

BONNIE BRAE

Neighborhood Newsletter



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President's Message

Welcome to 2023, Bonnie Brae! As a new resident of Bonnie Brae myself (2022), I am looking forward to meeting many new faces this year at community events, evening strolls, or even casting a line in Woodglen Lake.

The newcomers' party last year was bustling with excitement as we celebrated our 50th anniversary as a community. Our family enjoyed meeting new neighbors as well as hearing the stories of some of our original owners were so insightful about how this community came to be a place that we now call 'home'.

I have much to learn about what makes Bonnie Brae so special. Yes, the contemporary architecture, mature trees, Woodglen lake, hilly

streets for walking, and of course the proximity to schools, farmers market, coffee shops, and breweries make this location desirable for potential new residents. However, I am looking forward to learning more about my neighbors, their interests, their families, our history, and the opportunities for us to be neighborly. Maybe it's the simple gestures of saying hello, inviting neighbors over for a happy hour by the firepit, or checking on them if it's been a few days since you've seen them last. These are attributes of a community that makes it a special place that people love. Let's make 2023 the year that we truly get to know our neighbors. I hope to meet many of you in 2023!

—Tim Royster

What is the BBCA?

The *Bonnie Brae Civic Association* is the membership organization of the 305 homeowners and renters who live in Bonnie Brae. Founded in 1973, this Civic Association is governed by an elected Board of Directors and other volunteers with the goal of sharing a supportive, self-governing, and voluntary bond in a community to help communicate information, mitigate community concerns, and organize community activities. Annual dues, currently \$20/year, are required to be paid at the beginning of each year according to the Covenants of the Association.

The Board meets throughout the year to discuss community issues and plan activities. The Board also addresses issues or problems within the neighborhood and helps the community thrive by addressing problems of neglect or safety. As homeowners, we all share an investment in a beautiful, well-maintained, thriving community.

Currently BBCA plans and supports a neighborhood yard sale, Santa visit, book club, and several community potlucks. We publish an annual Newsletter and biennial Directory of residents and maintain a Bonnie Brae website (www.bonniebrae.net) to strengthen social ties within the community and keep folks informed. We communicate online through NextDoor.com and via printed flyers and signs to announce upcoming events. While all the activities are carried out by volunteers, they do cost money and are supported only by member dues. Each household is responsible for paying annual dues of only \$20.

You get a lot for \$20! Please mail in your 2022 dues or give them to your block captains so they don't have to ask twice. The membership form is included with this newsletter.

Community Calendar of Events

please check Bonnie Brae NextDoor for up-to-date information

2023 Upcoming BBCA Events

Sunday, March 26th 2 p.m.

Meet and Greet Easter Egg Hunt and Kite Flying at Fireside Ct/ Woodglen dam. Bring kids and kites for this new BBCA event.

April/May TBD 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.

Woodglen Lake Clean-up with Middleridge and Fairfax Club Estates (Possible—date TBD). Watch for NextDoor announcements. Community service credits are available for students. Contact Sarah Mayhew at sarah.mayhew@yahoo.com for information.

Saturday April 29th 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Community Yard Sale 8 a.m.-1 p.m. @ participating houses. Contact Charlie Gulac at cgulac88@gmail.com to have balloons put on your mailbox. BBCA will publicize the sale. (We hope to coordinate with nearby Middleridge to draw more people.)

Saturday, May 20th 9 a.m. at Woodglen Lake Dam.

Parent & Kids Fishing Day. Questions? Contact Tim Royster at troyster1108@gmail.com or 571-275-0871

Tuesday, August 1st 5 p.m.– 8 p.m.

National Night Out at Richard and Susan Yennerell's, 10511 Indigo. Everyone welcome. Contact Susan Yennerell at yennerell@gmail.com for information. Take a bite out of Crime - and many bites out of a burger. Celebrate our first responders with this national picnic/potluck.

Saturday, September 23rd 5 p.m.– 8 p.m. Location TBD

Newcomer Welcome Picnic and Election of BBCA officers (Location TBD – seeking a volunteer to host) All are welcome. Come meet the newest residents of our wonderful neighborhood. BBCA provides BBQ entrée. Please bring Potluck dish to share– snacks, sides, or desserts.

Tuesday, October 31st from 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Location TBD

Halloween Outdoor Potluck Kiddies, dogs, and parents all welcome! Costumes greatly appreciated. BBCA provides burgers and hotdogs. Please bring Potluck dish to share– snacks, sides, or desserts. Fill up with something good before you eat all that candy.

Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, December 15-17th

Judging Holiday Lights and Decorations weekend. Have your lights on and decorations up by this weekend to be considered in the friendly competition. Will YOUR home be “Best of Bonnie Brae”? Contest judges will tour the neighborhood after dark and select three winners.

Sunday, Dec 17th

Meet Santa. (Place TBD – Watch for flyers and NextDoor info.) Bring the family and share some holiday cheer, cookies, and hot chocolate with your neighbors. It's outdoors and cold, so be on time if you want to see Santa.

Watch for additional activities announced via flyers and notices online at Bonnie Brae Next Door. nextdoor.com/neighborhood/bonniebraeva--fairfax--va/

Election of BBCA Officers

The 2023 Board of the BBCA was elected at the Newcomers Welcome Party in September with Jon Miskell elected to serve as President. Soon after that however, Jon had some new personal and work requirements, so he offered his resignation in December. Fortunately, newcomer Tim Royster agreed to step in, and the Board appointed him as interim President. While we have a few long-serving board members, we are now getting help from an enthusiastic group of committee volunteers who bring new ideas and energy to our meetings and activities.

Your Board is always looking for new ways to serve our community, so feel free to contact any one of us with your ideas or concerns. In addition to the listed officers, our active BBCA team this year includes:

Marty Beach, Neera Badhwar, Scott Flory, Larissa Hohe, Andrea McGowan, Ann Müller, Susan Yennerell, and Courtney Wikle.

Additionally, Nancy Davis keeps us posted about Burke

Library events, and John and Lisa McAlduff design and lay out the BBCA Newsletter. We have a team of dedicated block captains who deliver flyers and newsletters and collect dues and help out wherever they can. I hope you know who your block captain is. If not, check out the chart in this newsletter. There are still a couple of block captain openings if anyone wants to volunteer.

2023 Bonnie Brae Civic Association Board of Directors		
Tim Royster	President	troyster1108@gmail.com
Charlie Gulac	1st VP	cgulac88@gmail.com
Margaret Pontzer	2nd VP	pontzer@cox.net
Lisa Travis	Treasurer	lisatravis33@gmail.com
Elaine Hawley	Secretary	elainejhawley@gmail.com

nextdoor

For the past few years BBCA has encouraged neighbors to sign up for our local social network, Next Door, as the best way to stay informed about what's going on in our neighborhood and some of the communities near us—whether it's communicating about Bonnie Brae events, finding a babysitter, selling household items, recommending services or businesses, or sharing alerts. This is a free and easy way to connect with your neighbors. NextDoor's mission is to provide a trusted platform where neighbors work together to build stronger, safer, happier communities. Let's get 100% of Bonnie Brae connected — sign up today!

www.nextdoor.com/join Code: ZNWLQZ

Trees for *The Turboks*

In memory of Jim and Ellen Turbok, who were special contributors to the quality of life in our Bonnie Brae community, the BBCA donated \$250 to plant 250 trees in a national forest. Jim and Ellen were both interested and concerned environmentalists. Jim was a longtime docent at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History Butterfly Pavilion and in recent years had taken a long boat trip exploring the Amazon River. Jim, a retired Army officer, and Ellen, a retired math teacher, were parents of five adopted children. After retirement, Ellen served as our BBCA Events chair and despite the limitations of her wheelchair, she and Jim hosted most of our Bonnie Brae social events in their home, where she loved to cook for a crowd. Jim was a Black Oak block captain for many years. This generous and loving couple brought laughter and optimism to our community and are greatly missed.



Interview: Tim Royster, BBCA's new President

Elaine Hawley: Recently Tim Royster volunteered to fill the vacant position of President of BBCA. Tim started coming to our monthly BBCA meetings shortly after moving into Bonnie Brae and as I, myself, discovered 20 years ago, doing this is a great way to meet neighbors and feel part of the community. I thought an interview would introduce him in his own words and asked about his background.

Tim: I grew up in Texas and studied Music at Texas Christian University in Ft. Worth. After graduation, I taught high school band in Fort Worth before deciding to go back to school for my Master's in Music Performance at Indiana University. After graduation, I auditioned and won a position in The U.S. Army Band as a tubist with "Pershing's Own". I served in the band from 2005-2014.

Elaine: Wow, I know Bonnie Brae has other musicians and military band members too. For some reason we seem to have more than our fair share of artists and musicians in the neighborhood.

Tim: Since I was assigned to Ft Myer in 2005, my family and I have made Northern Virginia our home. After I got out of the Army in 2014, I returned briefly to Texas, but quickly realized that NOVA was home. While I was in the army band, I also got my real estate license, and for several years during off-duty hours, helped colleagues and friends buy and sell their homes in the area. But, when I came back from Texas, no longer in the Army, my wife and I decided to start our own real estate team and did so in 2018.

Elaine: That's quite a switch-- from music to real-estate. Are there similarities?

Tim: Being trained as a professional musician prepared me well for my real

estate career. Musicians collaborate with many different people on a daily basis and have to quickly adapt to changes. Real estate is the same way. We work with so many different people, and each client has a unique story, so we tailor our services to make sure the client experience is personal as well as result-driven. The Army musician is never reactive, but proactive. This is the way I operate my real estate business.

Elaine's Note: Tim leads the Royster



Hearth Group with a team of 3 licensed realtors and 2 staff. He has over 10 years of experience assisting clients in buying and selling properties in Virginia. He's also a certified Military Relocation Professional (MRP) helping active-duty military and veterans buy or sell their homes and understand their military benefits.

Elaine: You seem well suited for your second career. What's the best thing about it?

Tim: It's an absolute joy to join a client on the journey to purchase or sell their home. It can be complex and confusing, and we love being able to provide structure, set goals and alleviate some of the stress of moving. Our team's mission is to 'serve our neighbors, not ourselves'. We hope our clients sense that from the first time we meet until the day the transaction is complete -- but really, we stay in touch with our clients for

years after their purchase. A good realtor always has repeat clients who call when they are preparing for right-sizing or PCS (military move), or when they have outgrown their space.

Elaine: You've lived in Fairfax for a long time, but you moved to your Bonnie Brae Arrowwood St. home just last year. It's reassuring to me when realtors want to buy in our community as they know the surrounding area well. What brought you to this special place?

Tim: We lived in West Springfield until last year when we decided to move to Bonnie Brae. We were looking for a unique style of home and as a realtor, I knew which neighborhoods to focus on. Besides the contemporary style of homes, the other significant factor was being near a lake for our kids to fish. When this house came on the market, it didn't take long for us to make our decision. Contemporary home + Lake = "Let's get this house"!

Elaine: I know you have a family and a working wife, plus you just became President of the BBCA. You must be very busy these days.

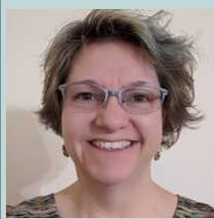
Tim: Yes, my wife Yee Peng and I have three kiddos. If you hear a cello, violin, or guitar, and maybe see a lacrosse ball flying around the yard, or nerf bullets or a fishing rod in the driveway ... that's us! My wife is the most patient human being I know...because she married me! She's the backbone of our home and works behind the scenes in the business. In addition to all that, she just recently took a position at my kids' school. So, I salute all the mothers out there. You are rock stars!

Interview continues on page 6

Snakes!—Information and Assistance

Bonnie Keller, a teacher from Woodbridge, loves science, and according to her posts on Next Door she and some fellow wildlife lovers have created a service to help folks humanely relocate unwanted snakes (especially copperheads) or other critters around the house. Below is an edited excerpt from one of her postings on Next Door. As we're heading into Spring when snakes start to get active, you may want to save the contact information for her colleague, Mark Khosravi (703-609-4278) who is available to help in Fairfax. Check out this website for Bonnie and Mark's services, availability, and fees:

www.k2cwildlife.com



Bonnie's Post on NextDoor:

“Remember that as the snakes emerge, they will first be lethargic and looking for a place to warm up. March and April are often when they will emerge, then go back into hiding, then re-emerge several times. April tends to be when they really start staying out and looking for mates. Rather than fearing every snake you see, learn to recognize this ONE: the Northern Copperhead, the only venomous snake in Fairfax and surrounding counties - except for extreme NW PWC and points west, where Timber Rattlers can be found. The Copperheads are very, very placid. They will not chase you; they will not seek out humans, they will not stay around

where people are often moving around.

Many folks have learned to recognize copperheads and how to live alongside them without killing them or getting bitten. However, if you have a copperhead that needs to be moved away from your yard, please call me or one of my partners.

We formed a small company, K2C Wildlife Encounters, LLC because we learned we needed insurance in addition to our state licenses to do wildlife control. However, we are volunteers, and we have intentionally kept our requested fees very low to be able to cover our license, insurance, and equipment costs. I will request that you please try to pay a small fee of \$25-50 (depending on distance) if I am able to come pick up the snake. If I have to spend time looking for it, then additional fees are requested.

I know that many of you have been raised to fear or hate snakes. It's part of our culture. But I invite you to look beyond the fear you've been instilled with, and learn more.

You may never love snakes as I do, but they provide needed ecological services, so I hope you can respect [them]. I can be reached at 703-986-7122. If you call during the school day, I will not answer, as I'm also a local high school teacher. If your snake issue is in Fairfax, call Mark Khosravi at 703-609-4278. (Mark is also a high school science teacher and may not be available during the school day.) You can find more info on our Facebook page *K2C Wildlife Encounters, LLC*, or our website www.k2cwildlife.com.

Interview with Tim Royster, continued from page 5

Elaine: (jokingly...) So, what do you like to do in your “free time.”

Tim: Free-time? ...I'm not sure what that is these days, but besides being an unpaid chauffeur to kids' music lessons and sports activities, or making sure their social calendar is full, we do like to get outside to hike and explore some of the small towns and places here in Virginia, which offers a lot of beautiful opportunities without going far away. I'll give a shameless plug to my wife's IG channel: @explorelocalgems. She loves to highlight restaurants, bakeries, quaint towns, and cool events around

NOVA. We love this state, and there are so many beautiful places to explore.

Elaine: We should get Yee Peng to write a newsletter column on the local gems. What motivated you to volunteer on the BBCA board? Ask a busy man...?

Tim: Volunteering in your community is something I want my children to learn from. Community service draws you out to learn and care for the people around you. It's a lost art to truly know your neighbor. I feel that has to change, and volunteering strengthens the neighborly relationships around us. I remember a time when a kid would spend the whole day outside around the neighborhood, and then a

friend's mom would call out the front door and say “Timmy, your mom said you need to get home in 10 minutes!” That was a connected neighborhood; we watched out for each other. I think it would be great for us to know our neighbors at that level so we can help each other out and just care for each other if needed.

Elaine: That's inspiring, Tim. A large part of the purpose of our Civic Association is to build that “social capital” by supporting events that strengthen ties to our close neighbors. If we can take care of each other in Bonnie Brae, we'll all be fine. We're lucky you and your family moved into our community. Thanks.

Travelogues: Italy & India

Italian Travels with Bonnie Brae Neighbors

In May 2022, the four of us, Jill and Matt Turosz, and Brad Czika and Lisa Travis, traveled to the Italian regions of Tuscany and Liguria. We carefully selected the places to stay and sites to see each day. However, once in Italy, our day-to-day activities changed based on the people and sites we encountered.

Week One: Together in Tuscany

Our first week was in and around Florence and Tuscany. We stayed in an AirBnB south of the Arno River in what Jill called 'the Arlington of Florence.' It was wonderfully close to the city (a quick walk over the Ponte Vecchio) without being too close. From there it was an easy walk or bus to the city sites. Our favorites, some expected and some not, in Florence were:

Serre Torrigiani - Bar and Restaurant in a lush Tuscan garden.



Duomo Climb - The interior of the Duomo is beautiful, but climbing the interior of the dome, an engineering marvel, to sweeping views of the city is unforgettable.

Piazzale Michelangelo, Giardino Bardini, and the Rose Garden. Again, in the Florentine 'Arlington', this is a beautiful garden walk that rewards your hill climbing with more city views and street snacks.

We also ventured outside of Florence, both north and south. Our first excursion was to Fiesole, a village just north of Florence easily accessible by bus. It's a solid day-trip with Etruscan and Roman ruins, beautiful Convent San Francesco, and scenic views of Florence. On two other days, we hired a driver for tours of Tuscany. Siena was a wonderful half-day paired with Monteriggioni and the vineyard Castellina in Chianti. The

Italian Travels, continues on page 8

A Winter Trip to India

My 3.5-week trip to India last December with my husband, Larry White, was, as always, a whirlwind of activity as we traveled from Delhi to Coorg to Mysore to Pune, accompanied by one of my sisters. Among the highlights of our trip were a tiger safari (on which tiger paw prints were the closest we came to seeing a tiger), tea estates (a picture of beauty), coffee estates, the largest Buddhist monastery in India, the oldest Catholic cathedral in India, a sand sculpture museum, and an Indian wedding.



Larry, Nuna, Me, Wininder



No report on India is complete without this picture of peaceful coexistence

The wedding was a special treat for Larry, who had never seen an Indian wedding before (except for our own semi-Indian wedding in Oklahoma). My friend's granddaughter, a Hindu, married a Parsi, so there were 2 ceremonies in 2 languages that no one, not even the wedding couple, understood: the Parsi wedding in ancient Persian (?) and the Hindu wedding in Sanskrit. Ancient languages always sound majestic and mysterious, especially if no one understands them, so they were quite appropriate for the occasion. The wedding arenas (two, for the two wedding ceremonies) were decorated beautifully with thousands of flowers and lights. And as expected, the dinner was lavish and delicious.

—Neera K. Badhwar

If you want to share your experiences on a journey abroad - or within the U.S. - in next year's newsletter, please feel free to send your travelogue to Neera Badhwar at nbad@ou.edu by January 2024.

Italian Travels, continued from page 7

second excursion was to San Gimignano and Radda in Chianti. Be prepared to walk a lot to see the towns and views – and work off the food and gelatos! (I'll spare you the 8000 pictures I took of bakeries and sweets.)

Week Two: Jill and Matt in Liguria

Our second week was in Liguria. We, Jill and Matt, stayed in Sestri Levante, a small beach town between Cinque Terre and Genoa. Sestri Levante was very relaxed (which we appreciated after a week in Florence), and a great location from which to travel to other towns on the Italian coast. To the south, it's an easy train ride to Cinque Terre where we walked/hiked from Corniglia to Monterosso stopping in Vernazza for lunch. Know that the scenery is beautiful but the trail busy and rugged. (Read as: Wear a sturdy pair of shoes you don't mind getting dirty.) To the north, we walked the peninsula of Portofino after a boat ride from Santa Margherita. There are an unlimited number of trails, historic sites, and luxury hotels to see along the way. The best routes can be found using the local tourist office map. Our final day trip was to Genoa, a true working, as opposed to tourist, city. My personal favorite, however, was our time in Sestri Levante among the Italian tourist families, small beaches, and walking trails. Our AirBnB had a kitchen that allowed us the luxury (yes, I'm serious.) of making dinner and enjoying it on our private balcony over the Bay of Silence.

Week Two: Lisa and Brad in Cinque Terre and Lucca

We, Lisa and Brad, split the second

week of our vacation between Vernazza and Lucca. Both were charming for different reasons. We splurged on an extraordinarily beautiful apartment in Vernazza with amazing sea and town views. We took advantage of eating breakfasts on our large balcony overlooking the quaint town with church bells tolling every hour, and relaxing on the smaller sea-facing balcony.

Vernazza, is one of five coastal villages within the Cinque Terre and it provided a great base for hiking to the nearby villages. The hikes themselves offer incredible coastal views, and while the distance between them is not great, the hikes require some challenging inclines and declines (although another alternative is easy train rides between the villages.) The villages are not to be missed, as each has its own unique character.

Lucca was a surprising gem, recommended by the owner of the Vernazza apartment. It was a short hour-long train ride from Vernazza. We stayed in a bed and breakfast that was a grand house that dated back to 1700 and had a short walk into the historic area of Lucca. It was such a beautifully preserved walled city with cobblestone streets filled with shops and restaurants. There was a very wide tree-lined walking/biking path with a large swath of green space that encircled the historic town center and gave sweeping views of the mountains that surround Lucca. It was truly a picture book setting.

All four of us felt that we couldn't have had a more splendid holiday.

—Jill Turosz and Lisa Travis

Pete Pontzer— Hiker...and Hero!

Pete Pontzer has been a resident of Bonnie Brae since 2003, along with his wife, Margaret, their two daughters, Katie and Emma, and their dogs, Charlie and Brandy. Pete recently retired from 32 years of service in the federal government, first as an Army soldier, then a lawyer, and finally a judge. Did he settle into an armchair to watch TV the morning after he retired? No, he left for California to hike the Pacific Crest Trail, covering 1,700 miles until, alas, he fractured his foot. He is recovering from foot surgery and has no plans to stop hiking! He will take on the New Mexico portion of the Continental Divide Trail in April, and the remainder of the Pacific Crest Trail in August and September.

The reason I'm writing about my husband, however, is not to inspire readers to take up hiking, or to feel sorry for him, but to let them know that he's a hero. In 2015, while vacationing in Emerald Isle, North Carolina, Pete helped to rescue a young teenager caught in a rip tide from drowning in the ocean. He then attempted to rescue another young person. For his efforts, he was awarded the Carnegie Hero Medal. Pete was interviewed by 60 Minutes for their story, "Are Heroes Born or Made?" which discussed what motivates heroes. This episode aired in June 2022 and was recently rebroadcast in February 2023.

If you see Pete walking Charlie and Brandy in the mornings or evenings, wish him good luck on his next hike!

—Margaret Pontzer



Calling all anglers, young and old!

Woodglen Lake is one of the best-kept secrets we have here in Bonnie Brae. Our family has caught (and released) channel catfish, large-mouth and small-mouth bass, crappie, and sunfish. We've even taken our inflatable kayak out for some fun on the lake. Let's celebrate Spring this year and drop a line as a community in May! Be on the lookout on Facebook and Nextdoor for the date and time. As a reminder, let's keep our lake beautiful by picking up any trash you may see while out on your walks.

This year we are starting a new feature: **Artists' Corner**. Our neighborhood is lucky to have a variety of artists: photographers, painters, sculptors, and others we may not have discovered yet. Let us know if you practice an art I haven't mentioned yet. —Neera K. Badhwar

Artists' Corner: Spotlight On Pamela Lepold, Photographer



Pamela's first photoshoot with her first camera featured a squirrel. Fascinated by this squirrel's antics, 8 year old Pamela used up the entire roll of film on the squirrel's activities. After that, she had to buy her own film rolls and pay for developing them.

Now Pamela has her own photography business. She loves to photograph weddings and families, especially mothers and fathers with their newborns. Her studio at home is filled with pictures of happy people. But she'll photograph almost anything and anyone: Hollywood stars, politicians, corporate events, cultural and political events.... Once she went to the White House to photograph a politician out on the lawn. When she was done, a Security Agent took her to see the Oval Office. Her first impression: smaller than it looks in pictures and films. The Security Agent also told her that a photographer once placed a hot light on the carpet and burned a big hole in it. But no problem – they had another carpet in stock for just such eventualities!

Pamela has had not a few adventures in her career. On one occasion, she found herself on a container ship from China having a coke with the captain. She also works with Freedom Alliance, a charity that supports wounded and Gold Star soldiers and their families. Among the many incredible opportunities this charity has afforded her, Pamela says, was a trip to Israel with 200 other donors. She documented their trip as they traveled through Israel visiting holy sites for 10 days. She states that these were some of the best days of her career.

Pamela's work isn't always safe or pretty. She once undertook a project for OSHA that required her to go 1 mile deep into the ground to photograph a coal mine and miners. She had to wear waders because of the pools of water, and an OSHA worker had to measure the amount of gas in the air to ensure that it was safe to use a flash. With too much gas, a flash could lead to an explosion (these were the days before digital photography). Pamela feels blessed that she was able to make a career doing something she loves.

To see her work, please go to <http://www.lepoldphotography.com/>

[DC Photographer \(@pamelalepoldphotography\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

—Neera K. Badhwar

2022 BBCA Book (Club) Report



Historical fiction was big in the Bonnie Brae Book Club in 2022. We read *The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post* by Allison Pataki (some Book Club

members "discussed" the book by visiting Hillwood, one of Marjorie Merriweather Post's homes in Georgetown); *Oil and Marble* by Stephanie Storey (if you haven't already guessed, it's about Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo); *The Duchess: A Novel of Wallis Simpson* by Wendy Holden (if you think Wallis was a gold-digger, Holden has some surprises for you).

Historical non-fiction (*Lev's Violin: A Story of Music, Culture and Italian Adventure* by Helena Attlee) also made an appearance on the book list, in addition to a light-hearted read called *Book Lovers*, by Emily Henry.

Once again, Jill Turosz hosted the final meeting of 2022 with a book exchange, and a discussion of *Memory Wall* by Anthony Doerr.

If this doesn't make your mouth water enough to join the book club, let me add that we also have mouthwatering food at every meeting!

Members volunteer to host a meeting, choose a book, and lead the discussion, and Marty Beach (martybeach@gmail.com) serves as the Book Club coordinator, announcing the host, book, and date of meeting, and generally looking out for book-clubbers!

Our Facebook group is called Bonnie Brae Book Club. It is a private group, so if you want to join, a member of the group has to invite you. If you don't know anyone, you can express interest in joining on the Bonnie Brae Fairfax VA Facebook group.

—Neera K. Badhwar

More on Going Solar in Bonnie Brae

There's never been a better time to go solar. Besides contributing to a cleaner environment for future generations and the long-term reduction of one's electric bills, there are new federal tax credits, property tax credits, and energy credits that help offset the hefty cost of solar panels.

I didn't know much about solar, so I signed up for *Solarize Northern Virginia* (<https://solarizenova.org/solarize-fairfax-county>) a coalition of Fairfax County and the nonprofit LEAP (Local Energy Alliance Program) which helps residents choose contractors and reduce the cost and complexity of adding solar panels. Each year, usually between April and June, the program seeks a group of residents who want to go solar and matches them with approved contractors who purchase panels at a bulk discount for the group. For a free assessment and for alerts about the sign-up "window" check the URL above.



After I signed up, I was contacted by Solar Energy World from Elkridge, MD which evaluated my home's suitability

for solar and provided a design, some panel options, and a complete estimate of system cost and energy production. The design is based on the sun coverage of your roof. This team was very helpful in answering my questions.

The installation of panels takes only a day or two, but from start to finish the process is 4-6 months, most of it waiting for scheduled work to be done. I committed to the project in mid-April and got a design and approval quickly then waited three months for installation. Then I waited a month for Dominion to put in a new meter and for Fairfax County to inspect. I finally turned on the system in early October. With the high demand for solar and new tax incentives, business should be booming and wait-times no doubt may increase.

The number of panels will depend on your usage. I use about 10 MWh (10,000 kilowatt hours) of power annually (this information is on your statement at

dominion.com). Virginia currently requires "net-metering" which allows Dominion to give credit for the kilowatts I consume but does not allow me to "sell back" any annual excess. If my system produces more than I use Dominion gets it, so your contractor shouldn't overbuild the system. You might consider excess panels if there is an electric car in your near future.

Panels and workmanship have long 25-30 year guarantees. I can monitor each panel's production in real time with a phone app. For example, I recently noticed that one panel was not producing as much as the other panels and my contractor quickly responded, checked it out, and ordered a replacement.

Adding solar panels is expensive, and at my age (retired) my motivation was more environmental than financial. Low or no electric bills are nice, but the investment is high. On the other hand, new tax incentives make this more tempting. There is a 30% Federal tax credit which expires in 2032. Fairfax County gives a small incentive on property tax; plus, you can "sell" solar credits (S-RECs) which businesses in Virginia are required to buy to offset energy use. And solar adds to the value of your home. To learn about the County's Solar Energy Equipment Tax Exemption, see: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/relief/real-estate-solar-equipment>.

I need to see a full year's data before I know just how much solar reduces my cost, as seasonal change affects energy production, and I've had my panels operational only through fall/winter months. Solar is more efficient in summertime – so I look forward to over-producing soon. Battery storage is tempting, but still quite expensive. However, it would provide electricity during power outages, which may become more of a vital issue in the future.

Solarize Nova (<https://solarizenova.org>) provides many online resources including a cool **solar map** <https://www.novasolarmap.com/> where you can type in your address to see how suitable your roof might be for solar power.

—Elaine Hawley



National Night Out / Food Truck

The annual National Night Out on the first Tuesday of August gives communities the opportunity to celebrate and to honor police and firefighters. Originally started to help fight crime in our neighborhoods, National Night Out became an annual picnic to build friendships and show support for the pros who keep us safe.



Last year BBCA tried out something new. Previous "Covid years" had limited some events so that we had enough extra money in the treasury to contract a Pacos Tacos food truck for our picnic. Susan and Richard Yennerell offered to host the event in their well-shaded yard. Each BBCA household was given a \$10 voucher toward the cost of a taco order, but BBCA also provided drinks and hot dogs for anyone who didn't want to purchase dinner from Pacos. The August weather was perfect, and the food truck was such a big hit that we'll probably do it again. Save the date for this event on August 1st in 2023.

Sewer and Water Line Insurance

Home Protection Programs

Our homes were built circa in early 1970's, making most of them around 50 years old, and the utility lines – especially water and sewer pipes are often beyond their “sell-by dates”. Homeowners are responsible for the exterior pipes that connect their utilities to the main pipes, and we've have seen frequent occurrences of the water pipes breaking in Bonnie Brae. In most cases, neither the utility company nor your basic property insurance policy covers this repair.



When my water pipe broke, the Fairfax Water inspector said our 50-year-old community was among the worst in the area. According to HomeServe, the average cost to repair a water line is \$2600, and the average sewer line is over \$5,000. Most water pipes installed in the 1970s are PVC. Many people in BBCA have

found it prudent to purchase the homeowner's insurance offered by the independent insurer, HomeServe, billed through Dominion Energy.

My own experience a few years ago was excellent. HomeServe contacted Fairfax Water, Miss Utility, and a contractor who fixed the pipe and repaired my lawn after digging a six-foot trench among all my other utility lines. Not only did I not have to pay anything, but I didn't have any hassle with the process or contractors after I called HomeServe. They did it all.

—Elaine Hawley

Update: Tip to save you thousands!

Do you have sewer and water line insurance, but have decided to rent your home? If you have decided to keep your home and turn it into an investment property, you may be surprised that the day your tenant takes over the water bill, your Homeserve coverage **stops!** You will need to call Homeserve and pay for the insurance outside of your dominion bill for your rental property.

HomeServe has a selection of several interior and exterior utility systems that can each be insured separately from gas and water lines to furnaces, water heaters, plumbing, and electrical systems. <https://www.homeserve.com/en-us/>

—Tim Royster

Sidewalk hazards and Parking District

We're fortunate that Bonnie Brae is such a beautiful, walkable neighborhood, but we've had complaints about some hazards that make walking less enjoyable -- buckled or uneven sidewalks, overgrown shrubs or plants, and sidewalks covered with wet leaves or, in winter, with snow and ice. It's a matter of courtesy to keep the sidewalks on our property clear of overgrowth, debris, leaves, snow and ice. It's also in our interest to do so, as an injury on our sidewalk can create homeowner liability. For our specific code, please refer to the By-Laws in your Bonnie Brae Directory.

Please pick up after your dog, keep your bushes trimmed, your fences repaired, and your noise inside your own home.

As for uneven sidewalks, Fairfax County can shave the bumps if they are not too high. If you have such a sidewalk near your house, you can submit a report online at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/report-walkway-problem>, and the county will let you know if your sidewalk qualifies for free maintenance shaving. Or, send the location to BBCA elainejhawley@gmail.com and we will bundle a community request.



Community Events

Easter Egg Hunt and Kite Flying Day

March 26, 2023 at 2pm

A Bonnie Brae Easter Egg Hunt, always a fun activity for our youngest Bonnie Brae residents and their parents.



We're trying it this year at the Spillway near the dam on Woodglen Lake (Fireside Court). We may even have a "special guest," so be there on time! And, in March, the wind is usually great for flying kites over the lake from top of the dam. So bring your kites!

New Neighbor Welcome Party

September 23, 2023

Our New Neighbor Welcome Party last September was extra special because not only did we welcome several newcomers to our community, we also celebrated Bonnie Brae's 50th anniversary and welcomed a few folks who were original owners here. It was fun to hear their stories of what the neighborhood was like back in the early 1970s. Some of these homes sold for less than \$70,000, some roads were still unpaved, the lake and dam didn't exist, and neither did Bonnie Brae school. Many thanks to Kevin Smith for opening his beautiful home and backyard to all of us. This September event is a casual potluck, mostly outdoors. We ask folks to bring a dish to share (appetizer, side dish, or dessert) and BBCA provides the entrée and drinks. Everyone in the community is encouraged to join the fun and meet the new neighbors. The weather is usually great. More details will post on Next Door and Bonnie Brae Flyers.



A "Bonnie" Halloween

October 31, 2023

We had many scary creatures haunting our annual BONNIE BRAE HALLOWEEN potluck last year -- our "scariest" party in Bonnie Brae. Many thanks to Pamela and Michael Lepold, who hosted the pre-trick-or-treating potluck. The BBCA provides hamburgers, hot dogs, and drinks; neighbors add potluck sides or desserts. This annual favorite is a great way to meet-up with neighbors and their children although you might not recognize them if they wear their costumes. Even though it rained last year, we had a good turnout to eat before the little ghosts and goblins rushed out to "trick or treat" in the neighborhood. Costumes optional—but great fun! October 31st --save the date! Come one and all! Bring a dish to share and a chair if you want one. Details for 2023 forthcoming on Next Door and BBCA flyers.

Santa visits Bonnie Brae

December 17, 2023

Santa will once again take time out of his busy holiday schedule to drop in on Bonnie Brae boys and girls of all ages at the third annual "BBCA Visit with Santa". Just before Christmas, we bundle up and gather around a fire pit in the Black Oak cul-de-sac to enjoy hot chocolate and cookies while Santa listens to all our wishes and poses for photos. He's the Best! Kudos to our 2022 Santa, Steve Fogelman, and his elf/daughter, Susan Yennerell, who made sure everyone got into the holiday spirit. Marty Beach warmed us up with her delicious hot chocolate, and Courtney Wilke and Larissa Hohe decorated cookies that were so cute those girls should have their own baking show. If you weren't there, you missed a great time! Be sure to join us this year.



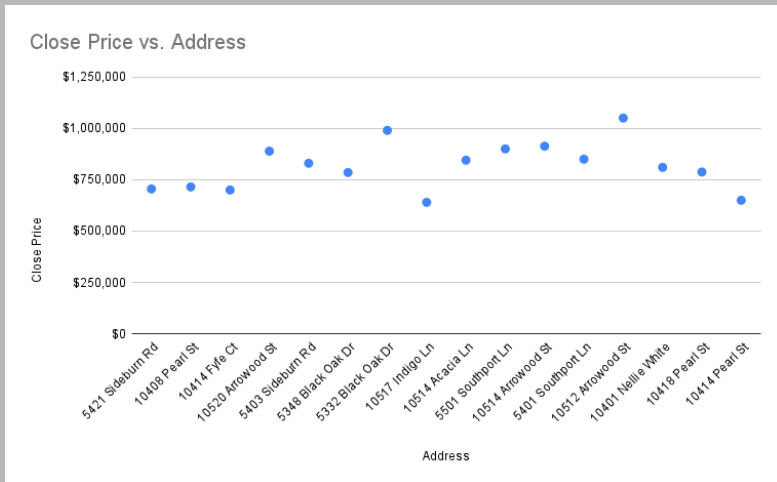
—Elaine Hawley

Bonnie Brae and 22032 Real Estate

2022 was a year of two real estate markets, We started with interest rates hovering around 3%, but by September 2022, interest rates were in the low 7s! It goes without saying that this curbed many people’s appetite for home ownership. As we enter the 2023 real estate market, we have come down from 7% interest rates, but we’ll have to keep a close watch on inflation numbers and how the Fed responds with fed rate adjustments. With interest below 7%, some buyers have come back to the market and provided assurance to sellers that they will get their homes sold in a reasonable time period.

Bonnie Brae continues to be an in-demand neighborhood for all the reasons we are living here. The contemporary style single-family homes, proximity to schools, restaurants, VRE, Woodglen Lake, and GMU, all make Bonnie Brae a great place to call home.

Here are the 2022 sale numbers in Bonnie Brae:



All information is from Bright MLS

—Tim Royster

New Glass Recycle Drop-off

As most of you know, Fairfax trash haulers no longer pick up glass for recycling. However, it is still collected in purple stand-alone dumpsters throughout the county. Conveniently, one of these dumpsters has recently been located in the parking lot of the VRE train station/farmers market. If you don't save glass to recycle, then just put it in with your trash, not in your recycle bin. But it's better to drop it off in a purple dumpster. Fairfax County Public Works crushes the glass and uses it in place of crushed rock as bedding and fill around new sewer pipes, saving the expense of crushed rock, and preventing a lot of excess bulk going into our landfills.



DO NOT RECYCLE THESE FILTHY FIVE:

Help Fairfax County get rid of the Filthy Five by pitching them in the trash and NOT in your recycle bin.

Plastic Bags – These get wound around recycling processing equipment and slow things down considerably! Trash them, reuse them, or take them to the grocery stores that collect clean bags in special bins, usually outside the entrance, where they can be collected separately and eventually recycled into new plastic bags or plastic lumber used to make benches and decks.

Shredded Paper – Trash it or add it to your compost pile.

Hangers, Cords & Hoses – These items strangle and destroy recycling processing equipment and are often referred to as "tangles!" Some dry cleaners will reuse old hangars, especially wire ones. Goodwill does NOT take hangars. Otherwise, hangars, hoses and electrical cords should be put in your trash.

Takeout Containers & Cups – Recyclers DO NOT accept takeout containers or foam of any kind!

Dirty Diapers – They are contaminated, and therefore CANNOT be recycled or reused, ever. Bag these and put them in the trash.

BBCA is forming a ROMEIO Club

(Retired Old Men Eating Out)

Who are ROMEIOs?

They are retired 'old' men who like eating out, having fun, and making friends. They meet for breakfast, lunch, or dinner once a week, once a month, or whatever works for a specific group. Some groups have members with similar interests or similar professional backgrounds, but most reflect the great mosaic that is the retired men's community. Some groups have outside folks come in to give a talk while others simply let the conversation flow.

We are planning on having our first meeting in early April 23 to establish an agenda and decide on meeting dates.

Please contact: Charlie Gulac, 703-323-6694, email: cgulac88@gmail.com.

For additional information see: <https://romeoclub.com/pages/faq>

BBCA Membership Information

Bonnie Brae is having a long celebration of its 50th anniversary. The first of 305 homes was started around 1971-72 and completed by 1973. That is also when our Civic Association (BBCA) was started. The activities of BBCA are supported by nominal annual dues of \$20. A handbook of by-laws along with a short history of the area is posted on our website: <http://www.bonniebrae.net> and is printed in the Directory. The website archive also includes architectural drawings of some of the various models in this mid-century modern community.

Your dues help support activities that bind our community and help keep Bonnie Brae a beautiful place to live.

Please be sure to pay dues for this year. Among the activities it offers are:

- Publication of the annual newsletter (also online at www.bonniebrae.net)
- Publication of a biennial Community Directory
- Rent and maintenance of our Bonnie Brae Website: www.bonniebrae.net
- Dues to join the Braddock Council of community associations
- Maintenance of Bonnie Brae signs.
- Printing of Signs and flyers to announce community events.

Social activities such as:

- Neighborhood Yard Sale (April)
- Bonnie Brae Car Show or Home Tour (occasionally)
- National Night Out Food Truck
- New Neighbor Welcome Potluck (September)
- Halloween Potluck (October)
- Santa's visit and hot cocoa (December) & Holiday Lights Review
- Book Club
- Bunco

We now also accept annual BBCA dues payment of \$20 via Zelle.
 Contact info: bonniebraetreasurer@gmail.com
(Be sure to provide your name & street address in memo when paying by Zelle.)

**Bonnie Brae Civic Association (BBCA)
 Membership Application
 2023 Annual Dues \$20**

Check box if you are new to Bonnie Brae in 2022-23

Names of residents _____

Names of residents _____

Names of residents _____

Names of residents _____

Past Members/ Contact Information Unchanged

Update new information if needed:

Street Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Give form and payment to your block captain or Mail them to:

**Bonnie Brae Civic Association
 P.O Box 336
 Fairfax Station, VA 22039-0336**

BBCA FINANCIAL REPORT	
from BBCA Treasurer Lisa Travis	
as of December 31, 2022	
<i>BANK BALANCE as of 1/1/2022</i>	\$9074.61
INCOME	
Membership Dues	3295.00
Newsletter & Directory Ad Sales	
Miscellaneous Income	
TOTAL INCOME	3295.00
EXPENSES	
<u>Administration</u>	
Bank Fee	
Bank Deposit Correction Fee	
PO Box Rental	216.00
SUBTOTAL	216.00
<u>Communications</u>	
Phone Directories	498.72
Door Bags	138.96
Flyer/Newsletter Printing	220.51
Stamps/Envelops	48.92
Website	199.00
SUBTOTAL	1106.11
<u>Community Safety & Maintenance</u>	
Community Parking District	
Neighborhood Watch	
Sign Maintenance	
Yard Sale	21.62
SUBTOTAL	21.62
<u>Annual Social Activities</u>	
Block Captain Party	55.63
Progressive Dinner	
National Night Out Party	975.93
New Neighbor Party	341.87
Halloween Party	
Holiday Party	
Santa Ride	
Christmas Light Contest	21.45
SUBTOTAL	1394.88
<u>Other</u>	
Tree Planting (in honor of Turboks)	250.00
Jenkin's Card	4.59
SUBTOTAL	254.59
TOTAL EXPENSES	2993.20
Annual Net Income	301.80
<i>BANK BALANCE as of 12/31/2022</i>	\$9376.41

Virginia Elections

2023 is an election year in Virginia for State and Local government. Federal offices and Virginia state-wide offices (Governor, Lt. Governor, etc.) are not up for election. Our Precinct is Bonnie Brae, and conveniently, our polling place is at the Bonnie Brae Elementary School.

The Virginia primary elections will take place on June 20, 2023, with the general election on Tuesday, November 7th. All 40 seats of the Senate of Virginia and 100 seats in the Virginia House of Delegates are up for re-election, as are local offices including Chairman Board of Supervisors, Braddock County Supervisor, and Fairfax Country School Board as well as other local officials. Plus, there may be bond issues to vote on.

While voter turnout in these "odd-year" elections is often low, these state and local representatives and the issues on the ballot often have more direct impact on our lives than federal elections. Be sure to follow the candidates and issues and VOTE.

Because of redistricting, both the State Senate and the Delegate Districts have changed for Bonnie Brae, so the candidates may change as well. As a result of the 2020 U.S. Census, our Senate district changes from 34 to 36, and the Delegate district changes from 41 to 10 with boundaries moving westward.

Our current State Senator is J. Chap Petersen, and our Delegate is Eileen Filler-Corn. Locally our current Chairman of the board of Supervisors is Jeffrey McKay, and our Braddock District Supervisor is James Walkinshaw. We will also be voting for Fairfax County School Board (Braddock District and Members-at-large). Megan McLaughlin is the current Braddock District Representative on the School Board.

For complete information about voter registration, absentee voting deadlines, candidates, and issues, follow updates on the Fairfax County Elections website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/>

B.B.C.A. SECTION LEADERS AND BLOCK CAPTAINS

SECTION LEADERS

SECTION I (82)	SECTION II (76)	SECTION III (71)	SECTION IV (76)
ANN MULLER 5355 Black Oak Dr. agm@oecengineering.com	PAT D'ALESSANDRO 10518 Acacia Lane 703-250-9760 loupat5@verizon.net	NEERA BADHWAR 10409 Pearl St 703-250-7959 nbad@ou.edu	SCOTT FLORY 5347 Aylor Rd. 703-323-6683 scott@theflorys.net

BLOCK CAPTAINS

#1—BLACK OAK even 5320-5348 (14) Dave and Beth Doane 5332 Black Oak Drive davebethdoane@gmail.com	#6—ACACIA LANE (16) Pat D'Alessandro 10518 Acacia Lane 703-250-9760 loupat5@verizon.net	#11—AYLOR RD - SOUTH (17) Barry Azimi 10419 Nellie White Ln. 703-675-6752 barry.azimi@gmail.com	#16— NELLIE WHITE (15) Michael Nickens 10403 Nellie White 703-989-4919 mnickens@gmail.com
#2—BLACK OAK (13) 5349 -5405 Ann Muller 5355 Black Oak Dr. agm@oecengineering.com	#7—ARROWOOD ST (15) Penny Pate Henry 10523 Arrowood St. 703-978-0175 pennypate@cox.net	#12—FYFE COURT (13) <i>Vacant—Volunteer Needed!</i>	#17— AYLOR north (13) Scott Flory 5347 Aylor Rd. 703-323-6683 scott@theflorys.net
#3—INDIGO & ALLERTON (18) Connie Dinapoli 10513 Indigo Ln. 703-272-8680 connie_dinapoli@yahoo.com	#8—FIESTA & SOUTHPORT 5331-5401 (15) Sharon Schwartz 10612 Fiesta Road 703-895-0324 sharons@thedesignminds.com	#13—JENNIFER south/even + 5401& SIDEBURN south/odd (14) Harry Wong 5408 Jennifer Dr. 703-249-8373 hkwong2@gmail.com	#18—CRISTFIELD CT (13) Cathy Gulac 5347 Cristfield Ct. 703-323-6694 cdgulac@gmail.com cgulac88@gmail.com
#4—ZION & SIDEBURN even (23) Rachel Hinnant 5330 Sideburn Rd. 703-359-5515 rhinnant@flinthill.org	#9—SOUTHPORT 5424-5506 & FIRESIDE (16) Andrea McGowan 5424 Southport Lane 202-438-0697 acmcgowan4301@gmail.com	#14—PEARL ST (17) Jill Turosz 10403 Pearl St. 240-447-2323 jturosz@gmail.com	#19—JENNIFER north/odd & HOLLYOAK (16) James Chu 5347 Jennifer Dr. 571-278-6909 mjwed@yahoo.com
#5—BLACK OAK (14) 5312-5318 + odd 5329-5347 Krista Glass 5341 Black Oak Dr. 610-704-2866 kristamglass@gmail.com	#10—SOUTHPORT 5402-5422 (14) Margaret Pontzer 5406 Southport Lane 703-250-0273 pontzer@cox.net	#15—MASSER LANE (10) Neera Badhwar 10409 Pearl St 703-250-7959 nbad@ou.edu	#20—JENNIFER north/even & SIDEBURN north/odd (19) Debby Sprague 5334 Jennifer Dr. 703-855-6641 debbiersprague@gmail.com

Volunteer Opportunity – we have 1 open Block Captain assignment!

Block Captain Duties

- Distribute Flyers, Newsletters and Directories to houses on your block (5-6 times per year)
- Notify your section leader about new neighbors (for our Welcome Team)
- Help collect annual dues from your block
- Help confirm directory information for neighbors on your block every other year