



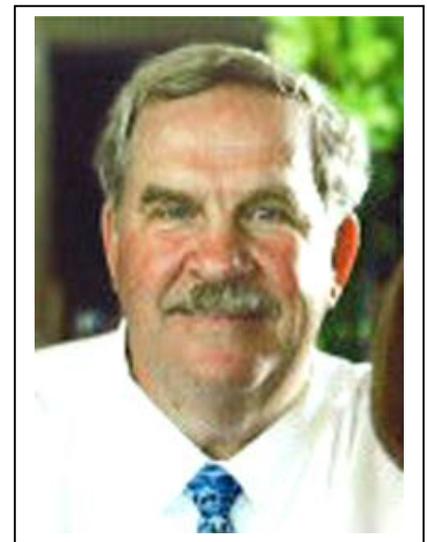
# The Atchison Riveter

*The Atchison Riveter* is available online at [www.atchisonvillage.org](http://www.atchisonvillage.org). The AV Board of Directors welcomes members' comments and contributions, in English or Spanish. Send submissions to [marthagruelle744@gmail.com](mailto:marthagruelle744@gmail.com) or drop off at the AV office.

## Meet Our New General Manager

New Atchison Village General Manager Jim Rueter has been a multi-family and commercial real estate professional almost all his career, which spans decades. This has included his most recent position as senior director, property, for a nonprofit in Alameda, where he managed 23 properties, supervised a staff of 10, and completed a five-year property plan in two years.

However, Jim has always kept an eye open, he says, for an opportunity to use his skills with an HOA or mutual homes corporation. Even so, driving by Atchison Village on trips to the Craneway Pavilion or to visit the *Red Oak Victory*, Jim was unaware of the Village's singular history.



Not anymore. Now ensconced in the AV office, he's reviewing records and paying careful attention to multiple issues. "We're looking at the maintenance projects that need to be accomplished by the end of the year, financial issues, including property taxes, and dealing with the City of Richmond," he told *The Riveter*. "We're also working to fulfill work orders."

A long-term goal is to increase the Village's capital reserves, "so that we know what we need to budget for 5-to-10-year plans," Jim says. Along with the AV board's Finance Committee, he's exploring writing grants that would help finance major infrastructure improvements.

While AV will keep him busy, Jim will always make time for his wife of nearly 50 years, playing with his two grandkids, swimming, and tennis.

If you see Jim around the Village, take a minute to give him a warm welcome. Atchison Village is privileged to have someone of his experience and expertise help guide us as we make our community an even better place to live.

—Janis Hashe

# You Count! Census Due September 30

The U.S. census is underway, with a Wednesday, September 30 deadline. You can complete the form in about 10 minutes online at <http://my2020census.gov>. Or do it by phone at 844-468-2020 or in Spanish at 844-330-2020. The census is a once-in-a-decade count of everyone living in the United States, regardless of citizenship or status.

## Why should you complete the census?

- Money! It will ensure that Richmond receives its share of the all-important federal allocation of resources over the next 10 years. The funds help pay for education, housing, transportation, healthcare, and more.
- Political power! The census will determine how many seats each state gets in Congress. If California is under-counted, we may lose one or two representatives.

## Is it safe to complete the census? YES

Census responses are confidential. The responses are grouped together to describe neighborhoods, cities, or states. It is illegal for census data to be used to identify individuals.

- The data cannot be used for law enforcement, immigration, or to determine eligibility for any kind of public benefits.
- The census does not include a question about citizenship.

You may see census workers making home visits in the Village, as they try to reach households who have yet to complete the form. The deadline to complete the census was recently shortened by a month. Please be sure to get counted!

More information about the census is available at [www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3745/Census-2020-Count-me-in-Richmond](http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3745/Census-2020-Count-me-in-Richmond). There's even a short video about the census in Richmond and San Pablo that you can share on social media, to notify your friends and relatives.

—Janey Skinner

## Vote Results Reported by Laurie Wattell

### 2020 Auditing Committee

Elected:

Isabel Ramos (108)  
Madeline Marrow (89)  
Vicki Sawicki (86)

Other candidates:

Ignacio Ruiz (45)  
Linda Ardakani (34)

### Rental of the Library to the Credit Union

(advisory vote)

Yes: 82

No: 62

# Use Water Wisely!

In August we got some good news about our water bills. Mary Phelps from the City of Richmond said that we are eligible for a 30-40% reduction of sewer fees on our 2020 property tax bill because of the large number of landscaped areas throughout the Village. (The sewer tax is based on our total water use minus water presumably used for gardens and not passing through the sewer system.)

We contacted Ms. Phelps because in July our bookkeeper noted unusually high water charges for May and June. He reached out to me, since I worked on past water issues, and to board members Zak Wear, Bob Jones, and Esthela Diaz. We formed the AV Water Committee, tasked with lowering the EBMUD bills all members pay equally.

On August 12, the committee met with Ms. Phelps, who said that leaking toilets and excessive landscape watering are probably our main water-wasters. A leaking toilet can waste over 6,000 gallons a month! To check your toilet, put food coloring in the tank without flushing. If the color appears in the bowl, your tank is leaking and needs a simple repair available free from AV maintenance.



Over-watering a landscape is evident when water runs along walkways or down the street. On a visit to AV, Ms. Phelps noted a few places this was happening. She suggested the Village may need to impose financial deterrents, which have proven effective in other communities.

She also said some of AV's higher water expenses might be due to the shelter-in-place, which has increased water use that would normally occur at businesses and schools.

As we take steps to control our water waste, water bills should go down.

—Elizabeth Claman for the AV Water Committee

## Call for Volunteer Help with Online Board Meetings

During the pandemic, we are running two lines for online board meetings: one on Zoom and telephone for English speakers, and a second, phone-only line providing Spanish-English interpretation of the meeting. For each of the lines, we need an administrator who can handle the technical end of the call, including making sure that people who want to speak are able to participate, muting and unmuting speakers, etc. We especially need someone for the Spanish line, so that the regular volunteer doesn't have to be there every month. Let us know if you can help.

—Tara Ayres, Secretary Treasurer

# Oh, Rats!

Although rats live wherever people live, Atchison Village is experiencing growing infestations of these hazardous pests. Large colonies of rats have been found by members and maintenance workers in walls and pantries, crawl spaces, sheds, and yards.

The increase in AV's rat population is largely due to pet food left outside 24-7. Although rats are known to be active after dark, they are opportunistic and will venture forth during daylight hours to eat any available crumb. The more they eat, the more they reproduce.

To address this problem, a motion was passed at a regular board meeting on August 12 that requires members to be present while feeding their pets outside. Members must immediately remove any leftover food when the pet has finished eating (although water must be left for outside pets at all times). Staff and gardeners will remove any pet food dishes they find outside.

Other ways you can help contain the rat infestation are to repair broken ventilation screens; remove or trim dense shrubbery; store wood and lumber piles above the ground and away from any structure; remove tall grass, weeds, and any debris from your yard; keep your garbage cans secured; pick up fallen fruit daily; keep shed doors closed at night; and install screening around the base of your shed.

General Manager Jim Reuter stated that repairs are starting for crawl-space vents and mesh will be installed around storage shed bases as needed.

—Diana Hume

## Square Foot Gardening Coming to Atchison Village

We are starting a committee on square foot gardening to produce food here in Atchison Village. You can see from the photo of Connie's garden that small spaces can provide quantities of fresh vegetables! Square foot gardens are built to fit into small spaces by using raised beds; these were constructed by Liam Caffrey, an AV member. Please join us, it's really fun.



If you would like to see this garden in person and see how much food the beds are providing, please contact Connie via email. The committee will meet 12 noon, Thursday, September 17, via Zoom or by phone. Please email Connie for the Zoom link.

—Connie Hibbard, [conniehibbard@gmail.com](mailto:conniehibbard@gmail.com)  
—Laurie Wattell, AV Board

# History Corner: Discrimination and AV's Founding

4-5636		HO
B. RACE		
White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Former Tenant:
Negro	<input type="checkbox"/>	Address
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deposit \$
D. STATUS		
Family		
Place		

The U.S. government had Atchison Village built in 1941 for white people only. "White" may not have meant the same thing as today, but for sure it excluded black people. When many African Americans migrated to Richmond to work in the shipyards, they were offered mostly segregated public housing in swampy, firetrap neighborhoods. The companies and the Boilermakers Union kept most black workers in lower pay categories, too. So after the war, when those

temporary housing projects were dismantled, it was crunch time for 10,000 black people in Richmond. Even a good down payment or deposit wouldn't get you private rentals or public home loans because of outright discriminatory rules and deeds.

The Richmond City Council did pass a resolution banning segregation in public housing in 1952, though protests continued due to the Housing Authority's racist reputation.

By that time, the war-time housing projects of Atchison Village, AV Annex, Nystrom Village, and Triangle Court had been designated for conveyance to "low-rent," low income use, which was especially needed by black Richmonders. But in our Village that transfer never happened.

What did happen is that some AV residents got organized because they would have exceeded income eligibility. Others perhaps simply didn't want the changes that were coming. Along with the mayor and some redevelopment officials, they lobbied to get the City Council to change its policy toward AV. The council did, in a 7-2 vote. The result left a lot fewer potential homes for poor blacks and made housing rights advocates wonder whether black lives mattered. Then and only then could a resident mutual homes group, with only six black families, prepare an application to purchase the property. The group succeeded in the spring of 1957, and the rest is our history.

—Marie Kochaver

## AV Social Club – Announcements and Events

The Atchison Village Social Club thanks everyone who helped make the 8/16 Village-Wide Yard Sale a success: 26 households signed up, 50 mini art kits were given out, and lots of free books were dispersed throughout the Village.

### **Next AV Social Club Meeting: Wednesday, September 16, 7 PM**

Meet on the benches in front of the AV Hall. Please wear a mask, and feel free to bring your own folding chair to help maintain a safe distance. All are welcome!

### **A Socially Distanced Halloween: Saturday, October 31 (Details TBD)**

This year Halloween falls on a Saturday (Yay!). Unfortunately, COVID-19 will interfere with the usual trick-or-treating (Boo!). The AV Social Club will sponsor some Halloween fun—all outdoors, socially distanced, and in compliance with state and county guidelines. Volunteers and donations are welcome, and if you have ideas for games that can be adapted for social distancing, please let us know. (email AV\_Social\_Club@yahoo.com)

# Board Meeting Summaries, August 2020

*These summaries are incomplete and may contain errors. The official minutes of the August 5 and August 12 board meetings will be available at the office once approved.*

## Special Meeting of the Board, August 5

Finance Committee Chair Tara Ayres presented a revised budget for 2020. The committee found that we are significantly under budget for the first six months of this year. The budget was amended to move about \$104,000 to the staff salaries and benefits lines to fund the hiring of a general manager plus two new maintenance positions for the rest of 2020. A copy of the revised budget is available from the office. (In an earlier executive session, the board had decided to hire James Rueter as general manager if this budget revision were approved.)

## Regular Board Meeting, August 12

Margarito Chacon resigned as secretary-treasurer due to time constraints. He remains an active board member. The board elected Tara Ayres replace Margarito as S-T.

### Committee reports

Finance committee: Tara reported that AV has not seen an increase in delinquencies due to the coronavirus, though a few current delinquencies require action.

Ad hoc committee on water: Elizabeth Claman reported on a meeting with Mary Phelps from the City of Richmond. See related article, this issue.

Trees committee: Laurie Wattell reported on a meeting with Groundwork Richmond. Eight AV members have signed up to have trees planted at their units. Groundwork plans placement of trees carefully to protect water lines, power lines, and solar panels. Any member who wants a tree can make a request through their website: [www.groundworkrichmond.org](http://www.groundworkrichmond.org).

Maintenance: Margarito reported that a contractor has been lined up to repave two lots. Tara reported that bids are being accepted on repair of building corners and window replacement. Our vinyl siding has an expected life of 65 years—meaning we should have 40 more years. Solar power options on the office/community building are being explored, for substantial savings on electricity.

### Preparation for Strategic Planning

The board brainstormed priorities to be part of an August strategic planning session.

### New Policy on Pet Feeding

Board President Zak Wear reported that AV has seen a serious rise in rat populations. A biologist with the city advised that pet food is a prime factor. Zak proposed, and the board approved, that members may not feed their pets outdoors unless the member stays present and immediately picks up the dish and any uneaten pet food after the feeding. See related article, this issue.

—Martha Gruelle

(For emergency repairs, please contact Jim Rueter, 805-815-8105 or [jim@atchisonvillage.org](mailto:jim@atchisonvillage.org).)

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<b>Tara Ayres Sec./Treas.</b>	510-730-9976 <a href="mailto:taraatchisonvillage@gmail.com">taraatchisonvillage@gmail.com</a>
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Laurie Wattell	<a href="mailto:laurie.wattell@gmail.com">laurie.wattell@gmail.com</a>

### **Office Hours**

*by appointment only:*

Tues. and Fri.

9:00 am – 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Contact Alicia Becerra or Xitlaly (Laly) Ramos for an appointment: **510-234-9054**, **[alicia@atchisonvillage.org](mailto:alicia@atchisonvillage.org)** or **[laly@atchisonvillage.org](mailto:laly@atchisonvillage.org)**

Work Order requests may be given by phone or email. Maintenance staff is on duty 8 am – 5 pm, Mon. – Fri., except lunch hour (noon - 1 pm) and holidays.

### **Atchison Village office**

510-234-9054

[alicia@atchisonvillage.org](mailto:alicia@atchisonvillage.org)

[laly@atchisonvillage.org](mailto:laly@atchisonvillage.org)

[Jim@atchisonvillage.org](mailto:Jim@atchisonvillage.org)

**In a life-threatening emergency call 911.**

**Police Non-Emergency:  
510-233-1214**

**Animal Control: 925-335-8300**

*The Atchison Riveter* is published monthly, with board oversight, to provide information to Village members. The Newsletter Committee edits articles for accuracy, clarity, and length (under 300 words is preferred). We do not print opinion pieces, classifieds involving money, or fictional writing. In the event of a legal dispute, the English version of this newsletter will prevail. You may submit articles to the Village office or email to the committee at [marthagruelle744@gmail.com](mailto:marthagruelle744@gmail.com)

**Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.**