



The Villas Voice

The Villas at Aspen
Ridge

Volume 2, Issue 1
March 13, 2009

Villas at Aspen Ridge Homeownership

The pride of owning a home is probably the primary reason why most people decide to take the plunge into homeownership. It means that you can paint your walls whatever color you choose, tile your bathroom in whatever design you want, and generally decorate according to your own tastes and not your landlords. It provides you with a sense of stability and security that is not available when you rent. With this great privilege comes great responsibility to your community and your neighbors. A strong sense of community is even more important in a Condo development like The Villas. Below are some tips for developing a stronger community:

1. Attend HOA meetings, and if possible, volunteer for a board position or committee. HOA meetings are important sources of information for current issues in your neighborhood, especially, financial issues that have a direct impact on your pocketbook. All board and committee positions are volunteer and are very rewarding. Think of it as a free way to give back to your community.
2. Introduce yourself to your neighbors. It seems like a very simple gesture, but it goes a long way to building a community.
3. Understand the difference in your responsibility and the HOA responsibility. One of the benefits of ownership in a Condo development is the shared cost of maintaining common use elements, such as the roofs, parking lots, trash and snow removal, etc...; however, the HOA is not responsible for repairs and maintenance within the walls of your unit.
4. Be good stewards of the "common elements". For example, use less water and pick up after yourself and your family (including pets).
5. Do your best to understand and follow the HOA covenants. Think of it as a binding contract between you and your neighbors.

Website—Update

Last Fall, the Board created a website to share information with homeowners. We are pleased to announce that the website has been updated with new information. All of the dates for the 2009 meetings have been added to the "Community Calendar" section along with past newsletters. In addition, PMA's contact information and an email address to the Board have been added. Please visit the site and click on the "Become a Member" link and provide your address and email address to ensure that you receive updates via email when content has been added to the site. Members will also receive newsletters via email in an easy to read PDF format, which will save the HOA money on postage. Finally, there is a "Meet Your Neighbors" section where individuals can create a personal site with information and pictures about themselves and their families. Ideally, we would like to feature a new homeowner in each edition of the newsletter. Visit the site today!
<http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/aurora/var/>
P.S. Look for information on your current Board members coming soon.

ACH Payments?

The Board is currently soliciting feedback from homeowners regarding a proposal to allow electronic payment of dues through an ACH transaction. Dues would be directly debited from your bank account. This would be purely **voluntary** on an individual basis and would be a **free** to the HOA and homeowners. While ACH transactions have many benefits including reducing the likelihood of late payments and saving the cost of checks and postage, it is important to note that homeowners who sign up for this service will have their payment removed their account on the same date every month and the payment cannot be rescheduled. You will be able to cancel the automatic transaction; however, there will be a small waiting period for the cancellation to process. The HOA will not be responsible if funds are not available on the scheduled date. If this is a service you would be interested in, please visit the HOA website, click on the Neighborhood Contacts and email Tawnya Zimmerman. We

Inside this issue:

<i>Reducing Water Usage</i>	2
<i>Snow Melt Buckets</i>	2
<i>Snow Removal</i>	2
<i>Pigeons</i>	2
<i>Role of PMA and the Board Members</i>	2

Volunteers Needed:

- Newsletter Committee
- Architectural Committee
- Board Members

HOA Meeting:

Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of every month in the Pool Cabana.

Notice to Pet Owners:

- Please be respectful of your neighbors and pick up after your pet.
- Always keep your dog on a leash!





Board Members Needed ~ Our Board needs individuals who would be willing to serve their neighbors and help preserve the value of the community.

Role of PMA versus Board Members

Professional Management Associates, Inc. (PMA) is a contractor hired by the Board to complete administrative and accounting tasks. They should not be confused with your Board members who are homeowners who volunteer and are voted in by Villas homeowners.

Reducing Water Usage

As mentioned in previous issues of this Newsletter, water and sewer costs are a significant portion of your HOA budget. From \$53,160 in 2005 these costs had ballooned to \$81,000 in 2008. That's more than a 26% increase per year! Last year—2008—we had some brown grass during the first part of the summer, but our total water and sewer bill was “only” \$74,300. That cost in 2008 could have been as high as \$99,000 due to the 30% rate hike from the City of Aurora. Because water and

sewer costs are such a huge portion of your HOA's Annual Budget (30% of it in 2009), it is important that everyone do their part to reduce water usage. Here are some tips to reduce water usage in your home:

1. Check and fix all leaky faucets and pipes. Even small leaks have a huge impact.

2. Check and fix any leaking toilets. See the website link below for tips on how to fix it yourself:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Fix-a-Running-Toilet>

3. Only run the dish-

washer and washing machines with full loads.

4. If you can afford new appliances, consider purchasing a front-loading washing machine. They use 40-60% less water than top-loading machines.

The Board will continue to pursue opportunities for reducing water usage from irrigation and the pool. If you see any broken water heads this spring or summer, please report them to PMA immediately at aurora@eschelon.com or 303-750-0994.

Snow Melt Buckets

The Board has directed the snow removal contractor to leave buckets of snow melt at each building. Please feel free to use the snow melt to reduce ice on the stairs and sidewalks. Please refrain from leaving cigarette butts and other

Pigeons

Pigeons have been an issue in our area since the first building went up. The Board has taken steps to discourage pigeons making their home at the Villas. There are feeding trays on many buildings that contain a chemical that causes the pigeons to become disoriented and not return to the same location. With that said, it is important that each homeowner take steps to reduce the pigeon population by using and cleaning your patio frequently.

Snow Removal

December was a bitterly cold month and ice was an issue all over the metro area. PMA received several complaints from residents regarding snow and ice removal during this period. It is important to note that the current contract with the snow removal company requires that they only come out if there are **2 inches or more of snow** to reduce snow removal costs. However, if you have **significant** build up of ice that is not responding to ice melt treatments, please contact

The Villas at Aspen Ridge

c/o Professional Management Associates, Inc.

12381 E. Cornell Avenue

Aurora, CO 80014

Phone: 303-750-0994

Fax: 303-750-1612

Email: pmaaurora@eschelon.com