

## Letters to the Editor — Sudden Valley Views, October 2016

Good morning,

This is Brent Lindquist, managing editor of the Sudden Valley Views. The letters to the editor from the October Views are posted below, with a couple of major corrections. Sarah Holmstrom's letter is included, in full, and Cameron Stewart's letter has been edited to include the correct opening paragraph.

I have searched high and low through my email and documents and can't figure out what happened with Cameron's letter. It was a mix-up in the editing process, I suppose, but I remain confused.

Sarah's letter, however, I can explain. She had sent me this particular letter on Sept. 14 (well before the deadline), relatively early on in the process. I wrote her a quick email asking if she could edit it down, as it far exceeded the 350-word limit, which has been posted at the top of every page four we have run since I began as the Views managing editor. When I didn't hear from her, however, I decided that I would run the letter anyway, because this is a letter-heavy issue and it seems that the word count has not been made clear or, for that matter, enforced. I had thought her letter was in my October letters file, but, in fact, it wasn't. Hopefully posting it here can rectify that situation to an extent. She didn't receive my initial email, and I should have followed up with her.

We went months without a single letter to the editor in the Views, to the point that board president Leslie McRoberts called me to check if I was either withholding letters or forgetting to post them. I was doing neither; I simply wasn't receiving them. The large influx of letters over the past couple of months has proven difficult to handle, for a variety of reasons.

As I alluded to in my column last month, there are multiple schools of thought regarding how to handle letters to the editor. Many editors simply throw out the correspondence that they cannot immediately verify. Others treat letters to the editor as a public forum, much like Facebook or any other online place to post one's thoughts. Most editors would balk at the idea of five newspaper pages filled with only letters. I personally tend to err on the side of running letters, as they are the community's monthly chance to make its voice heard.

That said, it has become clear to me that a more careful eye is required when it comes to letters to the editor. It has been a learning experience for me, and I certainly apologize if anybody has been hurt during that experience. Even in previous Sudden Valley election cycles (I've been here for two prior to this one), it hasn't been quite this difficult to wade through the sheer volume of content I received for the Views.

So, there's my apology, but as a member on one of Sudden Valley's several Facebook pages said, "Apologies are nice but doing one's job well is better." That's certainly true, and I'll do my best to make that happen.

Thanks for reading,

— Brent Lindquist

Managing Editor, The Sudden Valley Views

### Audit report

The 2015 audit report is out and overall we had a very good audit. The opinion was an unqualified opinion which is what you want and means we had materially correct financial statements and internal controls are adequate to prevent material misstatements on our financial statements. We also had no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in our management

letter so no findings! Also great news and what you want to see. Now many of you may be saying what the heck does all that mean, so I want to go over that because I believe it is very important for the users of the financial statements to understand them!

First of all, I want to say that an external audit is about the last ones that will detect fraud or theft in an organization. Unfortunately what the external auditors are looking for is high level items that would change our financial statements dramatically. Not to say that they never find anything, but typically frauds or thefts are caught internally by an internal auditor, forensic audit, or a whistleblower type situation where an employee reports something going on. That being said it is still good news to have a clean audit!

Now, our unqualified opinion means we had materially correct financial statements and internal controls. Materially correct means that the numbers are mostly correct. Basically, the numbers are correct enough that a user of the financial statements would have an accurate picture on the operation and financial well-being of the company. That being said it is pretty difficult to get anything other than an unqualified opinion. The only time a qualified opinion or partially qualified opinion is issued is if the auditors can't get enough information to be sure the financial statements are materially correct. This would happen if an organization didn't have adequate or any records, their accounting software collapsed and they didn't have data, or there were so many errors it couldn't be determined what was correct and what was incorrect to list a few examples.

We had no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses also known as findings in our management letter. This is an analysis of the controls in place over the financial records and entries into the accounting software. If there is an internal control weakness that the auditors believe could result in a material error on the financial statements or important enough weakness that the Board needs to be made aware of it for correction a finding will be listed on the management letter in the form of a significant deficiency or material weakness. Again we had neither of these and that is great news!

We did have some other recommendations that I want to discuss also. The first has to do with FDIC limits. There has been some discussion about this on Facebook. Each bank will cover up to \$250,000 in funds should there be a collapse of the market, so holding more than that at any one bank leaves one open to loss. However, we implemented sweeps which mitigate this risk. The banks essential sweep the money into an investment account nightly which does not fall under this FDIC limit, so our funds are protected and covered should the market crash. The issue had been addressed before the auditors left site.

The preventative maintenance recommendation is the most important one to me. This is a repeat recommendation from the prior year audit. It is also a huge issue right now as we only got our 2017 budget to balance by borrowing from our reserves. This recommendation is basically saying listen to what the consultant said in 2013 and implement a way to improve the reserves to protect our assets. We aren't setting aside enough currently and we are only making it worse by taking from this. In the near future we are going to have severe cash flow problems and have even more issues maintaining our already desperate facilities. The auditors note that we are drafting a quarterly maintenance schedule and updating the reserve study. We are updating the study because we are required to do so; no one gets any glory for that on our current management team. Some may be hoping that we'll get a different answer or the new study will tell us it is going to be ok. Well just take a trip around our amenities and it isn't hard to figure out it isn't going to be ok and that they desperately need repair. The auditors are basically saying the current dues are not enough to cover the amounts needed for reserves. This leaves two options;

increase dues or start making money on our other items. Either way money has to come from somewhere. We can reduce our expenses, but we can't reduce them enough to cover this shortfall. This is a huge problem and we should never have gone down the road this far to not only not be funding the reserves adequately, but taking from them to fund our 2017 budget. Where is the management and the Treasurer and financial analysis for Sudden Valley? Sadly, we have been let down by both to be in this situation. This did not happen overnight. Our current treasurer recommended the reallocation. How is that being fiscally responsible? I'm not sure and certainly wasn't in the best financial interest of Sudden Valley which is the whole point of the Treasurer position.

Please consider these recommendations when evaluating who to vote for in the next election. As a candidate running for the Board I hope to help improve our financial condition and start moving in the right direction. Our amenities need to make money, not just pay for the utilities they use. We need to be planning and saving for our roads, infrastructure, and buildings. We need to be fiscally responsible.

— Sarah Holmstrom

#### Candidate withdrawal and endorsements

I'd like to thank you for the support you've shown me here in my choice of running for the board. After looking over the list, I realize that there are more qualified applicants to choose from than me.

I don't plan to go away or be quite when something isn't right. I plan to move to the Long Range Planning Committee and hope to interject some common sense. As noted in the 9/8/16 BOD Meeting by Samantha Rorabaugh, the LRPC was designed to make suggestions to the board based on studies we've paid for (many times now) and work in conjunction with finance as in "can we afford it?".

The ones I have faith in that have the community interest at heart are:

Eric Trower, Cheryl Taylor, Sarah Holmstrom and Alma Alexander (Deckert).

If you have spent any time at a BOD Meeting, you would have seen Eric questioning Bylaws and Procedures. He does his research and comes back with facts, noting most often that someone hasn't followed a bylaw.

Sarah Holmstrom is currently a Chief Financial Officer of a multimillion dollar company and her responsibilities include analyzing businesses for profitability to ensure their longevity and maintain profitability.

This is something sudden Valley really needs!

Cheryl Taylor has spent time in both, Long Range Planning Committee and the N & E Committee as well as one of the SST committees over several years. She has learned the backside of the community and sees the desperate need for some common sense changes in order to grow.

Alma Deckert (Alma Alexander the writer) is self employed and very familiar with common sense decisions and business finance. You can't be self employed and not know a few things! She pays attention to the valley, she cares about the valley.

All of these folks believe in transparency and if you elect them, you will see more information coming out.

A big THANK YOU to Mike Ashby, Samantha Rorabaugh and Gail Chiarello for actually using Face Book to get information out and make we want to be involved.

If you can't get to BOD Meetings but you'd like to get more real time information about what goes on and have a chance to interact, express your opinions and have discussions, please use the Facebook groups.

They are:

Members of Sudden Valley

Sudden Valley - And Now The Rest Of The Story

Sudden Valley Raw

— Cameron Stewart

Please vote

Please vote in each of the upcoming elections (national, regional, local, Sudden Valley)!

With reference to Sudden Valley, I ask you to read about all the candidates and then consider doing as I will--casting my vote for Carol Bauman, Larry Brown and Carol Houlton. These are the voices of experience and knowledge.

Please don't be fooled by the scare tactics naysayers use. These tactics shouldn't work at any level!

The above candidates will build upon progress already in the works. They will join certain others on the BOD who are also experienced, competent, dedicated, tested and progressive thus increasing two very important aspects: our property values and our enjoyment of living in Sudden Valley!

Support the substantial amount of work already accomplished by the current majority and our SVCA staff by voting for Carol Bauman, Larry Brown and Carol Houlton!

Thank you for your consideration.

— Karen Dyer

Concerned with candidates' attitudes

I have grave concerns with the attitude of some of our candidates for the BOD. Some profess to be against the lease for our library because the library wants a clause saying SV will pay \$40,000 to help them transfer the books to a different location if SV terminates the lease prematurely. How hard is it to plan an eviction in a timely manner to avoid this penalty?

The golf course is constantly criticized for its losses. The \$10 to \$20 a year it might cost me to subsidize this asset is more than offset by the enhancement to my property value and also provides beautiful vistas. The pools are also a needed amenity. They are also subsidized.

We need our amenities for the community. I wish someone would do a survey comparing HOA fees nationwide. I think we would find we get a lot for our dues as compared to other HOAs. Our dues are no where near as high as they would have been if they had been tied to inflation.

Please attend our candidates forums to determine which candidates have the same philosophy concerning the valley as your own. This is an extremely important election. Make sure you vote.

— Alice Healy

Supports Houlton

Please consider my endorsement of Carol Houlton as a continuing member of the SVCA Board of Directors. Approximately, 2 years ago I was recruited as a member of the finance

committee. Unfortunately, after 6 months I needed to resign due to family illness. However, during that period I was able to appreciate her leadership in guiding the group through a myriad of transitions. She always, always demonstrated integrity, fairness and acute business acumen.

My professional career includes over 25 years as a leader in philanthropic, financial and organizational development for world class cancer research centers in the United States. This included raising over 200 million dollars with staff and volunteers alike. I mention this only to suggest I believe I can recognize talented leaders from many walks of life who work in collaboration. Our community is fortunate to have Carol as a trusted member of the board.

My wife and I moved here four years ago upon my retirement. We feel very fortunate to be part of an extraordinarily beautiful environment and recognize we have a responsibility to support a long term sustainable infrastructure.

There is no doubt that Carol serves our mutual community well. Thank you for your consideration.

— Larry Feder

#### Support Bauman, Houlton

First we want to thank the Board for the great job they have done these past few years with all the improvements here in Sudden Valley. Carol Bauman and Carol Houlton are up for re-election this year. They have been great assets on our Board of Directors. Their hard work, integrity, and ability to make the right decision after listening to all the facts, are just some of the reasons why we highly endorse them both for re-election.

— Richard Freeman, Michael Fiorenza and Rebecca Fiorenza

#### Supports Bauman, Brown, Houlton

Carol Bauman has lived in Sudden Valley for 17 years. During that time, she has worked harmoniously with other leaders on numerous community projects, including nominations and elections, communications, document review, the community center refurbishment and publicity/marketing. She served as vice president of the SVCA board for three years and as a member of the ACC committee for 6 years. As document review chairperson for two years, she located and reviewed all historical documents going back for 40 years. She was instrumental in bringing the YMCA to Sudden Valley.

Larry Brown is the only lawyer running for election. He has lived in SV for five years. During most of that time he has worked to improve the functions and standing of the Valley with Whatcom County, Bellingham and the School District. One of his first accomplishments was getting an “HOA exemption” that reduced building costs for Sudden Valley homeowners. He served as president of the SVCA board for three years and is highly knowledgeable about the SVCA’s experience with an outside management company that left behind a poorly set up and poorly used accounting system.

Carol Houlton has lived in Sudden Valley for six years and has served on the SVCA board for nearly three years. She earned a degree in business administration, ran her own company for six years and served as national training manager and HR manager for Kinko’s/Fed X for 19 years. Many of her SVCA projects have revolved around safety and stability. She is particularly interested in emergency preparedness. Carol believes we should do much more to prepare, not just for major disasters but also for more likely events such as windstorms, flooding, power outages, downed trees and heavy snowstorms.

— Rachel Smith Manrique

### Avoid the rumor mill

Rumor-mongering has become the daily feature for the 2016 AGM. The latest is an e-mail that is circulating in Sudden Valley where three persons, Carol Houlton, Carol Bauman, and Larry Brown have been listed as stating that the property owners will be faced with closure of the Community Garden, if they don't vote for these three.

I don't know if the e-mail is actually sent out by those three people or the e-mail is sent out by folks who don't want them voted back on the board at the AGM, but the statements in that e-mail are ridiculous, infantile, and grossly inaccurate. Why would anyone want to close Sudden Valley's Community Garden. I am not a member of the garden club but am in awe of what that club has accomplished in a small piece of property in front of our former Adult Center. And I am in awe of what folks involved with the Community Garden has accomplished. This community garden is where Sudden Valley's "green" people have enjoyed growing plants and edibles. I cannot grow anything and am therefore enjoying seeing what these "green" people can accomplish.

I hope the readers who receive that e-mail has the intelligence to laugh at what is stated and realize that we should all get on the same page and make Sudden Valley the best homeowners association in the USA and NOT cater to personal agendas or accept fearmongering.

— Suzanne Blangsted

### Don't gamble on your home values

These are dangerous times in Sudden Valley. The same sign-waving crowd that wanted to save us money in 2012 wants to save us again. The last time they "saved us money," they ran a million-dollar budget deficit, dismantled the valley's collection apparatus, and hired EMB—arguably the worst decision in our history.

Before we put them back in office, it might be wise to run a few numbers.

The average home in Sudden Valley is worth around \$260,000. That means that our homes and lots are collectively worth around \$700,000,000—not counting the golf course, the roads, our parks, et cetera.

Now, let's suppose that the "save-us" crowd elects to reduce our dues by 10% (although they didn't cut a dime last time). Then each homeowner would save in the neighborhood of \$92 per year, or less than three lattes per month. (Lot owners would save about \$81. ) The consequence, of course, would be that the budget to maintain the valley's assets would have to be cut by around \$285,000, just to break even with this year.

Lastly, let's assume that the 10% reduction in HOA asset maintenance would reduce the average value of a Sudden Valley home by a paltry 2%. Then the valley's property owners would lose about \$14,000,000 in equity. If the loss is 5% (and it could be worse), then we'd lose about \$35 million—because we thought it was smarter to save three lattes per month.

Your choice is simple: you can put the "cost-savers" back on the board by not voting, or by voting for candidates who unabashedly don't care if home values plummet. If, however, you believe that the value of your home should increase, then vote for Carol Baumann, Larry Brown, and Carol Houlton. They've been fighting the right fight for years, and they can do the math.

If you have questions about the numbers, then attend a board meeting or the AGM and ask tough questions. Or don't, and roll the dice on the value of your home.

— George Shaffner

It's never been more important to vote than in this upcoming AGM. As members of SV, we cannot continue to ignore the deterioration of our facilities. The purpose of this letter is to encourage all property owners to vote in this AGM.

We are volunteers on the Finance Committee who have responsibility to work with our staff and outside consultants for the best interests of our community. Our areas of oversight include Accounting and Financials, the Capital Repairs and Replacement Reserve Fund (CRRRF) and the Roads Reserve, for roadways, swales and culverts. Our collective careers and areas of expertise include significant experience in management and oversight of these functions.

As Finance Committee members, we voted to recommend that the Board of Directors include a measure on the next AGM Ballot for our Property Owners to express their support or rejection of plans to revitalize the assets of our community. Now you will have an opportunity in Measure 2 of your ballot to express your support for securing an estimate and financial plan to "Revitalize" our facilities. This measure is NOT asking for an increase in dues, only for direction to spend a portion of our current CRRRF Funds to identify what it would cost and how we might fund the revitalization of our significant assets.

The majority of our current Finance Committee members and Board of Directors do not believe it's in our best interest to continuously try to patch our deteriorating assets with "band-aid solutions". Over the last year, we have been forced to start making piecemeal decisions on spending funds to demolish facilities that no longer are safe or useful. We believe the better approach is to review all of our major assets and facilities with an eye on the future. What facilities do we have that we need for our staff to function effectively? What can we reasonably afford?

We ask you to vote affirmatively for candidates who wholeheartedly support this approach and express approval of Measure 2, for sustaining the beauty and assets of our wonderful community.

— Pug Edmonds, Rick Gray, Jack Levine & Tony Louzao

On the management question

As a first-term Board member, I was honored two weeks ago to be asked to serve with Board President Leslie McRoberts on a General Manager search team, along with Mike Ashby. We would work on a parallel track with a second team, headed by David Narsico, which was reviewing management company applications.

Narsico's team has had a head start. Applications were received September 8th in response to the Board-approved July RFP. As of this writing (September 22nd), they have completed their review, interviewed firms, and scheduled Town Hall presentations for September 26th, 28th, and October 3rd. Our team's first meeting was September 15th.

Which Way to Go? Fans of the management company see stability, numerous competent staff, protection from well-meaning "micro-managers" (you know who you are!), economies of scale. Opponents point to overhead on top of charge-backs for salaries, supplies, travel, etc., and an administrative overlay which insulates management from Board or community concerns (yes, some "micro-managers" have a valid concern!). As the community learned with EMB, promises at the beginning of the marriage can fall apart down the road, positions left unfilled (but still charged), hefty fee increases upon contract renewal, accounting errors, inscrutable software—leading to an uncomfortable divorce. Many respond to the management company option with "Been There, Done That." Although community enthusiasm currently appears lukewarm at best, the upcoming Town Halls may change that.

Others—myself included—favor simply replacing our General Manager. Finding a qualified candidate to work within Sudden Valley’s budgetary constraints and “special culture” is our challenge. We’re playing “catch-up,” and a thorough search cannot be done in two or three weeks.

Making a decision before Mr. Waterman’s departure November 5th could mean a decision—on a rushed schedule—that affects Sudden Valley for months and years to come. And with the AGM a month away, will a new Board endorse decisions made now? To be fair to our community, we must slow down.

I take heart that Leslie McRoberts has given her word this will not be rushed. She has stated twice, with her characteristic firmness: “We will take the time we need to do this right.”  
— Gail Chiarello

### Responding to the questionnaire

I am writing this letter in response to a “Sudden Valley Questionnaire” which I picked up at a Town Hall Meeting on August 13, 2016. It is also available on the web site and is to be answered by “Households”.

I would ask Home Owners to study the questionnaire and ask yourselves if you agree that 8 pages of questions, such as the ones listed below, represent a basis for reliable and valid answers which could be used to select which amenities and services are to be funded and why:

1. How I feel about services and amenities.....6 questions
2. How do I rate the “Views” .....1 “
3. Suggest improvements to the “Views” .....1 “
4. Would I suggest other means of Communication....3 choices and space for ideas
5. How important are amenities .....17 questions
6. How often do I use certain amenities .....21 questions
- 7,8,9,10 What are my preferences for funding....
- 11 Other options .....9 ideas
12. Additional comments .....4 lines

This questionnaire, in my opinion, is invalid because:

1. There is no “control”.....no name, no lot, no division, and a “Household” could be a rental household

2. The questionnaire asks how one “feels”, this is a very subjective manner of questioning, and offers no “Validity” for objectivity nor for “factual” answers

3. The questionnaire asks how important the amenities are to me....I would not buy and become a member of an HOA if the amenities were not important to me as a member of the community. Therefore the question is “redundant”

4. The questionnaire asks how “often” one uses the services and amenities....actually the HOA has the responsibility of maintaining and ensuring they are available whether I use them or not....if the the usage is of importance, then the authors of this Long Range Planning and Communication Committee should ask for the statistics from the various Managers who are in charge of the service or the amenity. 21 questions, some of which, are too subjective to expect an answer....i.e. previous use of the Adult Center, the use of the swimming pools, Library, marina, golf ...Regardless of my age, my ownership of a boat or my capability, my responsibility, is to make funds available for the services and amenities. That is what a member of an HOA does. We need the funds, not an 8 page unreliable questionnaire that is available to anyone and everyone.

5. The questionnaire ignores the fact that the Sudden Valley HOA voted in (or appointed) members to promote the availability and the up-keep of services and amenities....therefore most of the questions in the questionnaire do not provide answers to the tremendous DECISIONS which are facing our BOD.

The sooner we VOTE to repair, or to demolish and rebuild, the happier the members of the SVHOA will be.

— Margaret L. Grant-Paton

Supports Taylor, Trower and Holstrom

I want to ask you, neighbors, to join me in this November's elections by voting for candidates CHERYL TAYLOR, ERIC TROWER, and SARAH HOLSTROM. Based on their bios and their platforms, I believe that Cheryl, Eric, and Sarah are best placed to bring about decisive change in our community. That change means TRANSPARENCY, INCLUSIVENESS, and EFFICIENCY in SVCA governance.

When I became involved in SV issues just before the SGM earlier this year, I was neutral and largely unaware of the issues. I wasn't opposed to the idea of the dues increases proposed back then, but I did want to know more about our circumstances, and what our financial situation really was.

Since then, I have been disturbed at many of the things I have discovered:

- The SGM dues increase for specific operational maintenance of our roads and culverts was offset by cutbacks to other types of maintenance. Instead, the salary bill rose by almost the same amount as the dues increase (with almost all of it going to the Managing Director).

- Of a total of for 24 capital funding requests approved by the Finance Committee from January to July of this year (\$1.01 million), only 1 contract had the required 3 bids. 9 had just one bid and the rest had none.

- The 2017 budget takes money from our heavily underfunded roads and capital accounts to fund staff salary increases significantly in excess of inflation.

- Despite survey results showing a majority opposed, and despite repeated member requests for more realistic, cost-effective options, the Board majority is pressing ahead with its plans for a deluxe, loan-financed revitalization project (at least \$5.5 million) for our recreational corridor.

How will we maintain these facilities when we can't even afford to maintain our roads or parks?

I have personally witnessed secrecy, exclusion, and fiscal negligence in SVCA governance, and I know that we can do better. I believe that Cheryl, Eric, and Sarah provide an opportunity to bring about real and lasting change, and I ask you to please support them in this election.

— Adrienne Pratt

Supports, Houlton, Bauman, Brown

I have lived in many areas of the United States, but in my experience, Sudden Valley is the most beautiful and unique. We, as residents, have the responsibility to preserve our community.

Our Board of Directors should be comprised of individuals who have lived here long enough to know our history and our future needs. Carol Bauman, Carol Houlton, and Larry Brown have volunteered hundreds of hours of their time to Sudden Valley and should be supported in their willingness to continue to serve. Please vote for these candidates who have proven their commitment to our community.

— Marie Falen

Mike Maxwell has accused Ms. B. Wells of writing “misleading, malicious and libelous” statements about a “65-year-old woman who had bought a lot in SV less than 2 years earlier for \$7,000”. Claiming Ms. Wells “had no first-hand information” he challenges SVV for allowing “this embarrassingly erroneous letter to be published.”

This brings up a question: Mr. Maxwell, why did SVV publish your embarrassingly erroneous letter? Obviously Mr. Maxwell shows no compunction about providing his own misleading information. He makes assertions of fact that cannot be found in the complaint, trial transcript or court filings. For example, he states “this poor woman was in court trying to defend herself against an error-filled, SV led, proposed judgement of \$7,589.05”.

Wrong.

Having read the trial transcript, seen the complaint and the charges against Jeanne Tinker-Smith, there appear to be some errors in Mr. Maxwell’s assertions: SV Administration attempted for two years to get Ms. Tinker-Smith’s account to a paid in full status. Between July 9, 2014 and September 2, 2016, Ms. Tinker-Smith made seven small payments amounting to \$805.52. During that same period, Ms. Tinker-Smith, who had agreed to monthly payments on her account, ignored 68 charges for dues, late fees, interest and legal fees (for attempts to collect). This left her with a balance owed of \$6,066.74 on September 9, 2016.

Since she made no serious effort to retire the balance or even discuss a settlement, she was taken to small claims court where SV asked for an amount of \$1,100.95 (NOT the \$7,589.05 Mr. Maxwell asserts). SV was awarded \$437.18 by the commissioner. Believing that the award was insufficient, SV appealed the case in Superior Court and had the original request granted, less finance charges.

Mr. Maxwell accused the SV management of spending “\$6,000-\$9,000 in legal fees to collect ‘a total judgment of \$432.18’”. However, the legal fees, which are now the defendant’s responsibility, amounted to only \$2,591.05. (NOT \$6,000 to \$9,000).

“This poor woman....” Really? Are we talking about the same Jeanne Tinker-Smith who was just convicted of a felony for buying a shotgun, two rifles, and a pair of Glock pistols for her son, who had become a convicted felon in 2006? After lying to sheriff’s deputies regarding the whereabouts of her son, her son opened fire on the deputies, wounding one, and was subsequently killed in her house.

“Poor woman....”

Yeah.

— David Gustafson

Supports Bauman, Brown and Houlton

I would like to recommend three candidates for election to the SVCA Board of Directors. These three candidates all have extensive resumes of volunteer work on committees, special projects, and on the Board of Directors; in-depth understanding of the history, strengths and challenges of governance and management in Sudden Valley; and a love for this community shown by their willingness to commit huge amounts of time and energy toward volunteer activities.

Carol Bauman has demonstrated leadership skills and the ability to accomplish difficult tasks for SVCA. There are far too many accomplishments to list here, but a single important example of her service is the work that she did for three years as Document Review Committee Chairperson. In that role she gathered a team of volunteers to assist in the critical task of finding, organizing, streamlining, and cataloging SVCA official documents and records. What was

formerly an unorganized, jumbled mess stored for years mostly in piles of cardboard boxes, in various locations was organized gradually and carefully, so that these important documents and records are now much more accessible when needed. Carol is undaunted by seemingly monumental tasks.

Carol Houlton has a business background and professional experience that have been invaluable to us as she served on the Finance Committee and as Treasurer of the Board of Directors for two years. The Treasurer of the Board of Directors always has an intense and time consuming job, but that position during a difficult period for SVCA required many hours of work beyond the usual. Carol has worked tirelessly and effectively as Treasurer and on many other committees and projects. We need her skills, experience and tenacity as we move forward.

Larry Brown, during his tenure on the Board of Directors, accomplished many important things for Sudden Valley. His particular expertise made it possible for him to successfully think outside of the box of an isolated SVCA and to advocate for us through his work with Whatcom County Council, Lake Whatcom Policy Group, the County Planning Commission and the Bellingham School District on various issues of importance to Sudden Valley. With his past experience in governance of SVCA and interfacing with various governmental players on our behalf, and his continued service to the community, he would be even more valuable on the next Board of Sudden Valley.

Carol Bauman, Carol Houlton, and Larry Brown stand out clearly among the other candidates for the Board. I hope that you will vote for each of them in November.

— Brenda Sample

Choosing sensibility for our future

What do you imagine for the future of our community? Consider the system that is SVCA and what we must do to ensure its long term viability. SVCA is like a machine. Cogs in the wheels of this machine, our elected BOD members, should maintain a well running machine, but have they? We are at a point where we can no longer pop in a new cog or recycle a used one and expect our machine to run. We must examine the machine itself, address its malfunctions and find areas for improvement.

Decisions made have lasting impact. Why have the majority of the current cogs balanced next year's operating budget by pulling money away from our roads? When you imagine the future, do you see us needing roads? Reallocating these funds has our roads account on track to depletion within a few short years.

Who will change the machine? We have three BOD candidates who will address the systems level change required for our machine to run smoothly: Eric Trower, Sarah Holmstrom and Cheryl Taylor. They are not satisfied to run our machine into the ground. Eric is an active stakeholder participant and is a self made expert on SVCA governance. He prides himself on operating within the rules so that power is balanced and process is followed. Sarah is a CFO of a multi million dollar company and with sensibility and knowledge of best practices in both the business and non-profit worlds, knows how to analyze structures, improve efficiencies and balance budgets. Cheryl has been working on SV committees to better our system. She advocates prioritizing our funds in a way the community supports and spearheaded efforts to survey community members and make decisions that are informed by the will of the people of Sudden Valley, not just the will of the BOD majority. These candidates seek to work together with stakeholders, fix what is broken, and enhance what works to make it work better. With

utmost confidence, I give Eric Trower, Sarah Holmstrom and Cheryl Taylor my vote on November 5th. I hope you will do the same.

— Megan Thygesen

Supports Houlton, Bauman and Brown

I believe that the message below is very important for all of us who live in and/or care about Sudden Valley and I strongly encourage you read the whole message and to watch the video which is linked near the bottom of Fred's message below. I just finished watching the whole thing. I'll warn you that the video is fairly long, but with an open mind it should provide a good sense of the significant long-range progress made by recent Board's of Directors on behalf of our Community Association.

Though we have only owned our home here since 2005, I first came to Sudden Valley in 1990 with a large group of other professional community managers. What a spectacular community we saw, but even at that time we learned that SVCA had some very unusual restrictions in our founding documents which prevented the SVCA Annual Budget from even keeping up with the cost of inflation, let alone with the aging of our structures. This, and numerous other factors, had already contributed to a significant decline in the condition and quality of our infrastructure and amenities. That was 26 years ago.

Unfortunately, this did not improve, years of continuing unfunded maintenance and neglect have created a "culture of decline" in Sudden Valley which has become an acceptable state of affairs to many owners and residents. Relatively small improvements have been noted from time to time, but nothing like the overarching analysis and long-range planning undertaken by recent BODs. To their credit, this planning did not take place in a vacuum, but was done in the open with lots and lots of opportunity for membership comment and participation. I applaud the efforts of the last couple of Board's to look to the future and to recognize that much of the value of our SV homes (and much potential liability) is related to our commonly owned properties and the functions they provide for us. The above referenced video will serve to document some of the progress made.

I'm writing this today to encourage you to support the continuation of this planning and eventually the implementation of necessary repairs and ongoing maintenance of our infrastructure and amenities – by voting for the BOD candidates who have been a part of this process. Please support Larry Brown, Carol Houlton, Carol Bauman to be reelected. Do it to preserve and enhance your own property values, do it to create a nicer place to live for your family, do it to fulfill a responsibility to the community, but do it.

Thanks for reading this, please watch the video at: <http://suddenvalley.com/wp-content/uploads/SVCA-Revitalization-2016.pdf>.

— Clark Champion

Showing up

There is a complaint out there that goes something like this, "It is a small group of Sudden Valley residents whose names continue to appear on the Board and on committees, year after year....."

Woody Allen has been quoted as saying, "90% of success is showing up". One of the reasons why this "small group" keeps running things around here is THEY SHOW UP, GET ELECTED, and get elected by the COMMUNITY – not by some wizard behind a curtain - and WORK LONG HARD HOURS doing the community's business!! Those who complain the most

about this “small group” are those who rarely show up, rarely volunteer, and rarely assist in any community events, yet complain loudly with a multitude of insults toward those who do. Their complaints often seem to be structured around partial truths, distortions and incomplete information.

Correct me if I’m wrong, but last year there were nine openings for ACC; only three applied. Two years ago for three Board positions, only two applied..... Maybe I misunderstood something..... Maybe Woody Allen was right.....

— David Narsico

#### Supports Houlton, Bauman and Brown

SVCA is almost 50 years old. We are blessed with extraordinary natural beauty and the potential to be a “model” community for the state of Washington. Most of our property owners fully understand that the value of our personal property is directly influenced by the health and well being of our overall community. Unfortunately, the truth is that much of our buildings, roads, and infrastructure have been poorly maintained due a lack of sufficient capital and operating funds for many years. Some of our facilities are literally unfit for human activity.

As property owners, I hope all of you understand that it is extremely important to vote FOR progressive Board candidates with the capacity to govern SVCA in a responsible manner. I encourage everyone to vote for Carol Bauman, Larry Brown, and Carol Houlton for the three open Board of Directors seats. These candidates have served our community extremely well in the past. They have demonstrated the maturity, ability, wisdom and dedication needed to stand up and fight for what our community needs to fulfill its potential.

— Mac Carter

#### Support Houlton, Bauman and Brown

Having lived in Sudden Valley for the past 9 years, we are so glad to see the efforts by the current SVCA Board to move forward with much needed maintenance and infrastructure work, as well as various improvements to our community. Fortunately, the community is beginning to better understand these needs and is providing support.

We want to live in a community that values and takes care of its assets, infrastructure and shared amenities, and also has positive values and a sense of community. It is encouraging to see that much of the past negativity which smothered Sudden Valley and prevented many of the efforts to maintain and improve it, has significantly declined.

We support a SVCA Board that will continue the current efforts to maintain and improve our community. We want Board members who are sensible, positive, and who understand what it will take to continue the progress towards making SV the kind of community we want to live in. So, we will be voting for Carol Bauman, Larry Brown and Carol Houlton for Board this Nov.

— Richard and Marcia Morrison

#### Supports Houlton, Bauman and Brown

This year’s election of the BoD of Sudden Valley is one of the most critical we have faced. Following a painstaking, careful and thorough inspection/contemplation of the work needed to be done and to continue to build upon the substantial amount of work already carried out, we need to elect experienced, competent, dedicated and tested people.

Carol Bauman, Larry Brown and Carol Houlton have already proven their bona fides to our community. We need their expertise to go forward confidently with the SVCA staff as they

continue to make improvements to our beautiful Valley. Let's build upon this progress and enhance ALL of our property values.

I urge you to vote for Carol Bauman, Larry Brown and Carol Houlton.

— Barbara Gobus

For whom the bell tolls

There is an election approaching, and the candidates have been declared. There have been those who state that due to negligence of past Boards, the maintenance on buildings and assets has been deferred, and in such a state that several must now be torn down. I do not see disagreement there. Although one should look at who was on those past Boards, which allowed the negligence to occur, before casting your votes for candidates.

There are those who state that now is the time to conduct massive studies (\$140,000 on ballot measure 2) and take out jumbo loans, to correct the wrongs of the past, in one swift blow, correcting all that has been wrong. They say pay for it over 15 or 20 years and you will have nice new buildings and wonderful amenities. The problem is that they do not look at the other issues, the associated issues of underfunded Roads maintenance accounts, or the CRRRF account which are reaching depletion, due to previous Boards robbing from one fund to keep another afloat. After all, what good are nice new buildings, if the roads you drive to get there are beyond travel. There is always the Special Assessment, a favorite recourse of past Boards to correct the wrongs of the previous Boards. The problem is that you now have increased Dues for 15 or 20 years to pay for the building, and increased Dues to pay for the Special Assessment for the Roads account, but what about the CRRRF account, which is set up for major building construction, reconstruction and long term maintenance of those buildings you just built? Remember the CRRRF fund, according to the Accountants is also being depleted and in need of monies in the very short term. What do you do? Another Special Assessment, on top of the previous Special Assessment and on top of the 15 or 20-year jumbo loan?

The difference in the candidates is really a simple one. There are those who want to spend and there are those who want to save. The spenders want everything right now, the savers, want to take time and do projects one at a time as current funds allow, without taking out jumbo loans to indebt the Community. There are those candidates who backed the reallocation of funds from the Roads and CRRRF accounts, into the Operations account, basically taking money from our future to spend on our current state. The other candidates want to increase the productivity of our current assets, like Golf and the Marina, basically utilizing income from assets rather than raising Dues or requesting Special Assessments from the Community. There are the candidates who like things the way they are now and the way things have been in past Boards, and there are the candidates who want to open up the Board meetings, record the Finance Committee meetings, make documents available to the Community, enforce the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and allow free flowing communications with the members.

The choice you yours to choose. Do we move forward, or do we stay where we have been? The ballots and the election on November 5th will decide if the Bell really will toll for thee...

Think for yourself, research the following:

On Facebook: Members of Sudden Valley page, Sudden Valley and now the rest of the Story page, Sudden Valley Raw, and [www.CleanSweepsv.info](http://www.CleanSweepsv.info) for additional information on the issues.

— Michael S. Ashby

### Support Houlton, Bauman and Brown

We endorse Larry Brown, Carol Bauman and Carol Houlton for the SVCA Board. Their efforts over the years have shown us they are knowledgeable, qualified and will work for the best interests of the Sudden Valley residents.

We have lived in Sudden Valley for over 8 years. During that time we have observed the conflict between various Boards and some members of our community. We believe all the Boards have been good and honest people who have seriously tried to resolve the issues the Valley faces.

But despite the efforts of these duly elected representatives, some community members have always been dissatisfied, short-sighted, only offering negative comments with no positive solutions to the problems.

Many positive steps have been taken recently by the current board to resolve issues with the barns, pool, roads and other amenities. This forward-looking and long-term effort must continue.

Current board members Carol Bauman and Carol Houlton and previous board member Larry Brown have the business and legal experience to continue the positive steps taken for the future of Sudden Valley.

— Patrick & Patricia Smith

### Dear Friends & Neighbors

Individually and collectively, I believe we must do all we can to elect Carol Bauman, Larry Brown, and Carol Houlton to the Board of Directors. Many members are already familiar with their numerous and substantial contributions to our community. For those who are not, their bios and vision statements are found elsewhere in this edition.

This year's election is among the most critical we have faced. The current BoD holds a razor-thin majority (5-4) of experienced, competent, dedicated, tested, progressive members. It is imperative that a progressive majority be maintained to build upon the substantial amount of work already accomplished by the current majority and our superb SVCA staff.

To better understand the scope of work being contemplated/undertaken in response to decades of infrastructure neglect, I recommend you take a look at SVCA's facilities revitalization challenges and opportunities available on SVCA's website under the "2016 Annual General Meeting" tab. A few examples: 42% of our existing facilities are at the end of their life cycle, 23% of our existing facilities require significant revitalization, 34% of our facilities can be maintained if properly funded...but they are not.

Bottom line: "Deterioration of our assets continues to accelerate and time is not our friend."

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

— Fred Haslam

### Supports Bauman, Brown and Houlton

Enough is enough! The whiners who use Facebook to advance their divisive, destructive campaign to destroy the amenities and property values in Sudden Valley have got to be stopped. They have circulated so much misinformation and generated so much hatred that this year's voting for Board members looks like the Trump/Clinton campaigns. There are three members of "The Regressive Party" seeking to replace members of the Board with candidates who will back their unwavering efforts to shoot down any attempt to preserve the amenities in this splendid valley. These people are steadfastly focused on a rearview mirror and eschew any form of revitalization or basic maintenance of our infrastructure.

The only alternative and the only positive step for preserving, upgrading and moving forward in Sudden Valley is to cast your vote for Carol Bauman, Larry Brown and Carol Houlton. They have demonstrated fiscal responsibility and executed their fiduciary obligations with a commendable synthesis of vision and restraint. These are the people who separate the spurious from the meaningful; who work to advance the values of Sudden Valley. They have the knowledge and experience to achieve the goals that will prove beneficial to all of us. Vote for people who look to the future.

— Don Tenpas

#### A valley divided

Sudden Valley is divided. There are two groups. One favors taking over the Board, gutting the administration, converting the golf course to a cemetery, forcing the library out, razing the barns and ignoring all the other amenities. Can you imagine what their regressive thinking would do to property values?

The other group has worked long hours to develop a plan for revitalization, for saving the amenities and enhancing our property values. There are three people running for the Board who can separate us from catastrophe. Two of them are currently on the Board now and the third was on the Board recently. These are people of vision, people with a proven record of accomplishment and we need them to stay on the Board. Carol Houlton, Larry Brown and Carol Bauman are for moving forward. The others are angry, belligerent and very vocal. They want to join three others currently on the Board who have voted against every attempt to explore revitalization of Sudden Valley's amenities. Their myopic motivation would plunge Sudden Valley into a reenactment of the "Dark Ages."

For decades, Boards have kicked the amenities can down the road and ignored the escalating need to preserve the assets that make Sudden Valley a very special place to live and raise a family.

This may be the most critical election the Valley has ever faced. If you value your property, I hope you'll join me in voting for Carol, Larry and Carol.

— Mark Smith