

A close-up portrait of Mary Arnold, a woman with voluminous, curly reddish-brown hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a dark top with a light-colored, intricate lace pattern. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

# COMMUNITY MOMENTS

A RealManage Publication

Setting a Standard of  
**EXCELLENCE**

Mary Arnold®

Austin, Director of Training and Community Transition



EDITOR **Amanda Causey**

CONTRIBUTOR **Ben Kirby**

CONTRIBUTOR **Cheryl Veldman**

CONTRIBUTOR **Katie Vaughan**

CONTRIBUTOR **Amber Reyes**

### REGULAR FEATURES

- 2 WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT
- 3 EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT
- 5 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
- 6 DID YOU KNOW?
- 8 BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



## Words From Our President

Summer is upon us and I hope you and your loved ones are getting the opportunity to get out and enjoy some time with each other! We at RealManage are sincerely enjoying the opportunity to serve your community and are committed to making this the best summer yet. We feel that the best place to start in posturing our team for service is to start with a solid foundation, which is built upon our core values: Integrity, Respect, Selflessness, Personal Relationships, and Always Improving. Each one of our RealManage Ambassadors embodies these core values and brings our vision, being the best company in the world at managing jointly owned property, to a reality. I commend what each of you do as volunteers to serve your community and we are humbled and honored that you have chosen us to join your team. On behalf of RealManage, have a wonderful time with your loved ones and community members this summer and I look forward to a long and prosperous relationship with all of you.

**Chris Ayoub**  
President





## Employee Spotlight | Mary Arnold



By Ben Kirby, Vice President of Operations, - Austin

*Mary Arnold, CMCA® began her career with RealManage in 2009 and has set the standard of excellence for providing superior service to our client communities.*

Mary Arnold joined the RealManage Austin team in November of 2009 and has been a seasoned expert in the property management field since 1997 where she began managing condominium and single-family homeowners associations for a property management firm located in the Chicago suburbs.

She relocated from Chicago to the Austin area in 2009 and has never looked back. Mary said that she loves this company and industry because “managing property, the largest investment the average American will make in their lifetime, is work that truly does matter and makes a difference in the big picture of life.” She has progressed through the ranks of the Austin branch, being promoted from a Director of Association Management to the Director of Transition and Training for over 160 communities.

The President of the Central Texas Division, Ben Yaeger, had this to say about Mary: “Immediately after taking over leadership of the Austin market for RealManage, I recognized Mary as a top expert and leader in the company. She routinely handles complicated and delicate matters with grace and superior insight. She is my go-to manager whenever a community needs special oversight to improve client satisfaction. A clear standout, I immediately crafted a new position to fully use her talents, promoting her to Director of Training and Community

Transition. In this role, she is the face of our company for both new hires and new communities. She is well known as a fantastic manager among community developers and association board members across Central Texas. She consistently receives accolades for her meticulous attention to detail and proactive communication which quickly sets any stakeholder at ease. It is rare that a new community does not ask me whether Mary can be their manager. I hold Mary in the highest regard. Her excellence and track record of superior performance set her apart.”

Mary exemplifies all of the values RealManage strives to display as a company: Personal relationships, respect, always improving, integrity and selflessness. It is team members like Mary that distinguish RealManage from all others in the community management industry. Because of her efforts, character, and dedication, she was selected as one of the top three finalists in the 2016 Community Association Institute National Manager of the Year Contest, coming in 2nd in the country, and the only finalist in the state of Texas!

RealManage is so honored to have Mary Arnold as a part of the team and is confident that she will continue to serve our clients with the highest level of professionalism, dedication and respect for years to come.





# How Can We Increase Community Involvement?

By Amanda Causey, Corporate Sales & Marketing Manager

*Board members frequently ask us for ideas on how to increase community involvement. Here are five ideas to help increase the odds of homeowner participation.*

Often times in community associations, there is a struggle with homeowner apathy as the residents have difficulty seeing any benefit in the association. This causes a huge decrease in volunteer involvement and event attendance. Association Boards will often hear the common theme of “I pay my assessments, so that is enough.” The reality is that paying dues are only part of the equation. Homeowner volunteerism is an integral part of any community and as board members and management professionals, it is our job to figure out a way to promote a change in this mindset. We want to foster a community spirit that residents can be proud of. So the question is: what can we do to ignite homeowner enthusiasm and make people want to be involved? Here are a few highly effective ways to get started:

## WELCOME THEM.

What better time to start building community spirit than when a new homeowner moves in? Instead of only sending the typical welcome letter that includes all the rules, regulations and CCR's, consider having a board or committee member visit the new owner to warmly welcome them. This is also the perfect opportunity to find out what interests the owner has in community activities. Based on their responses, you could ask them if they would be interested in joining a committee to help organize those activities.

## MAKE IT FUN. MAKE IT SOCIAL.

Humans are social creatures by nature. As a community, consider holding various get-togethers through-out the year that will appeal to all sorts of groups. Celebrate holidays! Whether they are big or small holidays, make it fun. Outside holidays, other activities to consider are movie night at the pool, adults only swim party, holiday cookie drive, chili cook-off, block parties, national night out, etc.

## EXTRA! EXTRA!

One of the easiest ways to keep residents up-to-date of happenings in the community is to send newsletters either by mail or e-mail. Keeping people informed makes people feel like they are a part of something great. This will naturally lead to an increased enthusiasm and higher chance of people wanting to participate.

## THE MORE THE MERRIER.

A majority of the time, residents who are uninvolved in activities are disconnected from community business. Get board meeting dates, times and locations publicized in highly visible areas. Send out e-mails and publish on websites in advance. Of course, offer food! Make it known that goodies will be at the meeting for those who attend. The more board meetings that residents attend, the higher chance they will get actively involved in the community.

## CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

Sometimes, receiving participation from residents is as simple as how you ask for it. Develop volunteer opportunities that are important to residents. Ask people to personally volunteer, and of course provide training and set expectations. It goes a long way for volunteers if they have a clear goal in mind and the steps in which to achieve it. As always, tell people "Thank You" and hold appreciation events for them. People who feel appreciated are more likely to keep helping and encourage others to step up as well.



According to Foundation for Community Association Research's National Survey of Community Association Homeowner Satisfaction, the average community association resident volunteers twice a year for community-sponsored events. Nearly 60 percent of respondents said that they participate in each of the following community-wide events: parties, holiday celebrations, neighborhood watch programs, and community holiday decorating. Forty-five percent of respondents said that they participate in other social events. However, 45 percent of community association residents also admitted that they either never volunteer or only volunteer in their associations once a year.

*Source Foundation for Community Association Research*





## Summer Safety Tips

Summer has arrived and many families have plans for vacation. As exciting as time away can be, it is also a prime time for burglars to break into homes while vacationers are thousands of miles away. What can you and your community do to deter break-ins while residents are away on vacation? Below are some helpful summer safety tips.

### FORM A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP

Working with a police liaison, an HOA community should establish a neighborhood watch group that helps protect neighborhood assets from vandalism and burglary. If it is known that residents of a home will be on vacation, the watch can be adjusted to pay particular attention to the property until the residents return. Posting signs that indicate a neighborhood watch is in effect can serve as a burglary deterrent in itself.

### HAVE MAIL HELD AT THE POST OFFICE

Mail overflowing from a mailbox can be taken as a sign that no one is home. So, before you buy two tickets to paradise, contact the postal service and have your mail held at the post office for the period of time that you will be vacationing. In addition to helping to protect your property, having your mail held will keep your home looking neat and orderly.

### ARRANGE TO HAVE THE YARD MOWED

If your vacation will last several days, arrange to have your yard mowed at least once while you are away. Like a stuffed mailbox, an overgrown lawn can signal to burglars that no one is home, especially when the lawns of other homes in the neighborhood are neat and tidy. If you already hire someone to get your grass cutting done, simply move on to the next tip.

### DO NOT POST UPDATES ON FACEBOOK

Many vacationers like to post photos on Facebook that show them having a great time on their travels. However, not posting pictures of yourself on vacation is an important summer safety tip. If someone sees loads of mail in your mailbox or observes that your yard is overgrown, they may wonder whether you are home. But if they see a photo of you in Corsica that was posted fifteen minutes ago on Facebook, they'll know for certain that you are on the other side of the globe.

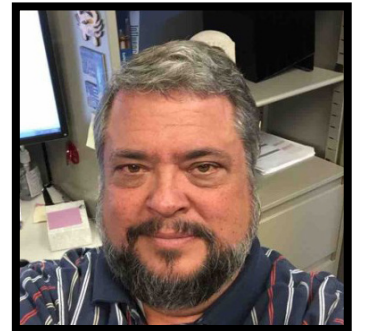
### A COMMUNITY MANAGER CAN HELP

If your HOA community needs to develop a summer safety program that includes burglary prevention, your Community Association Manager can help you to develop and execute a security program that meets the needs of the community.

## Board Member Spotlight

By Amber Reyes, Community Association Manager

*Mr. McInnis is a Director on the Board of Stonewater HOA in Austin, Texas.*



Thom McInnis has served on the board of Stonewater HOA for the past 2 years in a Director position. This board still has a declarant majority. His day-to-day job consists of working for Austin Energy, and his duties there include market research projects and making recommendations to executive staff based upon his findings. He also develops, analyzes, and recommends financial analysis and forecasting for new products. The duties in his corporate job carry over into his role as a board member and have made him an excellent asset when it comes to research, processes, budgets, and homeowner satisfaction.

Stonewater originally broke ground and was built by a developer who later went bankrupt. When the new developer bought out the remaining lots, started running an active board, and implementing the communities bylaws it had many homeowners up in arms. Thom has made it his goal to bring understanding to his fellow homeowners and homeowner perspective to the developer, making him an excellent liaison.

He has many times stayed up late after a long day to drive the community at night so that he can see the violations that occur during late hours and allow him

to have some understanding of other homeowners frustrations. By doing this he has been able to suggest better processes for the HOA to implement and enforce. He has also single-handedly written several policies that have been added to the community manual that have helped make Stonewater a better community.

Thom's desire to gain knowledge about the property code, rules, and ethics of an HOA have no doubt made him a strong leader on the board. It is often difficult to find homeowners that can sit on the board with a developer and understand the reasoning behind certain decisions, but Thom has been a team player along the way. It is the way he seeks to understand that makes him the successful board member he is.

With 700 homes still left to build in Stonewater, both the manager and the developer hope that Mr. McInnis will continue to be re-elected. By being proactive and going above and beyond what is required of him he makes the manager, the developer, and his fellow homeowners feel at ease knowing he is involved. Thank you for helping to show what can happen when homeowners and developers can work together. We are honored to work with you.

A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie stands on a thin tightrope. He holds a black umbrella over his head and a brown folder under his left arm. Below him, the ocean is visible with several shark fins protruding from the water. The background is a cloudy sky with a warm, golden light.

## Oh No - A Claim!

By Katie Vaughan, Vice President - CiraConnect Insurance Services

You work hard and are proud of the job you do for your community. When it comes to insurance, you have made sure the community has the important coverages in place. Here's a brief review of what those coverages are:

1. Commercial General Liability protects against claims others make against the association. The policy provides coverages for bodily injury, property damage, personal injury and advertising liability.

Homeowners are included as additional insureds. There is usually no deductible. This insurance is often combined with the property coverage in a package policy.

2. Non-owned auto liability responds in case someone who is driving on behalf of the community is involved in an accident and doesn't have enough insurance to pay for all of the damages.

3. Directors & Officers (D&O) liability protects the association and its directors for claims alleging mismanagement. Coverage is provided for claims made against the community during the policy period, subject to the 'prior acts' date.

4. An umbrella policy provides additional limits of insurance for liability claims. You've done a great job because you requested that this coverage extend over all three liability policies.

5. Commercial property coverage protects the community's commonly owned property. You've made sure the property is insured for its full replacement value and have reviewed the deductibles with an eye on the community's budget.

6. Fidelity/crime coverage protects against the theft of funds by an employee or volunteer. Even though you may manage the community's bank account, you know the association needs this insurance in the event a volunteer diverts funds through use of a phony invoice.

7. They even have a Workers' Compensation policy - because an association can have an exposure even without any employees. Here's a case in point. An employee of an uninsured vendor was badly hurt. The California Appeals Board ruled that the association and its managing agent were both responsible to pay state-mandated benefits. (Heiman v Workers' Compensation Appeals Board)

And, finally, you have Certificates of Insurance to assist you in a quick review of the policies.

But now, here comes the dreaded news - there's been a claim! What should you do? Claim handling steps can be broken down into finding out what, when, where, who and how.

What happened? Get as complete a description as possible. By clarifying what happened, you'll be able to determine which policy or policies to file the claim under. Take all necessary steps to prevent further loss or damage. If a vendor needs to install plywood over a broken window or tack a tarp over the hole, don't wait for an adjuster - go ahead with the work. Hang on to the receipts as this is part of the total claim. When did it happen? The date of the loss is important because it will likely govern which policy will respond. If it is a straightforward property loss such as a fire or it's a commercial general liability loss like a slip and fall, the policy that will respond is the one in-force when the accident happened. This may not be the current policy.

Sometimes we only find out about a loss when the claim arrives - which may be days, weeks, months or even years after the event happened. Perhaps someone fell in the parking lot and the board didn't find out about it until the lawsuit arrived. Or, you just learned a pipe in the wall of a condo unit has been leaking water for the past several months. That claim might involve more than one policy. So make sure you have insurance policy information for prior years.

The answer to 'when' under the Directors & Officers policy is a little different. The general definition of a claim is a written demand or notice of civil or criminal proceeding. So for this type of loss, when did you or the board receive it?

Where did it happen? Is there a specific address or just a couple of intersecting streets?

Who caused the accident? If possible, get the names and contact information of everyone involved. Was anyone hurt? Were the police, fire department or EMT's contacted? If yes, identify which one(s) and get the report number.

Then, evaluate the information you've gathered. If it is a property loss, first review the estimated cost to repair the damage against the policy deductible. If the loss is under that amount, you may not want to report it. Also remember that insurance policies are not maintenance contracts. Rebuilding an entry monument crumbling from age will not be covered by insurance.

Always report an accident when someone gets hurt on the community's property - even if the injuries appear to be minor.

Finally, how do you report it? Contact the association's insurance agent. Have the above facts at hand. You can expect the insurance company to provide the name and contact information for the adjuster within a day or two.

Once you have gathered information and reported the loss, you'll be proud because you can work with the board and the adjuster to get the claim on the way to being settled.



# CiraConnect Spotlight | What's New?

By Cheryl Veldman, Account Manager

*The CiraConnect Software Development Team has announced the deployment of new functionality to the Board invoice approval module.*

We have implemented a new view for the Invoice Approval process that will allow Board members responsible for reviewing/approving invoices to see actioned work items for a period of three days. This will, in part, help avoid the confusion many Board members experienced when they would receive their reminder emails on a given morning, but by the time they were able to log in to take a look, their fellow Board members had already approved the bills. Now they will be able to see those bills they were expecting to work on even if they no longer need to approve them and who took the action. If they still want to take a look at the invoice and AP Work Flow information, they can click on the View button to do so.

This does not in any way hamper the disbursement process. As soon as the minimum number of approvers have actioned on the invoice, it immediately moves on to approved status

(assuming that is the action they elect) and will be disbursed as per usual.

In the example below, notice that the invoices already approved are clearly highlighted in green, but you can differentiate the statuses in other ways as well. First, as noted above, you will observe that the approved items have a “View” button in the Action column, as opposed to the option to Action. In the Info column, they are designated by a green check mark as opposed to the yellow caution sign. Finally, the status will indicate the action taken. In the case below, the community only requires one approver, so you can see which Board member reviewed it and who was not able to before it moved on.

ID	Action	User	Added On	Due Date	Days Remaining	Info	Status	Documents	Discussion Notes	Log	Required	Reference	Details
1281616	Action	Patrick Camasta	5/20/2016	6/19/2016	5 days remaining	⚠	Unapproved	(1)			✓	Fullett Rosenlund Anderson PC	
1281616	Action	Richard Finn	5/20/2016	6/19/2016	5 days remaining	⚠	Unapproved	(1)				Fullett Rosenlund Anderson PC	
1291929	Action	Patrick Camasta	6/6/2016	7/6/2016	22 days remaining	⚠	Unapproved	(1)			✓	Fullett Rosenlund Anderson PC	
1291929	Action	Richard Finn	6/6/2016	7/6/2016	22 days remaining	⚠	Unapproved	(1)				Fullett Rosenlund Anderson PC	
1293452	View	Patrick Camasta	6/8/2016	7/8/2016	24 days remaining	✓	Approved	(1)			✓	Michael O'Malley	
1293452	View	Richard Finn	6/8/2016	7/8/2016	24 days remaining	✓	Unapproved	(1)				Michael O'Malley	
1293453	View	Patrick Camasta	6/8/2016	7/8/2016	24 days remaining	✓	Approved	(1)			✓	Michael O'Malley	
1293453	View	Richard Finn	6/8/2016	7/8/2016	24 days remaining	✓	Unapproved	(1)				Michael O'Malley	
1293454	View	Patrick Camasta	6/8/2016	7/8/2016	24 days remaining	✓	Approved	(1)			✓	Michael O'Malley	
1293454	View	Richard Finn	6/8/2016	7/8/2016	24 days remaining	✓	Unapproved	(1)				Michael O'Malley	

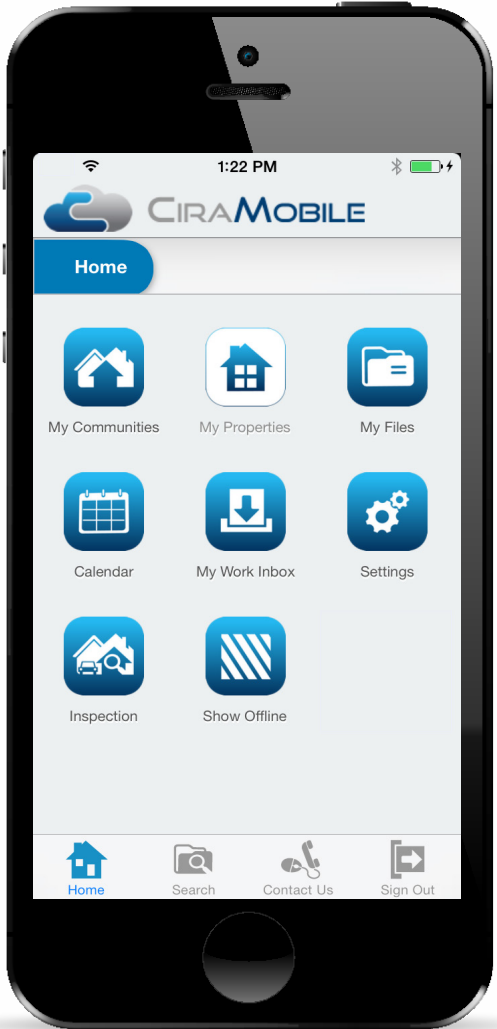


## MOBILE APP SUITE

PUTTING THE  
**POWER**  
----- OF -----  
**COMMUNITY**  
IN YOUR HANDS

### Manage on the go

- Inbox
- Email
- Work Orders
- Deed Restrictions
- ACC
- Dashboards
- Integrated Calendar



### Features

- Simply log in with your current credentials
- Various versions for all user types
  - ✓ Management firms
  - ✓ CAMs
  - ✓ Board members
  - ✓ Community members
  - ✓ Residents
- Fully-functional features
  - ✓ Manage your company
  - ✓ Manage your portfolio
  - ✓ Manage your community
  - ✓ Manage your account

Don't Have it?  
Get It Now for iOS

CiraMobile is available for iPhones and iPads in the Apple App Store



Interested in more industry related topics?  
Connect with us on:

