

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

For January 2009

By Sue Alandar, President
Board of Directors

As most of you know, we didn't have a business meeting in December, as the several meetings we held in September, October and November had caught us up to date. We had a Coffee Forum December 13, hosted by the Flying Solos, and plan to get back to this in 2009 as the CC&R Committee appears to have completed its round of meetings.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Board did finalize the 2009 budget, resulting in the \$6 per month assessment increase for 2009. This allowed us to continue putting money into our reserves while maintaining operations and maintenance. We also budgeted from our reserves for 2009, including the solar panels that, with the energy rebate program from APS, will pay for themselves in 18 months to 2 years. These panels, to go on the Recreation Center and the Yacht Club, will heat those two swimming pools, and once paid for they will heat those pools for free to us. It is thought that future Boards may decide to do the wise thing and keep those pools as our only heated pools, and save the Association all future heating costs for this purpose.

We've also set aside reserve funds to begin replacement of our aging irrigation systems. This should be done on a regular annual cycle beginning in 2009, as we are at the point where we are wasting money in repairs. Here's the probable order of repair in the next years, based on the age of our subdivisions:

Shores & Country Green 1 & 2 - built-out at the same time, beginning in 1986	Bay Point 1
Lakeside	South Bay 1
North Shores	Heritage 1
Gardens	Landings
Coves	Bay Point 2
Highlands & Moonlight Bay	South Bay
North Park	Heritage 2

THE VENTANA VIEWS

The Ventana View itself is a new and exciting project for our community. We've been working on the concept for a long time, but it's finally coming together thanks to the help of Lori Schuld, our new volunteer Editor, and of course Activities Coordinator Tina Dunn, and Chuck Schumm, too, who helped us get in the new computer and software.

It's an investment in two ways. Financially, we have put funds into a new computer and software and a contract for publication (with, incidentally, the same printer that publishes the *Peoria Independent* – they gave us the best bid!) We are sure this will be cost effective, as we are able to immediately cease rental of a copy machine at a big savings, and buying about 36 reams of paper a month. Additionally, with the ability to sell advertising in this much larger format, we believe the newsletter will become self-supporting and may even turn a profit in time, if a modest one.

We must still count on our wonderful volunteers to pick up and deliver the newsletter (I call them our "Golden Messengers") unless advertising pays enough to have them mailed. We shall see.

But there is an additional investment in this newsletter. And that is in the community itself, in its spirit and its worth. Communication is the key to so much, and now we have a very special way of communicating. I hope to see bits and pieces from many people in the community, so that we can all look forward to something fun each month from our neighbors. Do you have some good gardening advice for our wonderful climate? How about fun places to go or see nearby? A recipe for potlucks? I'm sure there is a lot of fun stuff out there to share. We are a community, and this will be a fun way to share with our neighbors.

THE ELECTION

It seems that we have only three people stepping up to the plate to date: Tony Fiore, Chet Homan, and Rudy Simon. We have another possible candidate, but he's waiting on some personal information that will make the difference for him, so we shall have to wait and see. There are five vacant seats and only three candidates – that doesn't look good for Ventana Lakes.

I hope everyone realizes just how important this is to all of us. I am grateful to those who have stepped up, but if you or someone you know has the skill and knowledge to help this community move forward, I hope you'll think long and hard about "giving back" for the opportunities life has given to you to live in a great place like Ventana Lakes. Being a Board member isn't easy, but it's rewarding. The majority of the people who live here are very supportive and very helpful, and that's what makes it all worthwhile.

THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

BOARD POLICY ON ENFORCEMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES AND CC&R'S

Variances may be granted by either the Architectural Committee or the Board of Directors when it is determined that a variance will create no harm to the community.

When the Board determines that a violation or a variance to a guideline or the CC&R's would create harm to the community, the Board will, with due process, enforce these with the full intent of bringing the homeowner into compliance with the governing documents, until compliance is achieved or the matter is settled by a court of Law.

The Board has made this its policy as it relates to enforcement of the Architectural Guidelines and CC&Rs. This is in keeping with the current training of the West Valley Homeowners Training Academy, the seminars conducted by Ekkark and Ekmark, and other modern models for homeowners associations. The intent is not to lower the standards of a community, but to ensure that the standards are reasonable and clear insofar as possible, and then to review each case individually to determine whether enforcement is necessary or if the homeowner can be brought into voluntary compliance, and if there are extenuating circumstances that may make a variance necessary if they cannot comply. Further, it must be determined if a variance would be harmful to the community. Would it bring down property values? Would it create a hardship to others? All factors must be considered.

In days past, HOA's were known to "make up the rules as they go" and enforce them based on personal like or dislike related to aesthetics. Or sometimes rules were enforced because they were "on the books" without regard to whether they should be on the books. Currently, Associations are warned against these practices for practical, legal, financial and political reasons.

Unfortunately, when this Board made the decision to modernize its policies, there was disagreement by at least one member of the Architectural Committee. Months of attempts to find common ground in this area failed. The Board determined that it was necessary that the members of this community have a Board and an Architectural Committee that did business with them using the same policy and direction. The events that followed resulted in the restructuring of the Architectural Committee and a new membership.

NEW ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

One of the most important things we accomplished this year, with your help, is the review of our community's Architectural Guidelines. They are now updated with the input given to us by many homeowners and ready for publication. Copies will be provided for everyone. Additionally, we are going to publish them in sections in the newsletter as well, so that you can digest them in bites.

The Architectural Guidelines are the backbone of any Homeowners Association – it's what keeps our property values up and our community looking good. Please take the time to read them. It's your responsibility!