergency plan and a list of snow shovelers. 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 and agencies. We keep in touch with several social workers and geriatric care managers who are excellent information resources. NAN responded double the number of requests for information and consultation than a year ago.

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 and care receiver 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. Programs at Little Falls Library were scheduled during weekday afternoons. Trips to local museums, historic houses and places of interest were enjoyed.

2018 programs included:

January: Where is Iran Today Nearly Four Decades After an Islamic Revolution? (Presentation by Irani-American Journalist); Because She's My Mother (Play reading of original work by Paula Stone)

February: Wise Elder presentations; choral performance

March: Expecting the Unexpected: Making an Aging Plan for Yourself, Your Friends and Your Family. Newcomers' Dinner, trip to Dumbarton Oak

April: Voice Activated Technology (in Rockvile on Alexa)

May: Spring Show

June: Water Exercise with Marianne Ross, Falls Prevention Strategies (with Little Falls Village)

July: Water Exercise with Marianne Ross

August American Diplomacy (at Little Falls Library)

September: Navigating Medicare (talk with State Health Insurance Assistance Program and JCA),; Market Outlook Seminar, Bannockburn Music Festival; Community Ice Cream Social; Play Reading Because She's My Mother

October: Home Safety; About the Montgomery County Commission of Aging: How to Get Involved; NAN Trip to Phillips Collection; Montgomery County Villages Gathering

November: Emergency Preparedness (Joe Corona from MC Office of Emergency Management)

December: North Korea (talk by retired Foreign Service Officer; trip to Brookside Garden and lunch; community tree lighting

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

Wise Elders: The Wise Elder Program, coordinated by Marianne Ross, John Noble 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. For the first time, students for whom English is a second language participated. The presentation was held in February and was attended by more than 30 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. There has not been interest in this program during the last year.

Communications and Outreach: Outreach Initiative: A small group of older residents are the biggest users of NAN services. This year, NAN made an effort to identify our target population in our expanded catchment area and reach out to them. With the help of grants from Suburban Hospital Foundation, The Jewish Council on Aging Village Rides and the service of Andrew Eagle, a neighborhood teen and board members Miriam Kelty, JoAnn Krecke and Lynn Springer, NAN culled voter registration records and identified all residents 65+ in our area: just under 1000 individuals. Lynn Springer designed a flyer that was printed in a special issue of the Newsletter and hand distributed within Bannockburn and distributed by first class mail to the broader group of seniors. The flyer included basic information about NAN, what it does, how to get involved and contact information.

NAN Notes, a newsletter distributed through the listserv and NextDoor, let people know 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. Miriam Kelty met with members of the Bannockburn Citizens' Association at their meeting and to publicize NAN's mission, answer questions, recruit volunteers and BCs.

Christo Andonyadis and Rob Jenson are generous with their time and expertise to work with NAN Board members to improve the NAN website (on Bannockburncommunity.org) and to post notices of upcoming events.

Other outreach activities included interaction with groups in Montgomery County and in the greater Washington area. NAN was invited to participate in County and Maryland State meetings about 'villages' and to share experiences with other groups that promote aging in place in the community. Miriam spoke at the State Commissions on Aging Annual Meeting and at the Maryland Caregiving Commission workshop and helped plan the County Village Gathering. Issues common to all villages 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 more than 30 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.

Donations: In 2018, NAN received just over \$1390 in donations from the community plus many hours of donated services. NAN completed proposed outreach activities supported by a grant from Suburban Hospital Foundation.

Priorities for 2019: 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 local hospitals to coordinate discharge processes and village support for seniors who return home after a hospitalization.
3. Familiarize our expanded community with NAN and recruit neighbors to become more involved.
4. 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
5. Update website and promote its use
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 Keltly January 2019