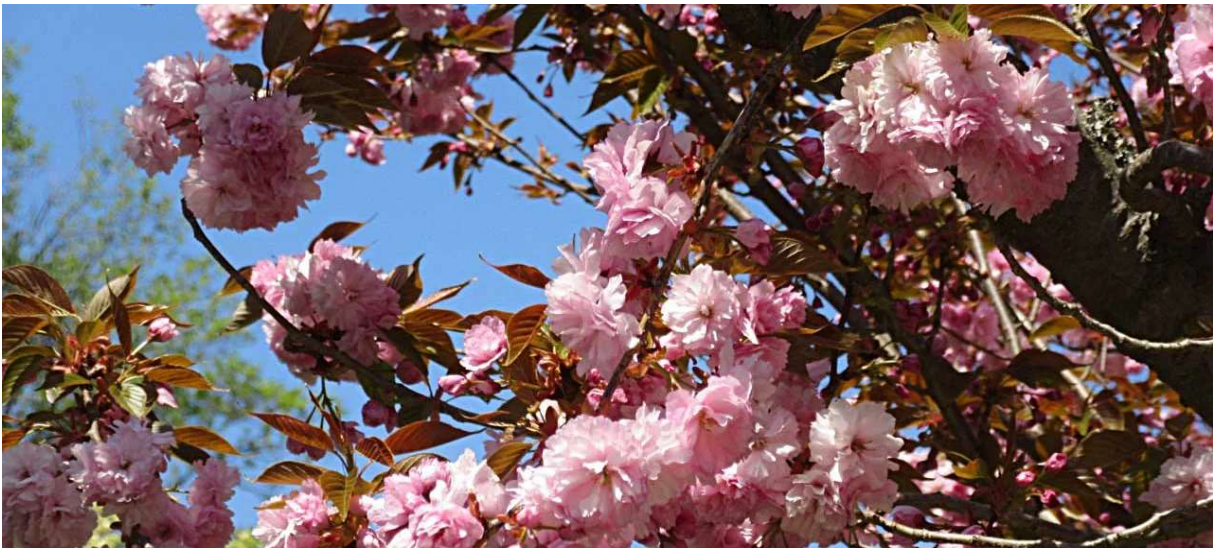




TRIENNIAL REPORT

FALL 2016 - FALL 2020



This Triennial Report is being distributed later than originally scheduled because of delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This report covers the period Fall 2016 - Fall 2020. As you will read, during the past few years we have continued to serve our community in new ways and more neighbors have gotten involved in community activities.

We look forward to your participation!

**Burning Tree Village, Inc.
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
240-389-3829
www.burningtreevillage.org**

Dear Neighbor,

Burning Tree Village (BTV) is our neighborhood non-profit organization whose goal is to foster a caring, supportive and friendly atmosphere in our community (comprised of the approximately 700 households closest to Burning Tree Elementary School). We do this by helping senior residents and other neighbors who may need extra assistance as well as sponsoring many programs and activities.

BTV began operations in 2008 as the first incorporated Village in Montgomery County and was the model for other neighborhood villages in the area.¹ Our Board continues to grow and has added several new members in the past few years. We welcome volunteers interested in joining the Board or helping to plan programs.

Our events are widely attended by many age groups and we also provide many services through neighborhood volunteers. Some of the services we provide include Village Rides (rides to seniors and other adults who are unable to drive), the BTV Services Exchange (weekly newsletter about upcoming events, vendor recommendations, items for sale or give-away, and neighborhood helpers), Book Club, Lunch Bunch, and Knitting Club. We also prepare and update the Neighborhood Directory and other publications. Events we sponsor include the annual Memorial Day Walk, 4th of July Celebration, summer "Front Yard Fridays" and educational seminars.

This is a wonderful place to live. Our village does not charge fees or dues and is supported solely through donations. We hope you can attend our upcoming events and meet your neighbors. Please feel free to contact any of us with questions or to get involved. We look forward to seeing you!

Officers

President: Marli Pasternak
Vice-President: Nancy Aronson
Secretary: Amy Rider
Treasurer: JJ Gruehl

Board Members

Rhoda Barish Odile Jennings
Ed Berger Judith Levy
Joanne Brainard Wendy Williams
Jane Meleney Coe

¹ *Village Blueprint*, Leslie Marks in collaboration w/BCC Regional Services Center (2011).

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

The Board of Burning Tree Village is pleased to share this triennial Report. Here you will find information about the many programs and activities that Burning Tree Village has undertaken over the last three years, along with information on our finances. Please take a moment to flip through this report to see what we have done and how you can engage and take part.

Burning Tree Village was created with a goal of helping seniors in our community stay in their homes as they got older, rather than having to move away from the neighborhood where they have become comfortable and have friends. We offer help with errands, clubs for shared activities, educational programs, and things as simple as a phone call for those who are lonely. Our offering with the widest reach is our weekly Services Exchange newsletter, highlighting local resources, events, and recommendations for service providers.

While our organizing principle is to help seniors age in place, we know that one important piece is keeping a vibrant neighborhood of families and offering opportunities for all ages to meet and mix, helping to keep everyone young at heart. In non-pandemic times we have organized neighborhood walks, clean-up projects, and gatherings such as our 4th of July party and Front Yard Fridays.

Unlike most villages, we do not charge fees for membership or programs but do appreciate voluntary, tax-deductible contributions to run our programs and defray expenses such as the printing of this report and our Neighborhood Directory. To donate, send a check to Burning Tree Village, 8404 Beech Tree Rd, Bethesda, MD 20817.

The volunteers on our Board are eager to meet you and hear from you. Please reach out to any of us to let us know how we can help you and what programs you might like to see. Check out our new website at www.BurningTreeVillage.org. Let us know if you have a new neighbor, so that we can welcome them and sign them up for our newsletter. Tell us if someone needs help, or offer your own to host a collection box for one of our food drives. We are hopeful that soon we'll be able to gather together again and in the meantime hope all of you are staying safe.

Sincerely,

Marli Pasternak

President, Burning Tree Village

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: **Marli Pasternak**, Burning Tree Rd (2019-present)
(Vice-President 2017-2019; Board member since 2016)

Vice-President: **Nancy Aronson**, Winterberry Place (2020-present)
(President 2016-2017; Board member since 2008)

Treasurer: **JJ Gruehl**, Thoreau Dr (2020-present)
(Board member since 2020)

Secretary: **Amy Rider**, Beech Tree Rd (2020-present)
(Treasurer 2007-2016; original Board member since 2007)

Directors

Rhoda Barish, Sebago Rd (Pres 2017-2019; VP 2016-2017; Board member since 2015)

Ed Berger, Thoreau Drive (Board member since 2020)

Joanne Brainard, Thoreau Drive (Board member since 2016)

Jane Meleney Coe, Pawtucket Rd (Secy 2016-2019; original Board member since 2007)

Odile Jennings, Beech Tree Rd (Secy 2007-2013; original Board member since 2007)

Judith Levy, Winterberry Place (Board member since 2020)

Wendy Williams, Beech Tree Rd (original Board member since 2007)



PREVIOUS BOARD MEMBERS

Kevin Barry, Cayuga Road	2018-2020 (Vice-President 2019-2020)
Tom Dahl, Beech Tree Road	2010-2015
Barbara Filner, Richard Drive	2007-2009 (original Board member)
Rich Frisch, Thoreau Drive	2017-2020 (Secretary 2019-2020)
Anne Golightly, Winterberry Lane	2009-2016 (President 2014-2016)
Katy Greenberg, Beech Tree Road	2014-2016
Naomi Greenwood, Beech Tree Rd.	2010-2015
Beth Isen, Cayuga Avenue	2010-2011
Leslie Kessler, Deep Creek Court	2007-2015 (Founding President 2007-2012)
Iris Kesterman, Winterberry Court	2013-2014 (Secretary 2013-2014)
Maryim Mujahid, Beech Tree Road	2017-2019 (Treasurer 2017-2019)
Harry Rosenberg, Richard Drive	2007-2010 (Founding Vice-President 2007)
Lisa Sams, Honesty Drive	2013-2015 (Vice-President 2014)
Virginia Strasser, Beech Tree Road	2013-2016 (Secretary 2014-2016)
Allan Williams, Beech Tree Road	2007-2010 (original Board member)

We are grateful for the services of our previous Board members.

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

OUR MISSION

Burning Tree Village is a charitable organization created primarily to provide support for our older neighbors who'd like to remain in their homes as long as possible. The Village also supports those adults who may be in a temporarily precarious position due to illness or accident.

Our Motto is "Neighbors Helping Neighbors." We accomplish our goals through volunteer activities, educational and social programs, and partnerships with other individuals and organizations that complement our volunteer activities. By engaging all residents in these activities, BTV enhances the quality of life of the entire community across all age groups.

OUR BOUNDARIES

Burning Tree Village includes the approximately 700 homes in the area delimited by River Road, Wilson Lane, Springer Road, Thoreau Drive up to Woodhaven Blvd., the six houses on Woodhaven up to Melody Lane, Melody Lane, Burning Tree Road to the bridge, and Beech Tree Road up to River Road. The neighborhoods are sometimes known as Burning Tree Valley, Cohasset, Maryknoll and Frenchman's Creek.

The streets included, in addition to the ones listed above, are Algonquin Avenue, Amy Lane, Arnet Lane, Cayuga Avenue, Deep Creek Court, Fulbright Court, Honesty Drive, Honesty Way, Kenfield Court, Loring Court, Loring Drive, Maryknoll Avenue, Massena Road, Meadowlark Lane, Melody Court, Paloma Court, Pawtucket Road, Richard Drive, Sebago Road, Summer Mill Court, Wahly Drive, and Winterberry Court, Lane and Place.



© 2016 Microsoft (names of Burning Tree Rd and Thoreau Dr added)

SERVICES

Our Volunteers: We have approximately 100 volunteers in the neighborhood. Some are more active than others, but they all feel the spirit of helping their neighbors and support the village idea of participating in the community in which we live. Some volunteers help by distributing BTV materials on their streets. Others offer their homes to host our social events or seminars. Volunteers may serve on our Board and committees, drive our neighbors to medical appointments or to the grocery stores, visit the elderly or sick or check on them by telephone or e-mail, and may provide assistance with computers, paperwork or medical claims. They might help with light household chores, such as replacing lightbulbs, and some have even been known to shovel the snow and ice off the sidewalk of elderly neighbors!

In 2019, we designed and distributed Burning Tree Village logo bags and thank you letters to our community volunteers. We also use the BTV bags to welcome new neighbors, enclosing a copy of the Burning Tree Village directory and the index to the Burning Tree Village Services Exchange Directory.

Neighbor Net: Since the fall of 2012, Burning Tree Village has been arranging Neighbor Nets (groups of two or three immediate neighbors who are being especially mindful of a nearby older person or neighbor recovering from an injury, surgery or desiring other types of informal assistance). The intent is to be friendly visitors or callers rather than providing regular services, and to check on neighbors when there are storms, power outages, or other urgent situations. Having such a supportive group can be a great relief to an older person's adult children, who may or may not live nearby. It can also be a great relief to neighbors who care and are concerned about someone but do not realize that there are others willing to be supportive. The point is to be caring and unintrusive. Sometimes the support is for a relatively short time to help with recovery and/or transitions; other times, it is longer term.

Over the years, we have learned to tap into existing more informal arrangements and letting people know who may be willing and able to be supportive. As of September 2020, we believe there are about 85 households with residents over 70 years of age in our Village. Many seem to be doing just fine on their own. There are currently 17 families we are being especially mindful of. We want to be sure everyone in the neighborhood is aware of the possibility of participating in Neighbor Net, either on the receiving or on the giving end.

To learn more, please leave a message with Neighbor Net coordinator, Jane Meleney Coe, via the Board number at 240-389-3829 or at board@burningtreevillage.org.

COMMUNICATION SERVICES

The Newsletter: The **Burning Tree Village Services Exchange** is the way we share community concerns and resources, announce upcoming events, and make recommendations or requests about various services. It is sent every Wednesday via email to all residents, with the exception of a few who prefer to receive it monthly in print. The purpose is to enhance our neighborliness and sense of community by increasing our awareness of resources in the neighborhood, to enable us to use the services provided or recommended by neighbors, to enjoy hobbies together, and to be helpful and supportive of one another as the need, occasion, or opportunity arises. The newsletter also lists the young people in the neighborhood who offer baby-sitting, pet care or plant care services, leaf-raking, and snow shoveling. To put an announcement or recommendation in the Services Exchange, please contact Jane Meleney Coe.

The Directory of Services: There is also a directory of previous recommendations for a whole range of local services, so that if you need a plumber, or a roofer, or a handyman or a lawn care provider, you can get a list of people others in the neighborhood recommend. It includes lists of many other services, including doctors, dentists, lawyers, beauty salons, exercise and fitness classes, nutritionists, pet care, dressmakers, therapists, and tutors. We send this to all residents approximately every three years and hope to distribute a new directory next year, but in the meantime, be in touch with Jane.

The Neighborhood Directory: Every three years, Jane Meleney Coe prepares a new Directory of the residents of the Village. We all find it very useful to be able to look up the telephone number of any neighbor in the neighborhood, by name or by street. Some of the volunteers help her to check the new residents on a street and to correct old listings. Everyone in the neighborhood received a copy of the most recent Directory in the Spring of 2019. If you do not have one, please let us know.

One note of caution, however: this Directory is prepared as a convenience to each of you. It should not be used for any form of solicitation or marketing. Doing so could threaten our 501(c)(3) charitable organization tax status. It should also not be shared with anyone outside the Village.

Resident Database: We keep a database of all our residents (unless they ask to not be included), a critical tool for the Board so that we can communicate with the whole community. We try to continually update the database as people move in and out of the neighborhood.

Distribution Network: All these flyers and directories and reports and announcements that appear magically at your door and in your mail slots arrive thanks to the legwork of our distribution network, our volunteers who are assigned to a street or a number of streets. Thank them if you see them in the exercise of their duties.

TRANSPORTATION - VILLAGE RIDES

Through a federal grant to the Jewish Council for the Aging, the Senior Connection and various departments of Montgomery County, Village Rides has established a volunteer ride coordination system in villages across our County that provides escorted, door-to-door transportation seven days a week when rides are needed and volunteers are available. The program provides a centralized process to match volunteer drivers with transportation requests.

In the past several years, we have had several volunteer drivers in Burning Tree Village who provided rides to older residents or other adults who may have needed assistance in order to be able to get to medical appointments, shopping, etc. With the advent of ride apps on mobile phones, there appears to be less of a demand for this service.

COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENTS

Burning Tree Village residents show their care and concern for the community by spearheading or participating in several community events. During the past few years including this past year, BTV has participated in several Manna Food drives. Manna Food provided us with bins and signs and we had about 10 drop-off locations. We collected a large quantity of food during each drive which Manna Food distributes to needy persons and families in Montgomery County.

During the 2017-2020 time period, we also had several local community service projects including cleanup of the area along Winterberry Lane near Burning Tree Elementary School and on Beech Tree Road along the creek.

At Halloween each year, BTV also participated in a UNICEF drive, distributing UNICEF boxes to students at BTES and Pyle.

ANNUAL EVENTS

Memorial Day Walk

One of the most successful events each year has been the Memorial Day Walk in memory of those who have died while serving in our military. Every year, the Walk is advertised by flyers, e-mail announcements, and street signs posted at various street corners. Neighbors gather in front of Burning Tree Elementary School and participate in either a short walk or long walk, with babies in strollers and dogs on leashes. Afterwards, participants socialize while enjoying refreshments. A very meaningful event every year.

Fourth of July Parade

The 4th of July Parade, a longstanding neighborhood tradition, is always great fun. We used to have a parade from Winterberry Court to Burning Tree Park led by the Rescue Squad. Due to the extreme heat and humidity at that time of year, in recent years we have met at Burning Tree Park with a parade around the BT Elementary School circle, again, with the Rescue Squad when they are able to join us. As a special treat, the Rescue Squad has allowed the children to board the truck and learn about rescue work. About 100 neighbors of all ages (and their pets) celebrate together with appetizers, refreshments, desserts and games.

Front Yard Fridays

These neighborhood gatherings began in the Spring of 2018. Front Yard Fridays are a casual gathering of neighbors young and old on summer Friday evenings. We hope you will stop by to see old friends and meet new. Our hosts offer their front yard, a few chairs, and some snacks and beverages. Guests drop by bringing conversation, bikes, toys or games, and perhaps another chair. Additional snacks and drinks are welcome. Dates will be circulated each Spring. Volunteer hosts are always needed. Please contact Marli Pasternak at board@burningtreevillage.org to sign up.

Garden Club Wine, Cheese & Cider Party

Held in October each year at the end of Cayuga Avenue (at the circle), the neighborhood Garden Club kicks off the Fall with this wonderful annual party. Everyone in the neighborhood is invited to attend.

OTHER SOCIAL GATHERINGS

On October 15, 2017, we celebrated **BTV's 10th Anniversary** at the home of Norma Bell and JJ Gruehl. It was a wonderful celebration with great food and cheer. Over 75 neighbors came and enjoyed the party!

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EVENTS

On January 29, 2017, there was an educational program on **Important Papers** with a presentation by Phil Fish, VP, Estate Planning at Sandy Spring Trust.

On April 2, 2017, BTV sponsored a **Yoga and Meditation** event at the Bannockburn Clubhouse led by yoga instructor Ginny Strasser.

On January 21, 2018, BTV hosted a **Keeping Seniors Safe** educational program which included discussion of such topics as dealing with solicitations, identity theft, and physical risks at home.

On March 31, 2019, BTV presented the program **Preserving a Family History**. Our guest speaker, Roberta Benor, has been helping people tell their life stories since 1986. Inspired by seniors at a community center, she founded *Let Us Remember*, a family history service. Roberta talked about preserving your family history and how to record your own family history.

On September 22, 2019, *Washington Post* reporter and author **Bob Levey** gave a presentation on his new book as well as his long and interesting career and also spoke about where we are going in journalism. Attendees who purchased the book, described as a fun read, were able to have it personally signed by Bob Levey.



GROUPS AND CLUBS

Several interest groups have been formed throughout the years. If you are interested in joining any of these groups, please email or call our Board. Due to the pandemic, several of our groups are on temporary hiatus while others are meeting via Zoom. If you are interested in learning the status of any of these groups, please contact us.

Book Club: This club was formed in 2017. When it was active, the group met monthly and had a lively discussion of a book selected by the group. Currently this group is not active. If you are interested in reactivating it, please contact the Board.

Book Salon: Different than Book Group, participants share reflections on non-fiction books they have read. You don't have to have read a book to participate – you are invited to come to listen to what other people have to say about books they have read. If you do have a book to recommend, please read it first so you can give a short description and talk about why it appealed to you. This is sharing without pressure or stress. Meets one evening a month.

Book Sharing: This is new since August 2020, now happening on Fridays, when a table with books is put up at the end of the driveway at 6703 Pawtucket Road and neighbors come by to peruse the books, drop off any books they want to give away, and pick up any of interest.

Garden Club: This is the oldest club in the neighborhood, founded around 1968, long before Burning Tree Village was formed. Its formal name is the Cohasset Home and Garden Club as the founders lived in the Cohasset area (Sebago, Cayuga et al.) In those days, the members, all women, were listed by their married names with first names in parentheses. (Perhaps they also wore white gloves when going out!) They wrote a formal constitution in 1977, and the first Wine and Cheese neighborhood party was held on October 13, 1979 at the end of Cayuga, where it is held annually each year. The group meets monthly and Wendy Williams is the president of the group.

Knitting Club: Also meets once a month, at the home of one of the participants. Six or seven participants bring their knitting, crocheting or embroidery and they work at their hobby while chatting and trading the news of the day. Kathy Peterson leads this group.

Lunch Bunch: One of our most successful clubs which usually meets on the third Friday of each month. Participants (usually women but occasionally men) lunch at a different restaurant. All participants report that they look forward to this time together every month. Rides to the restaurant are provided if needed. Everyone pays their own bill. Sandra Valderrama is in charge of this club and coordinates the arrangements.

Men's Group: The Men's Group used to meet in members' houses – the host would choose the discussion topic and provide refreshments. This group is currently inactive. If you are interested in reactivating it, please contact the Board.

Phone Buddies: This is our newest group started during the Covid-19 pandemic and expected to continue thereafter, as a way to form friendships in the neighborhood. This group arranges for people to be phone buddies for those who would enjoy a weekly phone call from a neighbor. This is especially appreciated during times when it is difficult to visit with neighbors either because of the weather or for other reasons. If you would like to have a phone buddy, or be a phone buddy, please contact Wendy Williams or the Board.

Spanish Conversation Group: Interested in conversing in Spanish? Everyone is welcome. The group is for intermediate and advanced speakers and meets every couple of weeks.

Tennis Club: This group consists of a group of neighbors interested in playing tennis together. If you'd like to join, please contact us. Games are outside in local tennis courts in the spring.

Ukelele Group: Started in 2018 by Amy Rider, the Ukulele Group is for beginners and intermediate players who want to play this very popular instrument in a group. The group meets about three times a month with the goal of learning basic strumming and singing of songs.

OUR WEBSITE

Our website was updated this year to a new platform. It is maintained and updated by Rhoda Barish and Judith Levy. If you want information about BTV or want to keep up with our everyday doings, please go to www.BurningTreeVillage.org.

PLANNED PROJECTS

During the pandemic, we anticipate continuing our food drives for MANNA Food. We are also organizing several educational events via ZOOM. Stay tuned for future announcements.

We look forward to the day when we can once again all participate in our neighborhood events in person. Stay healthy and safe!

OUR EXPENSES

As you know, Burning Tree Village services are free to all, and we have no dues, because we do not want resource constraints to be a barrier to participating or receiving services. However, we do have expenses, which sometimes recur every year including:

- Printing costs for publications, directories, signs, flyers and annual reports
- Insurance for our volunteers and directors and Village Rides drivers
- Events costs, such as refreshments, paper plates, cups, signs, etc.
- Website expenses – design and maintenance
- Dues for our membership in umbrella or sister associations: WAVE (Washington Area Villages) and BCC (Bethesda-Chevy Chase Area Villages)
- Postage and office supplies

To pay these expenses, we depend solely on voluntary contributions. If you would like to contribute, please send a check payable to Burning Tree Village, Inc., c/o Amy Rider, 8404 Beech Tree Road, Bethesda, MD 20817. We are a 501(c) (3) corporation and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

THANK YOU!!!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all our wonderful neighbors, friends, businesses and organizations who have donated money or in-kind products or services. We are grateful to you who continue to support our mission through your donations and volunteerism.

We gratefully acknowledge the help we receive from the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Service Center of Montgomery County for copying services and offering space for meetings.



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

You are part of Burning Tree Village, a non-profit organization whose goal is to foster a caring, supportive and friendly atmosphere in our community.

Contact us to join our activities, request services, or volunteer to help.

We look forward to your participation!

**Burning Tree Village, Inc.
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