



## Spring Valley Lake Association

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### Message from the Board Treasurer for SVLA Breeze November 2016

I would like to address some of the tragic events that took place in October. First, let me say I am a large proponent of using social media as a public source of information. We now have information at our fingertips on every device 24/7; tablet, phone & computer. We no longer have to rely on the evening news, morning and evening newspapers or other dated forums dedicated to public information. Now we have Twitter, Facebook, Blogs, Vlogs, Snapchat, Instagram etc. However, with the technology, the 24 hour news cycle, and the growing number of citizen journalists, we seemed to have (in some cases) checked our civility and personal responsibility at the door. In an effort to fight for views, likes and comments, there are some among us that will callously sit behind their device of choice, snap pictures and type away without asking themselves one critical thing: "Is this appropriate?" When the breakdown in appropriateness occurs, now we have to have someone to blame for proper censorship, but not over-censorship and the finger never seems to end up pointing at the originator.

As I stated, we had some tragic events take place in the month of October: Two very serious traffic accidents and a suicide. I am not going into any more detail than that in describing the events that occurred, but 2 of these incidents did affect me and my family personally as they were dear and close friends of ours. The social media was "a buzz" in SVL for all three. The pictures and videos that were posted were not only highly inappropriate, but some of the comments were extremely reprehensible. I am not appealing to any site administrator(s) to "take control" or "get people in line". I would just like you, the person reading this (and those citizen journalists that posted it/commented on it), to stop and think; if this were you, your family or your friends – "IS THIS APPROPRIATE?" Is this how you would like your next of kin notified? Is this how you would like your friends and family to find out that something tragic has happened to you, or your loved ones? Is this something you want to see pop up in your newsfeed? When news reporters and anchors report on horrific accidents, or crime scenes, graphic pictures and names of those involved are withheld or censored out of respect for the family. I saw no such respect in the posts on social media surrounding these events. I would hope a community as close as SVL would set the bar a little higher as these are all our neighbors, and in some cases close personal friends. A simple post about an incident, accident and statements to avoid the area or thoughts and prayers going out to the families would have been more than sufficient. We didn't need graphic pictures and crime scene video coupled with comments filled with disinformation and callous conjecture. If you want to assume the personal liability associated with chasing down cars that speed past you, pass the school bus with red lights flashing, roll a stop sign, etc. and post pictures of their car, license plate and address, that is between you and your legal professional. When it comes to the incidents I have described above I would ask that you check your moral compass, or at the very least take a moment of pause and put yourself in the situation you're about to post.

Social media and the internet are excellent tools that we have incorporated into our daily lives, but we must also refrain from becoming a voyeuristic society and reveling in the tragedies of others. Those of us that were close to these incidents, that saw what was being posted, were very hurt and very angry to say the least. If you see nothing wrong with how this unfolded on social media please look to your own lives and think of the things you wouldn't want to see about you posted on the World Wide Web available for download, comment, re-tweets and shares. I would encourage you all to get to know your neighbors and make lasting friendships where you can. You never know who is going to make your time on this big spinning ball more enjoyable.

John Smith, SVL Board Treasurer

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