



President's Message

Thanks to the pre-holiday work of the **Knolls News** team, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to wish you a Happy Thanksgiving!

The month since the last **Knolls News** has been an eventful one, given the back-to-back leak events we had on the 31st of October and the 1st of November. The editors allowed me space in this issue to address those events and the issue more broadly, including a little bit about the plan going forward for new upgrades that will give us water-detection sensors in the near-term and hopefully an additional redundancy in the longer-term. I encourage you to read that section.

As we close out the year with this final 2019 edition of **Knolls News**, I'd encourage you to make time on your calendar to attend the regular, monthly Board of Directors meetings. Every month each one of us writes a check to the Association for our dues and we ought to participate and have a say in how those dollars are spent and in how AKW allocates its resources of money and time. "I'm going to participate more in my community," may not be the most daring of resolutions for 2020 but it's one I'd encourage you to make. And you can get a head start by attending the December meeting, which is off-cycle this year on Tuesday, the 17th of December, with Open Session scheduled to start at 7PM, following Executive Session. If you ever have a matter for the Board to consider in Executive Session, please reach out to the Office to have your matter placed on the agenda.

With the entire holiday season upon us, I encourage you to take a moment to stop and thank our staff members for the work they do for us individually as well as for our community.

I hope you have plans for a great holiday this Thanksgiving and have many plans for a festive December and a great New Year's 2020!

Board Meeting Highlights

Reported Financials

	<u>October</u>	<u>September</u>
Total Cash and Investment	\$1,766,651	\$1,701,278
Year-to-Date Income	\$1,664,086	\$1,497,531
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$1,604,397	\$1,468,018
Year-to-Date Net Income	\$59,688	\$29,513
Delinquencies \$	\$66,087	\$61,211
Delinquencies %	3.5%	3.2%
YTD Reserve Expenditures	\$168,593	\$165,187

HAPPY
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Subsequent to the Board meeting, AKW's collections attorney reported the receipt of \$20,367.94 in delinquent dues.

Board actions follow:

- \$2,945.66 to SeeView to add a fish-eye lens camera to cover the rear of the C&D garage.
- Accepted a snow removal contract with VGS for the 2019/2020 season. Hourly equipment and labor costs are detailed in the contract.
- \$21,896 for 2020 and \$22,696 for 2021 to AquaSafe Pool Management for a 2-year contract.
- \$14,608 to Aware by BuildingLink to add water sensors to the penthouse Boiler Room.
- \$2,918 to Densel to chemically clean the cooling tower.
- 4% increase to the Allied Universal Security (AUS) hourly rate for security guards. The majority of this increase will be passed through as increased wages.
- Approved the reinvestment of three maturing CDs totaling \$370,000: \$250,000 moved to the Morgan Stanley Ultra-Short Income Fund (current 1.9% rate); \$60,000 each to two CDs, one 1.5% return maturing in February 2020 and one 1.65% return maturing in July 2020.

Thinking of the Staff

As all owners should be aware, employees are not allowed to ask for or receive tips or other cash acknowledgements for performing their work, including work performed as part of the Resident Services Program and its In-Unit Services component. Our condo fees include the staff salaries and our policies forbid staff from accepting direct payment, gratuities, or other cash-for-services performed during work hours. But, the holidays is an excellent time to recognize their contribution to the community over the course of the year. If you would like to offer a cash, gift card, or other acknowledgement to individual staff members, please feel free to do so. If you have something you'd like to give, you may give it directly to the person or seal it in an envelope and drop it in the Association Box next to the mail boxes. Photos of the current staff and their names are posted in the bulletin board if you have trouble remembering a name. We hope this goes without saying: any gift is purely voluntary. You are not required, obligated, or expected to give anything.

If you wish to give, consider leaving a cash donation (in an envelope) in the Association Mailbox or give directly to Justin for safekeeping. A timely decision (by the 12th) will facilitate the process. These "thank you's" will be given to Davon, Jose, Dion, Luis, and William in time for the Christmas Holidays. For those who wish to "give a little something" directly, please address an envelope to that person and leave with the Office or Association Box.

With wishes to all for a Happy Holiday and New Year!



I think even the most modest AKW'er would admit that it's been one hell of a six weeks as it relates to water leaks from the physical plant on the rooftop penthouse. The series of events that unfolded there from August through to the very first part of November is just nearly unbelievable. For those of you who are in other parts of the building not directly impacted, basically, we had a piece of equipment—the shot feeder—that performs water filtration duties, failed, was repaired, and then failed a second time and was repaired for a second time. The vendor at the time assured us that the piece of equipment—which itself was relatively new—was in fine working order and did not need replacing. On the 31st of October, the shot-feeder failed for a third time. The following night, a newly-repaired pipe failed and created what was the largest and most destructive of the events.

The shot-feeder has been taken offline and is being replaced. The pipe in-question was repaired on the 1st of November and is holding as expected.

Turning to the plan going forward, I'm pleased to announce that the Board voted at its last meeting to install sensor technology in the mechanical penthouse that will detect water on the floor and send alerts so that action can be taken before the situation becomes as dire as it did with prior events. And our management team is in conversations with vendors on ways that we can set-up/install a drainage system that can act as a redundancy; more details on that at future Board meetings as the team works through possibilities.

On Friday the 22nd, the management team met with the vendor selected to provide the sensors. Justin and Davon were both very impressed with the product, which will detect water and will also detect abnormal levels of humidity. In an instance such as the shot feeder, where hot water was leaking, the sensors may be able to detect the humidity before the water reaches them, allowing more time for response. The product chosen by the

Board is customizable and additional sensors can be added as needs are identified. And the vendor is beta testing complementary equipment that in the future may be able to respond to leaks by shutting off valves or otherwise respond to mitigate damage until someone can arrive onsite.

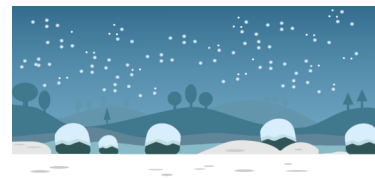
We'll keep you updated on this important upgrade to our building's safety systems.

Up on the Roof, Part II

Those who were at the November Board meeting were fully brought into the timeline of the Association's work to address issues related to the roof.

You may know—especially if you are on the 18th floor—that there have been issues with the “new” roof since its installation in 2015. The Association has reached a settlement with the roof installation firm and the roof's warranty provider to install a replacement. Given where we are in the weather calendar—roofs should not be installed in cold weather because the required adhesives cannot bond as well—the installation of the new roof will occur in April. In the meanwhile, the Association will be issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to third-party engineering firms to oversee the roof installation. The selected engineering firm will be the Association's representative and will ensure that there is oversight of this project independent of what the installer will employ and independent of the oversight the warranty company will undertake. We will also engage with the installer to do an inspection meant to identify any apparent issues that need to be repaired or otherwise addressed before we get into the worst of the winter weather season.

If you have questions about this I encourage you to come to the December meeting, where we will finalize the RFP and provide an update.



We have SO many people to thank for their gifts to our community of time, talent, a helping hand to a neighbor, an errand or some fresh baked goods! And a special heartfelt “Thank-you” to those Mostly Anonymous volunteers who provide transport to doctor and other appointments. You know who you are, and we salute you for your contributions! These some of the many things that make our community a warm and welcome place!



2019 VOLUNTEERS

**Joan Culkin
Connie Blood
K C Snyder
Myron Taylor
Rick Trevino
Jules Kolberg
Fay Menacker
Kay Wilmoth
Pam McCaffrey
Sharon Grant
Philip Ellis
Quade Whitmire
Traci Templer
Laura Rodriguez
Kay Vander Ven
Fanny Felipe-Morales**

**Dail Claridge
Pat Quinn
Terri Hansen
Barbara Righter
Larz Pearson
Ron Jones
Brian Lee
Becky Martin
Steve Colodner
Wendy Shelley
Rose Munson
Bill Munson
Joann Wray
Patsy Feinberg
Valmy Awasom
Mary McClelland**

**Kudos to those who have volunteered their time as office Receptionists
and the “Holiday Decorating Divas.”**

**This is a GREAT group, but we need even more folks for 2020!
Come to a Board meeting and get yourself involved!
Every person counts!
Everyone has something to contribute!**



The most wonderful time of the year!

It is so much fun to join with the **Holiday Divas** to decorate for the holidays—the new and incredible Lobby, the Billiard, Party, and Bar rooms—and maybe even something glorious for the outside entrances! Co-chairs **Dail Claridge** and **KC Snyder** are heading up the effort this year and are looking for volunteers to help create the beauty for our holiday season. Our General Manager, Justin, can take names and numbers to pass along. This is a really fun committee to be on, so we encourage your participation at this special time.

I just found out about this

Your editor is an enthusiastic user of the [Peapod](#) delivery service and I always make sure to add a tip that reflects on the usually-more-than-\$200 these drivers schlep to my door in sometimes the worst weather. I found out today that the tip *does not reach the driver as intended*. Peapod (Giant) keeps **half** so the driver gets only his half! This would also mean that those reduced tips are probably counted as ‘income’ and therefore are taxed! From now on I will give my tip as cash to the driver. I hope you will also change your method of tipping, if you have been as obtuse as I had been! *Those drivers will thank you!*



Future Board Meeting Dates

December 17, 2019

2020

January 28

February 25

March 24

April 28

May 19

June 23

July 28

August 25

September 22

October 27

November 17

December 15

Holiday Safety Tips

Everyone wants to have a safe and happy holiday season, but a simple mistake can ruin your holiday. Here are some hints for a safe and enjoyable season:



- Be sure your holiday lights are turned off when you aren't at home and before you go to sleep. Keeps a possible fire from happening AND can lower our electric bill!
- Be sure to get a **tree disposal bag** from the Office if you have a live tree. Slipping it over the trunk before attaching it to the stand means you just pull the bag up to have it all enclosed, eliminating needles all over your floor/carpet, the hallway, the elevator and the lobby! The Office will let you know when you should have your tree at the trash room for special pick up.
- Remember that in our heated units, moisture evaporates quickly so your tree needs plenty of water to keep it fresh; check it daily.
- When you're out shopping, keep your car locked and gifts/valuables out of sight. Shopping bags in the back seat are an invitation to mischief!
- Keep your pets in mind when leaving goodies out for Santa. Some stuff, especially chocolate and poinsettias, are dangerous for them.
- In addition, pets can choke on small ornamental tinsel, bows, and other glittery things as well as light cords.

And this is a good time to remind you FOR your housekeepers: They should take ALL trash from the holidays down to the trash room outside the canopy. All boxes are to be flattened. Smooth out all the paper and fold or roll into a nice bundle. Tape the bundles and the boxes so they're easier to carry and discard properly in the trash room! Remember that the bottom of the trash chute is a **compactor** so it's going to put the chute out of commission to throw cans and bottles and wooden or wire hangers and cardboard boxes down there – which means each of us pays in increased condo fees for those repairs.



There's no business like snow business

It's the time of year when we have to keep our eyes on the weather forecast and be ready for the eventuality of snow. Life on the Knoll can mean pretty slippery-going, so always exercise caution when you venture out during or after a "winter event." The Office has a set of procedures to refer to in the lead-up to snow and ice, including pre-treating sidewalks and steps and outreach to the owners of particular parking spots that are identified for snow storage or that are likely to be blocked in by the plows.

Additionally, the four visitor spaces in the "F" cul-de-sac may be cordoned off to keep the driveway clear. If you park in B-1, B-41, D-1, D-16, F-11, H-1, H-31 or K-1, be sure to stop in the Office the day before moderate snow (more than 2 inches) for arrangements for an alternate parking spot.

Parking spaces are **privately owned property**. Do not shovel snow from your space onto someone else's spot. You are ungenerously gifting them the task of shoveling twice as much snow. We're all in the same boat; let's get through winter storms together!



ALERT ALERT ALERT

We publish this for our Christmas edition because some of our residents have been affected at this Holiday time. Please pay attention so you won't be disappointed or scammed.

There is the possibility that outside shippers may be opening up avenues of mischief, often being unreliable and, even in mid-day, leave packages in front of our doors or (remarkably) outside the building where they may be picked up by someone else. Our suggestion is to **make sure the carriers are those who deliver to the building and are reliable: US Postal Service, DHL, UPS, FedEx.** An even better suggestion might be that you ask that any packages be held at those facilities for your pick-up using your own picture ID, or directing purchase *to your office* during this away-time or holidays. (And consider keeping your credit cards in an RFID (metal frame/lined) holder instead of a wallet or purse.) Remember: packages that arrive after Office closing will NOT be accepted by the guard and WILL BE directed to leave at your Unit door. BTW, the Office can't accept packages unless you've signed that form for us! [Handbook pg 16.]



Winter Must-Haves for your Vehicle

A **shovel** to clear snow from tailpipes and tires; **scrapers** to remove ice and a **brush** to clear it away; **gloves and hand warmers**; a **hat** to keep your ears covered; a **blanket** inside the car; **flares** or **reflective triangles** in case you break down; a **bag of sand or kitty litter** to spread around tires in icy patches; a spray can of **de-icer** for door handles, locks, windows, headlights, and windshield wipers. **Jumper cables** can be life-savers; too many of us don't have them! **Flashlight and batteries** for nighttime emergencies; **water and snacks** would be good, too. And of course your **cell phone and recharger cord!** The best idea: **NEVER, EVER HAVE LESS THAN A HALF-TANK OF GAS!**

December can be the worst month for Scams

From the Fraud Team: "I recently got a friend request on Facebook from someone with whom I'm already connected. Could this be a scam?" Most likely. Scammers are becoming increasingly aggressive using social media to find victims. Often scammers will mimic a legitimate profile to try to generate the interest of their Facebook friends. The most common scams we hear about that use fake Facebook profiles are government grants scams. These scams often come as a fake message from a friend who just received a grant – for a fee – and is recommending that you take advantage of the grant as well. Be very careful of offers on social media that seem too good to be true!

Have questions related to scams? Call AARP Fraud Watch Network helpline toll-free at 877-908-3360. Or online, go to aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.



**Fraud Watch
Network**

Just so our Office knows what's going on

A 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 **9-12:30 and 1:30-4:30, Monday thru Saturday.**] [Handbook pg 17.]



Recommended Maintenance



The “hard water” problem in Alexandria’s water system can make it difficult for us. The Virginia American Water (our supply company) acknowledges the ‘hardness’ of our water by measurement of calcium and magnesium. Hard water levels cause soap to not foam as easily and can also cause a build-up of calcium and magnesium deposits (commonly called ‘lime scale’ or ‘scale’) on metal faucets and shower heads. Treating the build-up of scale every 6-12 months helps to improve the flow. Commercial products are available for removing scale. A safe, inexpensive and effective solution is household white vinegar. A quick Internet search for “[how to clean shower head nozzle](#)” provides some options.

Additionally, naturally occurring silica can cause the aerator screen on your faucet head to clog up as well. Those can be [cleaned](#) by removing the gasket and housing, and remove any debris from the screen.

Goodbye Old Phone!!

It's always great to get a shiny new cell phone! But what to do with the old phone? Well, here's a worthy re-use!



**RECYCLING CELL PHONES
FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY**

By law, cell phones sold in the US must be capable of accessing 911 services. (Look at your phone bill; you pay for this service.) If you have an old cell phone, you can still call 911 if it is charged up. This is where [Secure the Call](#) comes in.

Hundreds of thousands of people in the US are electronically isolated from readily available emergency services. Secure the Call collects unwanted cell phones (that may likely have gone to landfills) and inspects them to ensure the phones work well enough to be reused. They then package them with chargers so the phones can be immediately reused to access 911 services. Finally, the phones are shipped to agencies, companies, and institutions such as Domestic Violence Centers and Senior Citizen Centers across the nation that redistribute the phones to individuals who are in need and possibly at a high risk. You can either go to the web site to print a packing label to send the phone at no charge—totally FREE. Or you can simply drop the phone into the collection barrels in any Alexandria library! And you can get an eligible tax deduction too! ***Isn't giving to a good cause the best gift you can give yourself?***

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS in Alexandria!



Did you know that in 1749, the City of Alexandria was officially established by three Scottish merchants and named after its original founder, John Alexander, also of Scottish descent? Tis true! There's much to see, do, learn and celebrate during the holiday season!

12/1 to 12/6	<u>Holiday Market</u>
12/7	<u>Scottish Walk Parade</u>
12/8	<u>Holiday Boat Parade of Lights</u>
12/14	<u>Kwanzaa Workshop</u>
12/20 & 12/21	<u>Christmas at Mt. Vernon</u>
12/24	<u>Waterskiing Santa</u>
12/31	<u>First Night Alexandria</u>

Find your favorite, or explore [more events](#) than we can list here!



SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA



The ***Friendly Visitor Program*** is offered to Seniors. Carefully screened and trained volunteers are individually matched with socially isolated seniors with whom they visit for at least an hour each week year-round. All seniors are also interviewed regarding their personal history and interests, to facilitate a compatible match. The program enhances the quality of life of seniors in the City of Alexandria by providing social interaction, mental stimulation, and emotional support.

For more information or to refer a senior, call 703-836-4414, ext 120, or email friendlyvisitor@seniorservicesalex.org.

The ***AniMeals on Wheels*** program of SSA works with the Animal Welfare League to form a monthly pet food delivery program for low-income seniors and their pets. These deliveries occur on the second Thursday of each month. Participants have the option of being delivered 10 cans of wet food or 10 lbs. of dry food.

Call 703-836-4414, ext. 113, or email communications@seniorservicesalex.org to participate.

IMPORTANT DATES IN DECEMBER

- ◆ **Knolls Knitters** **Second Sunday of the month, 2 PM**
- ◆ **Board Meeting** **Tue, 12/17**
- ◆ **Happy Hour Club** **Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 PM in the Bar Area**

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

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