



The BAN Quarterly

A NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE BAN PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!

Here are a few reflections as we turn the page from 2014 to 2015:

The month of January is named after the Roman god "Janus." He is usually depicted as having two faces, since he looked to both the future and the past.

The ideas of beginnings, transitions and progress that Janus symbolized in ancient times are still very much a part of modern New Year's Eve celebrations. As 11:59 pm on December 31 rolls into 12:00 am on January 1, we simultaneously look back at the year that has passed, and forward to the year that lies ahead. Most of us feel a mix of regret and relief as the clock strikes midnight. For some, there was great loss, pain, sadness in the departing year; for others, there was success, prosperity, happiness; for many, a mix of both. And who does not feel anticipation and hope for the things to come in the arriving year?

Which brings me to the most important thing of all:

Despite the many external dissimilarities that we humans tend to focus on, people are much more alike than different. Families and friendships, in their infinite variety, are the ties that bind us all. Sadly, in 2014, there were many terrible reminders of what happens when people see only the differences between them, when they believe that those differences are always bad, and when they stop seeing each other as individuals and see only the "Other."

But like beacons in the dark night, there were also amazing examples of what happens when people look past the differences and just see each other as members of the same extended human community. Just look at who was selected as TIME Magazine "Person of the Year": The Ebola Fighters -- those in Africa, the U.S. and other parts of the world who "risked and persisted, sacrificed and saved" in the fight against one of the most terrifying diseases to affect humanity. One of the most striking things about this choice was that it was not one single person who was chosen, but a group with a common mission. That group's members were of many nationalities, races, and religions. They were both male and female. They were just human beings trying to help other human beings.

So, what does this all have to do with our little patch in central Queens, New York?

BAN was formed, and exists, to bring people together. The residents and businesses of Briarwood form a mosaic of diversity that we seek to unify for the good of the larger community. Our organization provides a channel for those interested in being part of that community. In 2014, BAN brought people together to:

- Volunteer to rake leaves, paint benches, plant flower bulbs, and generally beautify Hoover Park and Briarwood Playground;
- Collect and donate food and toys to benefit the residents of the Briarwood Family Residence;
- Receive valuable information on a variety of subjects at Community Meetings;

and

- Participate in group tours and community outings.

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BAN has also shared information via our website, emails, Facebook and Twitter posts on a variety of topics of interest including the Van Wyck construction, subway entrance re-opening, and more.

In 2015, we look forward to finding new ways of getting folks to engage with each other. We want to continue to hear from you and work with you! Check our website - briarwoodactionnetwork.com, Facebook page, and Twitter feed - @BriarwoodAction for news from us. Please also use those forums to communicate news to us.

BAN is not a large, wealthy organization. The power of BAN comes from its ability to tap into our community's deep spirit of volunteerism and neighborhood pride. Our mission from the beginning was to activate that spirit – that's what the "Action" in Briarwood Action Network stands for. BAN is not the names of the Board of Directors listed on the letterhead. BAN is all of us who care about Briarwood

. . . and hopefully about the rest of our city, our country and our planet.

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

HERE'S TO GOOD THINGS IN 2015!

Aida Vernon
President
Briarwood Action Network

A BRIARWOOD RESIDENT REMEMBERS... THE WORLD'S FAIR – PART 2

We left the 1939 World's Fair on the verge of war, but with great hope.

But hope did not stop the German invasion of Poland and World War II.

Then came the Cold War, McCarthyism, the Korean War, Vietnam, the 1964-65 World's Fair.

I can remember the 1939 World's Fair like it was yesterday. The 1964-65 World's Fair is another story. The exhibits were wonderful; the food (from every country imaginable) was fabulous. But we were in the middle of the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and the explosion of the civil rights movement.

Hope was on the back burner.

To be continued...

See what else a Briarwood resident remembers. The anti-war movement, civil rights, and hippies!

Larry Sherman
Director, Communications Committee
Briarwood Action Network

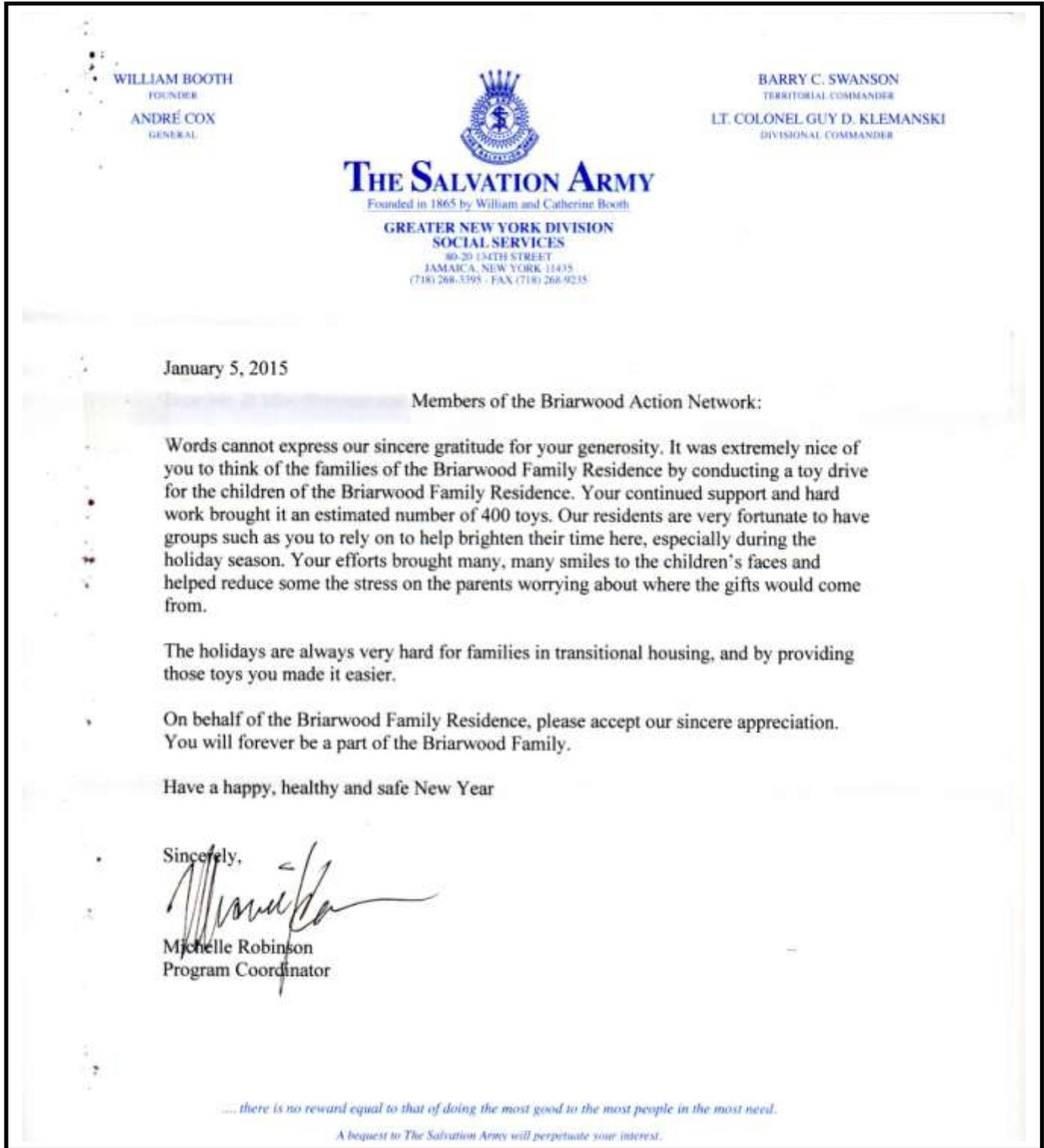


We would love for you to share your own '**Briarwood Resident Remembers**' story with us!
Go to the 'Newsletter' section of the website for submission guidelines.

WWW.BRIARWOODACTIONNETWORK.COM

A TOY DRIVE THANK YOU!

Thank you again to everyone who contributed to Briarwood Action Network's 3rd Annual Toy Drive to benefit the Briarwood Family Residence (A non-profit organization which provides temporary housing for families). As many of you know, BAN collected nearly 400 toys for the children at the residence. BAN received a thank you recognition letter from the Program Coordinator of the residence. We would like to share the letter with you here, because the thanks really are for all of us. The success of the collection was only possible through the kindness and generosity of all of our Briarwood friends and neighbors. Thank you again!



Upcoming Events: Check the 'BAN Events' page of our website often for more details on the events below and other BAN activities:

February: **February 7 - Community Meeting - Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation**
Saturday, 2/7/15, 10:30m at Melrose Credit Union, 139-30 Queens Blvd,
Downstairs Community Room
BAN is always seeking the input of Briarwood residents in determining the needs of the community, and finding ways we can all work together to address those needs. Please join us to share ideas over a cup of coffee!

Tips and Information – Winter Edition

- **February 13** is the deadline to apply for kindergarten. If your child is turning 5 years old in 2015, then it's time to apply. See more and apply on the NYC Dept. of Education website.
- Between October 1st and May 31st, building owners are required to provide tenants with heat under the following conditions:
 - Between the hours of 6:00 AM and 10:00 PM, if the outside temperature falls below 55 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit; and,
 - Between the hours of 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM, if the temperature outside falls below 40 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 55 degrees FahrenheitTenants can report heat complaints by calling 311. See the homepage of BAN's website to find a link to report heat complaints online. You will also find a link to the **NYC Severe Weather website**.
- Infants, seniors, and people with paralysis or neuropathy are at increased risk of hypothermia and frostbite. Check on friends, relatives, and neighbors who may need assistance to ensure they are adequately protected from the cold. If you identify someone on the street you believe needs assistance, call 311 and ask for the Department of Homeless Svcs' Mobile Outreach Response Team.
- Snow Removal Safety Tips:
 - Stretch before you go out. If you go out to shovel snow, do a few stretching exercises to warm up your body. This may prevent injury.
 - Protect your lungs from extremely cold air by covering your mouth when outdoors.
 - Avoid overexertion. Take frequent rest breaks, and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
 - Keep dry. Change wet clothes frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.
 - Stay safe. Walk carefully on snowy or icy sidewalks. If using a snowblower, NEVER use your hands to unclog the machine.
 - Maintain an awareness of utilities when shoveling snow. Do not cover fire hydrants with snow when clearing sidewalks and driveways. Do not shovel snow into manholes and catch basins.
 - Offer to help individuals who require special assistance, including seniors and people with disabilities.
- Con Edison 24hr hotline: 800-75-CONED (752-6633) / National Grid 24hr hotline: 718-643-4050

Do you have a submission for the BAN Quarterly?
We would love to hear from you!
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BAN continually strives, via emails, community meetings, and our website, to keep our neighbors informed. Check our website - **WWW.BRIARWOODACTIONNETWORK.COM** -, facebook page, and twitter feed -@**BriarwoodAction** - for neighborhood information. Please also use those forums to make us aware of any news. You can also email us at **briarwoodactionnetwork@gmail.com**. Or send mail to: **Briarwood Action Network**, PO Box 356068, Briarwood, NY 11435