

# James/Kilmer

Condominium Association Newsletter

Editor: Diana Cardenas



## Interview with our JK Property Manager

**Judy Barnes, JK Association Board of Directors**

**A. You will have been the JK Property Manager for 3 years on May 18. What messages would you like to deliver to residents given your observations and the JK projects with which you have been involved in these 3 years?**

I think it is important for residents to understand:

**That this is a very complicated job and requires focusing on a plethora of people, events and projects that are all moving at the same time and usually at different speeds.**

**But it is also important for residents to understand that my staff and I are here to help you.**

**But we need to work together to that end.**

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The job requires the discipline of being able to prioritize issues and strategically plan to coordinate activities and provide the best overall service to the Association. One need only to consider the projects that this office is doing or has done these past 3 years:

- James House resident window replacement,
- James House façade restoration,
- James House installation of penthouse and ground floor windows,
- James House painting and balcony resurfacing,
- Updating the Penthouse appearance/décor and creating temporary offices for external project staff,
- James House roof replacement,
- James House metal sheathing replacement,
- Kilmer House façade, balcony, patio wall restoration,
- Kilmer Window resealing,
- Com Ed vault replacement,
- 10-year Chiller rebuilds,
- Both J/K Laundry Rooms remodeled and so forth-- (multi-million dollars in the aggregate).

These projects, in addition to the day-to day requests for service, directing and managing staff, financial analyses, budgeting and many other operational requirements, make for an interesting and challenging workload.

**B. Tell me a little about your background and what you are able to offer JK in terms of skills and experience?**

I came out of the Marines and worked in the trades as an electrician for a number of years. During that time, I went to night school and earned a BS in Electrical Engineering. After working in another capacity, I continued night school and obtained an MBA. I was involved with the World Trade Center starting from excavation, construction, moving in the first tenants, and ended up as the 'Manager of Operations'. Also, I have heavy commercial building management experience, having worked for an international real estate developer handling large projects-- such as doing major upgrades e.g. lobby renovations. Having said all of this, I bring a particularly unique blend of construction and project management experience to the job, coupled with the ability to do financial analyses, strategic planning and staff management—so I bring a broad cross-functional set of skills to JK.

**C. You came at a time when major projects were about to start. How were you able to gain a quick understanding of what was going on?**

I attended all of the meetings, asked questions and, except for the specifics unique to JK, understood what was going on. I read quite a bit of specific JK background material and took on a direct role in negotiating with contractors to obtain price reductions and discounts on materials to benefit the Association. On a daily, operational basis, I also come in early, walk the buildings, make note of things and have a current strategic and operational picture that

gives me a good sense of what is going on in the Association. From that I can disseminate direction and information to the staff so we focus our short term and longer term operational projects on things that bring the most benefit.

**D. What were some of the challenges in understanding the issues at hand?**

I thought that not having been here to experience and participate in the developments that led to the undertaking of the major projects was a drawback at first. Fortunately, there has been very good record keeping and documentation at JK and, with some diligence, it was easy to gain an understanding of the specific JK issues. Also, keep in mind that some of the issues here are very similar to those at other condominium properties I have managed. These are inherent issues in condominium management—so they are strikingly similar.

**E. What have been some things that you have learned in working here?**

1. I have learned about some projects that I had not been involved with before-- such as a window replacement project.
2. In spite of my being a person of action, I have learned to be patient.
3. I continually learn to NOT take things personally.
4. I learn to begin each day as a NEW, positive start.

**F. What are you most proud of accomplishing?**

The most interesting and challenging thing for me was to have the Com Ed vault replaced. It was stimulating to come up with a plan for garage ingress and egress. There was a tremendous amount of coordination and traffic control required with the pre-school drop offs, the Thursday morning Ace Hardware semi-truck deliveries, the daily morning trash collection and the removal of old James windows—all created some special traffic logistics and people management challenges. On many mornings, the only site exit (to North Avenue) was blocked off by illegal parkers as well! I probably called 911 ten times to have these vehicles ticketed. I was on a first- name basis with the officer who usually responded. Each ticket cost the vehicle owner \$100.

**G. How are you developing your staff and also addressing staff problems and issues?**

I develop staff by:

1. Always letting them know what is going on.
2. Explaining WHY things need to be done and in WHAT manner.
3. I meet one- on- one to encourage staff and to counsel at the same time.
4. Finally, the annual reviews required by D&K afford the opportunity to take a look at performance over the past year and implement effective measures for improvement.

I address staff problems and issues by:

1. Identifying personnel who don't seem to 'get the word and don't go along' with our management direction and the need for changing their behavior and actions.
2. We always counsel these people and trust that they will get our message.
3. If they don't, then we take action and have done so with several persons since I have been here.

**H. What is your current assessment of the buildings and infrastructure?**

I feel that after completion of the James House balcony/painting project and then finally after the lateral pipes are replaced in both buildings, we will be in good shape from an infrastructure standpoint. There are not any other near-term issues with other building systems. On the other hand, the buildings appear tired and need upgrades-- such as hallway renovations and the remodeling of the penthouse.

**I. What are things JK needs to do to improve “Curb Appeal”?**

This is a tough one in that everything beyond the building footprint is the responsibility of HOA and many residents do not understand that. They also do not realize that the HOA maintenance staff is very small in relationship to the size of the Sandburg Village campus. Nevertheless, we need to focus on some of the HOA areas, improve policing, and provide trash and cigarette receptacles in strategic places. This was done in the past and residents complained about how these fixtures took away from the appeal of the front entrances—but it was either providing receptacles or continuing the nuisance of picking up/sweeping up cigarette butts. We also need to take a more pro-active role in influencing the landscape installations around the buildings.

**J. What sorts of things have made the job more difficult for you?**

1. We have residents who want to manage how this office works without any appreciation, experience or knowledge of what is involved with taking care of all the property, project, and people issues.
2. We also have a small number of residents who create operational problems by not allowing access to their units for planned work—for example, during the James House window replacement and the recent RCN signal optimization inspection and survey. These types of behaviors interfere with the orderly operation of the Management Office and Association’s projects—thus creating inefficiencies and additional costs to the Association.

**K. Are there any things or situations at JK that you find unacceptable?**

There are a few residents who continue to be very abusive. They seem to be unhappy living in a community setting and can’t find anything nice to say about the property, the staff or their neighbors. I further experienced it first hand when I had the Manager’s information table in the James House lobby where they were openly abusive and clearly also wanted an ‘audience’ to hear it. This was very upsetting to experience.

**L. How can we work better from a resident/staff perspective to make this a wonderful place to live?**

The most important thing for me, as I said upfront, is that I would like readers to take note that **my staff and I are here to help you. We are service providers. We can be of maximum assistance if we are able to discuss issues in a businesslike, respectful and neighborly manner.** We want everyone to enjoy living here and we want to provide a clean, comfortable and safe environment within the constraints under which we operate. We understand that

things go awry and that there can be communication lapses which will occur in an association of our size. We regret these things; we work hard to prevent them-- but sometimes they are beyond our control. The more we work together and focus on the positive aspects of James Kilmer, the better things will be for all of us.

**M. What are the things that make JK a nice place to live?**

JK is nicely positioned with many nearby restaurants, businesses and services available in the surrounding neighborhoods. We have ready access to Lake Michigan, North Avenue beach, excellent public transportation, the surrounding parks and the quiet streets east of here-- which allow residents to change the landscape by walking a few blocks. Finally you will find that the majority of JK residents are outgoing and friendly. Most importantly, they are very supportive of their neighbors. We see this all the time when medical and other emergencies arise and when residents need care for their pets.



**Upcoming Meetings and Events**

- **Board of Directors**  
May 1st, 7 p.m.,  
Penthouse
- **Smoke Detector and Door Closer Deadline**  
May 1<sup>st</sup>
- **Pool Registrations**
  - James- May 10<sup>th</sup>,  
4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
  - Kilmer – May 11<sup>th</sup>,  
5:00-7:00 p.m.

**GERMANIA PLACE  
EVENT LISTING**

**May 2012**

5/5/2012	Wedding	160 guests
5/12/2012	Wedding	250 guests
5/25/2012	Wedding	175 guests
5/26/2012	Wedding	225 guests
5/27/2012	Wedding	200 guests

**June 2012**

6/1/2012	Wedding	250 guests
6/2/2012	Wedding	200 guests
6/9/2012	Wedding	200 guests
6/11-6/15	Camp	150 guests
6/16/2012	Wedding	250 guests
6/22/2012	Wedding	200 guests
6/23/2012	Wedding	300 guests
6/30/2012	Wedding	200 guests

## Property Manager's Corner

**Richard Vicens, JK Association Property Manager**

### **RCN Services**

RCN completed the wiring signal inspection in all James House and Kilmer House units. They were not able to get into some units because the owners would not let them in. Nevertheless, out of 600 plus units only 5 were found to have minor wiring problems and these were corrected. The main problem seemed to be that residents did not know how to use their remotes.

### **Lateral Pipe Project**

In the last newsletter, I mentioned that there might have been a problem with the vertical pipes (risers) of the HVAC system. Samples were taken and sent out for metallurgical testing. The pipes were determined to have a remaining life of fifty-plus years. A decision has now been made to re-bid the project and to hire a mechanical engineering consultant to develop documents, bid the work, recommend a contractor and provide oversight and inspection services. Under this scenario, the Lateral Pipe Project will probably not begin until September 2012.

### **James House Façade**

The James House façade work began in Late-March. Most of the work consisting of balcony railing repair and painting, installing new membranes for the balcony decks and painting the building is being done on the east façade. Most of the work will be completed by the end of May.

### **Windows Project**

All residential windows have been replaced and punch list items are being attended to. The penthouse and ground floor window installations are scheduled to begin on or about July 2 and the process will go through July 27. The front entrance doors will be replaced and the single leaf door will be motorized and controlled by wireless transmitter touch pads at an outside column, at the door frame and at the doorperson station.

### **James House Roof and Deck**

Once the penthouse windows are installed, the James House roof will be replaced starting on or about August 6. This will be an eight-week project finishing up on October 5. The north mast climber has been left in place so that the roofing contractor can use it to remove existing roofing materials and bring the new material to the roof. The roof deck project has not been bid yet and cannot be installed until the new roof has been installed.

### **James House Metal Sheathing**

All of the metal sheathing around the base of James House will be replaced and bids will be received on April 26. After Board approval, work would begin immediately on the west side of



James house thus allowing the HOA landscaping contractor to install new landscaping in the area between the James mail box location and LaSalle street. The north and south ends of the building will be done next. Finally, the east side will be done as the Golf Construction (façade) scaffolds are removed.

### **James House North Mast Climber**

The James house remaining mast climber will be taken down during the week of October 8. Once it is removed, Golf Construction will re-mobilize and paint the north side of the building over a two-week period from October 15 through October 26.

### **Kilmer House Façade**

The Kilmer House façade project resumed on March 26 and is now scheduled to be finished by the end of May.

## **Functioning of JK Management Office**

**Richard Vicens, JK Association Property Manager**

I would like to remind everyone that it is not possible for me to be aware of everything that goes on at this property every minute of every day. With 616 units, there is a lot of diverse operating and capital project activities that our office handles daily. Quite often residents call me and express concerns or ask questions about things that are being handled by others in the office. We have the following general work assignments in the office (312-654-1560):

- 1) Work Orders, moving arrangements, leases, laundry room problems, fobs, website information, notices, resident information database - Diana Cardenas X1.
- 2) Assessments, billings, accounts payable, budget matters-John Zisis X2.
- 3) General management issues, Staff matters, pet registrations, bicycle registrations, rules violations, remodeling projects, payroll-Nichelle Meadors X3.
- 4) Major projects, contract preparation and administration, inspections, reports, resident relations, planning-Richard Vicens X4

So, please help us by following up with the individual in the office who is responsible for your area of question/concern. If you are not getting an immediate response, then let me know.

Thank you.

## NATO Summit Meeting

**Richard Vicens, JK Association Property Manager**

The NATO Summit meeting will officially begin at 2:00 pm on Sunday, May 20 at McCormick Place. Attendees and demonstrators will begin to arrive in Chicago on Friday, May 19 or earlier. The McCormick Place event will go on around the clock and end on Monday, May 21 at 11:30 am.

Three protest marches have now been permitted: a Friday event, involving a nurses' group; a demonstration at 11:30 on Sunday May 20th, by what is expected to be about a thousand Iraqi war veterans; and a protest by the group calling itself CAN-G8, two hours later, where the city said the permit application estimated 5000 demonstrators. In addition to this, there are groups without permit which are expected to demonstrate.

The majority of the Summit leaders will be staying at major hotels in the North Michigan Avenue area. Transportation for them to and from McCormick Place will be via motorcade and it has been estimated that any one time there could be up to 100 motorcades as 60 nations will be represented.

A security perimeter will be established around McCormick Place and around Soldier Field.

It is recommended that you have on your person identification showing where you live and/or work in the event that the Secret Service shuts an area of the City down. It is further recommended that if you will be in the area of the protests you dress casually so as not to be singled out by any group.

You should avoid driving and instead using public transportation and above all allow extra time to get to your destination.

## Engineer's Corner

**Kurt Kruger, JK Association Chief Engineer**

### City of Chicago Fire Code Compliance for Smoke Detectors and Door Closures

It is mandatory for all James Kilmer residents to be in compliance with the City of Chicago Fire Code for Smoke Detectors and Door Closures. Every unit MUST have approved Smoke Detectors mounted either on the uppermost ceiling within 4 inches of a wall or on a wall within 12 inches of the ceiling, and within 15 feet of all rooms used for sleeping, and there cannot be less than 1 detector per living level/unit or enclosed heating plant.

The unit owner is responsible for providing the smoke detectors and batteries, the resident (if not the owner) is responsible for checking them and replacing batteries, and the owner is



responsible for educating their resident tenants regarding testing and maintenance of the smoke detectors.

Also, all resident unit doors opening to the hall/public corridors MUST be installed with approved self-closing devices. If you do not have a door closure, please contact the management office to have the Engineering staff provide and install one at the owner's expense.

#### Single Source Recycling (SSR) – NEW Recycle Containers for Junk Mail next to JK Mailboxes

At residents' request, we purchased new recycling containers that have been placed by the mailboxes in both James and Kilmer lobbies. They are tall, cylindrical blue containers with the recycle logo on the front. To date, we are not seeing them well utilized and much of the 'junk mail' is still being dumped into the regular trash cans next to the mailboxes. Please just take a moment and throw your paper junk mail into these SSR containers and use the other trash containers for trash and unrecyclable materials.

## Pet Committee Update

### **Carol Abrioux, JK Association Pet Committee Chair**

The Pet Committee and J/K residents want to express their appreciation to those dog owners who have been following the pet rules, especially in not permitting their dogs to relieve themselves just outside the rear service doors at James and Kilmer. There has been some noticeable improvement since the special notice was delivered to the apartments of all dog owners and the notices were posted in both buildings.

We know that older or sick dogs can present special problems, and would like to repeat some of the suggestions made in the notice delivered to all dog owners on this subject. Always carry a towel or a supply of paper towels with you; carry your dog out to the dog runs if possible or use a small wheeled solid-sided cart lined with a towel in the bottom for easy transport. We had mentioned that these carts were available at office supply store, but I have also just seen them in the Ace Hardware store in Germania Place.

If an accident does happen outside the rear doors, dog owners (or a resident who observes the puddle) should immediately report it to the office or maintenance so maintenance can hose down the area.

The Pet Committee, although small, would welcome a few more members. If you are an owner and interested in joining us, please leave your name, unit number, telephone numbers and email address at the J/K management office and we will be in touch with you. Also, please advise if you are a pet owner.

## HOA Update

### Jack Vedra, HOA Representative

It's that time of year when the Carl Sandburg Village Homeowners Association (HOA) is busy preparing the Village for the summer season when the pools and tennis courts are open and the landscaping is at its peak.

The Sandburg Tennis Center opens for the 2012 season on Friday, May 4, and will remain open until Sunday, October 21. If you're a tennis player, join the Tennis Center and use the convenient courts located on the roof of the Potash Market and Faulkner House Garage. Membership registration begins on April 30 at the HOA Management Office, 1355 N. Sandburg on the Mall. For more information call the HOA office at 312-440-3615 x200.

The 2012 Sandburg Pool Season runs from Saturday, May 26, through Sunday, September 23. Registration is handled by Fitness Formula Clubs Old Town, 1235 N. LaSalle. Also look for notices of a convenient registration day in our building's lobby. Note that you will receive a significant discount on your pool membership fee if you register on or before the May 26 opening day.

At its March meeting, the HOA Board of Directors approved the painting of all the fencing in the 1500 block of Sandburg Terrace – that is, all fencing around James and Kilmer. Painting should begin soon. The HOA Board also approved a proposal by Halloran and Yauch to reconfigure existing piping, nozzles, and lighting in the Germania Fountain. Given the windiness of the site, the seven nozzles will be arranged in the center of the fountain to produce a bubbler or cascading effect with limited water trajectory heights.

Installation of new plant materials around James House will be coordinated by HOA management to fit the schedules for the James House painting and balcony work and the installation of new siding at the base of the building.

## LIFE SAFETY REMINDER

**Please keep in mind that the Board has mandated that all units have operable smoke detectors and smoke detectors installed no later than May 1, 2012. This is for your own protection and for that of other building residents. The Management Office can assist you with the selection of an appropriate device for your unit.**

## Website Update

### **Ron Miller, JK Association Website Committee Chairperson**

Have you visited your James/Kilmer Condo Association website? [JamesKilmerCondo.org](http://JamesKilmerCondo.org)

If not, we encourage you to take a look. It's a handy resource for information about James and Kilmer Houses, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), facilities, amenities, forms, and documents . . . and much, much more! You can even submit a maintenance request online.

If you haven't visited the site recently you might have missed some recent updates. The neighborhood section has been updated with the addition and deletion of local businesses, along with phone numbers for all businesses. We will be updating photos during the year as the various projects are completed.

The web committee is dedicated to providing a useful website for all. We'd like to hear from you if you have a website feature you would like added. And if you have any comments or feedback about the website you can use the online feedback form or just email Ron Miller, the webmaster: [webmaster@JamesKilmerCondo.org](mailto:webmaster@JamesKilmerCondo.org)

## Neighborhood and Ald. Reilly's 42nd Ward Update

### **Judy Barnes, JK Board of Directors and Editor**

#### **Happy Birthday, Chicago!**

The City of Chicago held its official 175th birthday celebration on March 4, marking the day the city was incorporated in 1837. The celebration kicked off at the Chicago History Museum and continues with 175 more days of special events, festivals, promotions and fun facts to mark this historic milestone!

From March 4 to August 26, 2012, you can find dining deals, shopping specials and guided tours created exclusively for this celebration. Explore Chicago, the city's official tourism site, presents **175 Days to Love Chicago**, where you can learn more about special events, festivals and significant dates in Chicago's History as the city Celebrates its 175th birthday.

Fun Facts about Chicago:

- Chicago Flag - The three white stripes in the Chicago Flag represents the north, south and west sides of the city. The top blue stripe represents Lake Michigan and the north branch of the Chicago River; the bottom stripe represents the Great Canal and south branch of the river. The four six-pointed, red stars each represent a significant historical event: Fort Dearborn, Great Chicago Fire of 1871, World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the Century of Progress Exposition of 1933.

- The "Historic Route 66" begins in Chicago at Grant Park on Adams Street in front of the Art Institute of Chicago.
- The first Ferris wheel made its debut in Chicago at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Today, Navy Pier is home to a 15-story Ferris wheel, modeled after the original one.
- Chicago's downtown area is known as "The Loop." The nickname refers to the area encircled by the elevated ('L') train tracks.
- In 1900, Chicago successfully completed a massive and highly innovative engineering project - reversing the flow of the Chicago River so that it emptied into the Mississippi River instead of Lake Michigan. Each year.
- Chicago was one of the first and largest municipalities to require public art as part of the renovation or construction of municipal buildings, with the passage of the Percentage-for-Arts Ordinance in 1978.
- The Chicago Cultural Center is the first free municipal cultural center in the U.S. and home to the world's largest stained glass Tiffany dome.
- Four states are visible from the Sears Tower Skydeck). Indiana, Illinois, Michigan & Wisconsin.
- The first mail-order business, Montgomery Ward & Co., was established in 1872.

#### **Clark/Division Red Line Station Construction Update:**

Work to renovate the Clark/Division Red Line Station remains on schedule. The following work will take place over the coming months:

- Continue installing cable and splicing dead cables. Primary cable pulling has completed with a few dead splices remaining before they cut over (energize) the new cable runs. The locations for the splices are LaSalle/Goethe, LaSalle/Elm and LaSalle/Division
- Crews will continue cutting the remaining feeders, about one per week until they are all completed (around April 15). The manholes used for the cut are located at LaSalle/Elm, Clark/Division, Division just east of Clark and State just north of Division.
- Beginning in March, they began installing additional short runs of conduit - one from the alley on the south side of Division, east of Clark, to a manhole in Division; and a second from the alley on the south side of Division, west of LaSalle to a manhole on Division. There will also be some pole, overhead transformer and wire installations taking place in the alleys and streets adjacent to the alley.
- Upon completion of items above, the sidewalk vault at 1201 N. LaSalle will be accessed to remove all the contained equipment and the vault will be filled in. The vault is in the location of a future escalator to the new LaSalle Subway Station.

### **New Website Provides Access to City, County and State Data!**

Governor Pat Quinn, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Mayor Rahm Emanuel recently unveiled a new website: [www.MetroChicagoData.org](http://www.MetroChicagoData.org), the nation's first "convergence cloud" that brings public data from the City of Chicago, Cook County and the State of Illinois into a single open portal to help increase service efficiencies, access to vital information and new innovation.

This groundbreaking initiative, developed by State, County and City technology staff in partnership with Socrata, connects the three existing open data programs at each organization into one place. Anyone is now able to find, explore and share online resources across jurisdictional boundaries using a single web interface based on common themes such as healthcare, public safety, housing and education.

### **Important Alert for Pet Owners - Dogs Poisoned in Chicago's North Side**

49th Ward Alderman Joe Moore, servicing the neighborhoods of Rogers Park, West Ridge and Edgewater, warns of reported dog deaths associated with "squirrel poison ingestion."

**Please note: there have been no incidents reported in the 42nd Ward**, but Alderman Reilly would like to remind pet owners to be cautious and not allow their dogs to ingest any unusual substances.

### **2012 Street Sweeping Season Now In Effect!**

Please be advised that the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation resumed its street sweeping schedule on April 1st lasting through November 30th.

The City of Chicago utilizes mechanical street sweepers in order to keep its streets clean and safe. On the assigned street cleaning days, temporary parking restrictions are applied so that the street sweepers can clean the entire street, without interruption.

To ensure curb-to-curb street cleaning, temporary parking restrictions are posted the day before work is scheduled to begin on any street. Some arterial streets have permanently posted signs that specify a once-per-week period when parking is prohibited for street sweeping.

**Please take care to read all posted parking restriction signs and be aware that street cleaning signs take precedence over other posted signs on the street. On street cleaning days, the streets should be kept clear of vehicles from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.**

Vehicles that violate street-sweeping restrictions will be issued a citation, and may be relocated to a nearby site by tow trucks enforcing this parking restriction.