

## President's Message by Roshan Patel

I want to start this month's **Knolls News** with condolences and prayers to the people of Ukraine and anyone else who the conflict might impact. I hope there is a quick resolution before there is any more bloodshed.

I hope you are looking forward to warmer and longer days as spring is only a few weeks away. As we go into spring, you will see our Landscaping vendor working hard putting in new plants. We are also revitalizing the landscaping near the C/D garage. A big thank you to Rick Treviño and the landscaping committee for making this possible.

Within the next few weeks, we anticipate the building structural review by Falcon Engineering. They will be working with the Board, CMC, and our Staff. If any of our Residents would like to participate, we ask you join the Buildings & Grounds committee.

Thank you.



There are no Financials reported by CMC for December or January.



## **DEADLINE NEARS FOR METRO CARD CONVERSION!**

Starting March 1st, farecards issued before 2012 will not function throughout the transit system because Metro upgraded fare gates at most stations that don't sync with older card. Metro said about 400,000 older SmartTrip cards were active before the pandemic. As of early February, transit agency figures show about 8 percent of those had been converted. **Free replacement cards** are available at Metro Center sales office; through the mail; at hundreds of DC-area businesses; by transferring account balances to a mobile card. For

more information, go to Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority [website](#). *Apparently, the conversion (currently) cannot be made at the station.*

I did find out that the correct first numbers of the serial number on the back of your SmartTrip card has to be **0167**. (Saved me from having to convert my card purchased in 2017.)

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## BOARD ACTIONS, February 25, 2022

- The Apple Federal Credit Union account was closed on February 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Updated the list of signatures for banking and credit card accounts. Additionally, it was suggested that the Home Depot account be changed to a “net 60” business account so that we will be billed monthly instead of having to keep track of a credit card.
- An RFP is being developed by the Safety & Security Committee to receive proposals for possibly replacing our current security company.
- In collaboration with **Knolls News**, the Communications Committee will try to focus on matters specific to our building and grounds (maintenance, repairs, replacements) anticipating what we may see in the Reserve Study over the next months and years.
- **Approved** motion of the Pool Committee to accept the amended proposal from High Sierra, after review by our Counsel, in the amount of \$28,400 for the 2022 season.
- The Landscape Committee reported that it will meet with Environmental Enhancements regarding replacing the areas on the West driveway destroyed for the garage repairs. They also reviewed priorities set in 2021, with no changes.
- **Approved** the proposal of Denzel to install an FX80 Supervisor Advisory Controller in the Boiler Room, for a total of \$2,250.00. Apparently what we purchased last year doesn’t work without this additional part.
- Suggested more vetting of the two Dryer Vent Duct Cleaners’ proposals, the question being the difference in cost. This cleaning process should be done every 3-5 years.
- The Board received only one proposal to repair a leak on the roof. The leak is near the T-Mobile antenna and would require their moving cables during any repair. CMC will follow through with other questions concerning the company that did the repairs earlier.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer approved that CMC move forward with closing the financials for 2021. By approving the year-end financials, CMC will be able to provide variance reports for December and January.

**Budget & Finance Committee Report:** Reviewed Reserves expenditures for 2020 - \$23,210.70 (Garage only); 2021 - \$113,348.39 (Garage, Boiler/HVAC, Plumbing, Other Reserves); and 2022 - \$142,115.30 (Garage at this time).

### **Committee provided the following recommendations and activities:**

Move \$100K from the Morgan Stanley Mutual Funds account to the AKW Operating account at Pacific Premier Bank. Motion was made and Board approved.

Shared list of CDs from Morgan Stanley's Primary Platform. Board decided to not invest at this time since we anticipate Garage Project invoices in the following months.

The Committee continues to look at ways of keeping all Morgan Stanley bank accounts at or under the FDIC insured limit of \$250K.

The Committee will begin reviewing and updating the following AKW Policies: Credit Card Policy, Overtime Procedures, and Investment Policy.

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## BOARD ACTIONS, January 31, 2022 (postponed from 1/25)

- **Approved** updating the Association's Investment Return policy to renew it for one year. The Policy also states that no more than \$200,000 may be invested between two regular Board meetings; not more than \$250,000 may be invested in a single institution across AKW's financial instruments; the investment must mature in not more than six months. The Policy also requires the Treasurer to alert the Board of maturations and further investment suggestions.
- **Reported** that it would not be possible to use transfers from any of our Morgan Stanley accounts to an M/SPBNA Preferred Savings account (with higher returns) as that is for only New Business investments.
- **Approved** moving \$119,000 from the Operating Account into the Sweep Account.
- **Approved** closure of the Apple Federal Credit Union account opened only with minimal deposit made to open it. This was on advice from our Association attorney, Ed O'Connell.
- **Approved** motion for CMC to transfer \$25,000 from the Sweep Account to Reserves, and then opening a (new business) M/S Preferred Savings account with that money. This was the result of ratifying an e-vote made in December.
- **Approved** that \$100,000 in CDs coming due in February should purchase new CDs for no more than six months, at minimal return.
- **Announced** that three Residents had volunteered to staff the Office when Capri and Judy are not available: Traci Colodner, Britton Toothman, and Alyssa Mullins.
- **Ratified an e-vote proposal** for AquaSafe to perform "Severe Cold Damage Pool Inspection" for a total of \$406.85.
- **Reported** that 40 cables in the A-B garages (1/3 of total) had the rubber surrounding them freeze, so further work was delayed for thawing. Work should be completed within the week [this would be the first week in February] and work would then proceed to the H/J garages, as previously described in our January issue of *Knolls News*. This work will continue probably through early Summer.
- The **Pool Committee** reported on and moved to approve the proposal of High Sierra Pools for their swimming pool management agreement. The contract price is \$26,500.
- **Reported** that the contract with Falcon Engineering for the structural audit of our building has been signed. With various weather delays and garage repairs continuing, we do not have a firm date agreed for beginning the audit; the Office and CMC will follow up.
- **CMC Reported** on the Insurance Renewal Process. The Board will review at the March meeting recommendations from CMC regarding the carriers, with a renewal date in April.
- The **Policy Review Process** was discussed generally, citing most of the policies dating from 2016 needing to be updated. Feedback on responsibilities (Board, Office, Counsel) has been requested, and target date for the updates will be decided. Looking ahead, an annual review of these policies would be preferable.



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# Garage Improvement Project: A History and Update

By Rick Treviño

The garage improvement project has affected every one of us in some way, and clearly some more than others. A lot of time has passed since the project was first proposed in 2019, so it seems worthwhile to review its history and provide an update on where we are today. No doubt we also have many new residents who aren't aware of the background.

## How it Started

In the spring of 2020, the then AKW Board of Directors (Board) engaged Engineering and Technical Consultants, Inc. (ETC) to conduct a professional structural engineering study of our parking garages and to provide consulting services. They began with a thorough investigation to evaluate the condition of the structures, including stairs, walkways, sidewalks, and associated waterproofing and drainage systems. The investigation resulted in a report of ETC's findings describing the condition of the garage structures and recommendations for needed work, including a prioritized list of repairs and a very preliminary cost estimate for the work.

## The Findings

As could be expected in a nearly 50-year-old structure, the structural engineering study of the garages found problem areas. The areas of concern included concrete deterioration, deck coating breakdown, foundation cracks, and drainage problems. The study also revealed damaged post-tension tendons (high strength steel cables embedded in concrete that provide the load carrying capacity of the slabs). Much of the damage found was due to age and water infiltration through the concrete, causing the deterioration.

## The Work

After reviewing the findings, the Board authorized ETC to develop the Request for Proposal (RFP) to be used to solicit bids from qualified contractors interested in performing the work. The bid solicitation was coordinated by ETC and the Board ultimately selected Ev-Air-Tight as the construction company tasked with completing the repairs. ETC remained, providing oversight of the project.

Based on the findings of the structural engineering study which indicated the C/D garage was in the worst shape, the decision was made to begin the work on that structure, followed by A/B, and finally H/J. Ev-Air-Tight began work on C/D in March 2021 and finished in January 2022. The degraded concrete and foundation were mended, damaged cables repaired, and drainage was improved. The below-grade waterproofing that was applied means you won't see water intrusion in the garage when it rains. The walkway from the D deck (by the tennis court) to the south sidewalk was also completely rebuilt. A fresh deck coating will provide additional protection to the concrete structure. A paint job brightens up the garage interior considerably.



*(continued)*

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Work on the A/B structure began in August of 2021. Though C/D was expected to be in worse shape than A/B, the opposite proved true. A/B came through with a lot of surprises in the form of more damaged post-tension tendons than were expected which slowed down progress; however, it is now mostly complete. Below-grade waterproofing that will keep the interior of the garage dry and a fresh protective deck coating above will be applied later in summer of 2022 when the weather is warmer. For now, the repaired tendons, plus the new stairs from the B deck to the driveway, better drainage, repaired concrete, and a fresh paint job are already a huge improvement.

The H/J phase finally began February 2022 and is expected to take approximately five months. We will keep you apprised of developments, but much of the same type of work is expected to take place, i.e., concrete and tendon repairs, drainage improvement, and deck coating.

### The Cost

The structural engineering study the Board received in 2020 included a very preliminary cost estimate for planning purposes of approximately \$900,000. As mentioned, once work commenced and hidden problems were revealed, the costs increased for which change orders were submitted for Board approval. As of now, we have paid out just under that amount; however, that also includes parking rental fees at Koons Collision which was not part of the initial estimate, as well as project oversight by ETC. Other costs that were not included in the original estimate were landscape replacement costs since we will be losing all the remaining shrubs along the west driveway when the below-grade waterproofing is applied.

Even though the costs will ultimately exceed the original estimate, there are adequate funds in the Reserve account to cover the cost of the project without exhausting our Reserve investments.

### The Result

All of the garage work is expected to be finished by early summer – almost two years since the project began. Those of us who have lived at AKW the longest do not remember a time when a project lasted this long or caused so much disruption; however, the results of the many months of noise, dust, and inconvenience are three garages that have been fully renovated and are structurally sound. We can expect our garages to last for many more decades and a maintenance plan will ensure this investment is protected.

The Board of Directors and the Management Team and staff thank you for bearing with us. We look forward to the summer when the project is complete, and everyone is back in their respective parking spaces and visitor parking is back to normal.





## Affordable Rental Housing Opportunities

The City of Alexandria's Office of Housing provides housing counseling services for persons seeking affordable rental and accessible housing in the city. Each month, the Office of Housing creates a list of current vacancies in affordable rental properties, including the property name, monthly rent, income requirements, and occupancy limits. An updated list is now available on the Office of Housing's

Renter Resources [webpage](#). If interested in a specific property, please contact the property directly. For questions regarding City housing programs and resources, please call the Office of Housing at 703-746-4990 or visit the Office of Housing's [webpage](#).

### **ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION / CHERRY BLOSSOM PACE CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP**

**Second Saturday of each month 10:30 a.m.— Noon**

Support groups provide a place for friends and family to share valuable information, caregiving tips and concerns throughout the Alzheimer's journey. If you are considering attending a support group, note that schedules and times change occasionally. Please contact the facilitator before attending a group to obtain zoom links or other information about the group. THIS GROUP IS MEETING BY ZOOM.

Please call Karen Profitt at 508-400-1703 to register.

### **INOVA – Northern Virginia Community Health Assessment Survey**

The Northern Virginia Community Health Assessment is a 4-minute, anonymous survey to learn about what is important to people in Northern Virginia and help make this a healthier community. Click on [Northern Virginia Community Health Assessment \(English\) Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](https://survey.monkey.com/survey/organization/chna). If you need assistance, email [CHNA@inova.org](mailto:CHNA@inova.org) or call 703-698-2575. The survey is available in multiple languages.

The Virginia Association Area on Aging Agencies' Senior Medicare Patrols (SMPs) empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education. Call 877-808-2468 if you have questions about Medicare fraud.

## Courtesy in a Shared Community

Courtesy is  
simply doing  
unto others  
what you would  
like them to do  
unto you.

Unknown

QuotePixel.com

One of the nice things (other than the Thank Goodness elevators!) about living in a hi-rise like ours in that we have lots of **grocery carts** available for toting everything from groceries to furniture to pets/children in carriers from the curb to “home.” One of the lousy things about (all those things) is that some folks have difficulty returning them to the trash or storage room so others can use them!

We have only 15 of the carts labeled with our name, and a few of the larger carts left from previous iterations. This means we *don't* have enough that you can keep one in your unit. We need them to be returned to the Trash Room “asap.”

Have you seen a cart all by itself next to the elevator? Or just left in the middle of the hallway? Some folks think this is okay. *It isn't!* If you use it, it's your responsibility to return it to the Trash Room. Same thing with the **hand truck** (dolly) or **luggage cart** – those are supposed to be *signed out* and then returned to the storage area.

These items are for everyone's use on a short-term basis. Please make sure you return them after use, not keeping them overnight. *And let's give an Attaboy to those who do recover those abandoned carts*

### *“Being courteous” goes beyond returning the carts . . .*

. . . and cleaning up after your dog, and keeping noise down, and obeying parking rules. We're talking about people using the gyms outside of their reserved time. This is unfair, inconsiderate, and un-neighborly. When you reserve one of the fitness centers, you do NOT reserve an hour to exercise. You reserve an hour to enter, set up any equipment (including the TV), exercise, wipe down the equipment you used, gather your stuff, and close up the gym.

With so many of us tele-working, many of those folks choose to carve out time for some exercise. Their time out of the workday is precious because of how the reservation system was established. Cut your exercise routine down to 55 minutes to give yourself time to clean up. Use the gym only during your scheduled time slot. And for those who think they can enter the gym when it seems to be quiet, *think again. Thank you!*



### *Good heavens, it's here again – already!*

Before you go to bed on Saturday night (the 12<sup>th</sup>), **reset your clocks for one hour ahead.** That's the “spring forward” that we hear, for the beginning of the seasonal Spring. “Daylight saving time” (DST) is **NOT** observed in Arizona, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. DST lasts this year until Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, and we'll remind you then to “fall back.”

## Beatley Library gives some links to frequently asked questions --



### Library Links:

- Talking Books Service: <http://alexlibraryva.org/talking-book>
- Low Vision Support Group: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/6059094>
- Adult Winter Reading: <https://alexlibraryva.org/adult-winter-reading>
- The Life and Times of Colonel Charles Young: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/6031555>
- Sheila Arnold's Left Behind: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/5937526>
- Local Author Rita Mattia: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/6013226>
- Selling Women's History: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/6158275>
- Outdoor Tai Chi: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/5971066>
- Local Author's Panel: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/6099280>

Manuscripts and Marketing: <http://alexlibraryva.org/event/6086196>

Contact:

Hannah Risley's email [hrisley@alexlibraryva.org](mailto:hrisley@alexlibraryva.org)



### PET REGISTRATION

The City of Alexandria requires dogs and cats to be registered and licensed, meaning that all vaccines must be up-to-date. AKW requires this, too, asking that you report your pet(s) (maximum of two, remember!) residing in the building. Please stop by the Office and have the proper notations made.

*Thank you!*

### **TAX TIME IS HERE! FILE FOR FREE!**

Through April 23 Community & Human Services, 2525 Mt. Vernon Avenue

Saturdays 9am to Noon Wednesdays 6-8pm

**BY APPOINTMENT – 703-831-2918**

*Eligibility: Individuals and Families with income up to \$58,000. Does not include virtual currency, complex investment income, sale of stocks, rental income; self-employment income with inventory, business use of the home, helpers, or losses.*

*Bring with you: IDs for you and spouse if filing jointly; SS card or Statement or ITTN letter for each person to be listed on the tax return; any IRS letters or related to healthcare marketplace; income statements (W-2, 1099-G, 1099-NEC, 1099-R, 1099-SSA); copy of your 2020 return. Other items may be required; call and ask when you're setting your appointment!*



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## **Financial Spring Cleaning Tips** (Abridged, but many thanks to Terri Hansen)

1. Review your credit report. By law you're entitled to order one a year from the three credit bureaus, at no cost from [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). Anything inaccurate? Be in touch with the 'store' and the credit bureau to make corrections.
2. Organize and/or Shred old financial documents. Sort through bank and pay statements, bills and other financial records and keep only those absolutely necessary, keeping anything related to the IRS for 6 years. Don't just toss in the trash; information on these documents will leave you open to identity theft!
3. Record your financial passwords and store records in a safe place. Make sure you're not using the same passwords and log-in information on all your accounts. Even if you're on a secure site, there's always the possibility of being hacked. Storing records can be those encrypted and on a thumb-drive. Store in a safe-deposit box at your bank, especially for stock or bond certificates, for instance, or on an online secure vault.
4. Review your Budget. Is your budget up to date? Noted any increases or decreases in your income? Make sure you're reporting expenses accurately and make some room for savings account contributions. Use a Personal Budget Worksheet to help organize your finances.
5. Set up Automatic Bill Pay. "Spring cleaning" isn't only about de-cluttering, it's also about making things more efficient. Set up auto bill pay linked to your primary checking account. This will eliminate the chances of missing a payment and paying those pesky late fees!
6. Pay off Holiday Debt once and for all! What does your current debt load look like? Spring is a good time to look at your total outstanding debts and see which loans or credit cards could be paid off quickly (and that means saving on the interest charges on those debts!). Cleaning up this debt can put you in a much better financial position for the rest of the year!

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### **You may have heard about these . . .**

In a full-age article in the 'Local Living' section of The Post on January 28, 2021, author Laura Daily says that "Adding a fragrant bath bomb to your tub can transform a routine wash into a relaxing, spalike soak. Although these popular bundles of stress reduction are especially welcome these days, they can pose problems for your plumbing." Birnur Aral, of the Good Housekeeping Institute, warns against common additives such as titanium dioxide (used in cosmetics and sunscreens). Further in the article a plumber, Aaron Mulder with Mr. Rooter Plumbing in San Antonio, gives concise reasons for avoiding adding these 'fats, oils and grease' to the drain pipes. "Drains are slimy and sticky to begin with, so they catch things like [common additives] flower petals, glitters and other add-ons that aren't biodegradable." A total "no-no" is bath bombs and jetted tubs that use pumps to suck water into and force water out of their jets, not being able to filter foreign material. "If you damage the main pump system, you may have to pull out the entire tub." Mr. Mulder and Ms. Aral suggest using a screening material (panty hose or jewelry bag) to hold the bath bomb. It will activate in the water but catch larger particles.

Go to [localliving@washpost.com](mailto:localliving@washpost.com) for the entire article. Whether you buy them or make them yourself, this is a very helpful and informative piece. Think of this in connection with possible leaks in our building pipes – for which you may be liable!



## Important Dates in March

- Budget & Finance Committee \* Tuesday, March 15, 7:00 pm
- Board Meeting \* Tuesday, March 22, 7:00 pm

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

\* Information on accessing the electronic meetings will be provided in advance.

## 2022 Board Meeting Dates

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



When someone calls you from the Security Door downstairs and you need to buzz them in, **press 9** on your phone.



## Important Phone Numbers

Guard Mobile	571-565-5591
AKW Office Phone	703-751-7541
AKW Office email	<a href="mailto:office@akwcondo.com">office@akwcondo.com</a>
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

Roshan Patel, President	<a href="mailto:roshan@akwcondo.com">roshan@akwcondo.com</a>
Rick Treviño, Vice President	<a href="mailto:rick@akwcondo.com">rick@akwcondo.com</a>
Brian Block, Secretary	<a href="mailto:brian@akwcondo.com">brian@akwcondo.com</a>
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