

BONNIE BRAE

Neighborhood Newsletter



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President's Message

Dear Bonnie Brae Residents,

I hope you all enjoyed the snow earlier this year as much as my family did. We practically lived on the sledding hill by the lake for 2 days – and let me brag for a moment, I managed several runs without a single tumble!

On a more official note, a warm welcome to any new residents who have recently joined our wonderful community. Bonnie Brae is known for its friendly atmosphere and diverse range of residents.

Looking to Connect?

Our thriving Bonnie Brae Facebook group is a fantastic resource for connecting with neighbors. Whether you're interested in the monthly gatherings at Bunnyman Brewery, lively discussions at the book club, peaceful mornings casting a line at Woodglen, or simply socializing with fellow residents, the Facebook group has something for everyone. Don't be a stranger – introduce yourself and join the fun!

Exciting News: A Brand New Website!

We're thrilled to announce a major renovation to the Bonnie Brae website – www.bonniebrae.net! This comprehensive resource will serve as a central hub for everything related to our community. Looking for information about upcoming events? Lost something precious? Need to share important news with fellow residents? It's all there. The revamped website will also be instrumental in showcasing Bonnie Brae's charm to potential residents considering joining our vibrant community.

Let's Get Acquainted!

I'm always eager to meet more of my neighbors, so if you see me and my family by the lake or taking a walk, don't hesitate to say hello!

Warmly,

Tim Royster

President, Bonnie Brae Civic Association

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 2024 dues or give them to your block captains so they don't have to ask twice. The membership form is included with this newsletter.

Election of BBCA Officers

Your Board is always looking for new ways to serve the community, so feel free to contact any one of us with your ideas or concerns.

BBCA had difficulty electing its officers for 2024 because our election events were rained out and finally cancelled. We tried an online election with a QR code but had a poor response. Because no one else volunteered to serve, the previous officers will continue service on the Board.

| 2024 Bonnie Brae Civic Association | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| Tim Royster | President | troyster1108@gmail.com |
| Charlie Gulac | 1st VP | cgulac88@gmail.com |
| Margaret Pontzer | 2nd VP | pontzer@cox.net |
| Lisa Travis | Treasurer | lisastravis33@gmail.com |
| Elaine Hawley | Secretary | elainejhawley@gmail.com |

Fortunately we have an enthusiastic group of committee volunteers including Marty Beach, Neera Badhwar, Larissa Hohe, Andrea McGowan, Susan Yennerell, Courtney Wikle, John and Lisa McAlduff and Dave Doane.

Block Captains

We also have a hard-working corps of 19 block captains who are always helpful collecting dues and distributing flyers and newsletters. We've had several block captain changes this year, and it's hard to add up the number of years our "retiring" block captains have given to this community. Many thanks to Ann Muller, Pat D'Alessandro, Scott Flory, Penny Pate-Henry, Krista Glass, and Connie Dinapoli. Some, like Ann and Pat, have each contributed more than 30 years to Bonnie Brae neighbors. We thank and welcome our new recruits as block captains and section leaders - Victoria Carroll, Sharon Schwartz, Glen Quesenberry, Jean Schwab, Courtney Wikle, Susan Yennerell, and Larissa Hohe. If you don't know your block captain, check out the chart in this newsletter and try to get to know them. It's especially helpful if your block captain knows your email address and phone number for timely communication when a flyer doesn't do the job. We still need a block captain for Fyfe Court, so if you live on or near Fyfe, please consider helping out. Contact Elaine Hawley elainejhawley@gmail.com if you want to volunteer.

Directory

For the past several years, Scott Flory has organized the BBCA Directory. It's a complicated effort, but Scott had the technical skills to manage the information and produce the layout. Scott and his family are moving to Colorado this winter, and we wish them all the best. Scott was also a block captain and a section leader, and he was kind enough to train his replacement. Dave Doane will take over management of the Directory this year and Glen Quesenberry will be both the block captain for Aylor Road and the section leader for Section IV. Being a block captain does have a benefit in that you get to know your neighbors. We thank all these folks for their dedication to our community.

Community Events Calendar

Bonnie Brae Events have gone Online! Use these sites to find the most up to date information



We are Bonnie Brae Fairfax VA. With 124 members on our Facebook page, this is becoming our main source of communication. Please sign up if you use Facebook. Find out about Bonnie Brae events, cancellations, activities, photos, concerns, and opportunities.

Bonnie Brae Website —Watch for the “Reveal” coming soon. BBCA has engaged a web designer to create a new Bonnie Brae website. This promises to be a game changer in our ability to communicate with members.



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

Did you know...



If you’re planning a party, wedding, or special event and want a one-of-a-kind space, **Fairfax City rents venues** including: The Old Town Hall, Historic Blenheim house, Sherwood Center, or the Green Acres Center (in the old Greenacres elementary school). Details at <http://fairfaxva.gov/rentalvenues> or call 703-385-7858.

Fairfax City will sponsor a free **Antique Car Show** on May 18th from 10am – 3pm, at the City Hall (10415 Armstrong St.) Free to all! Check out the Antiques, Classics, Modifieds, & Hot Rods 25 Years or Older. Registration for cars begins at 9am. Along with the display of cars, there will be children’s activities, live music, and trophies!



Virginia senior citizens (age 60+) may **audit academic courses** for free at GMU or other public colleges in Virginia. [Senior Citizen Higher Education act of 1974]. See details for GMU on its website: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/topics/senior-citizen-waiver/>

Burke Centre Station – a Transportation Hub

(with Free Parking!)

We're fortunate to live so close to this station and its many services:

Amtrak

More than 14,000 riders used Burke Centre Station last year, mostly VRE commuters. But did you know that you can catch the 10:45 morning Amtrak train to New York City and be there by 3:30? Daily? Buy your ticket online in advance; the station has no staff or Amtrak ticket kiosk. This train stops in DC and a few other places like Baltimore and Philadelphia, but you never need to get off the train until you arrive at New York's Penn Station. It's a 3-minute drive from Bonnie Brae to the Station and long-term parking is free in the parking garage. A daily return from NYC leaves around 12:30 p.m. and arrives at Burke Centre around 5:30. Always check the schedule for any changes.

The perks of train travel are tempting –

- ✦ Legroom – for both your legs!
- ✦ Four bags free. Yes, four. Yes, free.
- ✦ Free Wi-Fi.
- ✦ Power outlets at every seat.
- ✦ No middle seat
- ✦ Large windows to view the scenery.
- ✦ A snack car for that afternoon cup of coffee or snack.
- ✦ When you arrive, you'll be right in the center of the city.



VRE

Virginia Railway Express commuter rail service operates Monday through Friday from the Northern Virginia suburbs to Washington, D.C. The Manassas Line offers 7 weekday stops at Burke Centre Station, with 6 trains traveling into DC in the morning, and 7 returning to Burke Centre in the afternoon/evening. A single ride ticket to Union Station is currently \$8.55, but discounts are given for bulk passes like a ten-ride pass or a monthly ticket (\$237). If you also use Metro, you can buy a combination ticket for unlimited VRE and Metro usage for a calendar month. Check it out! <https://www.vre.org>

George Mason Shuttle

Also at the Burke Centre Station you can hop on a George Mason Shuttle bus which will take you to the campus where you can connect to Fairfax's CUE bus going to and from Vienna Metro.

Metrobus

Finally, you can catch the 17L Metrobus to the Pentagon and Metro stops there. Burke Centre is one of the first stops, so there are plenty of seats on the bus.



Susan Yennerell – Abstract and Still Life Painter

As an abstract and still-life painter, I focus on capturing beloved objects in exaggerated colors. Drawing inspiration from the evocative and dreamy objects of Wayne Thiebaud's paintings, my art invites viewers to immerse themselves in and reflect on the vibrant tapestry of memory. I am fascinated by people's personal stories, and the objects that play an important role in these stories. Five years ago, I was reunited with my birth parents. I was intrigued by their stories about what their heirlooms meant to them. This led me to an exploration of other people's connections to their beloved objects in my art practice. My subject matter and compositions are intentionally simple. I approach each object literally, relying on the use of color, line, value,



I recently won a contest in the Art in Daily Spaces exhibition, and will be featured in several different businesses and homes through Annandale from April 13th to May 31st, including:

- Amazon H2Q
- Maryland, Attorney
- Retired Capital Hill employee
- Pentagon employee

Although I primarily do commissions, I also sell prints of selected works.

I try to capture everyday objects in a way that elevates it, such as with this painting I call *Capital Heels*.



I think of my paintings as portals into people's – and animals - personalities.

texture, and space. I use cool shadows and warm highlights to create depth, even when the depth of field is relatively narrow, such as an object on a tabletop. I exaggerate line, color, and pattern through color blocks and different brushstrokes, which add layers of translucent texture and spontaneous lines to the composition. My artistic lens offers a fresh perspective on otherwise mundane objects.

I am working with interior decorators along the East Coast, and my work will be in private collections (commissions) in South Carolina, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, DC, and Virginia. Starting in June, you will be able to see some of these works on my website:

YennFineArt.com



This abstract is appearing in an interior design magazine – and hopefully on its cover - this summer.

Courtney Wikle—Our European Trip 2023

When my husband and I decided to try and start a family, we agreed that we should take one last trip - just the two of us - to see the sights in Europe, something that we've always wanted to do. Little did we know what adventures awaited us there!

We quickly made plans to visit France, Belgium and Greece, traveling in planes, trains, automobiles and boats, in March 2023. The time of year was great for international travel because it was off season and everything was sharply discounted. We tried to learn some French, Flemish, and Greek, but were unable to form recognizable sentences beyond "I'm so sorry, I'm American" in any of these languages.



Our first stop - Paris!

I will always remember Paris as an amazing hub of art, history, culture, and food. We could have spent our entire trip there and still not have had enough time to explore the entire city. But unfortunately, we had only three days. In those three days, we walked the equivalent of our hike down and up the Grand

Canyon in 2017. We saw the typical tourist sights: Montmartre, the Eiffel Tower, Napoleon's tomb, the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre, and Versailles.

We also each got to pick our must-dos in the city. For me this was the Moulin Rouge, where we saw what I thought was one of the most unforgettable shows ever! For my husband this was the Invalides War Museum, where we saw centuries of beautifully displayed history. We will readily go back to Paris any chance we get. From Paris we took the Thalys train to Brussels and enjoyed the scenic views of the European countryside.

As people living in the DMV (the DC-Maryland-Virginia area), it was so interesting to see how similar Brussels was! The city is home to the European Union HQ and a hub for government officials from countries throughout Europe. We were fortunate enough to be there on St. Patrick's Day - the perfect place to grab an amazing beer, see the downtown decked out in green lights, and meet people from all over the world. The Waterloo monument and museum was an amazing place to learn about one of the most historic battles in history.

Then came Ghent and Bruges. I totally fell in love with Bruges. The romantic cobblestone streets, winding waterways, amazing food (and yes, that includes waffles

and fries), remarkable architecture, and wonderful people made it so hard to leave. I see why Bruges is a vacation spot for Europeans, a short getaway to another world.

Ghent was a



Our European Trip 2023—continued from pg 8

metropolitan hub surrounded by history. No, literally! We stayed in the heart of downtown directly across from Gravensteen Castle that dated all the way back to 890 AD. Seeing it preserved in the heart of a thriving city showed us how much Belgians respect culture and history. Another thing I will always remember about Ghent was their trolley system and bike paths. Everything was within walking distance, so there were few cars on the streets. Overall, I don't think I've ever seen a more beautiful country than Belgium and will gladly go back any chance that I



get. Our travels continued with a flight to Athens and then a week of hopping around the islands.

If you want a party city, surrounded by history, with some of the nicest people you have ever met, then go visit Athens. The nightlife never stops and there are a million things to do. Seeing the Grecian architecture, and the effort that locals put into maintaining, it truly makes Athens a place you can't miss. We were fortunate to be in the city on a Sunday and get to see both the Evzones, or Greek Presidential Guards, dressed in full traditional uniform, as well as the

Athens Marathon. We managed to see the Acropolis Museum on our last day before hopping aboard our first ferry to Santorini.

When you see images of a Greek Isle, it's usually Santorini. The cliff-side stark white buildings with bright blue domed tops truly are as beautiful as they appear. But there are a lot of places on the island that are less well-known. We visited the Red Beach, Thira, Oia and even took a boat to the remains of the active volcano that the island surrounds.

Next came a day and a half in Mykonos, where we saw the main city of Tourlos. It was incredibly tranquil and serene (perhaps because we were traveling Greece during the off-season, and the shops were closed). The water was crystal clear and the streets were made of beautiful rocks. Just like Santorini, the buildings were painted stark-white, with narrow walk-ways full of shops and restaurants. We were also able to see the Mykonos Windmills, a historic landmark dating back to the Venetians of the 16th century who used to rule the island. We took one last ferry back to Athens before our journey home.



Our trip was full of history, adventure, amazing food, and wonderful people. I would recommend any of these places for a great vacation!

Anna Kekesi-Kim – Artist and Yoga Teacher

I have been painting ever since I can remember. Painting is a form of meditation for me. I am drawn to the moment that the paint touches the canvas and the colors flow into each other. Many of my paintings are based on a memory. Seeing the finished work transports me to the moment that the painting depicts and the moment that the work was created. I love working in different media: watercolor, acrylics and oils.

My favorite thing about watercolors is the way they mix. When the work is wet, the pigment is still able to move on the page, so you can create some interesting textures.



One of my favorite commissions was from the Rio Grande Museum where I was given several photographs and a beautiful story about a man's grandfather who lived in Rio Grande County during the Dust Bowl. After studying the photographs and doing some research, I created a watercolor painting of the young man's grandfather as a young man in front of his family's home with his grandson (who commissioned the

work 70 years later.) After I delivered the painting to the museum, I was invited to tour the family's ranch and meet the young man who commissioned the work. It's always fun to meet the people behind the stories that I paint. The painting is a permanent part of the museum's collection and was one of the highlights of my painting career.



During Covid, I learned to paint with acrylics. I started by doing acrylic paint pours which are reminiscent of how watercolor blends on the page. I instantly fell in love with the vibrant colors of acrylics. I am also a rather impatient painter, so I like that acrylics dry quickly (not as fast as water color, but faster than oils.) My personal favorite subject matter is my dog Pip. He's a Saint Bernard and has a very quirky personality that is easy to capture in acrylic. I love painting pet portraits because I often get to meet the dogs and their owners, which adds more depth to the painting than if I am just working from a photograph. Plus I love animals so meeting them is a bonus.

Last year when I was commissioned to do a portrait in oils, I learned that I like oils too. Though they take forever to dry, it's easier to get smoother blends with oils and I love that areas can be painted over and

erased (something that's near impossible in watercolors.) I also enjoy that oils make you go slowly. A painting can take weeks or months, giving you extra time to plan and get lost in the colors. My favorite subject matter in oils is people, especially my sons when they were young. When my oldest son graduated from college, I worked on an oil painting of him as a small child. It helped me to embrace a new chapter in my life that is slower and more meditative than before. When I look at the painting, it reminds me not only of the times we spent at the beaches in NC twenty years ago, but all the moments in between leading up to his graduation.



For more information about my work visit: www.annadraws.com

I also teach yoga at Burke United Methodist Church on Thursday nights from 7:30-8:30. I no longer have children's classes, but do have a children's book on yoga that will have them up and moving: [Mountain Moves](http://MountainMoves.net).

Neera Badhwar—Into the Wild!

Last December, Larry and I, along with my son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren, decided to venture into the wild. Having heard high praise of Tanzania as the best place to go in December, we signed up with a tour company and flew to Kilimanjaro, where we spent the night in a hotel with spectacular gardens. After a fabulous breakfast, we left for Tarangire National Park.

Here we saw zebras, elephants, vervet monkeys, olive baboons, the ever-graceful giraffes, dik-diks, gazelles with their ballerina-like leaps – and the big CATS! A lion sat in front of our vans with a bored expression, no doubt tired from all the roaring he’s been doing for MGM Studios since 1957. It was



somewhat insulting to be treated with such indifference - but on the other hand, I hear it’s not much fun to be mauled by a big cat.

Some lionesses slept blissfully on the warm rocks, unperturbed by our presence.

Having seen many of our species over the years, they no longer found us exotic.

We spent the next two nights in the



Sleepy Lioness

Photo credit: Arden Badhwar, through binoculars.

Ngorongoro (pronounced En-goron-goro) Crater in Northern Tanzania.



I wish you could have seen this giraffe walk – with its slow, loping gait, and upright posture, it looked like royalty.



A cheetah ponders its prey.

Once a gigantic volcano, it is the largest intact caldera in the world, and home to over 30,000 animals. The big 5 in Ngorongoro Crater are

elephants, leopards, buffalos, lions, and rhinos (although we could barely detect the distant rhinos even through binoculars).

Next came the Serengeti National Park, which houses the highest concentration of large mammals in



the world, including giraffes, elephants, buffalos, hippos, lions, leopards, cheetahs, and wildebeests – 1.7 million of them!

The wildebeest and zebras seemed to enjoy hanging out together – at least when the wildebeest were not making a mad dash across the plains for reasons only they could understand.



Lake Manyara National park is famous for tree climbing lions and

large flocks of pink flamingos. Alas, its fame is not entirely deserved. The flamingoes had left the park

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many years before, and if the lions were still there, they were obscured by the full foliage on the trees and the thick vegetation on the ground. Still, we enjoyed the drive through



the park, and did see the endlessly fascinating monkeys and elephants, as well as waterbucks.

We ended our trip with a visit to a Maasai village, where a group of Maasai women and men entertained us with a

song and dance, showed us how to make fire with two sticks, and pressed us to buy some pricey handicrafts. We didn't mind buying them at inflated prices, as the Maasai are quite poor, though voluntarily so. In spite of their poverty, however, the chiefs and their brothers still do what their status requires: marrying several women and having many children.



Here's a view of the setting sun over the crater from our hotel.



Pranav Badhwar and Larry White in the Chief's one-room hut.



Mama Elephant comes up to the van to inquire into our business.

2023 Halloween Party at the Ortegas

Gretchen and Fidel Ortega hosted a truly spooky Halloween pot-luck last November, complete with coffins and skeletons. Although I was out of town on Halloween's, I've heard enough about the event, and seen enough pictures of it, that I can almost hear the merriment and smell the food. And I'm told that the ghosts were so real, you could even touch them and talk to them!

—Neera K. Badhwar



And here's the pièce de résistance of the event: a Coffin Overflowing with Candy!



One of these guys is the host, Fidel. But which one? And where's the hostess, Gretchen? Is she the Invisible Force?

Bonnie Brae Book Club

Here's what we read in our Book Club in 2023.

--February 2023 *The Cold Millions* by Jess Walter. Historical fiction set in the early 1900s, right after a recession. Shows the injustice of the laws against unions, which allowed violent break-ups of peaceful demonstrations.

--April 2023 *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt "[An Amazon Best Book of May 2022](#)" —What does a misanthropic octopus have in common with Tova, a widowed aquarium employee? Not much, until a friendship develops following a daring tank rescue, and Marcellus McSquiddles happily uses all eight of his tentacles, his three hearts, plus his sharp brain, to solve the soul-scarring mystery of Tova's son Erik's disappearance thirty years ago."

--June 2023 *The Once and Future King* by T.H. White. "a timeless retelling of the legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, weaving together elements of fantasy, adventure, and profound moral lessons."

--August 2023 *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict & Victoria Christopher Murray. Historical fiction about J.P. Morgan's personal librarian, Belle da Costa Greene, born in Washington, D.C. as Belle Marion Greener. She was a black woman who passed as the descendant of a white Portuguese grandmother. Her literary and aesthetic judgment was so acute, and her bargaining powers so formidable, that Morgan trusted her to spend "millions of



dollars buying and selling rare manuscripts, books, and art for his library."

--October 2023 *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. Set in the 1950s and 60s, this is the story of a female scientist, Elizabeth Zott, who is ousted from her University position, but who continues with her experiments in her own home-made lab. She also reluctantly works on a TV cooking show to earn a living. She turns the cooking show into so many lessons in chemistry, and inspires many of the women in her audience to break free from their conventional lives and pursue their dreams. Eventually, she herself succeeds in getting recognized for her original scientific research. The book has been translated into more than 40 languages, and Apple TV has made a series based on the book.

--December 2023 *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver and annual pot-luck Book Exchange event, generously hosted by Margaret Pontzer. The book is based on Dickens' *David Copperfield*, but set in rural Virginia. Everyone liked the main character, and – importantly – the conclusion.

Anyone interested in joining the book club can do so on the Bonnie Brae page, or through an invitation by a member, or by emailing Marty Beach at martybeach@gmail.com

—Neera Badhwar

Bonnie Brae's Santa is the Real Deal



A few years ago, Susan and Rich Yennerell moved into our neighborhood. From the get-go they joined Bonnie Brae activities, serving on BBCA committees and twice hosting our National Night Out party in August. When they moved here, not only did we get the Yennerell family, but we also got a special connection to Santa himself --

Susan's father. For the past three years one new Bonnie Brae activity has been a "hot chocolate and cookies" get together with Santa just before Christmas. We have met outside in cul-de-sacs, but this year found a hospitable shelter in Andrea McGowan's open garage. Neera Badhwar's portable fire pit kept us warm, Marty Beach supplied her delicious hot chocolate, Courtney Wikle baked her (almost) too beautiful to eat Christmas cookies, Charlie Gulac and Larry White sang carols to the accompaniment of Charlie's guitar, and Santa arrived in a red sports car. I guess the reindeer were resting up for Christmas Eve.

When he's not sharing treats and listening to the holiday wishes of our little ones from Bonnie Brae, Santa, in his other life, is Steve Fogelman who lives in neighboring Country Club View. For the past several years, Steve has spent most of his free time helping new refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, and now, the Ukraine. He's a mentor, networker, fund-raiser, household goods collector, and furniture hauler for these folks who often arrive here with nothing. Steve, his wife, Cindy, and the few generous members of his small church have had an immense impact on the lives they touch. So, this Santa is truly "The Real Deal." and carries on the Christmas spirit every day of the year. Thanks, Santa! See you in December!



By Elaine Hawley

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.

—Tim Royster

Woodglen Lake / Park Cleanup - TBD

Late Fall and Early Spring 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The 2024 Lake Clean-up dates aren't set yet, but this is a great way for teens to earn community service points. The Point of Contact is Middleridge organizer, Sarah Mayhew at sarah.mayhew@yahoo.com. Sarah is a Master Naturalist and also volunteers to root out invasive plants from around the Lake. More information may be posted on the Middleridge website: <https://middleridgeffx.org/event/woodglen-lake-park-clean-up/>. Volunteers meet at the cul-de-sac on Fireside Court to clean up areas below the dam, along Woodglen Lake, and around Bonnie Brae Elementary School.

Dress for the weather and for working in the woods: long pants, long sleeves, and boots or shoes that you don't mind getting muddy. The county provides some supplies, including trash bags and adult gloves. Students can earn 2 hours of community service credit, but anyone under age 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

The county also runs The Invasive Management Area (IMA) Volunteer Program, a community-based project designed to reduce invasive plants in our parklands. Learn about IMA and help restore our parklands. More info here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/ima/>

J. P. Müller Lights Up Fairfax Once Again

A couple of years we featured an interview with our Bonnie Brae neighbor J. P. Müller. In his day job J.P. is a professional digital fabricator with his own engineering company. He creates and builds architectural features for commercial buildings and metro stations, for example. But in his dream job he's an artist and sculptor of large public art projects. His recent work was featured during the holidays in downtown Fairfax and was well worth a visit after dark to enjoy his use of light and form and motion. Congratulations on another stunning sculpture, J.P.



The exhibit to “Illuminate Fairfax” was part of the city’s effort to put a spotlight on the visual arts. This program is now sponsoring its first Annual Art Contest with a top prize of \$1,000. More information here: <https://www.fairfaxspotlight.org/event/spotlight-on-the-arts-1st-annual-art-contest/>

Robinson Secondary Student Receives 2024 Peace Award of Fairfax County



Samantha Katz is the recipient of this year's Student Peace Award for Robinson Secondary School. During the summer of 2023, Samantha visited the West Bank and Israel to study life and culture in the region as part of a program sponsored by an international youth group.

Particularly meaningful for her was witnessing a dialogue between Palestinian and Israeli community leaders discussing their perspectives on growing up in a region of constant conflict.

On her return to the U.S., Samantha resolved to study the issues further, and to bring her findings to her own school, other county schools, and other communities.

She has investigated and written about the spread of media propaganda around the world and how it has heightened Islamophobia and antisemitism on many levels due to harmful content being reposted out of context. Samantha believes that serious discussions and education surrounding the contentious issues will help to bring more peace, understanding and inclusion within her school community. She thinks these are the strategies necessary

to bring peace anywhere, and she hopes to devote her energies in these directions after finishing high school. Her objective now and after high school is to become fully educated about the background causes of conflict and to work with groups to reduce ignorance and the spread of hate.

Samantha joins 2024 Student Peace Award awardees from 25 other Fairfax County public schools and one private academy. Read more about Samantha and profiles of all the recipients at <http://fairfax.studentpeaceawards.org/>

Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County is a non-profit organized by volunteers and funded by donations from 15 secular and religious sponsoring organizations including George Mason University's Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution. Every year, high schools in Fairfax County are invited to select one junior, senior, or a group of students, whose work has promoted peace. Robinson Secondary has participated in this program since its beginning in 2006.

If you know of a local nonprofit organization that would be interested in getting involved as a sponsor or if you would like more information, please contact Bonnie Brae resident, Nancy Davis.

BBCA Holiday Lights Contest

Congratulations to the winners of the 2023 BBCA Holiday Lights contest for the BEST holiday decorations in the neighborhood.

Julie and Vincent Noto family - 5402 Sideburn Rd

Lee and Mark Dale family - 5348 Aylor

Sharon and Lonny Schwartz family - 10612 Fiesta Rd

Thanks to all who made the effort to light up these dark nights! And – thanks to our elves who had tough choices to make this year as there were many festive and creative displays.

These lucky 2023 winners will receive a FREE MEMBERSHIP in the BBCA for 2024. For the rest of us, the 2024 annual dues remain \$20.



Sewer and Water Line Insurance

We have run this story before but want to be sure our newcomers are aware. Homeowners are responsible for the exterior pipes that connect their utilities to the main pipes, and every year it seems that we have waterline breaks in our neighborhood. If it breaks, you pay to fix it. One Fairfax Water inspector said that our 50-year-old community, with PVC pipes installed in the 1970s, was among the worst in the area for water line breakage. However, in partnership with Dominion Electric, HomeServe insurance is available to cover this, and the low monthly charge will be added directly to your Dominion bill. According to HomeServe, the average cost to replace a water line is over \$2800, and the average sewer line is over \$5,700.

When a water pipe breaks, Home Serve covers everything and handles all the notifications and contracting.

HomeServe also offers coverage for several interior and exterior utility systems from gas and water lines to furnaces, water heaters, plumbing, and electrical systems, but the waterline is probably the most critical in Bonnie Brae. It's important to know that your coverage stops if you rent out your home to someone else unless you make new arrangements with HomeServe. Be sure to update your coverage if you rent out your Bonnie Brae home. Details here: <https://www.homeserve.com/sc/shop?channel=Home>

Tips for Choosing Your Mailbox

One of the things we don't really think about when moving into the Bonnie Brae community is the type and style of our mailboxes. But it's worth thinking about how to add your personal touch to your mailbox. Here are some things to consider:



Depending on the location of the mailbox, you can choose between post boxes with a pillar or solid support, made of various materials such as brass, aluminum, iron, wood, or galvanized steel. In addition to personal preferences, it is good to consider the material's resistance, so that you can be

rest assured that your mail is safe. The most solid material is galvanized steel, but if you have a more rustic property, a wooden box is a better choice. Wooden models are also very good for the exterior, but you need to re-paint them now and then.

Mailbox styles are endless. Major consideration should focus on the contemporary architectural style of our Bonnie Brae community. For some beautiful, one-of-a-kind examples of wooden mailboxes, see: <https://www.mailboss.com/simple-instructions-for-building-your-own-diy-mid-century-modern-wooden-mailbox-column-and-modern-farmhouse-mailbox/>.

Remember that the Virginia Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act requires you to call VA811 (formerly Miss Utility) 48 (1-800-552-7001) before you start digging for the mailbox post. VA's 811 is a free service that coordinates the marking of utility lines to prevent damage to them.

Some tips when upgrading/repairing your mailbox: set the post on a solid foundation below the frost line, preferably in concrete, to prevent leaning due to freezing/ thawing temperatures – or to the mailperson's constant pulling on the door to open the mailbox.

Speaking of winter: do clear snow from the front of the box so the mail truck can pull up and the mailman doesn't have to step over a snow bank: <https://www.valleynewslive.com/2022/01/05/mail-carriers-ask-you-clear-snow-sidewalks-steps-mailboxes/>

Remember to paint your house number on the mailbox. Looking forward to seeing your masterpieces!

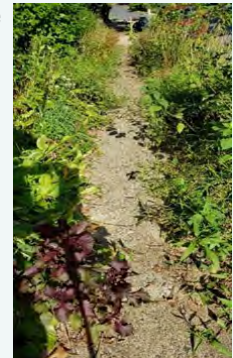
—By Charlie Gulac

Sidewalk Hazards



We're a walking neighborhood but some of our walkways are getting hazardous. Fairfax County can help smooth uneven sidewalks, a tripping hazard that may cause a bad fall. Special machines will "shave" the bumps and smooth our pathways. If you see such sidewalk hazards you may request Walkway Maintenance online at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/report-walkway-problem>, and the country will add your sidewalk to the list for free maintenance. This is also the site to report potholes.

Sometimes old growth creates other hazards on our sidewalks such as overgrown vegetation, tree branches, vines, debris, leaves, snow, and ice. It's not just neighborhood courtesy to keep the sidewalks on your property clear; neglecting these hazards can create homeowner liability if someone is injured.



Gardener(s) Wanted

We're still looking for a few volunteers who would like to refresh and maintain the plants around our two Bonnie Brae signs, which are getting overgrown and need a "facelift". BBCA could underwrite the purchase of new plants if you have ideas, but mostly we need the areas to be pruned, weeded, and fertilized, if necessary. Spring is the best time to clean up these areas which create the first impression of our special community. Each sign was designed by a BB neighbor -- J.P. Müller (Zion/Sideburn) and Bob Beach (Fyfe/Sideburn). If interested in volunteering for this project, please contact Elaine Hawley (elainejhawley@gmail.com)



BBCA ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating Out) Club.

The monthly ROMEO meetings are held every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 9 am. The 1st BBCA ROMEO Club introductory meeting was held on 23 April 2023 at Chloez's, chloezcafe.com, 5622 Ox Rd Unit F, Fairfax Station, VA 22039. We make every effort to meet at different locations to take advantage of, and support, our local eateries. BBCA retirees, do join us for interesting breakfasts – and conversations! Contact Charlie Gulac, 703-323-6694, email: cgulac88@gmail.com.

Who are the ROMEOs?

We eat out, have fun, make and keep friends, and are not bound by rules; that is, no causes, no specific membership restrictions except Retired "Old" Men Eating Out and talking. Our past meetings have touched on various subjects related to Ukraine, Russia, Fairfax Sr. Center, hiking the Sierra and Appalachian Trails, and downsizing. ROMEOs in other neighborhoods have their own schedules, meeting for breakfast or lunch or dinner once a week, or once a month, or whatever works for their group. Some are composed of people with similar interests or similar past professions, but most reflect the great mosaic that is the retired men's community. Some have outside folks come in and talk or educate while others simply let the conversation flow.

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

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

Burke Centre Library 2024 News

Fairfax County Public Libraries welcome all of us! Since our last BBCA Newsletter, library hours have increased for community and regional branch libraries. The hours for our nearby Burke Centre and Kings Park **community** libraries, are as follows:

Monday & Tuesday: 10-9
Wednesday – Saturday: 10-6
Sunday: Closed

Fairfax City and other **regional** branch libraries are open seven days, Monday – Wednesday: 10-9; Thursday – Sunday 10-6.

Print books, Ebooks, Audiobooks, DVD's - find materials in all these formats on the library shelves and by searching the [library catalog](#). You may also place an item on hold through the catalog or with call to a local branch: Burke Centre 703-249-1520, Kings Park: 703-978-5600.

Automatic renewals: If no one else is waiting for a book you have checked out, patrons registered for library services can elect to receive a notice that the item has been renewed for 3 additional weeks.

Library Events: Yes, our libraries offer a variety of programs. Click here <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/> and then search programs by type (author events, cooking, health, technology); or by audience (preschoolers, adults or in between); or by library branch. Be sure to register online early as spaces fill up quickly for popular programs.

Have books to donate? Libraries are accepting donations of adult and children's books in good condition. Some donations are placed in the library collection; most are sold at used book sales sponsored by the Friends of the Library – with profits being returned to the libraries.



Burke Centre Library Spring Booksale: March 20 (preview sales for members); March 21-24 (open to the public). Click here to find [book sales](#) countywide.

Research and Entertainment from Home: Your library card provides FREE access to 101 databases, from **Consumer Reports** and **Lerner Maker Lab** to **Gale Legal Forms**. **Magzter** is an amazing digital magazine collection of over 5,000 magazines and newspapers. For genealogy fans, **Ancestry.com** [library edition] and **American Ancestors** are available for use in branch libraries (not from home). Children can access fun and informative videos from **Just for Kids** and **Scholastic Go!** with informative articles, maps and videos for children and teens of all ages .

Follow these simple steps: Click on this link to the [FCPL Research Center](#), then search or select the data base of interest to you. When prompted, type in your library card number and this resource bonanza opens at your fingertips on your computer.

If you'd like to become a member of Friends of Burke Centre Library, contact Nancy Davis, Bonnie Brae resident and membership chair for Burke Library Friends. Individual annual membership is just \$5.00; individual life membership is \$50.

Fairfax Senior Center for Retirees!

Take advantage of what Fairfax City provides!

The Green Acres Senior Center, located in 4401 Sideburn Road, offers “Seniorcize” easy strength training, free weights, cardio equipment, a stretching area, and a workout room, as well as Bridge, Mahjong, Pickle ball, Bocce, and other similar activities. A library, including a Medical/Health Reference Library, is available. Call for a monthly calendar of events. Numerous and varied activities are available, including local trips, speakers, classes, and special events. Meals are provided on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Web Site: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/the-young-at-heart-senior-center>

Email: SeniorCenter@fairfaxva.gov

Address: 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA 22030

Phone: 703-273-6090

Hours:

Monday: 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Tuesday: 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Wednesday: 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Thursday: 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Friday: 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Saturday: 9:00 am –2:00 pm

Paper Bags (no plastic) for Yard Waste

Yard compost: By now you should know that you must use compostable paper bags or personal trash cans for grass clippings and leaves. Trash cans should be marked "Yard Debris".



Paper bags may be purchased at Home Depot, Costco, or Lowe's, among others. Tree limbs and brush must be no longer than 4

feet in length, 3 inches in diameter, and tied with twine in bundles. Trash haulers usually collect a maximum of 10 bags of grass clippings and leaves per pick up. Some of our beautiful big oak trees produce a LOT of leaves. It helps if neighbors who don't use the 10-bag quota offer spots on their curb for the neighbors who have excess bags so the bags get off the street on pick-up day.

DO NOT RECYCLE THESE FILTHY FIVE:

These Filthy Five are TRASH and will not be recycled by Fairfax County.

Plastic – Fairfax County doesn't recycle ANY plastic; you need to contact private recyclers of plastic if you want to recycle plastic. Of course, you can reuse plastic bags, or return them to the grocery store outside bin, or trash them along with other plastic.

Shredded Paper –TRASH bin!

Hangers, Cords & Hoses – These "tangles" destroy recycling processing machines – TRASH!

Takeout Containers & foam Cups – TRASH!

Dirty Diapers – Goes without saying, doesn't it?

New Glass Recycle Drop-off

Fairfax trash haulers no longer pick up glass for recycling, but it is still collected in a nearby stand-alone purple dumpster located in the parking lot of the Burke Centre train station. If you can't do that, then just put it in your trash bin, not recycle bin. Fairfax County Public Works crushes the glass and uses it in place of crushed rock to fill in around new sewer pipes, not only saving the expense of buying crushed rock, but also keeping this usable material out of landfills.



Virginia Elections

As if we weren't aware, 2024 is a federal election year with presidential primaries in March (over by now), other primaries in June and elections for President, Senate, and the House of Representatives in November. (State officials are not up for election this year.) Our Precinct is Bonnie Brae, and our polling place is the Bonnie Brae Elementary School. In Virginia, you can vote for a candidate from any party in the primaries.

The general election is on Tuesday, November 5th. Besides President and Vice-President, the seats held by Senator Tim Kaine and Congressman Gerry Connolly are up for election this year. Follow the candidates and issues and VOTE.

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/>.

Consider being a trained election officer

Fairfax County needs thousands of elections officers to ensure efficient and well-run elections. If you are a registered voter, willing to work from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. on election day, you may apply for one of these positions. It's a long workday and you will get a small stipend (\$250). You will get training in advance and, where possible, will be assigned to a polling place at or near your home precinct. Among your duties will be to help set up voting equipment, check voter IDs and names on the electronic poll book, provide assistance in using the voting machines and finally, help tabulate the results after the polls close. Bi-lingual speakers are especially needed. Applications and further information are available here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/officers/new-officers>

BBCA Membership Information

Bonnie Brae is a “mid-century modern” community of 305 homes and our Association activities are supported by nominal dues of \$20 per year. A handbook of by-laws along with a short history of the area is posted on our website: <http://www.bonniebrae.net> and is reprinted in the 2024 Directory.

Your dues help support activities that bind our community together and help keep Bonnie Brae a beautiful place to live. Do your part. Please join and pay your 2024 dues to support our BBCA activities:

- Publication of the BBCA Newsletter (also online at www.bonniebrae.net)
- Publication of a Community Directory (not online)
- Development and maintenance of our Bonnie Brae Website: www.bonniebrae.net
- Membership in the Braddock District Council of nearby associations
- Maintenance of Bonnie Brae signs
- Printing of Signs and flyers to announce community events
- Ice-cream social
- Bonnie Brae Car Show or Home Tour (occasionally)
- National Night Out Food Truck (but not this year)
- New Neighbor Welcome Potluck (September)
- Halloween Potluck (October)
- Santa’s visit and hot cocoa (December)
- Holiday Lights Review (December)
- Book Club
- Cookie Exchange
- Bunnyman night out (every 3rd Thursday of the month)
- Neighborhood Yard Sale

**Bonnie Brae Civic Association (BBCA)
Membership Application
2024 Annual Dues \$20**

Check box if you are new to Bonnie Brae in 2023-24

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

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

| BBCA FINANCIAL REPORT from BBCA Treasurer Lisa Travis as of December 31, 2023 | |
|--|-------------------|
| <i>BANK BALANCE as of 1/1/2023</i> | \$9376.41 |
| INCOME | |
| Membership Dues | 3060.00 |
| Newsletter & Directory Ad Sales | |
| Miscellaneous Income | |
| TOTAL INCOME | |
| EXPENSES | |
| <u>Administration</u> | |
| Bank Fee | 6.00 |
| Bank Deposit Correction Fee | |
| PO Box Rental | 230.00 |
| SUBTOTAL | 236.00 |
| <u>Communications</u> | |
| Phone Directories | |
| Sign Purchase | 111.28 |
| Flyer/Newsletter Printing | 386.91 |
| Stamps/Envelops | 3.59 |
| Website | 725.00 |
| SUBTOTAL | 1226.78. |
| <u>Community Safety & Maintenance</u> | |
| Braddock District Council Membership | 100.00 |
| Neighborhood Watch | |
| Sign Maintenance | |
| Yard Sale | |
| SUBTOTAL | 100.00 |
| <u>Annual Social Activities</u> | |
| Block Captain Party | 13.50 |
| Easter Party | 72.23 |
| National Night Out Party | 306.00 |
| New Neighbor Party | 68.88 |
| Halloween Party | 193.24 |
| Yard Sale Balloons | 21.50 |
| Santa Event | 23.34 |
| Christmas Light Contest | |
| SUBTOTAL | 698.69 |
| <u>Other</u> | |
| SUBTOTAL | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | 2261.47 |
| Annual Net Income | 798.53 |
| <i>BANK BALANCE as of 12/31/2023</i> | \$10174.94 |

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

SECTION LEADERS

SECTION I (82)

VICTORIA CARROLL

5350 Black Oak Dr.
703-300-5241

toriadidit@gmail.com

SECTION II (76)

SHARON SCHWARTZ

10612 Fiesta Rd.
703-895-0324

sharons@thedesignminds.com

SECTION III (71)

NEERA BADHWAR

10409 Pearl St.
703-250-7959

nbad@ou.edu

SECTION IV (76)

GLEN QUESENBERRY

5335 Aylor Rd.
703-303-2080

gquesenberry@hotmail.com

BLOCK CAPTAINS

#1—BLACK OAK even 5320-5348 (14)

Dave and Beth Doane

5332 Black Oak Dr.
703-919-0156

davebethdoane@gmail.com

#6—ACACIA LANE (16)

Jean Schwab

10514 Acacia Ln.
703-490-1293

jeanpwrow@gmail.com

#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

Victoria Carroll

5350 Black Oak Dr.
703-300-5241

toriadidit@gmail.com

#7—ARROWOOD ST (15)

Courtney Wikle

10517 Arrowood St.
520-437-3130

cbrock86@gmail.com

#12—FYFE COURT (13)

Neera Badhwar

10409 Pearl St.
703-250-7959

nbad@ou.edu

#17— AYLOR north (13)

Glen Quesenberry

5335 Aylor Rd.
703-303-2080

gquesenberry@hotmail.com

#3—INDIGO & ALLERTON (18)

Susan Yennerell

10511 Indigo Ln.
210-837-4235

yennerell@gmail.com

#8—FIESTA & SOUTHPORT 5331-5401 (15)

Sharon Schwartz

10612 Fiesta Rd.
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 Ln.
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 Private Dr 5312-5318 & odd 5329-5347 (14)

Larissa Hohe

5346 Black Oak Dr.
704-582-9788

larissa.hohe@gmail.com

#10—SOUTHPORT 5402-5422 (14)

Margaret Pontzer

5406 Southport Ln.
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