

Legislative Update



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It is with great pride this month that I spotlight CAI members who devote so much of their time, experience and energy to both the New Jersey and Federal Legislative Action Committee of CAI. It is especially appropriate that this column is appearing in CAI-NJ's Conference and Expo issue of *Community Trends*®.

The annual Conference and Expo is the one event where CAI members can conveniently meet other CAI members and colleagues. Over the course of the year, we largely recognize each other by screen names on a computer monitor, or communicate by infrequent telephone calls. Most of us have scoured the directory in the Conference and Expo issue of *Community Trends*® looking for the location of the respective booths of CAI members with whom we have become newly acquainted, as well as old (meaning longstanding) friends in the community association industry, hoping to meet up and catch up personally and professionally. Hopefully, the Conference and Expo will give you a chance to meet some of the LAC members.

LAC's accomplishments this year are the result of the tremendous contributions of LAC members who are mentioned in this article, as well as others too many to mention. Recognizing LAC members also gives me the opportunity to recap some of the achievements of LAC. I hope that you were able to join in or follow LAC's events, and agree that the efforts of LAC benefit you and your community. Attending monthly meetings is a miniscule part of being a LAC member. I am honored to chair this committee.

Legislative Update at the Conference and Expo

LAC's Vice Chair, Paul A. Leodori, will be moderating and speaking at this year's Legislative Update program. You will also get insight from Tim Martin of MBI-GluckShaw, CAI-NJ's lobbying firm, into the legislative process and the efforts of MBI in Trenton and throughout the State on behalf of CAI.

Appearing with Paul and Tim will be Ronald L. Perl, chair of the Federal Legislative Action Committee, and J. David Ramsey, chair of CAI's Government and Public Affairs Committee. It is extraordinary that the leaders of two CAI-National committees hail from a single state — New Jersey! LAC-NJ is greatly appreciative that both Ron and Dave are always willing (and, more often, anxious) to contribute their experience and a historical perspective on legislative issues of importance on Federal and State issues.

The program will update you on the status of pending legislation on a State and National level, seek your support to advance legislation serving the interests of community associations, and give you a forum to voice your opinion in areas where legislation is needed.

Statewide Legislative Update Programs

By the time you read this Legislative Update, LAC members will have participated in five CAI programs.

Three Legislative Update programs were organized by LAC and conducted at loca-

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tions throughout the State. On May 6, 2015, A. Christopher Florio, Paul A. Leodori, Jennifer A. Loheac, and Steven G. Mlenak were panelists at a Legislative Update program held at Greenbriar Woodlands in Toms River. On May 13, 2015, Thomas C. Martin, Michael Pesce, Carolyn Record, and Audrey Wisotsky presented at Renaissance at Raritan Valley in Somerset. George C. Greatrex and Paul A. Leodori conducted a Legislative Update program on June 23, 2015 at Horizons at Wood Landings in Mays Landing. With all three teams were Tim Martin of MBI-GluckShaw and Larry Thomas, CAI-NJ's Executive Director.

The Managers Best Practices Roundtable held at the Forsgate Country Club in Monroe Township on June 25, 2015 had Steve Mlenak representing LAC. Thomas Martin will be participating in the Business Partner/Manager Joint Best Practices Discussion slated for the Chart House in Weehawken on November 19, 2015.

LAC members are doing their best to cover the entire state, and conduct face-to-face meetings with CAI members and their guests. I thank all of the community associations which have extended the use of their clubhouses and hospitality to LAC for its programs. Finally, I extend great appreciation to Larry Thomas, CAI-NJ's Executive Director, and his entire staff for spearheading these programs and then working hard to ensure they run smoothly and are huge successes. We have consistently received enthusiastic evaluations from attendees, and hope to continue getting out word of LAC's mission.

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Subcommittee

LAC created subcommittees to move forward specialized and tedious assignments, e.g. analyzing complicated laws and legal processes, which would have been impossible to accomplish during our monthly LAC meetings. One subcommittee has proposed and drafted (and re-drafted) and worked tirelessly on legislation seeking relief by an expedited foreclosure process, control of abandoned properties, and accountability of lenders holding mortgages on the properties. Another subcommittee has drafted legislation and is working with legislators on implementing standards for the election of members to boards of community associations.

With certainty, these subcommittees will remain active as the LAC's efforts progress.

In Re Ronces Amicus

I am pleased to announce that CAI's Board of Trustees approved the filing of an amicus in a Chapter 13 bankruptcy proceeding captioned *In Re: Mark and Ronda Ronces*. The decision is one of the first in the nation to determine that condominium assessment liens are eligible to be stripped off as "wholly unsecured liens" despite being classified as security interests in Chapter 13 bankruptcy cases. The issue at hand is one of both local and national consequence.

The law firm of Griffin Alexander, with which LAC member, Steve Mlenak, is associated, filed the appeal on behalf of its client, Whispering Woods Condominium Association, Inc. Stark & Stark, the law firm of LAC member, Christopher Florio, was selected to prepare the amicus brief on behalf of CAI. By the time you read this Legislative Update, the briefs will have been filed. The Bankruptcy Court has set down the date of the appeal as November 2, 2015, without oral argument. A decision is likely to not issue until several weeks or months after.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference and Expo. If you are unable to attend, please reach out to any of the LAC members or me (cli@greenbaumlaw.com) with any questions or issues you would like us to address in our work on behalf of CAI-NJ. ■

ATTENTION ALL CAI-NJ SEMINAR ATTENDEES:

Please remember to keep your seminar completion certificates in a safe place.

These certificates are distributed at the end of each NJ seminar. This is proof that you attended and completed the seminar. You may need to reference the certificate in the future and CAI-NJ does not keep track of each member's attendance record. Community managers will definitely need the certificates to obtain credit for continuing education toward their designations.

