

*James/Kilmer*

❧ *Condominium Association Newsletter* ❧

Susan Geffen, Editor; Schoen Smith, Associate Editor



**SPRING IS HERE!**

## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

*The Newsletter is slightly different this time. After all, spring is a time for change. You will see that some columns do not appear. They'll come back, of course, when there is relevant/seasonal information to share.*

*While we do have some "softer," personal items in this issue, there is more of an upfront emphasis on news. In a few weeks, you will receive a survey asking your opinion. Should our newsletter be even shorter and more like a bulletin that comes out more often? Do you prefer the longer, more varied format? What articles did you miss? Which ones should we eliminate? Should it be online only, or do you like having a hard copy in your hand as you read? It's your newsletter and it should be exactly the way you want it.*

*Also, in the spirit of change, we're re-starting the "Hallway Renovation" Project, updating our Rules, and more. All to increase the value of our properties and the quality of our life at J/K. Read on!*

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## MANAGER'S CORNER

### By Tom Kristufek, J/K Property Manager

#### Capital Projects Update:

- This quarter, the Board of Directors has approved two major planned capital improvements: The James House freight elevator modernization project and the domestic water horizontal pipe replacements (above the 43<sup>rd</sup> floor and lobby). The pipe replacement project is scheduled to start on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> and will entail building water shut downs during regular business hours. (Particularly at the beginning of the project until localized valves are installed). Management will communicate more detailed information closer to that date, via the email blast system and informational posting frames. There will be two phases of work: First, will be the work above the 43<sup>rd</sup> floor ceiling, which is expected to take about 6-7 weeks to complete. The second phase will be in the lobby (those pipes above the ceiling) and will take approximately two months to complete, or until late July/early August. There will be scaffolding set up in the lobby during this phase; but otherwise residents will be able access the elevators and mailboxes.

Although scheduling has not been confirmed, the elevator project may begin as soon as the first phase (43<sup>rd</sup> floor) of the pipe replacement project is complete. This project, which will require one freight car down at a time, is expected to last approximately eight weeks per car. Management anticipates that this project will take place mid-June or July through October. More details about this project will be announced closer to, but well in advance of, the start date.

#### Smaller Scale Important Upcoming Projects:

- **Roof Anchorage System:** This year, OSHA regulations require that a roof anchorage system be installed before buildings can perform window washing or any other work on the building roof or elevations. Therefore, the window washing this year will be delayed. At the March Board of Directors meeting, the Board approved monies to be allocated to roof anchors. Management is working to coordinate their installation. The window washing company indicated that the anchors could be installed by late April / early May, at which point washing will be scheduled. It is my goal to wash the windows in May and again in early August, resuming the buildings' annual regular schedule.
- **New Heat Exchanger serving Low Plumbing Zone:** In an effort to continue consistent hot water service to James House floors 3-23 and Kilmer House, the older heat exchanger will be replaced. It will be installed shortly after delivery in April. This will make the fourth of four domestic water heat exchangers replaced during the past year.
- **New Electrical Panel Serving House Pumps and Chiller:** Before the start of the cooling season, a new electrical panel serving the chiller and domestic water pumps will be installed. This will entail running a temporary generator for the day of installation, so that we maintain power to the house pumps. Most likely the generator will be placed in front of James House. More details will be announced closer to the date.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### By Judy Barnes, President, J/K Board of Directors

A James/Kilmer Board Task Force (TF) was appointed in early 2016 to undertake the major project of the J/K Association Rules Update. This Task Force includes: Barb Mueller (Board VP) as Chair, Susan Geffen (Board Secretary and Communications Director) and Dave Beck (Board Director).

From my anthropological education/experience along with my Condo Association perspective, ***rules are to be guidelines and boundaries for behavior with the goal of preserving physical assets for owners and providing owners/residents with a respectable community structure and environment in which to live. The J/K Board has a fiduciary responsibility for completing a Rules Update, as well.***

A J/K Rules Update Project has not been completed with final Board approval since 1999—not because there have not been previous, credible efforts. There certainly have been! But the enormity and length of the task itself and the appropriate approval process make it a very challenging endeavor.

This TF has been working steadily for 16 months with hundreds of hours devoted to the review of:

- All old rules
- Separating processes from rules
- Deciding what/how the rules should be formatted and restated/updated
- The creation of new rules as a result of new or updated facilities (e.g. the roof deck)
- The creation of new rules driven by changing 'community living behaviors' driven by J/K demographic shifts over time

To date, this current effort has not simply been the work of the task force. The current draft updates are being reviewed by our Management Company (Property Manager and Supervisor). Also, the Board has completed 3-4 working sessions reviewing draft updates of the Rules, and will be scheduling 3-4 more working sessions to complete the review. I want to thank both Barb Mueller and Susie Geffen, in particular, for the incredible number of hours they have invested to diligently electronically record the updates and board changes arising from each working session.

When the Board review is completed, the proposed draft will be sent for legal review by David Sugar, our J/K Attorney. At an appropriate point, a draft of the rules update will be shared with owners with an evening meeting scheduled to receive owner comments prior to being presented for formal Board approval at an open Board meeting.

The diligence and team effort it has taken to bring this project to fruition with the task force, our Management Company, the diverse discussions within our 9-member Board, the legal review and owner review is exemplary. The reward will be an excellent J/K Association Rules Update of which we can be proud.

**ENGINEER'S CORNER**  
**By Freddie Arnett, J/K Chief Engineer**

Hello Everyone,

At last, spring is in the air and preparations are being made for the upcoming cooling season. If you have not scheduled a maintenance check on your heating/cooling unit, now would be a good time to do so.

During the next filter change, The Maintenance Department will be checking all drain pans and pouring water into each to make sure there is proper flow.

**Request:**

Please do not leave your smoke detectors on your balconies. The sound gets really loud causing disturbance to your neighbors.

Thank you.

Freddie

**J/K CORRIDOR RENOVATION PROJECT**  
**Nancy Slattery and Lynn Conner**  
**Co-Chairs/Corridor Renovation Committee**

Great News! The Corridor (Hallway) Project is back on track. It has been nearly two years since the project was put on hold.

A Schematic Design Kickoff meeting was held on March 29th in the South Penthouse Room of James House. Our designer, Wendell Gooch, of Gooch Designs, and his team joined us. Much of this first meeting was spent going over new budget projections for each building.

The Committee and the design team are aiming to begin the actual construction of the new corridors at the beginning of 2018. Prior to that there will be regular Corridor Committee meetings, updates at Board Meetings and in the Newsletter. So, we will be sharing information with you all along the way.

We had a good turnout for this first meeting, and we welcome all to come and observe as we go forward with this very exciting project.

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

### Bill Winter, Community Activities Committee Chair

The J/K Activities Committee recently met and welcomed residents interested in seeing what's going on. It was very productive and great to see new faces and hear new ideas. Hope you all enjoyed the Cubs opening game gathering on April 2.

#### WHAT'S BEING PLANNED

The Committee is investigating whether there is sufficient interest in starting a group for residents who would like to play cards or board games. Once we have determined how much interest there is, we'll focus on a specific activity.

Please share any interest you might have at: [jkactivities@icloud.com](mailto:jkactivities@icloud.com)

We are also in conversation with Wintrust Bank with regard to their informational workshops that might be of interest to our residents. We'll pass this information along to you as events are scheduled.

#### NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

The next J/K Activities Committee meeting will be Monday, April 24, 7:00 pm, in the Penthouse. We will begin discussing the second annual summer event on Friday, July 21, as well as the above possible activities. All J/K residents are welcome.

Thanks so much for your interest!

Your J/K Activities Committee  
[jkactivities@icloud.com](mailto:jkactivities@icloud.com)

## OUR AMAZING STAFF: Beny and Lazar

Beny David and his nephew Lazar have been a team for 21 years. Lazar was actually born in Beny's house in Chicago where the whole family lived: brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins. The minute Beny laid eyes on Lazar; he became a second father to him. They lived together, played together, and now work together.



Photo by esteemed photographer Arthur I Reich

**Q: You didn't want to do this interview. Why?**

**Beny:** I'm shy and very private. But when Lazar said we could do it as a team, I said "yes." We've been a team for a long time.

**Q: You work as a team here at J/K, too, right?**

**Beny:** Yes. We're responsible for the first part of the night shift. We love making the buildings shine while everyone is asleep.

**Lazar:** We clean, we restock; we do everything that needs doing and take great pride in that.

**Q: What did you do before you came here?**

**Beny:** I worked with Lazar's father in a factory that makes designer handbags.

**Q: Designer Handbags?!!! So do you have an "in" to, say, get one for someone....?**

**Beny:** No, Susan, no.

**Q: What did you do before this?**

**Beny:** I wanted other experiences, and I have 6 kids. I wanted to add to my income, of course. I was working in another building, when Jim Beichel called and said they needed help here. So here I am.

**Q: And do you like it?**

**Beny:** I love it here. I'm happy. Especially now since Lazar is with me.

**Lazar:** I had been working retail since I was 16 and never found it that satisfying. So when my Uncle Beny asked me if I would be interested in interviewing here, I thought "Why not?" I was very excited when I got hired.

**Q: And you're happy here, too?**

**Lazar:** It's a very different environment. People are friendly. We feel acknowledged and appreciated.

**Q: I heard that there's a whole thing about your name.**

**Lazar:** The way my name is written in script on my shirt it looks like "Logan", "Larry", "Lorenzo," I've been called them all of them here.

**Q: But everyone knows who both of you are.**

**Beny:** This building is like our home. And we take care of it together.

**Lazar:** We're a team, plain and simple. Always have been. Always will be.

## **Updates**

### **By Judy Barnes, J/K President**

#### **North/Clark:**

Having spoken to both the Golub Group and Howard Weiner (CDC), here is the latest. The Golub Group is finalizing details with Howard's group on the timing of the land sale which should be final within 30-45 days. The Golub Group plans to set up a Development Marketing/Sales Center in the neighborhood (probably on Wells). As they work through it all, they'll be able to provide us with demolition timing, and other project details. Concurrently, the individuals who had purchased units are being queried by CDC as to their interest in retaining their contracts.

#### **Alderman Hopkins:**

**The Alderman will be at J/K to speak at 6:30 pm on May 23 (prior to the Board Meeting) in the South Penthouse Room.** One week in advance, please provide any topics you would like him to address by submitting them directly to the Management Office or in our Suggestion Boxes.

**Also, see the information about the FREE Shredding Event on April 22 in both the HOA report and "Did You Know". And plan to attend!!!!**

**Judy Barnes, J/K President**

## HOA REPORT

### By, Marcie Johnson, Barb Fiacchino and Dave Beck

Alderman Brian Hopkins spoke before the Sandburg Village HOA Board of Directors at their meeting March 29. **Below is a review of the topics he discussed:**

#### Crime:

High on the list, at the recent City Council meeting, was the societal effect of crime. Most of the offenders in our area come from other neighborhoods. To try to combat this, \$500,000 was allocated to each ward to work with police, do job training and provide summer jobs.

#### Development:

The Mark Twain hotel on Division will be refurbished and the current storefronts will be closed. No decision yet on the 7-11 store. The hotel is in Ald. Burnett's Ward. The Fifield development of the Sinclair and the Jewel will have a security force to help monitor the Clark/Division area for both character and activity recognition. The Marcello's area requires a zoning change that is awaiting approval. 101 North has not closed the sale to a new owner.

#### Rats:

He is aware of the problem. The City has increased rat patrols. They have been trying dry ice and birth control pellets. Call the Ward Office --312-643-2299--if you see rats.

#### Summer Police Patrol at North Avenue Beach:

There will be increased bike patrol at the beach coordinated with monitoring the Chicago/State and Division/Clark subway stops.

#### Motorcycle Noise:

The Alderman is working with the State Legislature on a bill to impound motorcycles after three tickets for noise. There will be noise control monitors on Lake Shore Drive and the Board requested them on Clark and LaSalle.

#### Germania and Sandburg Terrace:

Mr. Hopkins has been working with the previous developer of the 101 North project and the contractors for the North Mall and J/K. He will need to work with the new developer when the sale is finalized. He is aware of the potholes, ponding and handicap ramp.

#### How to assist the Alderman:

He suggested getting involved with CAPS, Court Advocacy and speaking up when you see something suspicious.

#### Other Community News:

In conjunction with State Representative Feigenholz, **Free Paper Shredding** will take place **April 22 at 1254 N. State**. Electronics can be recycled. The Cook County Sheriff's Office will accept expired or unwanted prescription drugs. You can donate gently-used workplace clothing as well as old bikes. Cradles to Crayons will accept new and gently-used goods for children ages newborn to 12.

**Clean and Green** needs volunteers. To register, call our 2nd ward Alderman Brian Hopkins' office. (312) 643-2299. (*See "Did You Know" for more information*)



## TREASURER'S REPORT

By Betsy Latson, J/K Board Treasurer

### Finance Committee:

March is seasonally a quiet month for the Finance Committee. Activity is expected to pick up in April when the Committee convenes to review the draft 2016 audit. Marcum, our accounting firm, has been working on the audit and cost allocation study. We anticipate receiving the 2016 draft shortly, and plan to schedule our first finance committee meeting in mid-to-late April. Unit owners will be notified of the date and time and are welcome to attend.

### Financial Report:

Meanwhile, we can provide an update on J/K's performance for the first two months of 2017. Through February 2017, the J/K Association reported revenues of \$988,000 which were \$43,000 below budget due primarily to lower garage revenue and, to a lesser degree, lower move-in-move-out fees and lease process fees.

Garage revenue was under budget by \$27,000 for several reasons. The garage currently has 18 fewer resident monthly parkers due to a higher population of renters. These residents turn over their garage spaces more frequently than owners do and often do not have cars. Additionally, our garage construction project has reduced the number of day parkers. Lastly, Germania Place is being used for Lion King performance practices, and, as a result, we are not collecting as much revenue from Germania Place parking. At the same time, garage expenses have increased because more hikers have been needed during the construction project. We expect to see a gradual improvement in garage income beginning in April as Germania reopens for its regular events. The garage construction project concludes in June which will enable us to serve more day parker customers. Monthly resident parking may take a while to bounce back. Garage management is working on other revenue generating ideas to supplement any monthly parking weakness once the construction project is completed.

Operating expenses were \$1,065,000 and were higher than budget by \$19,000 largely due to garage repairs which were \$13,000 over budget. The garage repairs include the repainting and repairing of the garage management office related to the construction project. Utility expenses were also artificially inflated by \$48,000 because the year-to-date 2017 figures include the December 2016 gas bill. That gas bill will be backed into 2016 when the audit is completed. As a result, at the end of February 2017, the J/K Association reported an operating deficit of \$77,000.

On the capital side, J/K reported net income of \$188,000 at the end of February 2017. J/K capital reserve income amounted to \$199,000 with only \$11,000 in capital expenditures.

At the end of February 2017, the J/K operating fund cash balance was reported at \$122,035 and the J/K capital fund cash balance was reported at \$5,559,161. The bank loans have now been reduced to \$384,746.

**Board of Directors Meeting  
March 28, 2017  
Hospitality Room  
Executive Session 6:30 PM – 7:00 PM (Closed)**

**7:00 PM**  
Board Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Minutes from the February 28, 2017 Regular Board Meeting (Action Item #1)**
- III. Management Report**
- IV. Treasurer’s Report**
- V. Committee and Task Force Reports**
- VI. Owners’ Forum (15 Minutes)**
- VII. Action Items**
  - **Approval of Proposal for Cooling Tower Repair (Action Item #2)**  
*Approved*
  - **Approval of Proposal for Electrical Work Related to Freight Elevator Modernization Project (Action Item #3)**  
*Approved Dunning Electric*
  - **Approval of Proposal for 43<sup>rd</sup> Floor Ceiling Insulation (Action Item #4)**  
*Approved not-to-exceed amount.*
  - **Approval of Proposal for Roof Anchorage System (Action Item #5)**  
*Approved not-to-exceed amount.*
  - **Approval of Gas and Electricity Purchase (Action Item #6)**  
*Approved not-to-exceed amount*
  - **Approval of Remodeling Requests (Action Item #7)**  
*Approved*
- VIII. New Business, if any**
- IX. Adjourn Meeting**

## OWNERS' CORNER

By Susan Geffen, Editor and Board Secretary

**This column is dedicated to answering any questions you might have about our J/K Community. To have your question appear here, just slip a note in the Suggestion Box right outside the Management Office, or come to the Board Meetings and ask.**

*How do we know if we need a new drip pan in our HVAC system?*

The office has a record and is notifying owners. If you haven't been notified, but want your drip pans checked, call the office and maintenance staff member will do it.

*There are two major projects coming up for those of us who live on the 43<sup>rd</sup> floor: the ceiling is being re-insulated and pipes are being fixed and reinstalled. What's being done to make sure the air quality stays good during that time?*

Management is very sensitive to this. There will be a general contractor overseeing these projects to make sure the air quality stays where it should be.

*I've noticed how much cleaner everything is...the laundry room; the fitness room; everything. Just wanted to mention it.*

You're not the only one to see and remark about the difference. There is now a special emphasis on cleaning headed up by Jim Beichel our Assistant Engineer.

*Can you review who does what in the office? Many times I'm in a rush, poke my head in and tell whoever is there what I need. I know that's an imposition.*

It's tempting for all of us to just tell whomever what we want or go straight to Tom. But there are clearly defined areas each person is responsible for so we all get the best, most efficient service. Below is a listing of who does what.

### **Management Office Staff Duties:**

**Kathy Burgess, Administrative Assistant:** Resident information/ questions, website updates, work orders, elevator reservations for moving and projects.

**John Zissis, Bookkeeper:** Assessment issues, accounts payable/receivable, unit sales.

**Nichelle McFarlin, Assistant Manager:** Resident relations, door staff relations, rules violations, unit remodeling projects; registrations for bike, pets, and fitness room, rentals, building inspections.

**Tom Kristufek, Property Manager:** Oversight of all major projects, contracts, building inspections including infrastructure, budget preparation, administration, employee relations.

**Owners' Corner, cont'd**

*I know the Newsletter doesn't usually feature obituaries, but I wonder if an exception can be made. Lee Meyers was a longtime resident here and known by many.*

Sure. (Taken from the obituary in the Chicago Tribune)

Lee F. Meyer, 95, of Sarasota FL, former Chicago resident for 54 years died peacefully March 18. Lee received her BA in Drama from Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee where she met Leonard Meyer, married shortly after V - J Day, then moved to Hyde Park in Chicago where he began teaching. Later as mother of three, she supported her husband's career becoming the consummate hostess, entertaining University of Chicago guests ranging from Flannery O'Connor to Aaron Copeland. A later career was as a successful realtor, after which she enjoyed a job introducing important newcomers in government and business to the city of Chicago. She retained her self-deprecating humor, grace and wit well into her 90s.

*I think it would be nice if you included pictures of the writers of each article. I know most of them, but not all.*

We talked about your idea, but most of the contributors didn't want their pictures in the Newsletter.

*I want to compliment the office and the entire staff for doing such a great job. Would you print the letter I shared with some of them?*

Here 'tis:

“Tom, our Property Manager, has consistently maintained timely and informative email communication with us regarding all projects from broken elevators or pipes to special projects such as the garage renovations. He has also been personally responsive to any owner's issues with their unit, their floor or in the public areas as it relates to heat and a/c units, replacement of carpet, or maintenance issues. Our Assistant Manager, Nichelle, is also very helpful. She is always friendly (and fun!) and is open to hearing residents' concerns and addressing them quickly and effectively. John and Kathy always listen attentively and are warm and responsive to questions regarding billing/assessments, maintenance orders and/or any miscellaneous issues.

The engineering staff not only extended themselves when handling pipe and plumbing issues, they have also been helpful to residents in answering questions and going above and beyond to ensure things are working properly. Our garage staff has had to work twice as hard this past year and has remained exceptionally patient, organized and tenacious during the North Mall Project.

And last, but not least, our Door Staff. Not only do they create the first impression of J/K to our visitors, but it is their welcoming presence and personal touch in assisting us that makes us feel “at home.” Given all of the ongoing projects, the staff has extended sensitivity, compassion, and flexibility and service to us. I wanted to make sure that they know their hard work and efforts are noticed and greatly appreciated.” Loren Mercola, Owner

**Keep talking. We're listening!**



## DID YOU KNOW???

By Barbara Mueller,  
VP - JK Board of Directors



**Proper procedure for your sluggish drains:** Maintenance strongly suggests you don't use commercial drain clog remover products as they may damage the pipes (regardless of what it says on the bottle). The preferred product is *RENOWN Alkaline Drain Opener*. You can request it through the Management Office during business hours or after hours through the door station and they will pass the request to the maintenance staff. *RENOWN* costs \$8.00 a bottle and can be added to your assessment bill or paid by check (no cash). Should your drains be severely clogged, you can request a work order from the Management Office or online at [JKservicerequest@communityspecialists.net](mailto:JKservicerequest@communityspecialists.net). For further Maintenance tips check on the J/K website under "Maintenance".

**Reminder:** It's time to complete your **2017 Senior Sewer Rebate Application**. If you meet the criteria, which many of you do, you will be entitled to a \$50 rebate. You can find the application forms in the J/K Management Office along with a copy of our Association's most recent water bill which you will also need to provide. Completed applications and all necessary paperwork should be submitted before July 1<sup>st</sup> and mailed to the 2nd Ward Office located at 1400 N. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622. (I know it seems far away-but this is one of those things that-- if you're not careful --- keeps winding up on the bottom of your to-do pile. When it finally floats to the top, it's December. ☺)

Chicago's citywide **Clean and Green** being held on Saturday, April 22, 2017 is an opportunity for groups to team up and help beautify areas in their neighborhood. The city will provide brooms, rakes shovels, bags, etc. needed for the cleanup project. Deadline for the Registration is Wednesday, April 19th. Call Brian Hopkins' office. (312) 643-2299.

**The HOA Report details the Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> FREE Shredding Event.** Please note again that this Earth Day event includes the disposal of unwanted prescription drugs. (I underline it, because it's hard to find a place nearby where you can safely dispose of old medications. If you're anything like me, you probably have bottles of pills that are 10 years old lying around!)

**Public Safety Seminars:** On March 15, Alderman Brian Hopkins sponsored a Public Safety seminar at Latin School. (There have been recent robberies in our area.) There will be more of these seminars, so stay tuned.

**Broken English Taco Pub** is a recent addition to Old Town and is located at 1400 N. Wells. I haven't been there yet, but their website states they have \$2.00 taco Tuesdays from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Sounds like a plan!



**The Un-Poem**

**This issue has no mighty poem  
And there's no doubt about it,  
That some will say, "That's A-Okay."  
Others will not live without it!**

**We'll see when our small survey's done  
Who says "Yay" or "Nay."  
And then we'll either have the rhyme  
Or it may go away!**

**Stay tuned.....**