

Bannockburn Citizens' Association

Newsletter

Vol.4, No. 3

Bethesda, Maryland

September 2004

President's Column

Stuart Brown

It's hard to believe that summer is almost over as I write this column, and that school will be open again by the time you read these words. It's been a fairly quiet few months for our neighborhood, and hopefully we won't be visited by another Hurricane Isabel during the fall. Diane and I traveled for a number of family events this summer and we also began some long overdue repairs to our house. We learned that travel and construction may not be the best combination of summer activities – we were out of the country when our contractor called to tell us there had been a “slight” leak from a portion of our roof that was in the process of being replaced.

Judging by the number of dumpsters around the neighborhood, we aren't the only family who chose this summer for renovation projects. In general, everyone should be pleased to see the revitalization of homes in our neighborhood; we all benefit when our neighbors invest in their properties. At the same time, construction can be disruptive and annoying both for the owners who live through it and for the neighbors who live near it. Especially if construction activity is going to cause an unusual disruption (such as temporarily blocking a street to allow for heavy equipment), it's important to let your neighbors know in advance what is going to happen. Or, if contractors are doing something that is particularly annoying, neighbors should contact the owner as soon as possible; most everyone wants to be considerate, but sometimes we just don't realize how open communication can help make a difficult process more tolerable for everyone.

Apart from construction, our neighborhood has continued to see protests directed against one of our neighbors. In this regard, I want to repeat two points I made in our last newsletter:

BCA is not taking a position in the pro-choice vs. pro-life debate. We are, however, committed to protecting every family's right to live in our neighborhood without fear of harassment or intimidation.

According to the experts we have consulted, the demonstrators appear to be acting within the law and exercising their constitutionally protected right to free speech. The police will continue to monitor the demonstrations, but so long as the protestors obey the law, they have a right to peacefully express their views.

Because I know the demonstrations continue to be a concern for some of our neighbors – especially parents with young children – I have invited Councilman Howard Denis (or his staff), a spokesperson for the County Police, and a volunteer from the Washington Area Clinic Defense Task Force to attend our September 2 general membership meeting. I wanted you to have an opportunity to hear

Bannockburn Citizens Association



Neighborhood Meeting September 2nd Concord School

Social & Refreshments: 7:30-8:00 PM

Business Meeting: 8:00 –9:00PM

directly from those with experience in dealing with this type of situation, and also to provide an opportunity for you to express your views to them. I hope they will be able to attend.

On a lighter note, we are all looking forward to the 2nd Annual BCA Fall Picnic, Sunday September 26 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at Concord Local Park. Judging by last year's success, the picnic promises to be a fun-filled afternoon. It should be a good opportunity for parents of younger children to meet each other. Once again, we have to thank Renee West, Wendy Landres, Karen Lesser and a growing list of volunteers for their efforts in putting this together.

Finally, as the presidential election approaches, it's easy to be discouraged by all the problems and imperfections of our election process. Yet, despite these shortcomings, our system has provided more than 200 years of peaceful transitions in leadership – quite a contrast to most of the rest of the world. But elections can only be as valid as the number of people who participate. So whatever your views, and whichever candidate you support, I urge you to go to the polls and vote this fall.

Stuart Brown President

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The Street Where You Live

Mary Jane Pates

We know that we live in a community where the streets as well as the subdivisions all have Scotch names, but do you know what those names mean or from whence they came and who might have had them before you...I started to think about this and decided to look them up...I found many surprises

Some of this is ancient and some new, I shall take the longer streets first and work down to the shorter ones: so here goes...

NEVIS

Ben Nevis is not only the highest mountain in Scotland, but also the highest mountain in the United Kingdom. It is also a mountain in the Caribbean. The name Nevis means "peak" and Ben is mountain so is all "Nevisites" living on mountain peak? Or maybe in the clouds as some definitions of Nevis have been reported this mountain is but a hillside compared to the Alps, being only 4405 feet high but provides a challenge because of the uncertain weather.

HELMSDALE

Helmsdale is a port village on the northeast coast of Scotland and has a long and varied history. There was a gold rush of limited duration in the 1860's when a prospector who had made fortune mining in Australia, found a gold nugget in the river Helmsdale. After the initial excitement, it was determined that the quantity and quality of the gold found, would not justify any major operation.

The name originally meant "valley of the helmets, or helmeted men, possibly derived from the ancestry of the Norse who invaded and eventually mingled with the locals. The clan system later derived from this mixture of cultures. The area was first mentioned in the first century by the Roman historian Tacitus, who described the inhabitants as "tall men with red hair and long swords, possibly derived from the Norse invaders. If you're interested they even have a website helmsdale.org

BROXBURN

The definition of the word literally is "a stream of badgers, or brook where badgers live" The spelling can vary from broc broch boc, all probably derived from the Gaelic

HEATHERHILL

Obviously a hill covered by heather which has many family members including rhododendron, azaleas, mountain laurel as ornamentals, but also huckleberry, blueberry, cranberry and wintergreen...It is an evergreen with profuse pink blossoms

SELKIRK

"A church beside a hall". This is an ancient and royal burgh of Selkirk where William Wallace "Braveheart" was declared guardian of Scotland It was

settled about 1113, though it's history goes back well into prehistoric times. About 3000 the Tweed valley was settled by men who started to raise animals, instead of "hunting "and raise crops rather than foraging Or "gathering". The web site www.selkirk.bordernet.co.uk/prehistory.html is a fascinating source of history of this town.

CRAIL

You cannot begin to look into the history of Scotland without seeing the mention of GOLF, and Crail for those addicted to this sport the mention of St. Andrews will mean the nearby town of Crail. It is the most easterly of the settlements south of the East Neuk of Fife. It was settled by the 800's and made a burgh by Robert the Bruce, who gave it the right to hold markets on Sunday.altho for years after the Reformation the General Assembly unsuccessfully tried to change the market day to a weekday.

LOCH LOMOND

So many songs and poems have been written about this beautiful, jube lake that it is difficult to add anything...It was formed in the Ice Age and is the largest lake in the United Kingdom...27 ½ miles long, 5 miles wide and 600 feet deep...as you might imagine it is a popular resort with summer as well as winter sports.

BLACKLOCK

This street name came as a surprise to me and perhaps to its residents...this is the name of a Scottish poet Thomas Blacklock whose history is an inspiration.

Thomas Blacklock (1721-1791) the son of a bricklayer was blinded by smallpox at the age of two. His father read to him, and while blind managed to write poems that eventually attracted the attention of friends and acquaintances that arranged for his formal education a grammar school and eventually at the University at Edinburgh. He was a friend of Robert Burns. And was later conferred the degree on doctor of divinity

COMING NEXT; ARANDALE, ARAN, BARRA CARMICHAEL, BEN AVON, LAVEROCK, HIDDEN CREEK. GLENRIDDLE



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Concord Park Success at Last

Josephine Roberts

Some TV "ads" stick in ones head. Two in particular still make me laugh, years later. Who could forget, "Where's the beef"? The other one of comical note depicted a jolly, mischievous guy, sitting between two voluptuous blondes in the back seat of a limousine, wringing his hands gleefully and saying, "Thank you, thank you, thank you". We can thank Roy Rogers and Mr. Marriott for that one!

Bannockburn Citizens Association has cause to be equally gleeful. For years we have been asking, "Where's the beef?" Finally, it was announced at the June 2004 BCA general meeting, that the construction phase of Concord Park was fully funded, to the tune of \$500,000 plus dollars, by the Montgomery County Council in the FY05 budget.

The Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning is presently accepting bids on the project. In a few weeks a contractor will be named. Preliminary construction could begin as early as November 2004. The major part of the construction will begin in the spring of 2005, and the project is expected to be COMPLETED BY JUNE 2005!!!!

Besides the County Council and MCCPC, I would like to say "Thank you, thank you, thank you" to three great guys, who helped bring this project to fruition, namely our BCA Presidents during the period 2000 -2004. In the past, when this project has been mentioned, I seemed to be the one who got the credit, but I want to set the record straight on that one. David Weiss was the President who steered me into involvement in the project in the first place, and guided me through the bureaucratic maze. Geert Van Brandt's efforts brought the whole community together to approve the project. Stuart Brown didn't miss a beat and followed through, attending hearings, writing letters and offering encouragement all along the way.

We look forward to seeing you all and your children at the opening festivities in June, 2005.

Attention Gardeners-

Neighborly Concerns

Our neighborhood is full of lovely gardens. Many of us enjoy working in the yard and some also use the services of professional landscaping companies. It's a real pleasure to walk our streets and see the various garden styles that different neighbors have created.

Garden maintenance inevitably produces debris – brush, grass clippings, dead weeds, etc. It is important that these materials be disposed of properly – composted, put out for pick-up by the County recycling trucks, or taken away by your landscape company. Unfortunately, some of our neighbors who keep portions of their yards as natural woods have noticed that other neighbors may use those woods as a dumping ground for yard debris. We should all resist the temptation to dump yard waste in the woods next door – no matter how convenient they may seem. And, we should all remind our landscape contractors to dispose of the waste they create only in the proper place.

One of our neighbors who had someone else's yard waste dumped in her woods this summer was able to arrange for the waste to be removed a few days later by calling the Maryland State Environmental Department at 301-277-7623.



**Mark you Calendar
BCA Family Picnic
Sunday**

**September 26
4:00 to 6:00 PM**

Concord Park

**Pizza & Drinks
Face Painting-Moon Bounce
Kids' Games -Relays
Three Legged Races**

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Political Yard Signs

As the election approaches, the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services has provided some guidance for placing political signs on private property in residential areas. Here is a summary of the rules:

Signs may be placed on private property for up to 30 days without a permit. Signs displayed longer than 30 days require a "limited duration sign permit." These permits cost \$22 and are good for up to one year.

There is no limit on the number of signs; however, the total area of all signs cannot exceed 10 square feet.

Signs must be no more than 5 feet high (at the top), and must be set back at least 5 feet from the property line.

Desperately Seeking Volunteers

Do you enjoy reading the BCA newsletter? Could it be more interesting, relevant and useful? What would you like to see included?

The past 5 newsletters have been written by just a few individuals and we would very much like some help. There are many topics we don't cover, simply for lack of writers: for example, we could provide summaries of crime reports; real estate transactions; new neighbors arriving and old friends leaving; items related to local schools; etc.

So, if you have any interest in joining the staff of the BCA newsletter – or just feel like contributing a single article – please don't be shy. Talent is definitely not required. Contact Stuart Brown (slb7110@comcast.net) or David Weiss (dk.weiss@verizon.net)



Deer Damage Prevention – from MNCPPC

As reported in our last newsletter, Bonnie Garrett and Stuart Brown from BCA, Joan Kleinman from Cong. Chris van Hollen's office, and Ron Gibbs from MNCPPC met last April to discuss our concerns about deer in the neighborhood. We urged Mr. Gibbs to reconsider connecting two separate fences that currently exist near the single lane bridge on MacArthur Boulevard. We thought this new connecting fence would form a more continuous barrier to deter the deer from following a small streambed from the C&O Canal into our neighborhood.

On July 16, Bonnie received a letter from Mr. Gibbs explaining why the fence we had suggested would not be built, but indicating that additional fencing would be considered in a somewhat different location:

The principal reason MNCPPC rejected our suggestion for fencing was the concern that the fence might channel grazing deer out of the woods and onto the roads -- leading to an increase in deer-vehicle collisions along the Cabin John Parkway, MacArthur Boulevard, and Wilson Lane. This concern has led the authorities to consider extending the fence along Cabin John Parkway instead of placing it where we had suggested.

Apart from traffic safety concerns, the MNCPPC letter also presents a number of other reasons why the fence should not be built where we had suggested. These reasons focus on the easy availability of alternative routes for the deer to follow into our neighborhood, the difficulty of maintaining a deer-proof fence across the steep ravine and stream bed, and the undesirable precedent of fencing in parkland.

We are, of course, disappointed that MNCPPC did not accept our suggestion for reducing deer traffic through our neighborhood. But it does seem that they have analyzed the situation carefully; Mr. Gibbs' letter includes a detailed map of the area and indicates he and others visited the site on two separate occasions after our meeting. And some good might come of our efforts if additional fencing is added to reduce deer-vehicle collisions on the Cabin John Parkway.

What do we do next? Mr. Gibbs repeated his offer to provide a presentation about how homeowners can make their gardens deer resistant (e.g., plant selection, deer fencing, etc.) If you would like to have such a presentation – or if you have any other suggestions -- please contact Bonnie Garret by email (bonnie.garrett2@verizon.net). For more information on deer in Montgomery County, go to the MNCPPC website (www.mc-mncppc.org/) and search for "deer".

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Bark in the Park—a pet party

The party will be held on Sunday, September 12th from 1:00pm – 3:00pm behind the Little House at Westmoreland Park. Dogs, owners, and pet lovers are welcome to come see and participate in the Best Dog Trick Contest, the Dog and Owner who Look the Most Alike Contest, and the Best Tail Wagger Contest. Prizes will be awarded!

Groomers, Dog Photographers, Dog Walkers, and Pet Stores will be on hand to share information. To volunteer or for questions, please contact Robbie Rossetti at 301-263-0031 or email robbie@robbierich.com

Neighborhood Security Issues

Street Light Out?
Report It On-Line!
Did you know that you could use the Internet to report malfunctioning streetlights?
There are two ways to find the right page:
1) Go directly to this web address:
http://www.dpwt.com/tcle/StreetLighting_Maint.html
2) If you can't find (or can't remember) that address, go to the Montgomery County homepage; then click on "Departments", then click on "Department of Public

Works and Transportation", then click on "Information About Services", then click on "Streetlight Maintenance."

Once you get to the right web page, there are several ways to report the broken light. The easiest way may be using the "Streetlight Outage Form," but if you are feeling adventurous, you can try using the satellite photos of our neighborhood to locate the light.

Dogs on the Loose

We all love our own pets -- but we don't all love other people's pets. That's why we have animal control regulations and that's why we are reminding dog owners in our neighborhood of these basic rules:

- 1) Dogs may not be allowed to run loose.
- 2) Dogs may not be allowed to bark too much for too long.
- 3) Scoop your poop.

For a summary of Montgomery County animal control laws, you can visit the following website:
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/siteHead.asp?page=/mc/services/police/animal/animalhp.htm>

For further information, or to report a violation of animal control laws, call the Animal Services Division at 240-773-5960 or 240-773-5925; for after hours emergencies, call 240-773-5900

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*Bannockburn Citizens Association
Newsletter*

Vol. 03, No.6

Bethesda, Maryland

June 2004

Bannockburn Citizens Association Functions

Neighborhood Meeting

Thursday, September 2nd

Concord School

Social and Refreshments 7:30 PM

Come Early and Coffee/Tea with Neighbors

Business Meeting 8:00 PM

Neighborhood Family Picnic

Sunday, September 26th

Concord School (Park)

4-6 PM

FUN*Pizza*Games*Moon-Bounce*Races*Face-Painting*FUN