

**JANUARY 2026  
PRESIDENT'S REPORT**



# The Atchison Riveter

Dear Members! Happy New Year! I hope your holidays were full of good cheer, and you were surrounded by loving friends and family. There are a number of important issues that you need to be aware of:

1. Member Property Tax Status. The Board is actively working to clarify the property taxes of all members, particularly those who have moved in since 2020.
2. Annual Property Taxes. Every year the Contra Costa Tax office sends out an annual property tax bill. The amount we each owe cannot increase more than 2% each year. Note that everyone who pays property taxes has the right to appeal the assessed value of your unit at the Tax Assessor's office, not the AV office. For those who have moved in since 2020 we are working hard to reconcile accounts, mainly to adjust the property tax portion. Thank you for your patience.
3. Supplemental Property Tax. This is a one time 'catch up' tax for new AV members. The new member's tax is based on the difference between the price the new member paid for the membership and the previous member's price plus other factors such as market rate value.
4. Gas line replacement. PGE will be repiping our gas lines throughout the village. Presently, the project is to begin late March or early April.
5. Solar Panels. Before you sign up for solar panels with any company, please talk to the office. A green permit, signed off by 6 Board members must be completed before any agreements are made. AV would have to negotiate with the company before we agree. Remember, members do not own the unit, and that includes the roof. We need to protect our roofs. We had an agreement with GRID in the past and are willing to negotiate with other companies.
6. Meet with the City of Richmond. We are working to renegotiate the Conditional Use Permit and improve our relationship with them for getting building permits.
7. Our income. The AV Corporation's income is from our members' dues. For example, in order to have water in our homes, we have to pay the water bill from member dues. The water bill is over \$4,000/mo. Keep our water running by paying your dues. Payment plans are available.
8. As a reminder, our dues have 3 components:
  - (1) The County's individual property tax assessment for your unit,
  - (2) AV's operating expenses (day-to-day administrative and repair costs).
  - (3) AV's reserve expenses (major replacements).

*With kindness, Victoria (Vicki) Sawicki, Board President*

*\*KEY to voting on motions: M-Moved by, S-Seconded by, Y-Yes votes, N-No votes, A-Abstained*

**MOTION RE12222025.01** that the Officers track the work time of the maintenance staff allocated to operations vs. reserves and the Board will analyze those amounts and revise the budget accordingly no later than the April Board meeting.

**MOTION PASSED** M-Tara S-Michael Y-Unanimous

**MOTION RE 12222025.02** to not put money for the Mandel case into reserves.

**MOTION PASSED** M-Kevin S-Tara Y-Laurie, Milly, Casey, Kevin, Liam, Tara N-Vicki, Candy

**MOTION RE12222025.03** to accept the proposed 2026 Budget.

**MOTION PASSED** M-Tara S-Liam Y-Laurie, Milly, Casey, Kevin, Liam, Tara N-Vicki, Candy

### NO MOTIONS—JANUARY 2025

### FREE GROCERIES IN THE HALL

Bring your own bags and fill them up with free food!  
Open to all Villagers!

Thursday 2/19 /from 4:00 pm-7:30 pm (and every 3rd Thursday until August).

Can't make it to the hall? Get a delivery by texting Liz at 516-353-9685 or emailing at [liz.gewirtz@gmail.com](mailto:liz.gewirtz@gmail.com)  
Want to donate food? Come drop it off in the hall from 10-10:30 am or leave it at Liz's or Jillian's (907-691-8083.)  
Pet food welcome.

Want to volunteer? Text Liz to volunteer for set-up, clean-up or delivering - or just hanging out!

Want to be on the organizing committee? Text Liz.

*Photo: Liz Gerwitz, John Monks, Jillian Parker, & Food*



### SENIORS LUNCH—AMERICAN PICNIC

The **2026 Seniors Lunch** will be held on **Saturday, February 14, 2026**, starting at noon. The menu is **American Picnic** – cold chicken, and sides such as potato salad, coleslaw, fruit salad.

Would you like to help us honor our elders? Do you have a favorite picnic side dish you would like to make?

The Social Club can reimburse you for the cost of the ingredients with receipts. Can you help with set-up or cleanup? Please email us to let us know how you can help at [AV\\_Social\\_Club@yahoo.com](mailto:AV_Social_Club@yahoo.com). The Social Club will provide the chicken and some of the sides. Someone has already volunteered to make corn bread.

To our Village Seniors: **Please sign up in the AV office or by email. It helps to know how many people plan to attend the Lunch. "Seniors" is usually age 55+, and their partners/care givers.**

The Social Club February monthly meeting is on the first **Monday of every month**, at 7pm in the AV hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### SPANISH CLASSES CONTINUE IN THE HALL

The Spanish language class taught by member Alma Casias in the Hall has been welcomed by AV members. Several people at the January board meeting were disappointed they had missed the Riveter notice about the first class. That isn't a problem though; new members are welcome. Alma's informal classes are held in the Hall Library two times a week on Wednesdays and Fridays, 9:30-11:00. You can reach her at [atcasas16@gmail.com](mailto:atcasas16@gmail.com). Thank you Alma for generously supporting our community.

### **PROBLEM SOLVED!** *Luz Alvarez Martinez*

Do you know where the main shutoff for your water is? I did not and had a total emergency recently. After taking a shower I tried to turn the water off, but the faucet just kept turning and the water kept coming. I called my son Eric. He told me to go to my neighbors for help. So I went to my closest neighbor, went right to it, and pulled the **green lever** down on the right side of the water pipe next to my front porch. Thankfully, it stopped all the water.

We all should know how to turn off the water to our homes. Our AV shut-off valves are in different locations. For example, four plex buildings have only two shut-off valves, each shutting water off in two contiguous units. Isn't now is a good time to find your own main shutoff valve?

**Look for the 3-inch-long green lever under your spigot.**



### **IMPORTANT PARKING COMMITTEE NEWS,** *Luz Alvarez Martinez 270AVluz@gmail.com*

The Parking Committee (PC) has changed the deadline date for having up-to-date DMV tags to Saturday February 28, 2026 so members have time to avoid having their car towed.

AV parking rules are meant for safety. Breaking these rules can result in your vehicle being towed:

1. Park only in the parking space assigned to your unit.
2. Do not park on the lawn/grass or on any unpaved areas (fire safety).
3. Do not park with expired DMV tags in valid AV parking spaces.
4. Do not double-park.
5. Do not park on sidewalks.
6. Do not park in fire lanes (any area painted red).
7. Inoperative vehicles are allowed in AV valid parking spaces only with consent from the Board.

The PC sincerely hopes we never need to have a vehicle towed. If we do, it will be for a very good reason. The PC or AV office will notify Golden Bay One Towing Company to tow a vehicle.

If members have a problem or complaint regarding parking issues, pick up a form at the office. If there is an unusual or emergency situation and a member needs to change parking spaces with another member, all such requests will be considered.

If AV or PC puts a red or blue tag on a vehicle, that will be "cause" to tow the vehicle at the owners' expense. The red or blue tag will specify the offense. The AV office or PC will call Golden One and alert them of the need to tow. Golden One will take a photo of the offense so there is proof.

~~REMINDER: KEEP YOUR DMV TAGS UP-TO-DATE~~

## **BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Building and Maintenance Committee has submitted a draft *Charter and Regulations* to the AV Board in consideration for approval at our February Monthly Board Meeting. *The Summary of the Committee's Work and Duties* states:

*The Building and Maintenance Committee is Atchison Village Mutual Homes Corporation's authorized advisory committee on matters of building, maintenance, and permits.*

*In addition to being tasked with administration of bidding scope of work, and advice concerning building, maintenance, and permits, the Committee shall also work to identify best practices that maximize affordability for members, while preserving a high quality of basic residential habitability for the Corporation's members.*

Current members of the Maintenance Committee are Marcos Alvarez and Judy Andreas, co-chairs, Liam Caffrey, Michael Lopez, Robert Martinez, John Monks, Linda Ardakani, James Singleton.

NOTE: Full Charter proposal is available for review at the AV Office.

## **WE'RE STILL ACCEPTING SURVEYS**, Casey Bastiaans

Greetings Everyone, AV members recently received an important survey asking for anonymous information. I have only received 73 surveys back. We need at least 225 to paint a fairly accurate picture of the Village to the Board, the City/County, or any entity that could help with our sad financial situation, including donors.

Again, it's not about who you are, individually, it's to get a broad picture of who makes up the Village, especially in this time of ever-increasing Need. Please let me know at [caseybasav@gmail.com](mailto:caseybasav@gmail.com) if you haven't received your survey. It's one survey per household so duplicates aren't allowed. Gratitude for everyone who has participated so far.

## **FINANCIAL HELP RESOURCE**, Casey Bastiaans

If your income limits meet the requirements, California has programs that may help with your utility bills, phones, and energy-efficient appliances. Check it out at: <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts>.

## **FORENSIC REVIEW of AV FINANCES**, Casey Bastiaans

When your 2025/26 volunteer Board of Directors started last year our finances were in disarray. So we made a difficult but necessary decision to spend \$55,000 to hire professional auditors to clarify our financial status.

The “Forensics Project” officially started work on 10/1/25 with one team member (Melinda Morris) instead of two, largely due to hiring complications. (We have upgraded our background check procedures.) The shape of the books, filing disarray and lack of the needed supporting documents really slowed us down. Melinda has done a tremendous amount of work on the project so far. As of 1/7/26 we have a 3-person team, are funded for at least another 10 weeks, and still have a little less than half of the budget remaining. Thank you for your patience. The main focus now is member accounts. Here’s what we’re doing:

- Entering data, reviewing and correcting our existing financial computer records through 6/30/25 (and beyond) which were in way worse shape than anticipated, including missing/unfiled backup. This is essential for cleaning up member dues and tracking. Most importantly, bank accounts were unreconciled for quite some time. We’re also reviewing large expenses. ONGOING about 88% done.
- Researching large unidentified transactions in the Quickbooks Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss statements. They’re flagged for follow-up, whether by our team (preferable, if the budget allows) or by Collins. ONGOING, about 70% done.
- Internally tracking/identifying member property tax charges and payments. This is a very complicated process. ONGOING 40% done.
- Matching every member dues/tax/item/plan payment that cleared the bank to that member in Quickbooks to ensure correct crediting of payments. We’re going back at least as far as 2021. Member names are reviewed and corrected in documents and records to ensure they match. Time intensive. ONGOING 20% done.
- Reviewing member balances at 6/30/25 (before Collins), including members with high balances. Time intensive. Please email me ([caseybasav@gmail.com](mailto:caseybasav@gmail.com)) with your documentation about any unresolved issues. TO DO.
- Seeking historical information from members about AV accounting in the past and researching as needed. Please email me ([caseybasav@gmail.com](mailto:caseybasav@gmail.com)). TO DO.
- Transferring final corrected info to Collins. TO DO

### **UNIT FOR SALE**

363 WEST BISSELL AVENUE, \$235,000

### **AV COMMITTEES**

Can you help us by sending information—to the AV office—about your participation in committees so we can update our current committee list. At the January board meeting President Sawicki asked for the committee list to be put in the Riveter. The list posted below may not be up-to-date so we’re asking members to let the office know what committees you’re serving on for this 2025/26 board term. We would like this list to include names of chair persons and contact email or phone. Thanks for you help—[lindaardakani@gmail.com](mailto:lindaardakani@gmail.com).

**Finance:** Casey Bastiaans, Liam Caffrey, Candy Nakajima Tara Ayres, Gloria Samad, Sandra Dugan, Sharon Mullin

**Hall:** Milly Frederick, Liam Caffrey, Connie Hibbard, Gloria Samad

**Parking:** Luz Alvarez Martinez, Margarito Chacon, Michael Parker and Gloria Samad

**Documents:** Casey Bastians, Norma Larson, Tara Ayres

**Building and Maintenance:** Marcos Alvarez (co-chair), Judy Andreas (co-chair), Michael Lopez, Liam Caffrey, John Monks, Robert Martinez, James Singleton, Linda Ardakani

**Property Tax:** Vicki Sawicki, Kevin Cronin, Casey Bastiaans, Gina Ancona

**Labor:** All Board Members

**Screening:** Milly Frederick, Norma Larson, Meghan Timberlake, Luz Alvarez Martinez

**Architectural Rules:** Marcos Alvarez, Margarito Chacon

**Member Outreach:** Casey Bastiaans, Ron Kane

**Insurance:** Michael Lopez, Candy Nakajima, Casey Bastiaans

**Internet Technology:** Liam Caffrey, Margarito Chacon

**Permits:** Marcos Alvarez, Chris Baetge, Judy Andreas

**Trees (Green):** Liam Caffrey, Marcos Alvarez, Margarito Chacon, James Singleton, Jose Valera, Javier Vargas, Deborah Dethier, Breana George

**Health and Safety:** Milly Frederick, Margarito Chacon, Deborah Dethier

**Reserve Study:** Laurie Wattell, Barbara Postel, Scott Wolland

### IN MEMORIUM



We want to share that three long-time residents passed away recently: Marnie Temple, Joan Yarnell, and Karen Skowronek. They will all be missed.

