

FROM THE PRESIDENT

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*"We're going long
We're gaining weight
We're sleeping long
And far too late
And so it's time
To change our ways
But I've loved these days."
—Billy Joel*

In my first President's column I said that if I do this right, I wouldn't talk about myself in this column. That, my friends, was a lie. In fact, I've used the past five columns to do nothing but tell you about me, what I believe is important, and my (very) random thoughts about music, books, obscure theories, and, most important, about our community association industry.

I've talked about the havoc the pandemic created and how we all adapted, how the chapter's name change relates to a Pearl Jam song, and the importance of education to our community managers and community association volunteer leaders. My sincere hope is that these columns shed some light on things you may not have known, made you think about something in a new way, introduced you to a new book or idea, and, of course, made you want to continue (or increase) your participation in our chapter. If I have succeeded in any of those endeavors, my work here is done.

But, before I go, I do want to discuss something that I have not talked about in a column, and that

is our Pennsylvania Legislative Action Committee (LAC). This edition of **Community Assets** highlights some of the very important work that the individuals on the LAC are doing (mostly behind the scenes) to assist community associations throughout the Commonwealth.

Having participated in the LAC meetings over the last year plus, I can tell you that their work now is more important as it has ever been—especially when it comes to pending legislation that will affect how community associations will operate in the future. As you can appreciate, the LAC needs funds to do this work, so I would encourage anyone or any association who can to contribute to the LAC to support this imperative work, whether it is through an individual donation, attending a LAC event, or through the "Buck A Door" program. You can find out more about donating to the LAC at this link: <https://www.cai-padelval.org/advocate/support-our-efforts/>

I cannot leave you, however, without saying a few words of thanks and offering some good

wishes for those who are leaving or who will carry on without me. First and foremost, I could not (and would not) have been able to get through this year without the support of our intrepid Chapter Executive Director, Tony Campisi, and our fantastic staff—Michael Shaw, Gabrielle Grimes, and Denise Lawlor. You have all made it a pleasure to serve as chapter president and I hope that I haven't annoyed all of you with my random e-mails or my many quirks.

To the soon-to-be chapter president and my friend, Nicole Skaro, my advice is simple: (1) enjoy your time as president because it goes fast; and (2) always keep the board meetings moving. In all seriousness, I'm excited for you to take over and bring your ideas and energy to leading both the board and the chapter. I know you will do great things for the chapter and its members this coming year.

Thanks to our departing members of the board, Past President Greg Malaska, Esq. and Maria Elena Solis, CMCA, AMS, EBP for their dedication over the last six years. Your voices will both be missed, but

I know that both of you will remain involved in chapter events going forward, including Maria Elena's very entertaining "Whine on Wednesdays" podcast with Jill, Patti, and Rosy.

And one last thank you to Past President Cathy Dunn. During this year I leaned on Cathy for both her advice and her friendship, which was always invaluable. And one of these days you may actually convince me to get a late-night slice of pizza with you.

And finally, I would be remiss if I did not take a minute to mention the untimely passing of a member of both our chapter and the NJ chapter, 2017 CAI NJ Board President, and, more importantly, my friend, Denise Becker, CMCA, AMS, PCAM.

When Denise was preparing for her year as CAI NJ President, she asked me to help her write/edit her President's columns for **Community Trends**, which is New Jersey's version of **Community Assets**. We had a great time writing those columns and coming up with interesting things to talk about, which in a lot of ways informed the way I thought about and wrote my columns this year. Below is a portion of Denise's January 2017 column, which outlined Denise's goal/wish for her year, and which is something that I will always come back to when thinking about the mission of CAI:

Every member of CAI has the potential of being a mentor or ambassador for CAI. We have an outstanding and active chapter, and, with your help, we can make 2017 even better than the years before. What can you do to be a CAI mentor/ambassador? Bring a junior or new colleague to an educational seminar or networking event; recruit a new business partner to join our chapter, share your knowledge/experience by joining a committee or writing an

*article for **Community Trends**; sponsor an event; contribute to CA-PAC...you get the picture. Our business partners are a wealth of information in their specific fields, and I am certain each one would be very willing to assist in any problem or question you may have regarding their area of expertise. The same goes for those who need guidance and support in their career paths. Managers, there is a scholarship just waiting to help you along in your path to getting a CAI designation! If you are not sure how you can help, please feel free to reach out to me or anyone at the chapter office. You won't regret it.*

Those who knew Denise understood her passion for our industry and her unmistakable kindness and charm. Those who knew Denise well understood her dedication to her family, which included her dogs, her quick wit, and her everlasting love for the Grateful Dead. I miss her immensely.

So that's it. Six President's columns in the books. As always, thank you to those who had to read all of my random thoughts and ramblings,

and thanks to all of you for being members of the Keystone chapter. Here's to Billy Joel. Here's to Jerry Garcia, Phil Lesh, Bob Dylan, Roger Waters, Pete Townshend, Lowell George, Levon Helm, Warren Zevon, Les Claypool, Glen Hansard, Ben Harper, Dean Wareham, Brandi Carlile, Norm Macdonald, Cameron Crowe, and my good friends and concert buddies—Kelly Clegg and Michael Riley. Here's to the immortal Stephen Glansberg, who I tried to work into a column all year and just never found the right spot. And a huge thank you to my wife, Andrea, and my kids, Nathan, Charlie, and Molly, for putting up with me and my crazy work schedule, which I gladly do so they can spend time down in Wildwood. And for one final time, thanks to the Oxford comma.

And now I'm sure now I will fade away into the ether and, like Keyser Söze, my guess is you will never hear from me again. But as A.A. Milne of Winnie-the-Pooh fame once wrote: "how lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."

How lucky indeed.



Above: Terry Kessler, Esq. (left) and Jonathan H. Katz, Esq. (right) with Hill Wallack, LLP pose for a photo with Denise Becker, CMCA, AMS, PCAM (center) of Corner Property Management, LLC, AAMC at CAI's 2019 Annual Conference & Expo. Denise passed away on August 20, 2021 and will be sorely missed by her Keystone CAI and CAI New Jersey colleagues and friends.