

## KNOLLS NEWS



### **The President's State of the Community**

Ron Jones

Old Man Winter certainly dealt us a blow, but thanks to a great staff and a bit of patience, AKW made it through with flying colors. Jammie dug himself out at home to make it to the building and help to resolve some heat issues we experienced. Jose shoveled snow too many times to count and stayed overnight to be sure he was available to go back to work bright and early! We couldn't have asked for more from Jammie and José and thank them for their tireless efforts.

2015 was a year packed with projects but we now have some great things to show for the inconvenience; we have a new roof, recovered from the December 2014 fire on the 17th floor and hallways free of popcorn ceilings. We also are enjoying things we don't see, like valve shut-offs, ensuring integrity of the risers for the HVACs! 2016 has important improvements in store, like elevator upgrades and a new door-entry system.

As we've moved into 2016 we see a trend from last year continue to take hold: a spirit of volunteerism in the AKW community. Our neighbors have stood up to spearhead the HVAC project, to get the AKW website updated, and to make vital modernizations to our bylaws and governing documents. I urge each of you to consider getting involved: there's lots to do and there are many ways for you to contribute to our community. I am myself a volunteer for AKW, as are all of your Board members. We hope you'll join in the AKW volunteer effort!

#### **RETIREMENT PARTY FOR JOSE CASTILLO**

Special invitation to the Retirement Party for Jose Castillo has been sent to all Residents. It will be held on Tuesday, February 16th at 7:00pm in the Community Room. Please return your RSVP in to the committee so they can make their plans!

*Mark your calendar for this very special event !*

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## Board Meeting Highlights

**No more snow, please!** It was a given that there were comments and questions about snow removal. We had some situations where snow was put in the main drive lane, clearly not in the best interest of all residents. Our contractors also had some challenges finding places to put the snow, as well as removing a large amount of snow on the roof deck, putting considerable weight on that structure and potentially impacting existing drains. Such situations test us all, but we also saw a lot of people step up to help neighbors and considerable thoughtfulness.

**Safety & Security Committee.** The Board approved a proposal by Freestate to install replacement lighting on the exterior of the building (instead of in-ground). This will eliminate any potential issues with breakage of other underground components and provide us with bright new lighting in the area. Work should begin shortly, but continue to exercise caution walking in those areas after dark. As to other lighting issues, if you see lights out or lights not working properly (for example, not coming on at dusk or going off after daylight), please notify the office. In addition, we now have a 360 degree camera view of the building, an improvement we can all welcome.

**Elevators.** The work on upgrades to the elevator cabs will begin shortly. The schedule has been arranged to avoid conflicts with potential move-ins/outs and ongoing HVAC work.

**Policy Resolution—Late Fees.** The Board approved a formal resolution allowing for the assessment of late fees for any monthly dues more than 60 days in arrears. The late penalty will be 5%.

**HVAC Filters.** The subject of replacement filters for the HVACs was raised. In the past, there has been an AKW-sponsored filter-replacement twice annually; the Board is considering how the new HVAC units fit in with this program. We expect the Board to make a decision and issue guidance at its February meeting.

### **A NOTE FROM ONE DOG TO ANOTHER**

To my fellow AKW dogs:

When my owner took me for a walk the other day, I noticed that some of the other dog owners haven't been picking up behind my fellow canines. I know that the weather's been tough, but the snow is enough to step over without all of the other, um... stuff. I hate to walk through that! So, listen up, dogs: put your paw down and demand that your owner clean up behind you! It's good for all of us, even the humans!

Alexa K9 West



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**Decorating Divas are still working; do it again!**

Have you noticed the gorgeous flower arrangement on the lobby table? The Diva who had that inspiration was **K.C. Snyder**, so give her a round of applause when you see her next time! **Way to go, K.C.!**



***Communications Committee making progress — but we still need your help!***

Work on your new AKW website continues and it should be ready in a few weeks! Thanks to those of you who submitted photos for the site, but it's not too late: ***if you've got photos of the building, grounds, or a building activity***, please forward those to be included in the photo rotation. Special thanks to our fellow residents, Sharon Grant for content writing and Joann Wray for lending her web design talents. The next **Communications Committee** meeting will be Wednesday, February 10th. Send your photos and questions to [AKWquade@outlook.com](mailto:AKWquade@outlook.com).

***Floor Representatives***

The idea of a Floor Representatives committee had been suggested but has been tabled for the time being. This can be addressed when we have more interest in a committee of this type, a specific purpose for it, and a greater number of people who are willing to volunteer (so all floors can be covered). Alex Harrington has presented some good ideas, and we may be able to follow through during the coming months. *Stay tuned!*

***Hi-Rise Windows***

***PRESENTATION  
RE-SCHEDULED FOR  
WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 24***

Mark your calendars!

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## **Building & Grounds —**

### **“See and Say” goes further and Winter Auto Safety**

You know the saying, “If you see something, say something!” Well, that doesn’t apply only to Security. It also applies to Building & Grounds. If you see something in the hallways or on the grounds, please let the office know. We’re starting a “punch list” of things that need to be done and appreciate all the helpful observations we can get.

So, the Building & Grounds chairperson (*Moi*) seems to have the ability to jog people’s memories. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been approached with “Oh, I knew there was something I meant to tell you.” Please feel free to do so but don’t count on that remaining in my brain for very long, like more than two minutes after you’ve said it. Better yet, put it in writing by email to the office ([akwmainoffice@gmail.com](mailto:akwmainoffice@gmail.com)), a note in my folder, or a note in the association box. Anonymous or unsigned notes are put in File 13, never to see the light of day again. If you want an answer, be sure to put your name and unit number on it.

Well, this might be a little after the fact but winter is still upon us and you might want to put together a *winter emergency kit* for your car. No, we’re not in the wilds of South Dakota where you can be stuck for days but we all know you can be stuck for hours in traffic around here; just ask Chae. Anyway, you can buy already prepared kits on the internet or you can put together one of your own. I don’t know where I got this information but here’s a list of items for your kit: road flares, flash light (extra batteries), collapsible shovel, bottled water (small bottles will freeze but defrost faster), energy bars, dried fruit, emergency blanket, an extra set of clothes (not sure about this one), and a bag of sand or kitty litter. A final suggestion came from a friend of mine who was a Girl Scout leader for years. She suggested a candle, matches and an old cooking pot/pan. Open a window a little, place the candle in the pan and light it. It will emit enough heat to keep you from freezing. Who knew? I found a large candle in a metal container so that’s in my kit. Think about what you’d put in yours? And, from a husband who shall remain nameless, “NEVER, NEVER have less than a half-of-a-tank of gas.” Stay safe!

### ***A cornucopia of info for Seniors ...***

The Division of Aging and Adult Services in the Department of Community and Human Services for the City of Alexandria has a ***Directory of Resources for Older Adults & Adults With Disabilities***. It’s a 55-page booklet about what services are available and how to find them. Chae has ordered copies from the City and they should be available in the Office soon, if you’re interested.

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***We love our Volunteers!***

Building & Grounds Committee has a new Volunteer to the expanding list of folks who add so much to our Community's benefit! **Philip Ellis** (#1808) has graciously agreed to take over the "Phone Entry System" project. Philip's most-welcome first report on this is below.

\* \* \*

**A NEW TELEPHONE ENTRY SYSTEM!**

We are reviewing proposals to replace our aging call boxes with an updated system featuring name lookup, a multi-line digital display and support for every area code in the US. So if your name isn't on the board, or your phone can't be connected to the system because it's from somewhere outside the DC metro area, or if you forgot to provide your code for the driver last time you ordered pizza delivery, soon all these problems will be solved. When the time comes to program the new system, we'll need your current phone number — please make sure we have an up-to-date registration form for you. Just stop by the office and talk to Chae. Stay tuned....

**By-Law Revisions Making Headway**

The Master Deed and By-Laws Committee received and reviewed the first draft of proposed changes to the Financial and Administrative sections of our Operating Documents in December. Based on our review, with questions and proposed changes, a second draft was prepared and presented by our attorney, Ed O'Connell, to the committee and Board members on January 13<sup>th</sup>.

As a result of that meeting, Draft #3 will be delivered to the Board of Directors by early February. Mr. O'Connell will work with the Committee and Board to host "Town Hall" meeting(s) to review the proposed document so your questions are answered and suggestions addressed.

***We want your input prior to submitting final copy for your approval/vote. Please watch for scheduled meetings and updates.***

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## **GETTING YOU INVOLVED ...**

### ***Many hands make light work and strengthen our community***

In the December **Knolls News** we said that we are always looking for Residents (especially our Owner/Shareholders!) to participate in committee meetings. Committees address the affairs affecting the safety and wellbeing of our Residents, among other things.

**Your participation** as an Owner/Shareholder in the affairs of our community assures that **your** views are being heard and considered. **Your participation** means that it's not just a few folks making all the decisions. **Your participation** assures that complacency doesn't become a characteristic of the Association. **Your participation** assures that more of our Owner/ Shareholders volunteer. **Your participation** assures satisfaction from sharing the burden of decision-making when it can affect our 'bottom line.' **Your participation** has a direct effect on our monthly fees.

Attend committee meetings to become knowledgeable about building issues (what's proposed and where your money is going!). Do **you** have skills to share (especially related to our building's structure)? Can **you** contribute an article for **Knolls News** (like the dog-walk problem, or unacceptable trash)? Can **you** volunteer to help with building events (plan a pool party; landscaping ideas)? Can **you** volunteer to help in the Office when our Staff might not be available (like during the last snowstorm)? Could **you** be available to take a Resident to a doctor's appointment (our Residents' needs are overwhelming the volunteer list!)? What else could **you** offer? *When you volunteer, we all benefit!* **Many hands do make light work and strengthen our community.**

We ask you now to be a leader, look for opportunities to become involved, get out of your comfort zone and volunteer --- *make your voice heard*. Committee meeting times are listed on the back of **Knolls News** so you can always find us. Make a concerted effort to participate in any full-condo Town Halls or Special Forums so you'll be involved as a *Homeowner* of our community as well as a *Shareholder* of our corporation. Your continued investment in our community enhances our overall value. Your 'return on investment' will be greater than you ever imagined!

## WELCOME, NEW RESIDENTS!

Recently we asked new Residents to give us a glimpse of themselves that might be of interest to others, that would be an introduction when they go to Happy Hour or conversation at a committee meeting, etc.

**Kay Wilmoth**, 1209 since June 2015, has lived all over the US as an Air Force wife, raising 3 of her own who have given her 5 grandchildren and one *great*-grandchild! Retired now (*well deserved!*), she worked in Budget and Programming duties in all branches of DOD. You'll often see her walking "Pistol Pete," a friendly Pug. Kay likes visiting historic sites, museums; any beach could be a 'favorite,' *and* she's "up for day trips." Oh, she's one of the *Decorating Divas*, too!

**Tia Green**, 908 since June 2015, is still working the M-F/9-5 routine as a Financial Management Analyst "somewhere" in the District. (There are several folks here who are in the same 'business' – do you know each other?) Tia says she enjoys reading, movies and theatrical performances (lots of folks have this as a major interest, too, Tia!), and says she's enjoying living here, looking forward to many happy years! *Come to a committee meeting, Tia, so we can get you involved!!*

We're waiting for offerings from other new folks and hope this will be a regular feature!!

## Snow Storm Follow-up

Whew! We made it through another snow storm! In addition to our terrific staff, sincere appreciation goes to the AKW residents who assisted in shoveling out neighbors, especially some of our seniors!

However, a note to some of our residents... Keep in mind that empty parking spaces are *privately owned property*. When you pile the snow from your space onto someone else's, you are gifting them the homecoming present of having to shovel twice as much snow. It is difficult to find space for all the snow and our contractors work as quickly as possible. We are all in the same boat (not just AKW, or Alexandria, or Virginia; the entire metro area! Including the contractors tasked with dealing with the snow). We are equally inconvenienced, aggravated, frustrated and annoyed. Please don't "pile on" to your neighbors !





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## **HVAC Updates from Dylan**

As mentioned in the Board meeting highlights, the subject of replacement filters for the HVACs was raised. In the past, there has been an AKW-sponsored filter-replacement twice annually; the Board is considering how the new HVAC units fit in with this program. Dylan is researching options for multiple sources of the filters and we will know more on pricing later. Below is information Dylan provided on other questions received.

- AIR FILTERS. There are two sizes needed for pleated replacement filters. Awaiting custom air filter pricing from another company. They provide a more poly/fabric type filter.  
13"x23"x1" (300 and 400 CFM Units)  
16"x27"x1" (600 CFM Units)
- CLOSED LOOP SYSTEM. This term actually relates more to the water system used throughout the building. Meaning air must be bled from the water lines for the system to Heat and/or Cool properly.
- NEW FAN BLOWER MOTORS. These new fan motors use sealed bearings and will not need to be oiled annually like the previous models.
- ENERGY COST ANALYSIS. I do not think I can provide any information comparing energy usage between old and new units. The only power consuming device inside these units is the blower motor, and the amount of power they consume is minimal.
- HEAT DELIVERY. During **heating** modes we prefer slower fan speeds as the air will absorb more heat from hot coil. I would recommend trying Low or at most Medium fan speed to get higher heat output delivery from the air handler. The water temperature is regulated by the building so I have no control there, but try the adjustment on slower fan first. If that does not work we can inspect further.

The HVAC project is due to finish on the 12th Tier by the end of the second week in February — exactly as Dylan and HUI proposed when they started during the beginning of December! Positively remarkable that they're right on target and have given us positively remarkable service, with smiles on all faces, in a most professional manner. We will be pleased to welcome them back for Phase Two.





## A FOND FAREWELL

Dear AKW Family,

We move out today. After almost thirteen years at Alexandria Knolls, our family will be moving on to a single family home in Fairfax. As we head out, we just wanted to share our thoughts and feelings about moving away from AKW, a place that has very much been our home for the better part of our adult lives.

The first place I lived at in Alexandria was an apartment complex just down 395. It was a nice place, but for whatever reason, the people there didn't seem to connect to one another. Instead, we passed one another without really looking up, barely noticing who our neighbors were or what might have been important to them.

AKW was never like that. From our first day at our new condo, our neighbors felt like a family. Everyone seemed to know everyone, and they wanted to know us as well. Soon, we were going down to happy hours, stopping to talk to people in the lobby, and feeling like we were a real part of the community. Sure, like any real family, there were those eccentricities of some of our neighbors that may have made life a little more difficult, but these were never borne out of spite or pettiness. It all came from how deeply our neighbors cared about the building and the people who shared it with them. We were a family—a giant, ever-evolving family.

I joined the board of directors because I felt an obligation to help this family out in some way, and over my term (I believe at nine years, it's the longest continuous term ever served), I got to be part of some of the more trying times in the building. We saw fire and snow, boom and bust, and everything in between—all those small things that kept the building running from day-to-day. I was privileged to share my time, and hope only that the building will remain in the hands of the capable and caring sort of people I served alongside.

But now we have to move on, so that our family can continue to grow, and so someone else can take our place in the AKW family. It's bittersweet for us to leave so many we've come to know and care about, but at the same time we know that we're really not going to be that far away. This isn't the end to our friendships, it's simply a new phase in them.

Know then that AKW will always hold a special place in our hearts. This was the home that we came home from our honeymoon to. This was the home where we house-broke our first dog. This was the home we brought our son back from the hospital to. This was our *home*. AKW will always be our *home*.

Thank you for so many wonderful years and all the best to everyone in the years to come.

With much love and affection,  
Russell, Kelly, & Connor Kupferer (plus Killian too!)

12/29/15

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## IMPORTANT DATES in FEBRUARY

- ♦ **Communications** **Wed, 2/10, 7:00 PM**
- ♦ **Jose Castillo Retirement Party** **Tue, 2/16, 7:00 PM**
- ♦ **Building & Grounds** **Wed, 2/17, 7:00 PM**
- ♦ **Board of Directors** **Tue, 2/23, 7:00 PM**
- ♦ **Hi-Rise Window Presentation** **Wed, 2/24, 7:00 PM**

**All meetings held in the Community Room**

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## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

<b>Guard Mobile</b>	<b>703-635-6668</b>
<b>AKW Office</b>	<b>703-751-7541</b>
<b>Email: <a href="mailto:akwmainoffice@gmail.com">akwmainoffice@gmail.com</a></b>	
<b>AKW Fax</b>	<b>703-751-2136</b>
<b>A-1 Towing</b>	<b>703-971-2600</b>
<b>Police non-emergency</b>	<b>703-746-4444</b>
<b>Police emergency</b>	<b>911</b>



### Board of Directors

Ron Jones, President	<a href="mailto:ronjonesakw@comcast.net">ronjonesakw@comcast.net</a>
Becky Martin, Vice President (By-Laws)	<a href="mailto:beckymartinakw@gmail.com">beckymartinakw@gmail.com</a>
Quade Whitmire, Secretary, (Historian, Communications)	<a href="mailto:akwquade@outlook.com">akwquade@outlook.com</a>
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