



## Spring Valley Lake Association

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### Message from the Board President for SVLA Breeze April 2015

Its election time and I hope most of you have returned your ballots by now for the Board of Directors election. This is a very important election for every homeowner in SVL, since it determines who will make decisions that affect every homeowner in SVL. It also matters because a failure to reach a quorum of 25% returned ballots could cost SVLA over \$10K to conduct a second election. Please return your ballot if you have not yet done so.

Ballots will be counted by an independent election company at the Semi-Annual meeting on April 25, beginning at 10:00AM at the Community Building; and the new Board members will be announced a few hours later. You still have time to mail your ballot, and if you need a replacement ballot, please visit the Association Office. You can also bring your completed ballot to the meeting as long as you do so before 10:00AM.

I often hear complaints that we don't do anything about problem properties that are an eyesore in the community, but nothing could be further from the truth. While SVLA has an aggressive code enforcement program, we are often limited by the law and private property ownership rights. It's ironic that people often demand that we take very aggressive action against homeowners with code enforcement issues, until they themselves become the offender. Then, we hear complaints about being too aggressive and picking on them, or not giving them enough time to resolve the issue. Either way, we look like the bad guy.

People often ask us why we don't "just fine them", or "put a lien on their property", or "make them fix it"? While we do levy fines and liens on homeowners, it is very difficult and expensive to "make" anyone do anything. Contrary to some beliefs, HOAs simply don't have unlimited power to "make" people do things without going through due process of law in every case. Every homeowner in SVL is entitled to due process, and that takes time – sometimes a very long time! We employ a professional team of experts to assist us in the most difficult cases, but the process is still slow and expensive. Fines, liens, and letters are tools we can and do use, but they don't actually "make" anyone do anything. The only way to do that is often following an expensive legal process where a court order "makes" them fix something, but that can sometimes take years because of bankruptcies, foreclosures, bank-owned properties, and various legal proceedings. Most of us are very aware of some "eyesore" properties that never seem to get resolved, but trust me, most of these properties are already in some step of the code-enforcement process, but it is slow. It is slow because there are many laws that protect homeowners who decide they don't want to comply with the rules of an HOA, especially in California! You can thank many of your elected state legislators for this. Also, don't forget that SVL was not immune to one of the worst real-estate meltdowns in history just a few years ago, and we are still recovering from many of the problems that came with it. As you may know, there are three Board members whose terms are ending on April 25 - Jonathan Tasker, Ilene Bandringa, and Kenny Martell. I want to personally thank each one of them for their dedicated and unselfish service to our community. It is through the efforts of people like these that make SVLA a better place to live. I hope you all will join me in thanking them for their service to our community.

I want to give special thanks to Ilene Bandringa who has served our community in many ways over the past 10 years, most recently as the Board Vice-President. Without her continual support, my life as Board President would be much more hectic and difficult. I'll sure miss having her around!

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Finally, even though I have one more year remaining on my term, it may not be as Board President, since new officers are elected every year by the new Board. Therefore, I'd like to say that I have enjoyed my time serving as the Board President this past year and look forward to serving our community however I am called upon to do so over the next year.

I also want to thank each of the five candidates who have chosen to run for the Board of Directors and have volunteered their time to serve, if elected.

Please join the new Board at our next regular Open Board meeting on April 28 at 6PM in the Community Building.

Note: There will be a Q&A Open Forum at 5:30PM prior to the regular Board Meeting.

Scott Eckert

SVLA Board President