

# KNOLLS NEWS



## President's Update

The 12 months since AKW's last Annual Meeting in 2015 were busy and productive. It's important that each co-owner realize their condo fees are put to effective use and that those dollars contribute to important improvements and ongoing maintenance. The list of accomplishments below is not exhaustive and doesn't consider the regular day-to-day maintenance of the building and property, but it does paint a picture of progress that we should all be excited about. Projects have included:

- Complete replacement of the building's roof
- Updates to the billiard and community rooms, bar area, and adjacent hallway that included removal of the wall treatments, repairing—and where necessary — installing new drywall, painting the ceilings and door frames, and installing new baseboards
- Installation of a new door entry and call-up system
- Fitness Center renovations and upgrades to the lighting in those areas
- Elevator upgrades and updates
- Following the discovery of mold in the 5<sup>th</sup> tier master bedroom closets, undertook an exhaustive remediation of the problem, eradicating it and working with residents to address its effects on their personal property
- Major upgrade of garage lighting in all three covered garages
- Upgraded exterior lighting on the east side of the building



- Camera and security upgrades
- Concluded the major balcony project
- Upgraded and had certified the building's lightning suppression system
- Replaced all of the water shut-off valves that control the flow to the HVAC units

In addition to these items, which added much to the physical environment at AKW, the Association can also take pride in other efforts which positively impact the community. Among them are:

- Establishment of the AKW website ([www.AKWcondo.com](http://www.AKWcondo.com))
- Updating of the AKW parking policy to better-accommodate residents who own more automobiles than they do parking spaces
- Documentation of the Association's administrative and financial processes
- Increased transparency and better communication to more fully involve co-owners and residents in committee and Board meetings and to make it easier to participate in the governance of the Association

Two resident-sponsored projects also took place in the same period: the HVAC and window replacement projects. While co-owners made individual decisions to make these improvements, the Association lent logistical support to make the work of the co-owners' contractors easier. And, it's important to note that

More—>



every co-owner benefits in the form of lower gas and power bills.

For the coming year, we anticipate work on three major projects:

- Repair the garage expansion joints and other maintenance items, repave the parking areas and driveways and renovate the main lobby.
- Implementation of the *Building Link* system which will increase efficiencies in the areas of building maintenance and management.
- The nearly two-year effort to update the Associations’ Master Deed and By-laws will continue.

Thanks to the many Board and volunteer community members for these accomplishments that benefit us all.

## **Annual and Board Meeting and Special By-Laws Meeting**

Hang on to your hats, everyone! Lots took place at the September 27 meeting. Three sessions occurred somewhat simultaneously: resumption of the Town Hall Special Meeting recessed in May; the monthly Board Meeting and the Annual Meeting. As the Annual Meeting cannot occur without a Quorum of owners, registration was tabulated while the two meetings went forward.

The May Town Hall **Special Meeting on the Master Deed and By-Laws** changes was called back into session to hear the progress on voting made since that time:

- ◇ 161 unit owners have voted, representing 86.9% of the building owners
- ◇ Amendment #1 passed with 75.3% affirmative vote
- ◇ Amendment #2 passed with 76.73% affirmative vote

Our attorneys will now reach out to the mortgage holder for each unit (where there is one) to gain their affirmation. The mortgage companies have the right to confirm the proposed changes will not affect their

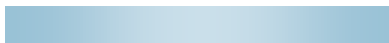
security interest in the property, which they do not. The meeting was recessed until December 15 to work through the next step.

As the **Board Meeting** began, Quade Whitmire reported that the work of the By-Laws committee was a community effort and involved many more than committee members alone. Assistance was provided from a number of owners and staff, among them Joan Culkin, Dail Claridge and Patsy Feinberg.

Officer and Committee reports were brief as determination of a Quorum for the Annual Meeting was established. Of note:

- **Budget & Finance** results were presented by **Sharon Grant**, Treasurer. The Community had year-to-date net income of \$35,117. The delinquency rate continues to creep up and is now at 7.5%; 5% is considered acceptable by FHA in determining buyer financing eligibility. CMC actively works on delinquent accounts and our attorneys are pursuing all available options to collect outstanding amounts due to AKW. The necessary reserve projects undertaken this year this puts us slightly behind the fully funded status we desire. A Budget Review meeting was held on September 20 and a follow-up meeting session will occur on October 18 after additional requests and the need to validate some costs estimates.
- **Bill Munson** reported for the **Fitness Center Committee** that the next phase is to consider vendor proposals for new equipment; the Committee meets next on October 10 (and every other Monday).
- **Safety & Security, Traci Templer**, reported that “no news is good news” with no items to report for the month.
- **Mary McClelland**, on behalf of **B&G**, said she is wrapping up the balcony repair items and preparing a to-do list for the next B&G Chair.





- **Quade** reported on behalf of the **Communications Committee** that the **Building Link** system will interface well with the AKW web site and will provide tools to owners that were earlier anticipated in Phase 3 of the web site design.

The following items were approved by the Board:

- ⇒ Proposals by Environmental Enhancements to remove/replace spent plantings and to remove the crabapple tree and stump (the one near the Highpoint garage that lost a large branch in a recent storm) were approved for a total of \$3,757.
- ⇒ Approval was given for Dominion Paving to repair the storm drain, repair asphalt and remove the speed bump at the north corner of the building for \$6,500.
- ⇒ A proposal to re-stripe the parking lot was approved. The labor will be provided by A-1 Towing at no charge to AKW; we provide the paint (roughly \$150). Although repaving is a major upcoming project and re-striping will occur when complete, the goal is to refresh the markings and clearly identify visitor parking spaces.
- ⇒ A void in the corridor concrete due to past dryer vent work was identified on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor. Repairs by Associa were approved for \$2,045.
- ⇒ Atlantic Duct Cleaning will clean the common area/corridor supply and exhaust ducts for \$8,460. This work was last done more than two years ago.
- ⇒ Densel Company will repair the domestic hot water circulating pump (pushes hot water through the system) for \$6,751. This was the source of issues recently noted with water occasionally being “warm” but not as hot as usual.
- ⇒ Freestate Electrical will replace all remaining pole lights on the property and in the pet area for \$2,350.

New parking rules effective October 1 have been delivered to each unit with a request to confirm contact information so that owners can be contacted before a tow is made. See more details on page 5.

There will be an HVAC replacement meeting held on Wednesday, 10/5 for those interested in considering these upgrades.

Letters of appreciation and gifts of \$150 each were presented to Mary McClelland and Ron Jones to thank them for their many efforts on behalf of the AKW community. Mary and Ron offer their farewell remarks on page 4 and 5.

**Annual Meeting.** The procedural steps of proving a quorum of owners and the official notice of the meeting earlier provided, and the minutes from the 2015 meeting approved, candidates for the three open slots on the Board were permitted to make remarks to attendees. **Wendy Shelley, Kay Wilmoth, Brian Block** and **Sharon Grant** each made brief statements on their qualifications and goals for serving on the Board. A call for any additional nominations occurred without comment and owners who had not voted were provided a few moments to do so. The tallied votes resulted in the election of: Sharon Grant, Kay Wilmoth and Wendy Shelley. The Annual Meeting was then adjourned.

Returning to the monthly Board meeting, Quade reported that a Board training session will be held in October to focus on procedures, processes and expectations for board members. Date to be determined and will be posted for all to attend once known.



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In Executive Session following the Board meeting these officer assignments were decided and will be confirmed at the October 25 meeting:

- ◇ Quade Whitmire, President and Chair of the Communications Committee
- ◇ Becky Martin, Vice President and Chair of the Bylaws and Pool Committees
- ◇ Sharon Grant, Treasurer and Chair of the Budget & Finance Committee
- ◇ Wendy Shelley, Secretary
- ◇ Bill Munson, Director and Chair of the Fitness Center Improvement Committee
- ◇ Traci Templer, Director and Chair of the Safety & Security Committee
- ◇ Kay Wilmoth, Director and Chair of the Building & Grounds Committee
- ◇ Dail Claridge, Chair of the Landscape Committee

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### **Mary McClelland Takes a Well-Deserved Bow**

L. Frank Baum, author of the book *The Marvelous Land of Oz*, one of the "Oz" books' series (who knew there was a series?), said "Everything has to come to an end, sometime." Well, this is my "sometime." It has been my pleasure, and occasional pain, to chair/referee the Building & Grounds committee for the last three years. I am most thankful and grateful to:

- My "Tiger Team" (Alex, Rob, Randy, and Robert) for helping review and recommending the interior painting contractor
- The "Spawned Committees" for 1) the Exercise Rooms (Bill), 2) the HVACs (Wendy), and 3) the Door Entry System (Philip). They stepped up and took over, saving the B & G chairperson time, energy and brain cells
- My fellow board members (Quade, Becky, Sharon, Traci, Ron, and Bill), building manager (Chae), and CMC (Gita), for your support, patience, and encouragement
- Our building engineer (Jammie) and our porters (Jose, Luis, JJ) for putting up with my questions and suggestions
- All who offered to help whenever needed and graciously did so when called upon
- My loyal and regular B & G committee attendees who always had my back
- And, last but not least, a final big THANK YOU to all AKW co-owners/residents

I didn't do it alone. I couldn't have done it without you. THANK YOU!

P.S. I am available as a consultant but at twice the salary that I was paid while on the board. ZERO twice is ZERO ZERO! LOL!

***WE TIP OUR HAT TO YOU, MARY!***



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## **Ron Jones Has Not Left the Building**

As I leave the AKW Board (for the last time), I extend my appreciation not only to members of the current Board but also to all of the Board and Committee members who I have served with over the years. All of these individuals devoted their time, energy and expertise to meet and address the issues affecting all AKW owners.

People have asked why I have been on and off the Board over the past 20 years. The truth is that I wanted to be involved in the decision-making process that affects my personal investment in AKW. We all have a stake in AKW's administrative, operational and budgetary processes. One last time, I strongly encourage you to participate in Board and committee meetings. You will gain a better understanding of the challenges and costs the Association faces in maintaining our community, and your contribution of experience and input will benefit both you personally and AKW as a whole.

Though I will not be on the Board, I plan to remain active in committee meetings and to assist the Board in any way possible. I ask that you join me in a committee of your choice so that you too can contribute in the management of YOUR home's operation.

*YOU'RE A TRUE ROCK STAR, RON!*



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### **Parking Policy in a Nutshell**

- YOU:
- Park in the "R" spaces at the canopy, for 30 mins maximum
  - Park in Visitor spot M-F, 7a-6p *only*, excluding holidays
  - *MUST* sign in at the lobby desk
  - Will get a violation alert one-time only 5 minutes before a tow is called
- VISITORS:
- Overnight parking permitted 10 days per calendar month
  - *MUST* sign in at the lobby desk
  - Overnight parkers have until noon the following day to check out or re-sign for that next day
  - M-F, Residents may request hang-tags for a visitor to park up to a maximum of 42 days annually (signing in is not required)

All of the rules and regulations of this new policy (eff. October 1, 2016) are in the document distributed to each unit (and Absentee Owners) on September 27<sup>th</sup>. It is the Resident's responsibility to ensure that the Office has your correct phone and license tag (how the car will be identified and you will be notified). It is the Resident's responsibility to know and adhere to these rules. *Forewarned is forearmed: The towing company charges a very high fee, and it's 'cash only' to redeem your vehicle.*



***My goodness, a whole year's gone by!***

Just about a year ago we started this “new format” **Knolls News** with the exhortation that as **Owners** we are also **Shareholders** in the corporation known as Alexandria Knolls West Condominium Homes. This means that **your involvement** in any and all decisions impacts all other Owners.



**We need you to become involved** so you can understand what’s being discussed at Board meetings. You are a **Shareholder** in this corporation, so it’s necessary to learn of **Your** concerns and complaints and suggestions and praises for the folks who are putting forth so much effort on **Your** behalf and on behalf of the rest of our Community. *When you don’t get involved, when you don’t care, it’s a disservice to the rest of us when you ignore opportunities to vote on a subject that affects all 190 units.*

This is particularly true in the efforts expended by so many of your neighbors **for the past two years** in trying to get the amendments ratified to our **Master Deed & By-laws**. That we have finally achieved this milestone is a testament to perseverance and hard work by a few, but also acknowledgement by the majority that we needed to comply with Virginia law. We still have work to be done by our attorneys on this first phase. The **By-Laws Committee** (led by **Becky Martin’s** persistence and tenacity) looks forward to the next phase (Maintenance and Enforcement) and hopes it will be quicker to achieve.

But one of the other things we stressed a year ago and continuing through so many months was the fact that we needed **Volunteers** for so many facets of our community life: the **Landscape Committee** has brightened our lives exponentially; the absolutely **SUPERB** efforts of our **Webmaster (Joann Wray** and the **Communications Committee**) in establishing **AKWCONDO.COM**. And let’s give a big round of applause for our **Safety & Security Committee** (which really means Chair **Traci Templer**) who spent many sleepless nights working with the Alexandria Police as well as our Guards and the security service, to make our community as safe as possible.

**Volunteers** like the several folks who joined the **Building & Grounds Committee** to take charge or at least take some of the load off the Chair (**Mary McClelland**) as she *volunteered* at least 5000 hours of her time – go back and reread Quade’s letter of Accomplishments! And *then* kept everyone happy when Jammie took vacation!

Volunteers like **Sharon Grant** who stepped up the **Treasurer’s** position in the Spring. The efforts of **Budget & Finance** included hiring an investment firm (**Morgan Stanley**) to begin handling our Reserves, so that we can get more out of those investments than only CDs could give us. (Oh, and you’ll recall that Sharon is integral to the Communications Comm. & the Publisher of this newsletter!!!)

The last two Directors – **Ron Jones**, who started out as President, and **Quade Whitmire**, who began as Secretary – need to have even more accolades directed to them! **Ron** gave his All by being in charge of “everything,” so that “everything” could run smoothly. He had further responsibilities within the community that, added together, made his health precariously unhealthy. **Quade**, while maintaining Secretary duties (beginning when the Recording Secretary resigned), kept AKWCondo.com an active and productive committee, as well as having that Historian title, stepped into the President’s spot.





**We are SO lucky!** Ron is a long-term Owner and served previously as President – so he knew the ropes! Quade is a newer Owner, fresh on the Board, and took over that transition without even a hiccup. Our community is blessed with having so many who are able to do the job (whichever job that is!) and **Volunteer** their time and efforts to benefit the rest of us. **BUT ..... Please consider how YOU can help!**

It's not necessary for YOU to donate 5000 hours, but how about coming to a **Super Committee** (Building & Grounds, Safety & Security, and Budget & Finance) meeting **once a month** to hear what's proposed, see where your condo fees are going, and *even offer an opinion or comment* --- Yours may be the solution we're looking for! Join the **Landscape Committee** for fun assignments! Help out the **Fitness Committee** as it decides on new equipment! Create a new friendship with **Knolls Knitters**. Think up another way to get involved and meet the neighbors who need your ideas and enthusiasm!

***Everyone's welcome; please come!***

## **The Knolls Knitters**

Inspired by a project that involved creating a blanket for the Red Cross ([www.redheart.com/redcross](http://www.redheart.com/redcross)), Fay Menacher, Barbara Righter, Pam McCaffrey, and Mary McClelland (pictured here l-r) wanted their experience to be fun and relaxing.

Beginning to meet in the Community Room during February, by August they had created the "Red Heart Cares Blanket" which they donated on Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. The blanket will go to Red Cross Service Armed Forces at Walter Reed.

The **Knolls Knitters** will continue to meet in the Community Room at 2 p.m. on the first and third Sunday of every month (October will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>). Now that their group project has been completed, they are planning to knit individual projects for a variety of charities, for example: Project Linus, Hugs for Homeless Animals and St. Jude's Medical Center. Future projects may include baby hats and blankets, children's sweaters, and blankets for shelter animals. All AKW residents who knit or who would like to learn are encouraged to participate (and Crocheters will be welcomed, too!).



## ***HVAC Unlimited – Phase 2***

Looks as if we will have Phase 2 to look forward to! Dylan Deloatch will make his Presentation on Wednesday, October 5. Watch for any other announcements on the lobby easel; this is coming up very quickly in October, for winter delivery and installation!



## ***Decorating Divas at it again!***

This gorgeous arrangement by KC Snyder was created right after our September **Knolls News** was published, so we're sorry to be a bit behind in giving 'Attaboys' and 'Congratulations' once again to our outstanding Volunteers! Ladies (and Gentleman!), you are incredible, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your lovely work!



## **BUDGET REVIEW MEETING**

The initial review and discussion was held at the **Super Committee** meeting on September 20, but you can still take advantage of this opportunity find out what's in store for 2017.

***Attend the Budget Review Meeting in the Community Room at 7pm on Tuesday, October 18.*** This is your chance to provide input and to better understand how AKW manages the financial obligations and needs of our community, on short- and longer-term bases.

## **SAFETY TIPS FOR YOU ....**

**Enter the Police Non-Emergency number (703-746-4444)** in the Contacts on your cell phone. Then you don't have to remember it when a stressful situation arises. If you have speed dial on your landline phone, enter that so you have to push only one button to be connected!

If you've entered the number for **A-1 Towing (703-971-2600)** in your cell phone, you won't have to come back to the building before calling for the "someone's in my space" situation. (You still **DO** have to stay to identify yourself!)

*If you ever feel unsafe at night coming from the garage areas, please call the **Guard (571-565-5591)** and ask for an escort. (Put that number in your phone, too!)*

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## **ANONYMITY**

Unidentified notes left at the unit doors in our building are not helpful to the rest of us and without attribution, cannot be given attention. If you have something to say, to comment on, to complain about, to bring to the attention of everyone here, **DO** present it to the Board (via the Office) with your name attached. Or better, attend a Board meeting, be heard and have your comments entered into the official record. You may discover that [your problem] has already been addressed and remediated (using *your* condo fees to pay for it!). Thank you.





## RECYCLING QUESTIONS??

Trash cans have been relabeled and now indicate which containers get garbage, kitty litter, etc. and which can be used for “single stream recycling”. A poster has been put on the backside of the sliding door to the garage which provides guidelines on items can be recycled. Green means “Yes”; Red means “No.” We’ve maintained separate containers for newspaper and other paper, simply because it takes up a lot of volume and can absorb moisture from other items.

Oversized cardboard items can be placed against the wall; please flatten boxes so everyone has room for their items.

Remember to rinse food particles from cans and glassware. And by the way, pizza boxes, while cardboard, can’t be recycled because they contain food waste that cannot be removed in the recycling process.

## Ghosts and goblins at your door

Wear your favorite costume and dare to join in Mon, **October 31st, 6 PM to 8 PM** on the Haunted Elevator (Freight Elevator) as we travel floor-to-floor collecting treats from our participating neighbors\*



We’ll knock on doors displaying “ghosties.” (Ghosties available in the lobby the week before Halloween.)

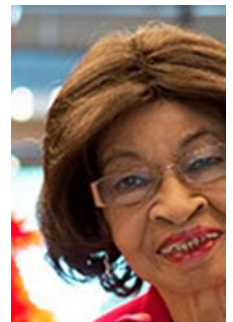
\*As in past years, we let you decide if you’d like to receive “**trick or treaters**” at your door. If you wish to participate, you simply need to hang the (provided in the lobby) tissue paper ghosts from your door knocker. If there is no “ghost” on your door, you will not be disturbed.

### **Another one got by us ....**

The Guard’s phone number has changed! Be sure to put this one in your cell phone Contacts, and make it a one-button speed dial on your landline: **571-565-5591**

### **Recognize this friendly face?**

Find out more about her life and favorite past-time on the Resident Spotlight on [www.akwcondo.com](http://www.akwcondo.com)





### IMPORTANT DATES IN OCTOBER

- ◆ HVAC Unlimited Presentation **Wed, 10/5**
- ◆ Fitness Center Committee **Mon, 10/12**
- ◆ Super Committee **Tue, 10/18**
- ◆ Fitness Committee **Mon, 10/24**
- ◆ Board Meeting **Tue, 10/25**

**Unless indicated otherwise, meetings begin at 7:00 PM  
in the Community Room**

The "Board Book" (containing what's on the agenda) is available in the Office for Residents' perusal on the Friday before the Tuesday Board meeting.

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### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- Guard Mobile 571-565-5591**
  
- AKW Office 703-751-7541**
- Email: [akwmainoffice@gmail.com](mailto:akwmainoffice@gmail.com)**
- AKW Fax 703-751-2136**
- A-1 Towing 703-971-2600**
- Police non-emergency 703-746-4444**



#### Board of Directors

Quade Whitmire, President (Historian, Communications)	akwquade@outlook.com
Becky Martin, Vice President (By-Laws)	beckymartinakw@gmail.com
Wendy Shelley, Secretary	wendyakw@outlook.com
Sharon Grant, Treasurer (Budget & Finance)	sharongrantakw@gmail.com
Traci Templer (Safety & Security)	tracitakw@gmail.com
Kay Wilmoth (Building & Grounds)	kwilmothakw@outlook.com
Bill Munson (Fitness Facilities)	bmunsonakw@yahoo.com

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