



Bonnie Brae

Neighborhood Newsletter



Volume 60—Spring 2026

BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Increasingly we are learning how important it is to our health and longevity to create and maintain social ties and an immediate opportunity is within our own neighborhood. While building these relationships becomes more challenging as we grow older or live alone, isolation can affect individuals of any age. Fortunately, Bonnie Brae is a welcoming community with kind and good people. A significant role of our Civic Association is to foster social activities and encourage connections among our neighbors. We're a happier village if we know the folks who live around us.

The charter of BBCA defines the organization as a "Civic Association" dedicated to neighborhood engagement and support. In support of that mission, we sponsor social events like the fun Trivia Night and Halloween. We also gathered for a yummy Taco Bar to welcome newcomers last year.* In May, we had a progressive dinner for the Kentucky Derby with fancy hats and mint juleps all around. Thanks to the initiative of some of our teenagers, we have revived the Youth Council, who recently organized a creative and enjoyable Easter Egg Hunt for BBCA kids. We also compile a neighborhood Directory in alternate years and put out this annual newsletter.

We maintain a community Website and Facebook page, all aimed at promoting neighborly relationships and effective communication. And, we're always looking for new ideas and new volunteers to keep Bonnie Brae a wonderful neighborhood.

Even if you aren't inclined to participate in our organized social events, it's still important to get to know your immediate neighbors. We're a healthy community when we can rely on one another. Do you know folks on your street or people who live near you? Do you look out for each other, laugh together, keep an eye on things, help when needed, give a ride, watch out for kids heading to and from school. Bonnie Brae is truly a "friendly village". We're so lucky to have a school virtually within our neighborhood. In the past few years, we've welcomed many new neighbors. Take some time to greet new families on your block when they move in. Join BBCA. Bonnie Brae is a thriving neighborhood for a reason. Let's continue to strengthen the social ties within our community.

Elaine Hawley

Block Party Support

Building community and fostering relationships between neighbors is an ongoing goal for the BBCA. While the BBCA hosts a few events for all residents of Bonnie Brae each year, we support and encourage smaller events for neighbors within their blocks. If you plan to host a happy hour or cookout for neighbors in your block, please send the BBCA a brief description of the event, photos, and receipts so that the BBCA can reimburse you for up to \$100.00 per event. Please email your photos and receipts to bonniebraetreasurer@gmail.com.

Get to Know the BBCA

While the BBCA has elected board members who serve specific roles, the vast majority of the BBCA efforts are supported by general members who give a few hours of their time each month to support our community. So far in 2026, our general members have:

- Attended Braddock District Council planning meetings
- Met Fairfax County Parks to learn about planned maintenance projects for Woodglenn Lake
- Attended Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environment Services hearings during which the county considered alternatives to solid waste management
- Planned and hosted several social events
- Planned and executed the annual Easter egg hunt. The credit for this goes to the BBCA Youth Council.

We are always seeking feedback, suggestions, and involvement from our members. Our monthly BBCA meetings are open to all residents of Bonnie Brae, so we encourage you to attend one or more of them. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 29th at 7:30 PM at 5424 Southport Lane. The dates and locations of future meetings will be available on our Bonnie Brae website- <https://bonniebrae.net/committees-volunteer-opportunities/>

We hope you'll join us to learn more and help us shape the future of our community.

Andrea McGowan

BBCA Volunteers

Your Board and committee of volunteers are always looking for new ways to serve the community, so feel free to contact any one of us with your ideas or concerns. We are once again in need of a BBCA President. Please contact Larissa Hohe if you are interested in joining the team. It's a fun team to work with!

2026 Bonnie Brae Civic Association Board of Directors

VACANT	President	
Charlie Gulac	1st VP	cgulac88@gmail.com
Margaret Pontzer	2nd VP	pontzer@cox.net
Lisa Travis	Treasurer	lisatravis33@gmail.com
Larissa Hohe	Secretary	larissa.hohe@gmail.com

BBCA Team

Fortunately, we have an enthusiastic group of committee volunteers including Marty Beach, Neera Badhwar, Elaine Hawley, Andrea McGowan, Courtney Wikle, John and Lisa McAlduff, Jean Schwab, Patrick Collins, and Tim Royster. Thanks, too, to Emelyn Royster and her brother Hudson for re-starting our Bonnie Brae Teen Youth Group. The teens organized our best Easter Egg Hunt to date, and we look forward to sponsoring more activities for this group. They are always looking for ways to volunteer.

Block Captains

We have a hard-working corps of 19 block captains who are always helpful distributing flyers and newsletters and getting the word out about our activities. (Find your block captain on the chart in this newsletter.)

Thanks to our section leaders, who also serve as block captains:

Victoria Carroll, Sharon Schwartz, Glen Quesenberry, and Neera Badhwar

Thanks to the rest of the block captains:

Dave & Beth Doane, Susan Yennerell, Rachel Hinnant, Elaine Hawley, Larissa Hohe, Jean Schwab, Courtney Wikle, Andrea McGowan, Margaret Pontzer, Barry Azimi, Lisa Hoyle, Jill Turosz, Michael Nickens, Cathy Gulac, and James Chu and Larry White.

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 we have your email address and phone number. We still need a block captain for Jennifer/Sideburn (block #20) Contact Elaine Hawley elainejhawley@gmail.com for details.

JOIN BBCA

To sign up for membership, pay \$20 annual dues. Your block captain can tell you if you're paid up for 2026. Or, if you can't log in to the bonniebrae.net membership page, you probably haven't paid dues this year.

Community Events & Information



We are [Bonnie Brae Fairfax VA](#). With 198 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. This is a private group; only members can see who's in the group and what they post.

Bonnie Brae Website

Our beautiful new BBCA website (<http://bonniebrae.net>) is now up and running thanks to the efforts of Joe Landry, our neighbor and web designer in Middleridge who worked with our BBCA team. We have started to populate the site with content, good information and photos. Current BBCA members login in with their email address to get access to the Directory. We hope this new look shows off our neighborhood to be the beautiful place we all know it to be. Check it out, bookmark it, and take pride in our beautiful neighborhood!



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

Calendar in Review

Below are the 2026 BBCA events that have taken place or will take place, funded by your \$20 annual household dues. We advertise events via periodic flyers to each home, physical signage in the community, our website calendar (<https://BonnieBrae.Net> > Events), and Facebook (Bonnie Brae Fairfax VA), and NextDoor (Code znwlqz).

If you would like to propose – or even host – an event, we'd love to hear from you! You can contact your Block Captain or bonniebraewebmaster@gmail.com. You are also welcome to attend a BBCA Board Meeting – dates are posted on our website.

March 28 (Saturday)	<i>Easter Egg Hunt with Easter Bunny</i>	An Easter Egg Hunt hosted by the Easter Bunny, with crafts and snacks.
May 2 (Saturday)	<i>Derby Progressive Dinner</i>	An Adults-Only Progressive Dinner at neighborhood homes, including a Kentucky Derby watch party.
May 2 (Saturday)	<i>Spring Yard Sale</i>	
June 6 (Saturday)	<i>Bonnie Brae Neighborhood Trivia Night!</i>	Hosted by Pour House Trivia, neighbors compete in teams over pub food and other refreshments.
July 17 (Friday) Rain Date August 22 nd (Sat.)	<i>Ice Cream Social</i>	Simple summer Friday night fun with ice cream and toppings.
September 19 (Saturday)	<i>New Neighbor Welcome Potluck</i>	The biggest event of the year, this is an opportunity to meet new residents of our community. *We use this opportunity to conduct BBCA Board Elections.
October 31 st (Saturday)	<i>Halloween Potluck</i>	To kick off trick-or-treating, this potluck brings neighbors together to show off their costumes.
December	<i>Winter Holiday Lights Contest</i>	Each year, a panel of judges awards 3 homes a prize for their Holiday Light displays. Winners receive free dues for the upcoming year, and a yard sign for bragging rights.

Dangerous Ice on Woodglen Lake

Did your children spend time on Woodglen Lake's ice last winter? Many sledders ventured onto the frozen lake near the Dam, worrying neighbors who often asked them to get off the ice or who even called police several times in one day. The Dam is a popular sledding spot during snow days, but Woodglen Lake, with water depths of 15–20 feet near the dam, is never fully safe—even if mostly frozen, areas of open water remain. In past years, dogs have fallen through and needed rescue, but so far, no people. Please remind your children about the dangers of ice when visiting the lake.

The mostly frozen lake provided a great opportunity for Fairfax County Emergency Response teams to train for ice rescue this year. They donned thermal gear, broke through the ice and dipped into the water to practice. Of course, in an emergency situation, by the time they arrive and get into that bulky thermal suit, it may be too late if someone has really fallen through the ice.



In case of Emergency

It pays to take a few minutes to figure out where you might get emergency care if you need it. Of course, in a serious emergency (heart attack, stroke, severe injury, etc.) calling 911 is likely the best option as you will be taken to a hospital.

But for non-emergency care you should know where you would go. We have many Urgent Care facilities in the area, but they often aren't open 24/7. These facilities often change owners and have limited services and hours so it pays to keep up with the latest availability and know your options before the need arises. I have recently learned that former Urgent Care facility at Burke Centre Commons is now a Primary Care facility that requires appointments.

Our nearest full staffed/always open Inova Emergency Department (ED) is just up 123 towards Fairfax about 8-10 minutes away. Connected to the Fairfax Hospital System, it is a great service to have close at hand.

It's also useful to know that if you have a concern that is not urgent or life-threatening, you should call **the non-emergency number (703) 691-2131**. These non-urgent things might be:

- Non-violent disputes between neighbors
- Property damage vehicle accidents not causing a hazard to the flow of traffic
- Noise complaints
- Leash law violations
- Assistance resolving disagreements involving no crime or violence
- Dumping of trash or materials onto public property

Neighborhood Notes

KEEPING SIDEWALKS CLEAR

Many thanks to all our neighbors who have pruned their bushes and plants and picked up leaves, so they don't encroach on our sidewalks. Sidewalk safety is important to young and old alike. Bonnie Brae is a community of dog walkers, children walking to school, joggers, and folks who just enjoy a beautiful



stroll. Sometimes those wet leaves or sharp branches can be as dangerous as snow and ice. Thanks for all that tough shoveling this winter and for the clearing of your walks all year round. It's a responsibility and a liability, so please keep up the good work.

KEY LOCKBOX

What happens if you're away and a water pipe breaks? Do you share a spare key with your neighbor to help with just such an emergency? How about if you fall and call 911 but your door is locked and you can't open it? If emergency responders can't get inside, they will break down your door. However, if your door has a coded entry or if you have a coded lockbox with a key inside (I bought one for less than \$25) you may register the code with our local police station which, for Bonnie Brae, is the West Springfield Station (6140 Rolling Rd, Springfield). Then when

you call 911, the code will be transmitted to first responders who can access the key or use your code to open the door, saving you the trouble and expense of a new front door.



SCAM JAM

Most of us have encountered scams or know someone who has. Billions of dollars are stolen each year via increasingly sophisticated scams, many originating from abroad. Posts on NextDoor about current scams help raise awareness, which is crucial in preventing fraud. Along these lines, each April, AARP and Fairfax County host a Scam Jam at the Government Center—a three-hour event designed to help community members learn how to spot, avoid, and report fraud. It features experts from agencies like The Secret Service, FBI, Postal Fraud Unit, Local Banks, and Police.

While the focus is on scams that target senior citizens, they also cover common scams including fake EZ Pass fines, arrest warrants, IRS and phishing schemes, grandparent scams, romance scams, fraudulent bank calls, and credit card, bitcoin or gift card scams. Following the program, county agency reps provide information on available support. This free event is very informative, raises awareness and is free and open to the public. You do not need to be a member of AARP to attend, but you do need to pre-

register. Watch for details next spring or check the AARP website. AARP provides valuable information and services and is well worth joining, if only to receive the interesting monthly magazine and newsletter. While AARP is dedicated to people over 50, anyone 18 and older can join for as low as \$15 for the first year with automatic renewal.

FREE SMOKE ALARMS

Smoke alarms save lives! And, Fairfax County has a fire safety program to install free fire alarms with batteries for county residents in your personal home. It is recommended that every bedroom in the home have a fire alarm. Application is available on this Fairfax County website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/free-smoke-alarms>



"Smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries. Fairfax County residents can get **FREE battery-powered smoke alarms** by contacting their local Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (FRD) station or by submitting the completed form below on this website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/free-smoke-alarms> After your request is received, a member of the Fairfax County FRD will contact you to schedule a visit to your house or apartment, to check your current alarms, and install new ones. For more information about our smoke alarm program, please call 703-246-3801 or email fire.smokealarms@fairfaxcounty.gov. (Note: Fire department personnel are not able to repair or replace hard-wired smoke alarms.)

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BONNIE BRAE WEBSITE ONLINE DIRECTORY

If you have not been to the Bonnie Brae website, go and check it out: www.bonniebrae.net You will find an easy-to-navigate plethora of information, from the latest community events to an online version of our annual newsletter, to the history of our neighborhood and drawings of original house floorplans.

There is also a membership section that contains the structure of our civic association board and committees, opportunities to participate and/or volunteer on committees, and our bylaws and standards and guides.

Under the membership section, the only area that is restricted to members is the Directory. **Membership in the Bonnie Brae Civic Association (BBCA) gives homeowners the many benefits listed below and provides a newly developed online directory that allows for a search of neighbors by name, address, phone number, and email address.**

- Delivery of our annual community newsletter to your door by your block captain, announcing upcoming events and sharing topics of community interest.
- A paper directory that is updated every 2 years and contains Bonnie Brae residents' names and phone numbers, the BBCA's Bylaws and Standards and Guides, and street maps of the east and west sides of our neighborhood.
- The funding of many annual neighborhood activities: New Neighbor Welcome party, Halloween party, Easter Egg Hunt, and since last year, Trivia Night. Additionally, the BBCA sponsors the Bonnie Brae Website and maintains neighborhood signs.

The online directory provides members who have paid their current annual \$20 dues access to the Directory. For those who cannot remember if they've paid their dues (a common problem), an unsuccessful attempt to access the online Directory indicates nonpayment for the year (unless a recent payment has been made but not yet recorded by the Bonnie Brae Treasurer). **For instructions on how you can pay your annual dues, go to: <https://bonniebrae.net/membership/>.**

Neighborhood Notes, continued...

SNOW DAYS (Fun for the kids, not so much for adults...)

This was one of those rare but hard winters in Fairfax. The kids loved it! The ice was a killer for Mom and Pop. I know it's not seasonal now, but it pays to remember some key issues when we have snow and ice.

- Talk to your kids about staying off the ice on Woodglen Lake. (see article in this issue)
- Clear your sidewalks in a timely manner. We don't want school kids to have to walk in the street.
- Help clear bus stops, fire hydrants, and storm drains near you.
- Clear snow and ice off your car before getting on the road. Snow and ice can break off and damage cars behind you, injure someone, or even cause an accident. Snow can also slide down over your own windows and obscure your vision.

A good pro tip from VDOT:

Before the snowstorm, park in driveways or if that's not available, park on the odd-numbered side of the street to allow plows room to pass unobstructed when they come by. After one side is clear, cars could move to the even side of the street. This could really help the plows and get our streets cleared fast.

Elaine Hawley

Unified Sanitation District Update

Bonnie Brae considered the Fairfax County proposal for a *Unified Sanitation District*, where all single-family residential customers in a defined area would receive trash service under contracts administered by the county. However, the County dropped the idea on 13th June (<https://www.ffxnow.com/2026/05/13/fairfaxs-plan-to-manage-trash-collections-countywide-appears-dead-for-now/>)

Bonnie Brae Book Club



The Bonnie Brae Book Club is one of Bonnie Brae's longest lasting groups. Although I am not sure of the exact origin year, I joined in 2003 and have been a member ever since.

We meet every two months at a home in the neighborhood, usually on a Friday evening, and discuss a previously chosen book over wine and snacks. The hostess gets to choose the book and leads the discussion. (Sometimes some of us fail to finish the book, but it's still fun to party!) We have had some very lively discussions over the years, even continuing one at Hamrock's and in a member's backyard. We have gone to visit Hillwood Estates after reading about Marjorie Merriweather Post. The books have varied in genre from classics to mysteries to historical fiction to new releases. Recently, we made a list of all of the books we have read over the last 23 years and came up with over 90 titles (contact Elaine Hawley if you would like to view the list.) The Bonnie Brae Book Club is one of my favorite things about our neighborhood and I have enjoyed finding new authors and engaging in lively discussions with my friends and neighbors.

Margaret Pontzer



ICE-CREAM SOCIAL!

Want to cool down, but can't get to the beach?

No worries, you can cool down right here with ice-cream on Ruth and Barry Azimis' lovely lawn!

17th July, at 7.30; rain-date: August 22nd at 7.30.

10419 Nellie White Lane
703-675-6752

Virginia Elections 2026

2026 is an election year for US Federal offices and three Virginia Constitutional Amendments. The Republican and Democratic Primary Elections will be on August 4, 2026 for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. The General Election is November 3rd. Our voting site is the Bonnie Brae Elementary School.

In addition, three constitutional amendments will appear on the November ballot:

- One would remove a 2006 ban on [same-sex marriage](#) from Virginia's constitution — language that has been unenforceable since the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 ruling but remains on the books.
- [Another amendment](#) would automatically restore voting rights to people with felony convictions who have completed their sentences.
- The third would [enshrine reproductive rights](#) in the state constitution.

Virginia allows early and absentee voting, but you must register to vote before the election, online or in person at the Government Center. This Virginia Department of Elections website <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation> has information on how to:

- Register to Vote
- Check and update registration status
- Find your polling place
- Apply to Vote Absentee by Mail

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

Election Officers Needed

Fairfax County has 264 precincts, and it takes thousands of trained election officers from the community to help ensure that we have well-run elections. **If you would like to help with elections**, consider being a trained election officer. 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 near your precinct. Election officers help set up voting equipment, check 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/working-polls>



Fairfax County's Planned Projects for Woodglen Lake Park

The BBCA was recently contacted by Fairfax County regarding two planned projects for the Woodglen Park: partial lake dredging and dam toe drains repairs. While the plans and schedule are not finalized, we were provided an overview of the project's scopes and potential timing. The county has indicated they will follow up with more details and exact timing.

Partial Lake Dredging-

The county will dredge a portion of the lake on the Zion Rd end to remove excess sediment from the lake bottom. The project will take approximately six months to complete and won't commence till fall. The park entrance from Zion Road will be used for equipment access and project staging. The county plans to remove invasive plants along the lake shore as part of this project but there is no planned tree removal. Many trees within the Woodglen Lake Park have been tagged and numbered over the last year and the county communicated this was done to complete the survey needed to establish the scope of work for the partial lake dredging. The BBCA members encouraged the county to ensure the dredging work areas are secured as the walking path in that area will not be accessible during the project.

Toe Drain Repair- The toe drains are located on the back side of the dam berm on the Middleridge side of the lake. A toe drain in the embankment dam is a critical seepage control system located at the downstream to collect, manage and remove water that seeps through under the dam. This project will take

approximately three months to complete and will start in the late fall. The design plans and timing aren't final yet. The county had proposed accessing the toe drain work area via Fireside Court, but members of the Bonnie Brae Civic Association expressed serious concerns with that plan as children walk along the path to go to Bonnie Brae Elementary School. We informed the county that access could be made to the

planned work area via a path from Sideburn Road at the end of the school property. This was the access path the county used when they completed the last full lake dredging. We strongly urged the county to consider this option to maintain a safe path travel to the school and to avoid increased

vehicle traffic on Acacia Lane, Southport Lane and Fireside Court during the planned three-month project duration.

The county did not provide written plans or maps that can be shared at this time for the planned projects but will do so once the project plans are finalized, contracts are awarded, and exact schedules are established. Once the county communicates the final plans, maps, and schedules, BBCA will share those details with the neighborhood. We will experience some inconvenience while the work is being done, but we appreciate that the projects are necessary to maintain the functionality of the dam and to preserve the lake.

Andrea McGowen



Progressive Dinner

On May 2nd, Bonnie Brae revived a beloved neighborhood tradition: the progressive dinner — and what better occasion than Derby Day?

The afternoon kicked off at the Kelleys' welcoming home on Sideburn Road, where neighbors gathered for appetizers and dinner while watching the Kentucky Derby together. The spread was pure Kentucky comfort food — Hot Brown Sliders, Bourbon Meatballs, Mac and Cheese Bites, and Ham Biscuits — paired with good conversation, new neighborly connections, and a little friendly, informal betting on the race.

From there, the group "raced" over to Cathy and Charlie Gulac's home on Cristfield Court for the dessert course — and what a finish line it was! Turns out Bonnie Brae has its very own pastry chef living right in the neighborhood, and the dessert table proved it!

A big thank you to the Kelleys and the Gulacs for hosting, and to everyone who came out to eat, mingle, and cheer on the Derby. Here's hoping this is the first of many progressive dinners!

Marty Beach

Greening Bonnie Brae

Save Your Trees, and Maybe Even Your House

A widely used option for ground cover in many Bonnie Brae yards, is English ivy. But once leaving the ground, ivy has the potential to damage your trees, shrubs, and home.

Ivy can choke trees, block sunlight, and create a haven for pests and diseases. And it can add significant weight, making trees more susceptible to wind damage and falling.

Here's a quick and easy solution. Cut the vines at the base of the tree. Remove a section of the vine from all around the tree, about 1-2 feet in length. This prevents the vine from re-rooting while the top portion dies. Pull off as much of the vine as possible. Then regularly inspect trees and address any new growth promptly. Your tree, your house, and your neighbors' houses will thank you!

If you've recently had a tree fall (voluntarily or involuntarily), please consider planting a new tree in its place. It may take 10-20 years to achieve full grown status but it will quickly begin to provide benefits. Plant a much-needed tree to:

- Replace a tree that recently came down
- Celebrate a birth or memorialize a loss
- Save money by increasing shade and reducing your cooling bills
- Create a habitat for local and migratory birds
- Protect soil from erosion and drought
- Create a privacy screen and wind buffer
- Increase the property value of your home
- Help green your corner of the planet
- Or just beautify your home and our neighborhood.

Fertilizers & Pesticides – Keep Them in Your Yard.

Make sure these chemicals stay on your lawn & garden to do the job intended, and don't land on the sidewalk and street where they end up on the bottom of shoes and paws (and then inside your house), or washed directly into Woodglen Lake. After you or your landscaping company treat your lawn, double-check that none has gone astray, and if it has, please sweep or blow the chemicals back onto your lawn.

Consider using fewer chemicals and less of them. Pesticides, which include herbicides to kill plants and insecticides to kill insects, kill pretty indiscriminately. Spraying for ants or mosquitos and other pests can kill not only the targeted pests but also beneficial insects such as pollinators like bees, fireflies, and butterflies,

and natural pest predators like ladybugs, lacewings, and dragonflies.

Those poisoned insects then go on to poison and harm all the creatures that eat them, such as birds, bats, frogs, and turtles. And when your pesticides eventually wash off your property and into Woodglen Lake, the Occoquan Reservoir, and then the Potomac River, they impact aquatic life. Also reconsider the use of mouse baits. The bait poisons mice and chipmunks which are then eaten by the crows, owls, foxes, hawks and eagles around us, in turn, sickening and killing them. The bait packs can also harm children and family pets that may find them.

This is not a doom and gloom message, just more of an awareness message before you spray, spread, or throw. These are opportunities to save money while protecting your family, pets, and the environment.

Light Pollution – It's More Than Meets the Eye

When we use too much light, fail to use sensors correctly, or use the wrong color of light, we can negatively affect many parts of our world, including migratory birds, pollinators, owls, and mammals, including us humans.

Light pollution impacts human well-being, disrupts wildlife, contributes to climate change, and blocks our view of the sky.

Many people bathe their homes in light at night for aesthetics or security. Ironically, there is actually no clear scientific evidence that increased outdoor lighting actually deters crimes. It may make us *feel* safer, but it has not been shown to make us safer. Additionally, your lighting can actually be polluting your own home and bedroom as well as those of your neighbors.

Both non-stop lighting and the super-bright motion detector flood lights that flash on and off at each passing pedestrian or car disrupt sleep, causing a myriad of health problems. Researchers found that even a little light—such as that from outdoor nighttime lights—can disrupt sleep and increase the risk of disease. And open windows and fresh air for sleeping are no more in Bonnie Brae. Your lights force your neighbors to close their windows and blinds in an effort to darken the bedroom. If you and/or your children are not sleeping well, it may be due in part to all the outside lighting from your own home or your neighbors'. *(story continues on next page)*

Greening Bonnie Brae, continued...

And it's not just us. Plants and animals depend on Earth's daily cycle of light and dark to govern life-sustaining behaviors such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep, and protection from predators. Artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on many creatures, including amphibians, birds, mammals, insects, and plants.

Many people think burglars are more active at night in the dark. As it turns out, the exact opposite is true: according to statistics, 65% of burglaries occur during daylight, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. The timeframe between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays is especially popular among intruders. This is when most people are at work or school and their homes are empty.

The County recently changed our street lights to help reduce lighting costs and to be *DarkSky* compliant. Here's what we can now do:

- Turn Off or Remove Unnecessary Lights.
- Challenge yourself to use only the absolute minimum amount of outside lighting possible. The less, the better.
- When You Have to Light - Direct Outdoor Lights Downward
- Much of the outdoor lighting in the U.S. is wasted due to poor shielding, which often causes glare and skyglow rather than lighting areas that actually need it. Glare not only wastes energy but also makes it harder for our eyes to adjust to the dark, reducing visibility and even creating safety risks for drivers and pedestrians. In contrast, properly shielded and downward-directed lights improve vision, reduce eye strain, and makes outdoor areas safer. Beyond human benefits, this approach also protects nocturnal wildlife, since excessive glare

and scattered light disrupt natural behaviors and habitats. By simply shielding all your outdoor light fixtures (house & landscaping) and pointing them toward the ground, you can save energy, improve safety, and reduce their impact on the environment and the night sky.

- Set and Adjust Motion Sensors to Save Energy
- Motion sensors should activate lights only when someone approaches very close to your home and should only be active for a very short period of time. When the motion sensor is not placed properly, the sensor may be able to receive signals from moving traffic, pedestrians, or wild animals, triggering the motion sensor to turn on the light. If you must have a motion detector, adjusting it correctly can reduce electricity waste and help minimize light pollution.
- Pick Warm, Low-wattage LED Bulbs for Outdoor Areas
- Use warm LEDs (under 3,000K) in patios, garden paths, and entrances. Angle lights downward to avoid shining them into the sky or neighbors' yards and homes.
- Turn Off Lights When They're Not Needed
- Every light turned off helps create a darker, calmer night environment and supports nocturnal wildlife.
- Look for *DarkSky* approved outdoor lighting products at most home improvement stores or online.

By taking these steps, you can save money while helping your health and the planet - not a bad deal! For more info on light pollution, go to: darksky.org

Let's keep Bonnie Brae a cool green neighborhood to live in!

Jean Schwab

Swimming Pools in or Near Fairfax

One Life Fitness <https://www.onelifefitness.com/swimming>

Burke Racquet and Swim Club <https://burkeracquet.com/>

Aquatic Racket and Swim Club <https://recreation.gmu.edu/>

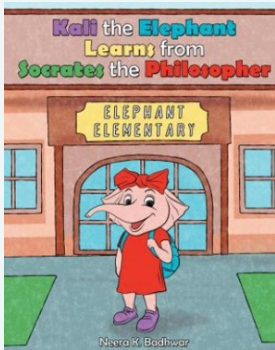
Old Keene Mill Swim and Racquet Club <https://okmpool.com/>

Sideburn Run Recreation Association <https://sideburnrun.com/>

Creativity in our Neighborhood:

Neera Badhwar's "*Kali the Elephant Learns from Socrates the Philosopher*"

Our very own Neera Badhwar brings philosophy to life in her award-winning children's book, "*Kali the Elephant Learns from Socrates the Philosopher*" (targeted for ages 3-8). Alongside beautiful and whimsical illustrations, Neera introduces young readers to Kali, a young elephant who is teased about her looks. Hurt, she first tries to change her features, but after reading a comic about Socrates who was also teased by his friends, comes to see them as assets.



Although it's her first children's book, Neera's book has received multiple 5-star professional and customer reviews. One Amazon.com reviewer writes, "This is a sweet story about Kali the Elephant, who is inspired by Socrates' wisdom to confront her classmates' bullying. With humor and wit, the book teaches us that there is more

than one way to appreciate beauty in others. All kids (all humans really) struggle with their physical appearance in some way or other. We can all benefit from hearing the words of Kali and Socrates." Another reviewer comments, "This is an excellent kids' book that combines a lovely story with thoughtful lessons about kindness, self-confidence, and thinking for yourself. The colorful pictures complement the story by bringing it to life. What I appreciate most is that the philosophical ideas are woven into the text without overwhelming or

boring children." **Readers' Choice** says: "Badhwar's background in philosophy shines through as she introduces children to Socrates' wisdom in an accessible and entertaining way. The story is not only enjoyable but educational too, subtly teaching children about genetics and the importance of self-confidence. Young readers will laugh, learn, and be inspired by Kali's journey to self-acceptance." And **Online Book Club**: "The book deserves 5 out of 5 stars. I could not find a single negative about the book.... I read it with my six-year-old daughter, and she loved it. I recommend this book to any teacher or parent of young children." **Midwest Book Review** says that it is an "especially and unreservedly recommended pick for family, daycare center, preschool, elementary school, and community library Life Skills and Socratic philosophy themed picture book collections appropriate for children ages 3-8."

Literary accolades include the *Literary Titan Book Award* and *PenCraft Book Award*, the *American Legacy Book Awards* (Finalist) and the *Indie Book Awards* (Finalist). Neera was also interviewed about the book on Global TV, as well as by Kate Delaney of the internet radio station, *America Tonight*: <https://on.soundcloud.com/BLRqCZ9TNy3NU0mVFX>.

If you would like to buy a signed copy of the book, contact Neera at nbad@ou.edu. The book is also available on Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, and other platforms.

Larissa Hohe

Who are the ROMEOS?

ROMEOS - Retired "Old" Men Eating Out - meet regularly to eat out, have fun, make and keep friends. They don't have a cause or specific membership restrictions except that everyone must be a Retired "Old" Man! They meet over breakfast, lunch, or dinner, once a week, or once a month, whatever works for a specific 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 give a talk while others simply let the conversation flow.

Our BBCA ROMEO meetings are held every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 9 am. The first BBCA ROMEO Club introductory meeting was held on 23 April 2023 at Chloe's, chloe'scafe.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. Our past meetings have touched on various subjects related to Ukraine, Russia, Fairfax Sr. Center, hiking the Sierra and Appalachian Trails, and downsizing. BBCA retirees: do join us for interesting breakfasts - and conversations!

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

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

Market Update: Bonnie Brae

Data from BrightMLS | January 2026 – June 15th 2026

How's the Market?

It's the question I hear most often these days, at the lake, at the farmers market, or during a short conversation on a walk. And it's the right question to be asking.

Our corner of Fairfax County is holding up remarkably well. Mortgage rates have spent most of 2026 in the mid-to-low 6% range, and the broader economic picture (a military conflict overseas, elevated gas prices, and inflation that refuses to cooperate) has made buyers and sellers alike more cautious nationally. But caution doesn't mean inactivity, and it certainly doesn't describe what's happened right here in Bonnie Brae.

9 homes sold in Bonnie Brae between January and June with a median sold price of \$975,000, and the results tell a consistent story: buyers are competing for homes. Properties moved quickly, demand was real, and the sold prices reflect how seriously buyers are taking this market. That's not something you see everywhere in Northern Virginia right now.

Why? The reasons are the same ones that drew many of us here in the first place. The architecture is distinctive. The sidewalks are real (and yes, that matters more than people may realize). The Robinson High School pyramid remains one of the most sought-after in Fairfax County. The VRE stop, the farmers market, Woodglen Lake, these aren't amenities you can easily replicate somewhere else.

See you around the neighborhood! - Tim

Tim Royster | Realtor® Licensed in Virginia | Army Veteran
| 571.275.0871

Trivia Night

In June 2025, the BBCA hosted the first ever Trivia Night at Margaret and Pete Pontzer's house on Southport Lane. It was sponsored by the excellent Pour House Trivia and was a big hit with all who attended. The



event was held from 6-8 PM on a Saturday evening. It was supposed to be held on the Pontzers' beautiful new deck but had to be moved to the carport due to rain. It was a BYOB party, with the BBCA providing snacks and soft drinks. The weather didn't dampen the competitive spirits of the players, who were eager to display their knowledge of our culture's trivia. Since it was such a hit, the Pontzers very generously hosted Trivia Night again in June 2026. Over 20 people attended with 4 teams competing for bragging rights until next year. The weather also cooperated this year and the Pontzers could host it on the deck instead of under the carport.



Annual Halloween Party

The annual Bonnie Brae Halloween party was held last year on November 1 instead of on Halloween Day to give the children ample time to go Trick-or-Treating and the parents time to go with them. In the past, parents complained that having the party on Halloween was too rushed and that people didn't have time to stay and enjoy themselves before preparing for Trick-or-Treating. So last year we held the party on Saturday, November 1 in the evening on at Margaret and Pete Pontzer's house on their beautiful deck. People brought their own wine or beer, while the BBCA provided a taco bar and drinks. Costumes were encouraged but optional. Attendance was good and the weather held out until people were ready to leave. The Pontzers have generously offered to host Halloween again in 2026.

BBCA Membership Information

Bonnie Brae is a “mid-century modern” community of 305 homes and our Association activities are supported by nominal dues of only \$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 2026 Directory.

Your dues help support activities that bind our community together and help keep Bonnie Brae a beautiful place to live. Please join and pay your annual 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
- Support for the Bonnie Brae PO Box
- Membership in the Braddock District Council of nearby associations
- Maintenance of Bonnie Brae signs
- Printing of Signs and flyers to announce community events
- Social Activities & Support for the BBCA Youth Club

Bonnie Brae Civic Association (BBCA) Membership Application 2026 Annual Dues \$20

☐ Check box if you are new to Bonnie Brae in 2025-26

Names of residents _____

Names of residents _____

Names of residents _____

Names of residents _____

☐ Past Members/ Contact Information Unchanged

Fill in contact information if you are new to Bonnie Brae or directory entry needs correcting:

Street Address _____

Phone (please note if mobile or landline) _____

Email (please include) _____

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, 2025	
<i>BANK BALANCE as of 1/1/2026</i>	\$9549.55
INCOME	
Membership Dues	1560.00
Newsletter & Directory Ad Sales	
Donations from outside BBCA/Sideburn Run Rec Assoc	60.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1620.00
EXPENSES	
<u>Administration</u>	
Bank Fee	32.80
Bank Deposit Correction Fee	
PO Box Rental	
SUBTOTAL	(32.80)
<u>Communications</u>	
Phone Directories	
Sign Purchase	
Flyer/Newsletter Printing	
Stamps/Envelops	
Website	551.00
SUBTOTAL	(551.00)
<u>Community Safety & Maintenance</u>	
Braddock District Council Membership	
Neighborhood Watch	
Sign Maintenance	
Yard Sale	
SUBTOTAL	0.00
<u>Annual Social Activities</u>	
Trivia Night	395.00
Easter Egg Hunt	91.79
National Night Out Party	
New Neighbor Party	
Halloween Party	
Neighborhood Shaved Ice Party Truck	
Santa Event	
Christmas Light Contest	
SUBTOTAL	(486.79)
<u>Other</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES	(\$1070.59)
Annual Net Income	\$549.41
<i>BANK BALANCE as of 5/31/2026</i>	\$10,098.96

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)

Larry White

10409 Pearl St.
405-417-3610

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)

Lisa Hoyle

5406 Jennifer Dr.
561-506-6597

lisamhedge@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)

Vacant

Please Volunteer!

elainejhawley@gmail.com