



President's Message

Welcome to March at AKW! I hope you're looking forward to spring and warmer days ahead. I know I am. As the seasons transition a few changes are afoot here at AKW. First, our Ground Floor Project is down to just a few minor outstanding items, and it will wrap up completely very soon. Next, we've had a few personnel changes since the last edition, with William (or Will) Murray joining the maintenance staff as our Porter/ Groundskeeper and the addition of Justin Meltzer, our new General Manager. Many of you have asked to see a full staff listing, with photos, and hopefully we'll have that in the next **Knolls News**. Please welcome William and Justin to the AKW family!

Looking ahead, the maintenance staff will be working with the awarded vendor on getting the emergency lighting and exit signs installed in the hallways and on addressing the persistent water runoff on the northeast corner of the property that causes that icy patch in the driveway and the F parking spaces. The Office is working on testing a new package process that'll notify you when your packages arrive—you may have noticed the updates on the BuildingLink monitor in the lobby. Also being looked at are other ways to integrate BuildingLink into the way AKW works, with the idea being a smoother, better running office. And, as always, we're looking at a better way to provide service to those of us who call AKW home.

Finally, I'd like to remind you that the Board of Directors meets monthly and ask you to consider participating in the Association by attending. These processes aren't sexy but it's the way your money—your condo fees—and your Association's energy is spent. Consider joining the meetings. Also, remember that the Open Session Board Book is available to you in the Office about five days before the meeting. The "Book" is what the Directors see and you are privy to as well. Stop by and have a look ... and join us at the March meeting!

Board Meeting Highlights

Reported Financials

	<u>January 2019</u>	<u>December 2018</u>
Total Cash and Investment	\$1,587,667	\$1,629,6100
Year-to-Date Income	\$171,305	\$1,952,278
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$150,846	\$1,896,421
Year-to-Date Net Income	\$20,460	\$55,858
Delinquencies \$	\$41,946	\$36,404
Delinquencies %	2.26%	2.15%
YTD Reserve Expenditures	\$15,320	\$437,498



Board actions follow:

- \$3,100 to Otis to replace the broken handrail in the rear of the freight elevator
- \$15,969 to Densel to renew its preventive maintenance contract for building equipment and systems
- \$1,200 to VGS to stain and seal the two Fitness Center and the Maintenance office doors
- \$7,200 to VGS to repair the kitchen cabinets and replace lights; needed due to failing supports
- \$15,870 to VGS to create a trench and install drywells that will collect water runoff between Highpoint and AKW
- \$250,000 funds from a mid-February matured CD reinvested in a FifthThird Bank CD returning 2.2%, maturing in April

Approved parameters to relay to investment firm Morgan Stanley with a request for a 'catalog' of options that provide AKW with highly rated, conservative and insured investment instruments.

Total Ground Floor Renovation Project expenditures were \$250,005 through December 31, with another \$9,752.59 incurred; to date, less than the \$276,000 estimated in the Reserve Study. All costs have been paid from AKW's Operating Account, preserving funds in the Reserve Account.

This section is new to *Knolls News* and we hope it will be interesting and informative for those of us who are, or those with friends and relatives "of a certain age!" We would love to have input from any of our Residents. *Please enjoy!*



[Senior Services of Alexandria](#) (SSA) is a nonprofit organization that has as its mission, "to foster independence and self-sufficiency, enabling seniors within the City of Alexandria to age with dignity." SSA operates the **Meals on Wheels** delivery program and **DOT transportation reservations** for the City; presents **educational programs** through various events; a **speaker series**; a monthly **cable television production "Senior Living in Alexandria"**; and a **Senior Ambassador** program. SSA and the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria operate **Animeals on Wheels** program, providing food for pets of low-income seniors. SSA's **Friendly Visitor Program** matches volunteers with seniors for weekly visits, enhancing connections to the community. SSA also operates a **Groceries to Go** program for seniors who have difficulty shopping. *Knolls News* will expand on these and other topics in the months ahead.

If you would like to join the effort to enhance the lives of seniors in our community, contact SSA at www.seniorservicesalex.org (703) 836-4414.

Save the date: Wednesday, March 13, 9:30-12 noon at the Beatley Library (5005 Duke Street), for "Managing Your Money in Retirement." This program will feature local experts from AARP, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Signature Estate & Investment Advisers. *Free* but please RSVP online as above, or call (703) 836-4144, ext. 110.

ON 2/26/19, THE BOARD REVISED THE PET POLICY

Article V. Section 3, "Use of Project (1) By-laws, Council of Co-Owners, Alexandria Knolls West Condominium Homes provides that "No livestock, poultry, rabbits or other animals whatsoever including dogs, cats and other household pets except as approval by the AKW Board of Directors shall be allowed or kept in any part of the project."

The Board has long accepted cats and dogs (that do not exceed 25 pounds at maturity) in our community. The Board has elected to assess a nonrefundable fee of \$200.00 for bringing a dog into the building. A second dog will require another \$200.00 fee. Owner control and maintenance of pets is established to assure the full and peaceful enjoyment of all residents of the individual Units and the common areas of the building and grounds, to prevent damage to facilities and ornamental shrubbery, and to maintain the required standards of health and sanitation.

The Board of Directors shall bar residents and guests from maintaining a pet in the condominium when it is determined by the Board that further retention of the pet would constitute an unwarranted denial to other residents of the peaceful enjoyment of their individual Units and/or the common areas.

The following clarification of "permissible pets" was made at the February 26 Board meeting:

- "Permissible household pet" includes small dogs-up to 25 pounds at maturity, cats, caged birds, and creatures normally maintained in a cage designated for household use or an aquarium. Permitted dogs and cats are limited to those whose adult weight is expected to be less than 25 pounds. Residents may keep a total of not more than two dogs or cats: two of one or the other, or one of each, as well as one caged bird within their apartment. Additionally, residents may keep creatures normally maintained in a cage designed for household use or an aquarium without seeking prior approval of the Board, so long as the number of such creatures is reasonable. Such creatures (other than dogs, cats, and caged birds) include hamsters, gerbils, fish, and other such creatures, other than amphibians and reptiles, which do not normally leave the unit and which do not make noise and normally sold at pet stores. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.
- The term "permissible household pet" does not include snakes, reptiles, amphibians, spiders, felines other than domesticated cats, canines other than domesticated dogs, rodents, or other similar types of creatures. Exceptions to the types of permissible pets require the prior, written approval of the Board.

An October 2018 Board approved change to the Pet policy required all residents to register a photo of their pet(s). Owners can do this directly through their BuildingLink account, or the Office can do for you. Call to set up a convenient time.

These new guidelines will be added to the upcoming AKW Handbook revision. In the meantime, residents are encouraged to read and ensure compliance. This pet policy information provided as well as rules of enforcement can be found in the resident handbook, page 20.

And, please note: The City of Alexandria requires dogs and cats to be registered and licensed, meaning that all vaccines must be up-to-date. AKW needs this information, too, requiring that you report your pet(s) residing in the building. Please stop by the Office and have the proper notations made. Thank you!



Have YOU been doing YOUR part to reduce expenses?

(continued thanks to Terri Hansen)

Running the Association is a business, where the Owner/Shareholders watch the 'bottom line.' The Board is responsible for a million-dollar budget, and works to adjust for fixed and variable costs. Fixed costs are determined annually and include insurance, taxes, annual management and other contracts, landscape, pool services. Variable costs are determined throughout the year and change depending on usage – utilities, for instance -- and fluctuating circumstances – repair and replacement of worn-out or broken equipment. Some ways to help with these variable costs would include:



Just Wondering...

- Replace filters in HVACs at least twice a year. The new HVACs require special filters. .
- Use ceiling fans to circulate cool air.
- On south and west-facing windows, keep blinds/drapes drawn against the sun.
- Be mindful of leaky faucets. *One drip can waste up to 48 gallons a week!*
- Check for a toilet leak by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If the color appears within 30 minutes, a leaking flapper should be repaired/replaced.
- Install a low-flow showerhead; it will save 50% of water usage.
- Run your dishwasher at night when energy costs are lower.
- Clean your dryer's lint filter after every load, to maintain dryer efficiency – which also means using less electricity, reducing our utility bill!
- Turn off lights in rooms that aren't being used.
- Completely disconnect lights, TVs, computers from the wall or cords when you're away for an extended period of time, like on vacation.

From the "Farmers' Almanac"

Named for the Roman god of war, *Mars*, March was the time of year to resume military campaigns that had been interrupted by winter.

Was there really a St. Patrick? Definitely. Did he really drive the snakes out of Ireland? Probably not, since snakes weren't native to Ireland! We might wear shamrocks (clovers) on St. Patrick's Day (he was supposed to have used them in religious teachings). Originally the color blue was associated with St. Patrick, but green is now favored (perhaps because shamrocks are green!).



Happy St Patrick's Day

Future Board Meeting Dates

March 26	April 23
May 21	June 25
July 23	August 27
September 24	October 22
November 26	December 17

Knolls Knitters Second Anniversary!

by Fay Menacker

Can you believe it? Our fun group is celebrating two years of meeting, chatting, knitting, and eating chocolate -- and plying other needlecraft as much as we can. *Time flies when you're having fun!!!*

We began meeting in February of 2016 and are still going strong!! The Fab Five: Pam McCaffrey, Mary McClelland, Fay Menacker, Fanny Felipe-Morales and Barbara Righter, invite other AKW residents who like to knit (as well as those who would like to learn to knit) to join us. We meet the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the Party Room.

Please note, we are no longer the “Knolls Kneedlers” and have renamed ourselves the **Knolls Knitters** because knitting is what we usually do! Of course those who do other needle crafts are always welcome; some of us already crochet, crewel, and needlepoint. We're glad to help you learn if you're a beginner!

If you're crafting just for yourself, you are welcomed! As a group we continue to make baby hats for *INOVA Alexandria Hospital and St. Jude's Hospital*; squares for *Warm Up America's* afghan project; blankets for shelter animals for the Snuggles project of the *Animal Welfare League of Alexandria*; and are completing the second of two small blankets that will be donated to the *Red Cross*. In other words, we have plenty to keep us going!! *Come join us!!*

**March is National Craft Month.
Happy Spring and Happy Crafting!**



Report SUSPICIOUS Activity

Sometimes it's just a matter of looking out your window. See something or someone that looks suspicious? In a place that looks different? Go ahead and call the non-emergency for the police (703-746-4444) and ask them to do a drive-around of the property. If you see something that looks like an **emergency**, dial **911** and then report to the Office or Guard for their follow-up.

The Safety & Security Committee reminds us again how important it is for each of us to BE AWARE so that our Community stays as safe as possible. And add our emergency numbers (from the back page) on your speed-dial (landline) or Contacts (mobile phone) – so you'll know where to find them when you need them!



Another reminder to keep us on time

So that on **Sunday, March 10th** you'll be on the correct time, set your clock ahead **one hour** before you go to bed on Saturday night. That's the “spring forward” that we hear, for the beginning of the seasonal Spring. “Daylight Savings Time” (DST) is *not* observed in Arizona, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. DST this year lasts until Sunday, November 3rd. (And we'll remind you then to “fall back”!)

A Cautionary Tale

For someone who's always thought of herself as a pretty savvy person, I ended up being the victim of a scam. I can see the eye-rolling and the *tsk-tsk* that goes along with feeling sorry for anyone who's been duped. My eyes are rolling, too, and I've done a *LOT* of tsk-tsking at myself for being susceptible to the urgency foisted upon me. I know better than this! If I saw it happening to someone else, I'd jump at the chance to try to intervene. Any call has to have a Contact Name attached, or I don't answer it -- a caller can leave a message if it's legitimate and I'll call back. If there's no message, it goes to "Telemarketer" on my Contacts and all of those calls are "Blocked" so I don't hear from them again. (More than 125 numbers so far!)

This one wasn't a call. Earlier this month on going to my Email, a full-screen bulletin popped up immediately, *with a voice telling me I had to call this number to get a foreign virus deleted within 3 hours; cancelling out would give my IP address to "The Government" (with Codes and Sections listed) and I'd have my computer confiscated.*

You already know NOT to answer that! NOT to call that 888-number! You hear yourself screaming "NO, get out of it!" Actually, trying "Escape" or "X" or Ctrl-Alt-Del doesn't get out of it. And the voice keeps announcing that within 3 hours

I didn't have the presence of mind (until it became hindsight) to just pull the plug and reboot! This wasn't something that my security could intercept (first time in more than 15 years with them that I was compromised).

I won't bore you with the details of this hideous day – my "Microsoft Sr Software Engineer" took over my computer so that he could see what the virus problem was, and kept me on my cell (from 100% battery to 19%) for several hours while he gave me instructions of what to do and how fast to do it and what to say if I was challenged, etc. It was *exhausting!* And I lost a lot of money (I'm trying to live on Social Security). Yes, I got the Alexandria Police involved, with suggestions to report to the FBI (they never called back) and the Secret Service (good suggestion in working with my bank "Financial Crimes" unit). No one ever suggested that I'd ever get anything back. Google Fraud really doesn't care and wouldn't take any actions either to me or the police. My bank is "trying" but it's possible nothing will come of it.

I hope this hasn't happened to anyone else here in the building. The younger folks already have it in their DNA that this was a scam and they'd hang up. For us older folks, the *urgency* takes over and thinking isn't allowed by the scammer.

More alerts: AARP has identified latest scams coming from "Social Security, with an arrest warrant for drug trafficking in SW Texas." Phone scammers can put any phone number on your ID so you think they're really calling from Social Security, Drug Enforcement, FBI, IRS, local utility companies, your bank. You may get a voicemail that is a little sketchy, that says only that there's a "legal issue" and call this number immediately! For what it's worth, my TIPS are:



DON'T BELIEVE ANY OF IT!

The only way you can get out of this is to **HANG UP! DISCONNECT! UNPLUG ENTIRELY!**
Put the number in "blocked calls" so they can't call again.

Worth Repeating

How the Association Addresses Delinquencies

The Association's collection efforts are meant to bring Owners current. Delinquent Owners can expect specific actions:

- On the 16th of the month a late fee of 10% is assessed on the delinquent amount.
- At 30 days late, CMC sends a letter advising of the delinquency and warns of future steps that could be taken.
- At 60 days late, the account is handed over to the Association's legal counsel. At this point the late owner is assessed fees associated with the effort to collect from them. Also at 60 days the Board will review the account and decide whether to accelerate the Owner's dues through the end of the calendar year and/or seek wage/account garnishment, conveying the seriousness of the matter.
- At 90 days late, the Board will ask the Delinquent Owner to attend a hearing to discuss revocation of privileges, including the pool, gym, in-unit-service program, and visitor parking. The Board may also direct legal counsel to pursue foreclosure on the Owner.

If you are delinquent, please bring your account current. If you are more than 60 days late, please reach out to the Association attorney as soon as possible to discuss a repayment plan. The Association wants to work with you and make your Co-Owners whole.

Just so our Office knows what's going on



Reminder to Residents that we're each obligated to make arrangements with the Office for our vendor deliveries. Most often there's not a problem. But when a move-in or -out has been scheduled, your furniture or appliance may be turned away. **TIP:** when you're making your purchase, give the Office a buzz to reserve your space – and know you'll get the delivery when you want it! [Another reminder: hours for deliveries are **9 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday thru Saturday.**] (And don't forget to tell your vendors they are NOT permitted to park in the 30-min spaces at the canopy; they will be towed!)

Take this into consideration ...

Co-Owners have now received their tax assessment for 2019. This includes notification of a new Stormwater Utility Fee effective January 2019. This fee funds the City's Stormwater Management Program, including Chesapeake Bay cleanup mandates. For each unit the assessment is \$19.60, or about \$3,724 for the entire building. When preparing the Budget each year, an amount is always estimated for taxes, as you know. BUT, when considering increased expenses during the year to create the next Budget, please remember *this* Utility Fee adds to our calculations.



People were asking for more info:

Last month we notified you that all **paint cans** should be removed from your locker in the Storage Room. The rationale: While it's true that latex paint is now considered safe and easily disposed, it is impossible for AKW staff to determine whether the contents of paint cans is latex or volatile oil-based paint, varnish or other coating materials. At the February meeting the Board confirmed AKW's policy to forbid keeping paint in the Storage Room. Staff will be surveying the Storage area and owners with such items in will be required to remove and SAFELY dispose of the items.

Disposal can be made at the Collection site on Colvin Ave. The basics: *only* on Saturdays and Mondays, 7:30am to 3:30pm. Go East (toward Old Town) on Duke Street, to *right* onto South Quaker Lane (opposite the fire station) and one block to *left* on Colvin. What we didn't tell you is that when you drive in, the staff will take anything from your vehicle; you don't have to lift again! You DO need to sign in at the logbook on your left, indicating that you're bringing paint or electronics or whatever hazardous material you're dropping off, using our street address (so they know it's not coming from DC, e.g., or Fairfax County). As we've said before, easy to find, easy to drop off.

If you need help doing this (yes, we know everyone is too busy! Or maybe there's just a lot!), please let Wendy know (w-shelley@comcast.net) and she'll be glad to help out. It's possible that we'll have our annual inspection from the fire department in April, as we've had in the past, this will help us avoid citations and possible fines! **Thanks, All!**

March
In like a lion,
out like a lamb!



Another chance for Yoga

A new 10-class session of Iyengar Yoga is being offered beginning Saturday, March 23. Instructor Leah DiQuolio will return with an invigorating class suitable for all ages and fitness levels. Gentle stretches improve flexibility and yoga poses work to improve posture and balance.

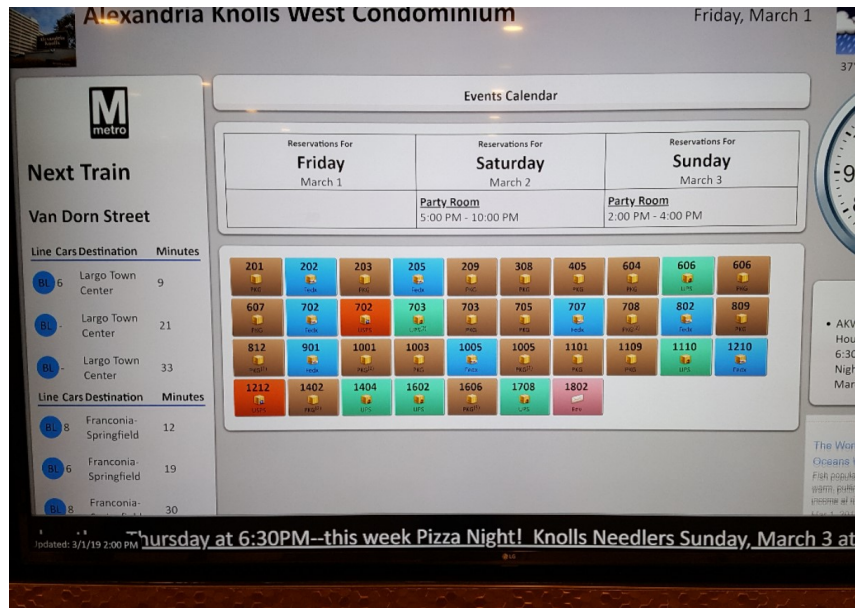
Contact Leah at leah@iyengaryogawithleah.com for details. Classes are held in the small Fitness Room on the first floor. It doesn't get more convenient than taking an elevator to the first floor! (Minimum sign-ups needed for on-premises class. Reach out today for info.)



Home Run, Slam Dunk and Touch Down!

Justin Meltzer is demonstrating his technology chops and is testing the BuildingLink package system. This is a considerable convenience to residents! No more guessing when you're package will arrive and perhaps days of checking the Office.

The lobby display shows unit numbers for all packages received, and the package carriers (in red, green, blue or brown designating which carrier). Envelopes are shown in pink.



In addition, BuildingLink generates an email to the recipient indicating that a package is being held in the office. If you do not have an email address on file in the office, please be in touch so your information can be added.

For now you will still be asked to sign the paper log for receipt of your package, but plans are to move to a tablet or similar paperless option to capture your signature. There may be additional tweaks or bugs to resolve, but this is a very welcome feature.

Based on the smiles and "Wow's" and "Wonderful" comments heard in the office on Friday, this was definitely the home run for the day! Thanks, Justin!

Budget & Finance Committee

The Budget and Finance Committee met on February 20th to discuss guidelines for investment of AKW's Reserve funds. The parameters to be conveyed to investment firm Morgan Stanley are:

- Cash or CDs (FDIC, NCUA or SIPC insured/guaranteed account)
- Security of a State government, rated Aa1 or AA+ or better
- Institution must earn a 5-star score on the Bankrate.com "Safe and Sound" system
- Investment cannot exceed FDIC/NCUA \$250,000 insurance threshold
- Maturities ranging from 3 months to 3 years
- Securities vehicles must be redeemable with no loss of interest or principal



These parameters will be communicated to Morgan Stanley with the request to provide a "catalog" of available investments for the Board's future consideration.

IMPORTANT DATES IN MARCH

- ◆ **Knolls Knitters** **Sun, 3/3, 2 PM**
- ◆ **By-Laws Committee** **Tue, 3/5, 6:30 PM**
- ◆ **Board Meeting** **Tue, 3/26**

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 Board meeting.



NEED A NOTARY?

Sharon Grant is a Virginia Notary and offers services to AKW residents by appointment at no charge. Email sharon@akwcondo.com.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Guard Mobile	571-565-5591
AKW Office	703-751-7541
Email: office@akwcondo.com	
AKW Fax	703-751-2136
A-1 Towing	703-971-2600
CMC Emergency	301-446-2635
Police non-emergency	703-746-4444
Police emergency	911

Board of Directors

Quade Whitmire, President (Historian, Communications)	quade@akwcondo.com
Becky Martin, Vice President (By-Laws)	becky@akwcondo.com
Pat Quinn, Secretary (Pool)	pat@akwcondo.com
Sharon Grant, Treasurer (Budget & Finance)	sharon@akwcondo.com
Kay Wilmoth (Building & Grounds, Landscaping)	kay@akwcondo.com
Bill Munson (Fitness Facilities)	bill@akwcondo.com
Valmy Awasom	valmy@akwcondo.com