



President’s Message by Roshan Patel

I hope everyone in our AKW Family enjoyed their holiday season with their families and loved ones. As we all start preparing for 2022 and getting back to our daily routine, the Office and the Board are busy preparing for the next phases of the Garage Project. The Structural Engineering project will begin in the next several weeks. Other extensive projects that the Board identified (in the November issue of Knolls News) will impact all Residents, to improve the community generally and ensure a safe home for all.

I also want to take some time to thank our Office and Maintenance Staff for all they have done this year and continue to do for all of us. The Staff work on things large and small to keep our building and grounds functioning for our benefit. I encourage every Resident to take a moment and thank these exceptional people for all they do.

Monitoring for further changes in COVID guidelines from Alexandria or the CDC, we are reminded that face coverings for Residents, Staff, and vendors are still required in all building common areas. COVID cases are quickly rising with the new Omicron variant and we all need to do our part to keep everyone safe.

Have a happy and joyous New Year, as we wish for 2022 to be safe, healthy, and successful for all of us here at AKW.

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Reported Financials

The Association is fully funded. Delinquencies are at 3.8% for \$59,113. There are three delinquencies for \$25,603 and 14 comprising the other \$33,509. Most auditors consider an average of 5% to be good.

November

<i>Total Cash and Investments</i>	\$1,900,670
<i>Year-to-Date (YTD) Income</i>	\$1,937,442
<i>YTD Expenses</i>	\$1,827,603
<i>YTD Net Income</i>	\$109,809
<i>YTD Reserve Contributions</i>	\$418,559
<i>YTD Reserve Expenditures</i>	(\$702,476)
<i>Total Reserves</i>	\$1,363,510

BOARD ACTIONS

- **APPROVED** the updated guidelines from the structural engineering firm Falcon Group of how surveys will be handled during the Preliminary Building Assessment. Adjustments will be made for the Resident Interviews; the area drone survey is deleted (15-mi restrictions in our area). The contract with this firm was reviewed and accepted by our AKW Attorney.
- **ACCEPTED** the proposal from Fire & Life Safety America, Inc. (FLSA) for fire alarm monitoring services (formerly held by ADT). The cost is \$750/yr, with a Panel Programming and Activation one-time fee of \$1,500. There will also be an Inspection Fee of \$6,419 annually with possible increases due to labor and materials costs.
- **APPROVED** ETC's estimated schedule for Garage Repairs, generally: there will be some further disruptions on D & C garages for concrete work, to be completed in January. A, B, C, and D repairs are "essentially finished" except for the coating on the B deck (which needs temps above 40 degrees and will be postponed until Spring). The move to the J and H garages will follow on immediately in January; the first order of business will be *exploratory work*, based on earlier experience. ***There will be no overlap of current and proposed work.***



There will be four stages in the Phase for the new Garage Repairs: the east and west halves, and then the north/south transverse. Estimates that it will take about five months, costing about \$118,700 with a \$15,000 offset by repair allowances already in the contract. Based on the earlier experiences, ETC expects that half of the transverse and primary tendons will be severed and so have to be repaired.

Landscape Committee by Rick Treviño

If you normally exit the building on the south side (nearest the tennis courts), you've noticed a major change in the landscape. Those overgrown yews one could barely see over are gone! The shrubs had grown so large with so much dead wood inside, pruning was out of the question. The best option was to get rid of them and the result is a much more open area. The Party Room plantings have been completed. In removing the yew bushes, we were able to reduce the cost to \$1,247 because Environmental Enhancements was working there anyway.



Another change is the patio just outside the party room. That area was also overgrown with old shrubs which have now been removed and all new plantings put in. Many of the new plants are now dormant, so we won't see the results until spring. If you want a preview of what that area will look like, check out the design plan posted in BuildingLink at [Building Library > Committees > Landscape > Landscape Enhancements – Fall 2021](#). By the way, you may remember a tall arbor vitae at the south-east corner of the building that was removed as part of the party room patio renovation. Before it got hauled off, many of its branches were recycled for the holiday greens in the entry planters.



SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA
Partners with this organization for your benefit

Groceries to Go

In partnership with Giant Foods and Safeway, **Senior Services of Alexandria** provides a grocery shopping and delivery program to seniors who are 60+ living in the City of Alexandria. Through the *Groceries to Go Program*, screened volunteers deliver groceries year-round, every other week. Groceries are ordered based off the grocery recipient’s personal shopping list. There are no delivery fees, and no minimum order requirements. Giant, Safeway and Harris Teeter are the stores used in this program.

Currently (during the pandemic), volunteers deliver groceries to the client’s front door. Through this program, SSA volunteers provide a vital link to the community and outside world for seniors who otherwise have limited mobility. This program is an important addition to SSA’s larger Senior Nutrition Program, with the intent of increasing senior safety, health, and nutrition. *To say the least, Volunteers are always needed and welcome (phone number below).* SSA is looking for Spanish-speaking volunteers, to expand their reach to encompass these families.

Eligibility

To be eligible, you must be a resident of the City of Alexandria, be at least 60 years old, have difficulty shopping on your own, and have a debit, credit, or EBT card. If you or someone you know is interested in the *Groceries to Go Program*, contact Sandy Freedman at **(703) 836-4414, ext. 119.**



“Senior Services of Alexandria” is a 501(C)(3) non-profit charitable organization, and as such is always pleased to accept support from residents or from out-of-town owners or grateful families who have moved from the area. They take checks and credit cards for payment. They are also able to take bequests and can even take donations of stock/mutual funds if you’d prefer that method of giving. They may be reached at **703-836-4414** or at **206 No. Washington St., #301, Alexandria 22314.** To give online, go to www.seniorservicesalex.org. Thank you for your generosity.



Legal Services of Northern Virginia

LSNV is the largest legal aid organization in Virginia, helping thousands of clients each year in civil legal matters. They partner closely with other legal aid organizations, state and local bar associations, as well as the courts to serve the region's low-income and neediest populations. Services provided include: Consumer Law; Elder Law; Family Law; Human Trafficking; Housing Law; Public Benefits; Child Advocacy & Education Law; Veterans Law Project; and Support for Re-Entry and Return to Communities. Staff and volunteers provide legal advice, brief services, and representation in administrative hearings and in court. They also deliver community legal education and partner with other community agencies, task forces, and coordinated response teams to find innovative solutions to broader problems.

To learn more go to [Home - Legal Services of Northern Virginia \(lsnv.org\)](http://lsnv.org). To make an appointment call 703-778-6800 or text to 571-444-8548.

A handy-dandy resource for you: The "Directory of Resources for Older Adults and Persons With Disabilities" is a 57-page booklet of all that's available through SSA, covering subjects such as day care centers, adult protective services, assisted living placement, caregiver resources, pension rights center and more! Everything is categorized, alpha-listed with brief explanations of each, plus phone numbers. We have a dozen-or-so that are now in our Library. They're **free**, so please take one if you need it. (If you take the last copy, or they're missing when you look, tell Capri or Judy and we can get more.)



2022 Board Meeting Dates

January 25	February 22
March 22	April 26
May 24	June 28
July 26	August 23
September 27	October 25
November 15	December 20



You've heard this one before

Do you have a smoke alarm? You are strongly advised to get one. The ceiling sensor in your unit (that thing close to your bedroom) is a horn only and is not a fire alarm (as we normally think of it) or a smoke detector. This horn sounds ONLY when someone has pulled the switch in the hallway.

The company that monitors our system is alerted and THEY call the fire department. *The alarm continues until the fire department turns it off!!!* The only way to get away from the awful noise is to leave the building!



Messages from Capri

Garage/Parking: the Intermediate phase should conclude by 12/23. There are approximately 56 vehicles displaced, and much of the visitor parking along the Eastside of the community and in the C Garage is being used to accommodate owners. Please be mindful as this will change as the phases change. All open visitor spaces are listed in Envoy. Be sure visitors are signing in; if not they are subject to towing.

Hallway Improvements: Lighting – Per Resident suggestion to the B&G Committee, a few different light bulbs will be tested and then replaced with the best to improve hallway illumination. Drywall -- The Staff has begun repairs (dings and dents, etc.), trying to complete within the next few weeks. A quarterly inspection will be scheduled to stay current with needs.

Elevator --- The replacement cable has been ordered (per proposal accepted at the November Board meeting) and another scheduled for replacement (covered under maintenance contract). The offending (noisy, rattling) cables have been lubricated and adjusted temporarily. The noise will return; it is not a safety hazard and we are waiting for parts to repair.

FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION *(Shared by Larz Pearson)*



Social Security

SCAM ALERT

The Social Security Administration will never threaten, scare, or pressure you to take an immediate action.

If you receive a call, text, or email that ...



- Threatens to suspend your **Social Security number**, even if they have part or all of your Social Security number
- Warns of **arrest of legal action**
- Demands or requests **immediate payment**
- Requires payment by **gift card, prepaid debit card, internet currency, or by mailing cash**
- Pressures you for **personal information**
- Requests **secrecy**
- Threatens to **seize your bank account**
- Promises to increase your Social Security benefit
- Tries to gain your trust by providing **fake "documentation," false "evidence,"** or the name of a real government official

... it is a SCAM !!!

Do not give scammers money or personal information – Ignore Them!

Protect yourself and others from Social Security-related scams

- **Try to stay calm.** Do not provide anyone with money or personal information when you feel pressured, threatened, or scared.
- **Hang up or ignore it.** If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email, hang up or do not respond. Government employees will not threaten you, demand immediate payment, or try to gain your trust by sending you pictures or documents.
- **Report Social Security-related scams.** If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email that mentions Social Security, ignore it and report it to the [SSA Office of the Inspector General \(OIG\)](#). Do not be embarrassed if you shared personal information or suffered a financial loss.
- **Get up-to-date information.** Follow SSA OIG on [Twitter @TheSSAOIG](#) and [Facebook @SSA Office of the Inspector General](#) for the latest information on Social Security-related scams. Visit the [Federal Trade Commission](#) for information on other government scams.
- **Spread the word.** Share your knowledge of Social Security-related scams. Post on social media using the hashtag #SlamtheScam to share your experience and warn others. Visit oig.ssa.gov/scam for more information. Please also share with your friends and family.

This is the address to use to have your mail held at the Post Office while you are on extended (more than 3 days) absence from the building. The Office is unable to collect any of the mailbox overflow; packages need to be picked up same-day or else leave them with the delivery vendor. The above address is super-effective, super easy to use. Some of our Residents tried this out during a trip away at Thanksgiving and say "It's E-Z P-Z"!

Get the form on your computer (or ask the Office for a copy). Insert your 'start' and 'stop' dates and indicate if you want the mail delivered or if you'll pick it up at the PO. Delivery will be ON the "stop" date, if that's what you choose. If you'll be gone for quite a while, it would be reasonable for you to pick up (since even our new mailboxes can't hold everything from a longer sojourn!). *This is easy! Don't be surprised!!*



We encourage your participation at Board meetings!

Our Community has always encouraged Volunteering by any and all of our Residents. One of the easiest ways is to come to a Board meeting --- still on Zoom since the virus prevents us from meeting in person! -- - and participate by asking questions and by bringing up comments and concerns during the Open Forum for Residents. *(And remember to let Capri know that you'd like to speak so your mic can be opened during the Open Forum.)* Click into the link that will be sent out from the Office (**next one is Tuesday, January 25th at 7pm**), and take part in our very own democratic process of running the building! It takes a *lot* more than just the seven directors. Your expertise can add a lot to our discussions. ***Please join us!***





You'll know if your driver's license is compliant if there's a small star in the upper right corner. Compliant credentials can be used as the federal ID necessary beginning May 2023 to board a domestic flight. REAL ID also impacts access to secure federal facilities and military bases. Some military bases may no longer accept credentials displaying "Federal Limits Apply."

I got mine a couple of years ago (with a 2-hr wait!!). Virginia notified me in November to make an appointment to renew before February expiration. Gosh, it was super easy, the actual appointment was exactly on time and took perhaps 10 minutes to complete! Takes less than 2 weeks to get the license in the mail. When your license expires, make that DMV appointment; there's no waiting like there was previously! If you still need to apply for the REAL ID, make sure to have ALL your documentation ready. For more information: www.dmvNOW.com/REALID.



WE ARE SO LUCKY!

The Resident Elves who did such a fine job of decorating the lobby area were K.C. Snyder, Traci Colodner, and Brian Lee. Accolades continue to Rick Treviño for his glorious outside planters! He was able to use the yew branches from the about-to-be-mulched plants removed from the Patio area. We are blessed with all the talent we have in our Community and thank them sincerely for their time and efforts.

"My bad. My apologies." In our December (holiday) issue of *Knolls News*, we did not say anything about the Chanukkah holiday (which was Nov 28 thru Dec 6) and were brought to task for the omission. I had been told by a couple of Jewish friends how delighted they were that their holiday wasn't being conflated with Christmas, as it had been for several prior years. After wrestling with "do or don't" in setting up the issue, we decided to not go beyond "Happy Holidays." Apparently, this was the wrong answer! We're telling you now that this was not intended to be exclusionary in any way and offer apologies to anyone who may have wondered and felt the omission. We hope and trust our Jewish friends had a delightful holiday.

If you have a holiday tree to discard ...

TrashAway will pick up trees on Wednesday, January 5th and Wednesday, January 12th. **Helpful-to-know** Take your tree (*hopefully wrapped in the tree bag!*) to the Trash Room either the night before OR by 7am on whichever day. There is no charge for these pickups. *If you discard your tree at any other time, you'll be charged for such pickup.* (And we hope you've used a bag, to collect all the needles!)





Below are some safety tips about space heater safety that might be appropriate for this time of year and perhaps some of you didn't already know. If you work for the federal government, you may be aware that they frown on having space heaters in the office; there are reasons for that. When we get cold, all we want is to be warm and sometimes we cut corners or bend the rules in order to do so.

First, when you are shopping for a space heater look for the certification mark such as ETL or UL. These are the marks of companies that test products, including space heaters, to ensure they meet OSHA electrical standards. These companies put the product through multiple safety tests.

You may have heard those pesky safety people telling you not to plug space heaters into an extension cord or surge protector and thought maybe they were just being picky. Not so much. Extension cords and surge protectors are not designed for the load that a space heater puts on them and could cause a fire in a very short period of time. Plug your heater directly into the wall outlet.

A few other things to consider when using a space heater:

- Consider buying a space heater that has a tip-over feature, where the heater turns off if it tips over.
- Another great feature is a timer that you can either *program* to shut off after a period of time or *automatically* shuts off after a certain period.
- Place your heater on a flat surface on the floor, preferably not on a rug, and leave it there. Don't put it on furniture.
- Keep your heater at least 3 feet from the wall, furniture, and any flammable objects.
- Never leave the heater alone in a room while it is on.
- As with any electrical appliance, keep your heater away from a water source.

We are fortunate to live in a concrete building, which prevents spread of fire from condo to condo, but that doesn't mean we can't start a fire in our own units. You may think "stuff is stuff and can be replaced" but fires could also cause you considerable physical and psychological damage as well!

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. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9Du7vEA4oM>

Important Dates in January

- Budget & Finance Committee Tuesday, January 18, 7:00 pm
- Board Meeting * Tuesday, January 25, 7:00 pm

The Board Book with agenda is available in the Office the Friday before the meeting.

* Information on accessing the electronic meetings (using Zoom) will be provided in advance.



Important Phone Numbers



Guard Mobile	571-565-5591
AKW Office Phone	703-751-7541
AKW Office 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
City of Alexandria Info	311 or 703-746-4311



Board of Directors

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Brian Block is a Virginia Notary and offers services to AKW Residents *by appointment* and at no charge. Email brian@akwcondo.com