

from the **PRESIDENT**

GEORGE SKRBIN, CMCA[®]



I am sure we all are enjoying this warmer weather and longer days! It is hard to focus on the daily grind, but I would like to spotlight a few things that we offer you and your Association to be more efficient and save money! I want to take a minute to think about Associa cost savings programs designed for you and your community. Here are some exclusive opportunities you have due to your partnership with us. In this newsletter, you will read more details about Associa and its advantages.

Did you know that the Associa Advantage Program could offer you significant savings on the many items we use every day? And offer these savings to owners as well! Or that we offer a waste removal program which can reduce the monthly costs to remove trash. What about our Homeowner Link Elite program – so many possibilities for use! You can alert your homeowners of changes in services, remind them of annual meetings, special meetings or parties, update them on projects throughout the community, remind them of the due date of the upcoming fees, the list goes on and on. Use of this service could reduce mailings throughout the year to your owners. Thus allowing the annual cost to be offset by the program.

Your manager has all the information you need to successfully provide your community with quality, time saving services. Feel free to call me with questions.

COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE FINALISTS

Associa/Association Services of Florida is pleased to announce that they had finalists in four different categories at the Communities of Excellence Conference and Award Ceremony on April 1st, 2011 held at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. Although none of the finalists won for their category, Associa/ASF wants to congratulate the following:

DOREEN ERNST, CMCA[®]
Florida Managers of Excellence Finalist

JOANNE FOLEY, CMCA[®]
Family-Friendly Programs and Initiatives
Country Creek Club (HOA)

LUCRETIA FASCIANO, CMCA[®]
Family-Friendly Programs and Initiatives
Hollywood Oaks (HOA)

DARRELL BARTLEBAUGH, CMCA[®]
Energy and Water Conservation
The Pointe at Pompano Beach

ASF was most proud that several Board members took time out of their schedules to attend this event with their Manager. Both these Managers and these properties are all winners to us.

Congratulations!

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HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS TIPS

MORE THAN THE HURRICANE, IT IS THE AFTERMATH THAT CAUSES A LOT OF PROBLEMS; SHORTAGE OF FUEL SUPPLY, WATER AND FOOD ARE VERY COMMON DURING THESE SITUATIONS. THERE IS ALSO A HIGH CHANCE OF A SUDDEN OUTBREAK OF PANDEMICS.

PRE-HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

Always prepare a hurricane plan for your home as well as your office. Insuring your property is one important way in which you can minimize the damage that can be caused by a hurricane. To keep your insurance claims valid, pay your premiums before the hurricane season. Now, let's come down to the steps that you can manually take to safeguard your house. If possible make your building hurricane proof by installing plywood or hurricane shutters.

Prepare a 'disaster bag' for each member of the house. Keep the first aid kit and all your medications with their prescriptions in that bag. In case you have to evacuate, keep photos of all family members, ID proofs, blankets, clothes, canned food and bottled water in the bag too. This bag should be prepared, well in advance, so that there will be no last-minute rush. Keep all your valuables and important papers in a water-proof locker at the highest floor. The advancement of a hurricane is usually accompanied with an acute shortage of fuel, so keep your cars fueled up, well before time. Make a note of your emergency shelter and their contact numbers. Pets are not allowed in the emergency shelter and they may have to be left in an animal shelter. Ensure that they have proper collars (with accurate identification). The animal

shelter may require (certain details, like) the papers that verify their vaccination. If your pet is under some sort of medication; then you need to inform the authorities about it.

DURING A HURRICANE

The bottom line is 'Stay Alert'. Stay informed about all hurricane watches and warnings. A hurricane watch is issued when a hurricane is expected within 36 hours and a warning is issued when hurricane is expected within 24 hours. If a flood warning is also issued along with the hurricane warning, take it as a clue, that you may have to evacuate. Follow all instructions given by the local authorities.

Take videos or photos of your property before you leave. This will help you during insurance claims. To reduce the damages caused by the hurricane; bring all the out-door objects inside your home and keep your yard clean. Before leaving your home; turn-off all electrical appliances and remove the TV antennae from the roof. Lock all rooms and the house properly. A battery operated radio and flash light with extra batteries can prove to be of much help during these times. It is very common that when a hurricane hits a city, the ATM machines don't work, so it is better if you keep some emergency cash or a credit card along with you. If you do not choose to evacuate, then stay in the house and do not move out until it's an extreme emergency. Turn off electricity from the main switch as soon as a warning is issued. Avoid any contact with the windows and doors. Don't try to video shoot the hurricane. Stay away from the wind; this means if the wind is hitting your kitchen windows, then stay in the room opposite to the kitchen.

POST-HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

If your area has been hit there are chances that there may be an outbreak of many diseases. Make sure there is proper sanitation and hygiene. Carry bottled water along with you. Impure water caused by hurricanes are the biggest sources of most of these diseases. Boil water before drinking, if boiling is not possible use bleach or water purification tablets. Eat only the food that is provided by the authorities; (it is the safest food that can be available during these times.) Throw away cans which are damaged.

Keep listening to the radio for the instructions issued by the authorities. Return home only after the re-opening is ordered. Beware of snakes and other insects that may have come with a flood. Before turning on any appliance, check if there is a gas leak or any damage to the system which you are about to turn on. Photographs of your damaged property will prove to be very useful during your insurance claims. Fallen electrical wires are very common after a hurricane. If you notice any such fallen wire, do not come in contact with it and inform the authorities immediately.



A BOARD MEMBER'S FIDUCIARY DUTY

by Joanne L. Willoughby, AMS®, CMCA®, PCAM®

Director of On-Site Communities | Director of Education & Training | Association Services of Florida

How board members effectively perform their voluntary duties directly affects the success of their associations.

There is a wealth of resources available to directors to assist in understanding and meeting their fiduciary responsibilities. Not only are there books, pamphlets, magazines and newsletters, but there are professional advisors such as attorneys, accountants, reserve advisors, engineers, architects, insurance brokers and professional community association managers. These consultants are among the paid advisors whom you may engage to advise or help directors understand and comply with their legal standard of care, their fiduciary responsibility.

In successfully-run associations, members of the board of directors possess good communication skills, carefully plan ahead, make good judgments based on sound decision-making practices, delegate work to qualified committee or advisors, exercise initiative and independent thinking and work well together as a team.

While there are leadership success stories, there are also leadership failure stories. If board members cannot work together and

do not abide by the governing documents, state statutes and their moral obligation of fiduciary duties, these board members can send their associations into political turmoil, financial collapse and physical deterioration. It is in the breakdown of good management practices and the lack of skilled leadership that give rise to claims of breach of fiduciary duty.

According to Wikipedia, fiduciary duty is “the relationship of trust and confidence between one in a position of power, dominance or authority and another who is dependant on that person’s decision making, or exercise of authority”. Directors are expected to act in the best interests of their associations and its owners. Board members should not exploit their position of power for personal gain or advantage. Board members cannot become paralyzed in stressful situations in which the responsibility to act in the best interest of the association conflicts with personal or emotional needs.

One of the more important aspects of fiduciary duty is documenting the actions and decisions of the board to demonstrate a thoughtful, deliberative process while acting in the association’s best interests. The importance of maintaining a good set of minutes for board meetings is crucial.

Critical decisions made by board members that involve potential legal liabilities for the association or the board should be paid special attention when minutes are drafted and approved. Your legal set of minutes should never detail verbatim conversations but should only reflect the business of the association. Typical minutes should include what motion was made and by whom, who seconded the motion, and the vote. Through the board meeting minutes, the board of directors has an opportunity to succinctly record its exercise of fiduciary duty.

In conclusion, fiduciary duties include:

UTMOST CARE: board members are bound to a higher standard.

INTEGRITY: board directors must act with fidelity and honesty.

DUTY OF FULL DISCLOSURE: of all material facts which influence a director’s decision.

LOYALTY: no “personal agendas” or conflicts of interest.

DUTY OF GOOD FAITH: means total truthfulness, absolute integrity, and total fidelity to the association. The duty of good faith requires board members to always act in the best interests of the association.

Associa Access

We are excited to now offer our Homeowners “real-time” communication and connectability to their accounts via smartphones. The new, user-friendly enhancements to Associa Access websites are specifically designed for small screens like the iPhone, Android and some Blackberry models.

Associa Access websites are secure financial gateways that combine state-of-the-art technology and community association accounting to provide both Homeowners and Board Members access to accurate financial reporting and account balance information. To learn more about Associa Access, visit Associa’s YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/associamarketing.

All registered Homeowners of Associa Access may now conveniently view their account balance, transaction history

and more on their smartphones. There is instantaneous, real-time transmission of data when a

transaction is made on an account, indicating exactly when checks have cleared or credit card payments have been processed. Homeowners also have the option of being alerted when account activity occurs, such as the confirmation of a payment received or when a charge is placed on an account.

For those that want to view from their laptops or desktops, they can do so through our website or access through the association’s website should we host the site.





The Associa Advantage Network is a free and voluntary **VALUE-ADDED SERVICE** available to members of the Associa Family. By leveraging the purchasing power of Associa's 8,000 communities and 2 million households, we are able to negotiate exceptional savings on household goods and services commonly used by our clients, maintenance groups and employees.

Through the Associa Exclusive Offers area members will find trade partners that are icons in their industry such as Lowes, Sherwin-Williams, DoodyCalls, 1800-GOT-JUNK?, Budget Blinds and *Bulbs.com* to name a few.

Choose the best and take advantage, www.associaadvantage.com.

“I recently placed an order with *Bulbs.com* through the Associa Advantage program and was extremely pleased with their pricing and service. I received a quote from our normal supplier and *Bulbs.com* beat their price by 50%! The ordering process was easy and we received our shipment fast. This is a phenomenal program and I look forward to sharing the savings information with my Board of Directors and using their services for future orders.”

-BLAKE ROSE, CMCA®
COMMUNITY MANAGER

“I was getting ready to order more bags for our pet stations and thought this was my chance to experience Associa Advantage for myself. There was definitely a huge savings! For \$115, I received 4000 bags from DoodyCalls! The closest competitor would have cost the Association \$250. In times like these the Association definitely appreciates the savings.”

-MAYEA HENDERSON, CMCA® AMS®
BEECHTREE COMMUNITY MANAGER