

SOUTHEASTERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF CAI [WWW.SEVACA1.ORG](http://WWW.SEVACA1.ORG)

# Currents Jr.

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# In this edition...



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**64**  
chapters  
worldwide

**40k**  
members

**36**   
legislative action  
committees

**69**  **MIL**  
community association  
residents in the U.S.

**90%**   
report their overall  
experience as positive

# Meet Our Board of Directors



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The Board of Directors for the Southeastern Virginia branch of the Community Associations Institute (CAI) is dedicated to guiding the chapter's strategic direction and ensuring it meets the educational, business, and networking needs of community associations in the region. The board is responsible for setting long-term goals, establishing operational policies, overseeing financial management, and developing educational programs and events that benefit community association managers, board members, and other stakeholders. Through their leadership, they strive to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism of community associations throughout Southeastern Virginia.



# From the Committee

Dear SEVA-CAI Members,

As we continue to grow and strengthen our chapter, we want to hear from you—our valued members! SEVA-CAI is here to support, educate, and connect community association professionals, but we can't do it without your input.

We are always looking for passionate volunteers to join our committees and help shape the future of our chapter. Whether you have fresh ideas for events, want to contribute to educational initiatives, or simply want to be more involved, there's a place for you. Your time and expertise can make a real difference in strengthening our industry and providing valuable resources to fellow members.

Additionally, we want to know what you need from SEVA-CAI. Are there specific topics, training sessions, or networking opportunities that would help you in your role? Your feedback is essential in helping us tailor our efforts to better serve our community.

If you're interested in volunteering or have suggestions, please reach out to us at [info@sevacai.org](mailto:info@sevacai.org). Let's work together to make SEVA-CAI stronger than ever!

Thank you!

*Jessica Simpkins, Communications Committee Chair*



# SEVA NEEDS YOU!

As a 501(c)6 not-for-profit organization, our success is driven by the passion and dedication of our volunteer committees. These committees are the backbone of our annual programming, with each member playing a crucial role in bringing our initiatives to life.

We are always looking for enthusiastic individuals to join our team and contribute to our vibrant community.

Explore the committees currently recruiting new members and reach out to a chairperson to discover how you can be a part of the magic. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact and elevate our mission.

# COMMITTEES

**Membership** This new committee's focus is helping our members get the most out of their experience with CAI. They serve as the welcome wagon for new members, and brainstorm fresh ideas to keep the Chapter's existing membership engaged.

Della Johnson, CMCA®, AMS® [djohnson@unitedpropertyassociates.com](mailto:djohnson@unitedpropertyassociates.com)

Kimberly Niesel, CMCA® [kniesel@solitudelake.com](mailto:kniesel@solitudelake.com)

**Social** Networking is a major component of what our Chapter provides, and this committee makes the party happen! Volunteers will research potential venues and plan our quarterly social events. Developing sponsorships and promoting attendance are key functions of this committee as well.

Carol Lare, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM® [manager@glenwoodca.com](mailto:manager@glenwoodca.com)

**Communications** If you think being on the magazine committee means you need to write for the magazine, think again! This committee curates the content you see here in Currents. They determine what the hot topics for our readership are, and reach out to the subject matter experts to get the articles written. If you're also a writer yourself, that's a bonus, but certainly not required! Eventually this committee hopes to expand the Chapter's digital footprint by developing a blog, podcast, or other useful media. This committee meets one Wednesday a month, year round, via zoom.

Jessica Simpkins, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM® [jessica@mystreetva.com](mailto:jessica@mystreetva.com)

**Programs** - Education is the heart of our Chapter's mission, and this committee keeps that heart beating. They work together to develop the topics that will best serve our homeowner & manager members, and connect them with the most qualified presenters out there! Committee members work with presenters and staff to schedule, promote, and run our monthly education. This committee meets one Thursday a month, year round.

Laura Carnrike, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM® [laura@kilncreek.org](mailto:laura@kilncreek.org)

Jill Ewell, CMCA®, AMS® [jewell@thinkpma.com](mailto:jewell@thinkpma.com)

**CA Day** Our signature event is planned by a hard working committee of volunteers. In addition to staffing the event in various roles day-of, this committee develops the theme and branding of the event, brings in sponsorship partners and exhibitors, and develops all the special touches that make this event stand out from the crowd. This committee meets one Tuesday a month, mid-summer until the event.

Michaela Audet, AMS® [maudet@unitedpropertyassociates.com](mailto:maudet@unitedpropertyassociates.com)

Zach Shepherd, RS® [zach@gfengineers.com](mailto:zach@gfengineers.com)

**Golf Classic** Our other flagship event is the annual Golf Classic, which is a both great day on the links and a fundraising opportunity for both the Chapter and our charitable partner. You don't need to be a golfer to be an asset to this committee! They also plan additional activities for non-golfers, host a silent auction, raise sponsorship dollars, and more! This committee is currently on hiatus between events.

Zach Shepherd, RS® [zach@gfengineers.com](mailto:zach@gfengineers.com)

Tanya Gasser, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM® [tgasser@theselectgroup.us](mailto:tgasser@theselectgroup.us)

**INTERESTED IN JOINING? IT'S AS EASY AS SENDING AN EMAIL!**



# Get to know Board Member, Zach Shepherd

**How long have you been involved with SEVA-CAI, and in what capacity (e.g., manager, business partner, etc.)?**

I've been a business partner in SEVA-CAI for 4.5 years.

**What inspired you to pursue a career in the community association industry?**

I wasn't necessarily inspired but it's where my engineering career led me, and it's been really neat to get involved in an industry I knew nothing about before.

**As a Chapter member, what goals do you hope to achieve, both personally and for the growth of SEVA-CAI?**

I hope to build solid long-term relationships built on trust with other members, and inspire others to join the chapter so there's no lack of trusted quality service.

**What unique skills, experiences, or perspectives do you bring that could help advance the Chapter's mission?**

I believe my logical reasoning (engineering brain) will pair well with others who think differently to help push the chapter toward the mission.

**What fresh ideas or innovations would you love to see incorporated into future CA Days?**

I have some ideas regarding improvements that could be made to the planning and organization prior to CA Day and I am ready and willing to step in and help implement those ideas.

**What key piece of advice would you offer to someone new to the industry to help them succeed?**

Join a committee or two. There's a lot of enjoyment that comes from the relationships you build with the other members.

**Where did you grow up, and how has that shaped who you are today?**

Just outside of Hickory, NC where there's not a whole lot to do. It's shaped me into being simple, reasonable, down to earth, and having a country accent.

**As a child, what did you dream of becoming when you grew up, and how does that compare to where you are now?**


I'm not a huge dreamer, but engineering and architecture were always interests when I was younger. Being an engineer now and loving what I do, I'll say it worked out.

**If you had to choose one meal to eat every day for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?**

Burgers and fries, cause it's yummy.

**What is the most meaningful or memorable compliment you've ever received, and why did it resonate with you?**

"I am grateful daily that God wrote us into your story." This was meaningful to me because it's not always clear whether you're having an impact on those around you, but when someone says something like that, it probably means I'm headed in the right direction.



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## Community Associations



The Woods Rogers Community Associations Practice provides comprehensive legal services tailored to the needs of Virginia community associations. Our team has extensive experience working with common interest community boards and managers on day-to-day issues and more complex legal situations.



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# POND + STORMWATER SYSTEM SPRING

## MAINTENANCE: WHAT EVERY HOA NEEDS TO KNOW

BY: JESS LICKLIDER + ANDREW KOSYDAR OF DRAGONFLY POND MANAGEMENT

As spring approaches in Southeastern Virginia, HOA communities must take proactive steps to manage their ponds and stormwater devices. These systems play a crucial role in managing runoff, preventing flooding, and improving water quality. However, without proper management, they can quickly become sources of erosion, pollution, compliance violations, and costly repairs.

This article outlines four key areas of concern that HOA managers should address this spring. By focusing on these management practices, communities can ensure their ponds and stormwater systems remain functional, compliant, and visually appealing throughout the year.



### **1. Turf Establishment for Bare Areas & Erosion Prevention – The Importance of Healthy Turf Cover**

A well-vegetated turf cover around ponds helps stabilize soil, preventing sediment from washing into water bodies, which can increase flood risk. It also acts as a natural filter, trapping pollutants. Additionally, maintaining healthy turf is often a regulatory requirement to ensure stormwater ponds function as designed. Sites with insufficient turf cover may fail compliance inspections, leading to costly fines and mandatory repairs.

#### **Turf Remediation Process – Establishing healthy turf requires strategic steps:**

- Soil Testing & Amendments – Conducting a soil test ensures proper nutrient application.
- Soil Aeration & Tilling – Loosening compacted soils improves seed-to-soil contact.
- Ongoing Maintenance – Regular mowing and stormwater maintenance prevent overgrowth while keeping the system compliant.

By addressing bare areas promptly and following best practices for turf establishment, HOA communities can protect their ponds while ensuring a well-maintained, beautiful landscape.



## 2. Native Aquatic Planting - Benefits of Aquatic Plants

Beyond their visual appeal, aquatic plants play a vital role in a healthy pond. Native aquatic plants provide multiple benefits including water quality improvements, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic value. In Southeastern Virginia, stormwater ponds must meet specific regulatory standards, which often include aquatic planting requirements.

### Guidance for Maximizing Establishment & Survival

To ensure aquatic plants thrive, HOA communities should consider:

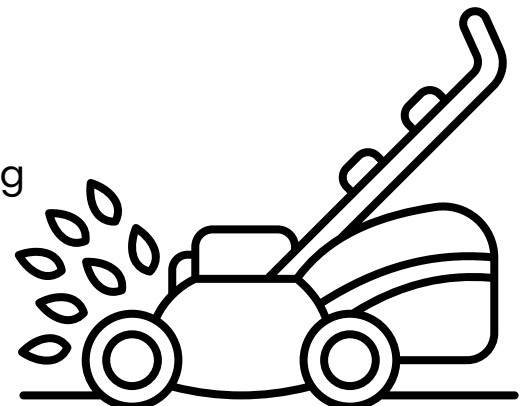
- Site Preparation – Assessing water depth, soil type, and planting zones before installation.
- Plant Selection – Choosing species suited to the pond's conditions.
- Seasonal Timing – Spring to early summer is ideal for planting.
- Ongoing Maintenance – Regular care, such as monitoring plant health and removing invasive species.

### Specialized Maintenance Considerations

Even with careful planning and proper installation, aquatic plants require specialized, routine maintenance. Selecting a specialized stormwater pond contractor is important, as general landscapers may inadvertently remove beneficial plants or allow invasive plants to thrive. Working with professionals who specialize in aquatic plant maintenance ensures that plant communities remain healthy and compliant.

## 3. Specialized Mowing for Stormwater Ponds -The Importance of Proper Mowing

Maintaining community ponds and stormwater devices requires specialized care beyond standard landscaping practices. Improper mowing can lead to erosion, safety hazards, and compliance issues.



# SPECIALIZED NEEDS OF PONDS + STORMWATER DEVICES

## **Specialized Needs of Ponds & Stormwater Devices**

- Regular landscapers may lack the training and equipment necessary to maintain these areas without inadvertently causing damage.
- Specialized slope mowers and brush-cutting tools are essential for safety and erosion prevention.
- Trained crews understand proper mowing heights and vegetation management strategies required for ponds and stormwater systems.
- Overmowing or scalping the turf can lead to erosion and compliance violations.

## **Protecting Vegetated Buffers**

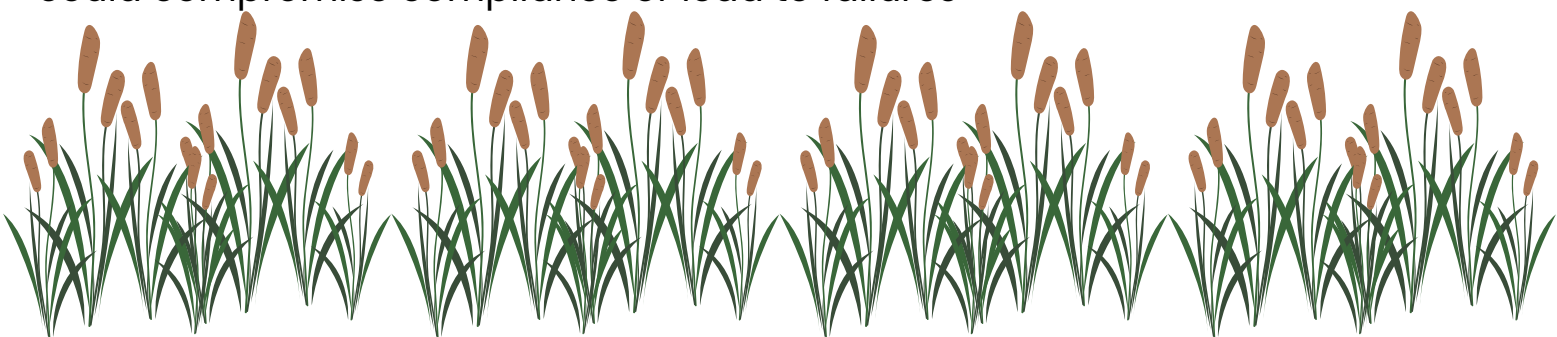
Many stormwater ponds include vegetated buffers or littoral zones that serve as natural filters and erosion barriers. Inexperienced crews may over-mow or apply herbicides that damage essential vegetation. Proper maintenance focuses on preserving the natural habitat while ensuring that the stormwater system is healthy, compliant, and aesthetically pleasing.

## **4. Year-Round Maintenance Vs. Seasonal Maintenance**

Ponds and stormwater devices in Southeastern Virginia require ongoing maintenance to remain functional and compliant. Relying on seasonal maintenance alone can lead to costly repairs, environmental risks, and compliance violations. A proactive, year-round approach ensures stormwater ponds operate efficiently and avoid long-term issues.

## **Importance of Routine Maintenance with Specialized Contractors**

Unlike general landscaping or property maintenance crews, specialized stormwater pond contractors understand the complexities of stormwater devices and ponds. Partnering with experts helps prevent costly mistakes that could compromise compliance or lead to failures



## **Key Maintenance Task List**

Municipalities around Southeastern Virginia conduct regular inspections to ensure stormwater ponds meet performance standards. A comprehensive stormwater maintenance program includes:

- Vegetation Control
- Debris and Trash Removal
- Specialized Mowing
- Aquatic Plant Management
- Wildlife Monitoring
- Comprehensive Cleaning & Inspection
- Service Recommendations

## **Benefits of Year-Round Maintenance Over Seasonal Maintenance**

Year-round maintenance provides continuous oversight. Seasonal approaches often lead to reactive rather than proactive management. Regular maintenance ensures stormwater devices and ponds remain in top condition, ultimately reducing long-term costs.

## **Proactive Stormwater Management: A Smart Investment for HOA Communities**

Proper stormwater and pond management requires a specialized approach. Addressing turf establishment, incorporating native aquatic plants, implementing specialized mowing practices, and a consistent maintenance schedule are all essential steps for sustaining healthy ponds and stormwater devices. Proactive management today will help ensure a well-maintained and healthy system for years to come.



# The Anchor

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# SPRING IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER AND YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO START A BACKYARD GARDEN, BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START. DON'T WORRY, SEVA'S GOT YOU COVERED!

## **How to Start a Backyard Garden in Coastal Virginia**

There's nothing quite like stepping into your own backyard and harvesting fresh herbs, vibrant flowers, or homegrown vegetables. Whether you're looking to add a pop of color, attract pollinators, or grow your own food, starting a backyard garden in Coastal Virginia is both rewarding and manageable—with the right approach!

Coastal Virginia's humid subtropical climate means long, warm summers and mild winters, providing a fantastic environment for a variety of plants. However, gardening success depends on choosing the right plants, understanding your sun exposure, and preparing your soil properly.

### **Step 1: Determine Your Sun Exposure**

Before planting, spend a few days observing your yard at different times to see how much sunlight each area gets. This will help you decide what to plant and where.

**Full Sun (6+ hours of direct sunlight):** Ideal for vegetables, herbs, and sun-loving flowers like tomatoes, basil, lavender, and sunflowers.

**Partial Sun (4-6 hours of sunlight):** Great for leafy greens, root vegetables, and hardy perennials like kale, carrots, and black-eyed Susans.

**Shade (less than 4 hours of sunlight):** Best for ferns, hostas, impatiens, and shade-loving herbs like mint and chives.

**Pro Tip: Coastal Virginia's sun can be intense, so afternoon shade can help protect delicate plants from overheating!**





## **Step 2: Choose Plants That Thrive in Coastal Virginia**

### **Best Vegetables to Grow:**

Coastal Virginia's long growing season allows for multiple plantings throughout the year. Here are some reliable options:

Spring & Fall: Lettuce, spinach, radishes, carrots, broccoli, kale

Summer: Tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, squash, okra, green beans

**Year-Round Herbs: Basil, thyme, rosemary, oregano, parsley**

 **Beautiful Cut Flowers for Your Garden:**

**If you love fresh flower arrangements, these hardy blooms will thrive in your garden:**

Zinnias – Low maintenance and long-lasting cut flowers.

Sunflowers – A summer favorite, great for pollinators.

Dahlias – Bloom from summer to fall with stunning color varieties.

Coneflowers (Echinacea) – Drought-tolerant and attract butterflies.

### **Must-Have Herbs for Cooking & Pollinators:**

**Many herbs are low-maintenance and thrive in Coastal Virginia's climate.**

Great choices include:

Basil – Loves warmth, perfect for summer dishes.

Mint – Grows fast, best in containers to prevent spreading.

Lavender – Beautiful and fragrant, thrives in well-drained soil.

Thyme & Oregano – Hardy perennials that return each year.



### **Step 3: Prepare Your Soil & Plant Wisely**

Coastal Virginia's soil is often sandy and well-draining, which is great for some plants but may need compost or organic matter added for nutrient-rich gardening.



For vegetables: Use raised beds or amend your soil with compost to improve fertility.

For flowers: Mulch around plants to retain moisture and prevent weeds.

For herbs: Ensure good drainage—most herbs hate sitting in soggy soil!

Pro Tip: Coastal breezes can dry out soil quickly, so regular watering (especially in summer) is key for keeping plants healthy.

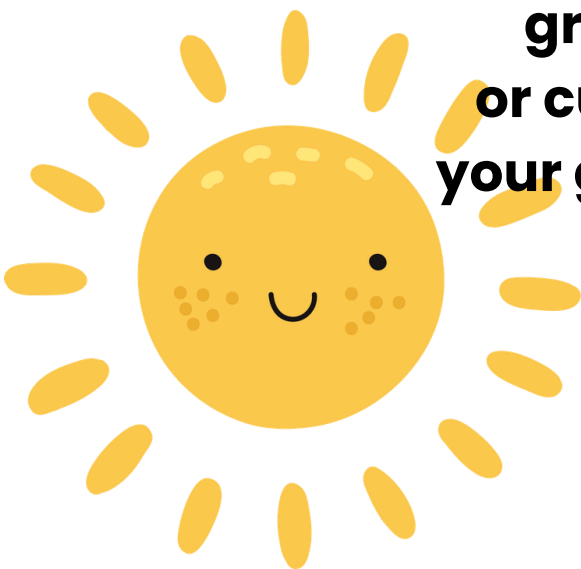
### **Step 4: Maintain & Enjoy Your Garden**

Gardening is a learning process, but with the right care, your backyard will flourish!

- Water deeply in the morning to prevent evaporation.
- Mulch around plants to retain moisture and keep weeds down.
- Harvest veggies regularly to encourage continuous production.
- Cut flowers early in the morning for the longest vase life.
- Enjoy fresh herbs in your cooking or dry them for use year-round!

 Ready to Get Started?

**Starting a backyard garden in Coastal Virginia is a fun, rewarding way to enjoy fresh food, beautiful flowers, and a more inviting outdoor space. Whether you're growing tomatoes for summer salads or cutting zinnias for a vibrant bouquet, your garden will bring joy all season long.**



**Happy Planting!** 

# 2025 Legal & Legislative Update

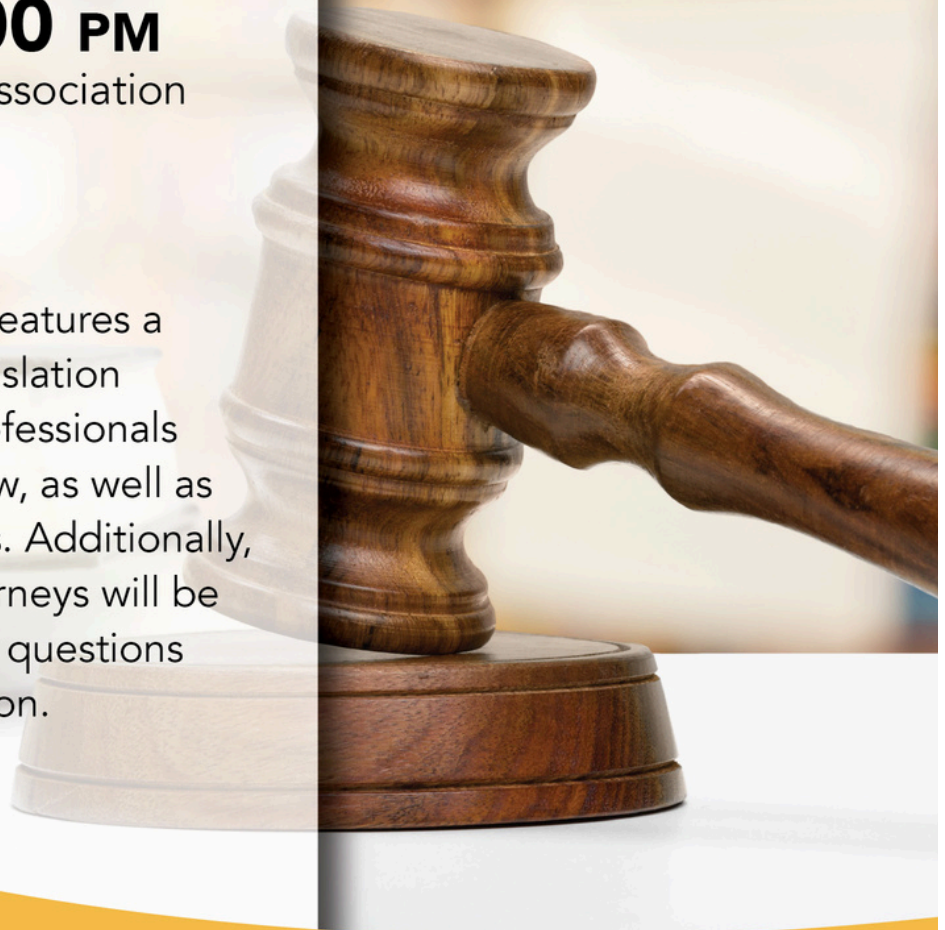


**May 22nd, 2025**

**9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Glenwood Community Association  
2097 Round Hill Drive  
Virginia Beach, VA 23464

Our annual Legal Update features a recap of the cases and legislation community association professionals and residents need to know, as well as the Ombudsman decisions. Additionally, a panel of association attorneys will be answering all your burning questions during an open Q&A session.



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# Celebrating Excellence in Community Association Management!

The SEVA-CAI 2024 Awards recognize the outstanding contributions of professionals, volunteers, and business partners who go above and beyond to support thriving communities. These individuals and organizations exemplify leadership, dedication, and innovation in community management, making a lasting impact through their service. From rising stars to seasoned experts, this year's honorees reflect the best in the industry, setting the standard for excellence and professionalism.

Congratulations to all the award winners—your hard work and commitment continue to elevate the communities you serve!



# Congratulations

TO OUR 2024 AWARD WINNERS

RECRUITER OF THE YEAR

Della Johnson

AUTHOR OF THE YEAR

Jessica Simpkins, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

SPEAKERS OF THE YEAR

Deborah M. Casey, Esq., CCAL®

Walter Campbell, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

RISING STARS

Erin Dowdy, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

Tanya Gasser, , CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

Victoria Hutchison

Olga Tseliak, Esq.

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

CA DAY 2024

Zach Shepherd, RS®

COMMUNICATIONS

Michael Kwiatek, CMCA®\*

GOLF

Kristina Mack, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

PROGRAMS

Sarah R. Palamara, Esq.

SOCIAL

Sally Stamper, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

COMMITTEE OF THE YEAR

Golf Classic

COMMITTEE CHAIRS OF THE YEAR

Laura Carnrike, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

Jill Ewell, CMCA®, AMS®

COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Kiln Creek Owners Association

BUSINESS PARTNER VOLUNTEER

Shannon Lee

BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Whitman Development Group

MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Jessica Simpkins, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Jeffrey Hunn, Esq.

HALL OF FAME

Jennifer Williams, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

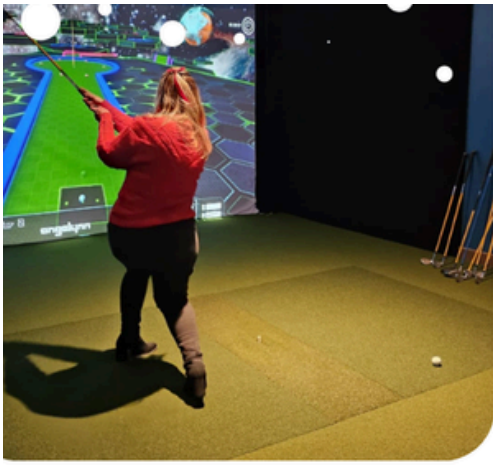
Kathleen Panagis, Esq.



# ANNUAL MEETING

2024





# KICK OFF PARTY

2025





# CA DAY 2025





# CA DAY 2025



# Designations

**Definition of a community manager:** A community association manager will have the knowledge, ethics, professionalism and skills with verifiable experience in financial, administrative, and facilities management in at least one community association, either commercial or residential. The community association manager must be compensated for providing professional guidance and assistance to the board of directors of any association(s) managed by that community association manager, whether the individual is acting as an full time independent contractor, or as an employee of a management firm, or as a general manager or executive director of a common interest development. Management of property other than community associations will not meet the qualifications for community association manager.

**The Certified Manager of Community Associations (CMCA)** credential is a professional certification awarded by the Community Association Managers International Certification Board (CAMICB). It signifies that an individual has demonstrated the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively manage community associations. This includes understanding financial management, facilities maintenance, governance, risk management, and ethics. The CMCA credential is recognized as a mark of excellence in the community management industry, ensuring that certified managers are qualified to handle the diverse and complex responsibilities of managing homeowners associations, condominiums, and other community associations.



# Designations

**The Association Management Specialist (AMS)** designation is the second level in the career development track for community association managers and demonstrates a higher level of commitment to your career and the community association industry. An AMS designation is recommended for managers who want to enhance their career opportunities by increasing their knowledge and expertise.

**The Professional Community Association Manager (PCAM)** designation is the highest professional recognition available nationwide to managers of community associations. Awarded by the Community Associations Institute (CAI), the PCAM designation demonstrates an advanced level of knowledge and expertise in managing large-scale communities and complex association issues. To earn this prestigious credential, managers must complete extensive coursework, pass a comprehensive examination, and demonstrate significant experience and leadership in the community association management field. The PCAM designation reflects a commitment to professional growth and excellence in managing homeowner and condominium associations.

**The Large-Scale Manager (LSM)** is a unique designation is designed to acknowledge PCAM designees who specialize in large scale community association management. CAI acknowledges the unique aspects of being a large-scale community manager and is providing an opportunity for recognition and continuing education in order for you to expand your career opportunities.



# Education for Managers

## April 2025

April 3-4, 2025: M-320: High-Rise Maintenance and Management (Live Virtual Class)

April 24-25, 2025: M-100: The Essentials of Community Association Management (Live Virtual Class)

## May 2025

May 5-7, 2025: M-100: The Essentials of Community Association Management (Orlando, FL; Live Onsite Class before the Annual Conference)

May 6, 2025: M-201: Facilities Management (Orlando, FL; Live Onsite Class before the Annual Conference)

May 6, 2025: M-202: Association Communications (Orlando, FL; Live Onsite Class before the Annual Conference)

May 6, 2025: M-203: Community Leadership (Orlando, FL; Live Onsite Class before the Annual Conference)

May 6, 2025: M-400: Contemporary Issues in Community Association Management (Orlando, FL; Live Onsite Class before the Annual Conference)

May 22-23, 2025: M-206: Financial Management (Live Virtual Class)

May 29-30, 2025: M-203: Community Leadership (Live Virtual Class)

## June 2025

June 5-6, 2025: M-100: The Essentials of Community Association Management (Live Virtual Class)

June 12-13, 2025: M-202: Association Communications (Live Virtual Class)

June 26-27, 2025: M-370: Managing Developing Communities (Live Virtual Class)

Don't forget to  
keep track of  
those education  
credits with  
SEVA's  
Education Tracker



# Education for Owners

## CAI Board Leader Certificate


If you live in a condominium, homeowners association, or housing cooperative, you know how important it is to have an effective governing board of directors. The CAI

Board Leader Certificate is designed to provide a foundation for effective community association board leadership.



Whether you are an experienced board member or just thinking about getting involved, this certificate will help you become a more informed and effective leader.

The certificate course is offered in the classroom through CAI chapters or online.



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# Business Partners

In addition to managers and owners, our industry thrives thanks to the dedicated business professionals who work tirelessly alongside us.

## **Reserve Specialist (RS) Designation**

Prepare at least 30 reserve studies within the past three (3) calendar years, hold a bachelor's degree in construction management, architecture, or engineering (or equivalent experience and education), or meet other requirements options. Please see the application for full details.

## **Community Insurance and Risk Management Specialist (CIRMS) Designation**

Five years of experience in the community association insurance field, be of satisfactory legal and ethical standing in the industry.

## **College of Community Association Lawyers (CCAL)**

Minimum of eight (8) years legal practice with a demonstrated concentration in community association law, five (5) of which must immediately precede the date of application; be a member of CAI and have attended at least one CAI Law Seminar within the last three(3) years.

## **Educated Business Partner Distinction**

Business Partner Essentials is an online course designed to help CAI-member product and service providers better understand CAI, community associations and the industry at large. Individuals who pass the course and maintain CAI membership earn the CAI Educated Business Partner distinction, gaining special recognition among thousands of companies and professionals who support common-interest communities—accountants, attorneys, bankers, insurance professionals, landscapers, painters, reserve specialists, software providers and many others.

# Wellness Resources

Community management is demanding—long hours, resident concerns, and financial responsibilities can take a toll.

That's why SEVA-CAI's Wellness Corner is here to help!

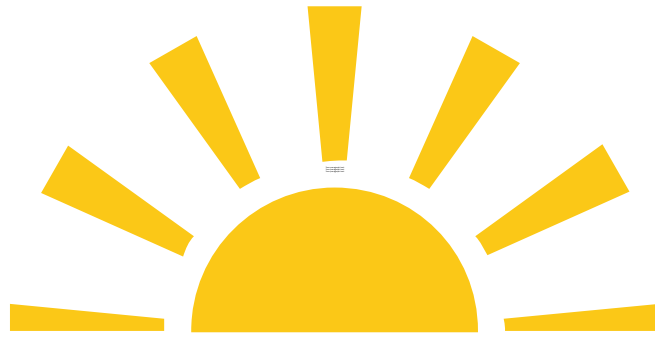
In each issue, we'll share practical wellness resources to support managers, board members, and business partners. From stress management tips to quick desk stretches and time-saving tools, these strategies will help you stay balanced and energized. When you take care of yourself, your communities thrive. Stay tuned for this issue's featured resources!

## Mental Health & Stress Management

- ✓ CAI's Wellness Resources for Managers – CAI occasionally offers webinars and articles on managing stress in the industry. Encourage readers to check [www.caionline.org](http://www.caionline.org) for resources.
- ✓ BetterHelp Online Therapy – Offers flexible, virtual counseling sessions for professionals managing high-stress jobs. [www.betterhelp.com](http://www.betterhelp.com)
- ✓ Calm & Headspace Apps – Both provide guided meditations, sleep stories, and stress-relief exercises tailored for busy professionals. (Calm: [www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com), Headspace: [www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com))



# Here are some quick, effective ways to reset your mind before, during, and after your workday:



## **Before Work: Start the Day with Intention**

**5-Minute Morning Mindfulness:** Before checking emails, take five deep breaths and set a positive intention for the day.

**Stretch or Walk:** A quick stretch or a short walk outside wakes up your body and reduces morning tension.

**Avoid Immediate Screen Time:** Give yourself at least 10 minutes before diving into phone notifications or work emails.



## **Midday Reset: Managing Stress During the Workday**

**The 4-7-8 Breathing Technique:** Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, exhale for 8 seconds. This reduces anxiety in under a minute.

**Desk Stretches:** Try a shoulder roll, seated spinal twist, or wrist stretch to relieve tension from sitting.

**Walk & Talk Meetings:** If possible, take a short walk during a phone call instead of sitting at your desk.

**Take a 5-Minute "No Work" Break:** Step outside, listen to calming music, or just close your eyes and breathe for a moment.



## **After Work: Unplug & Recharge**

**Create a Shutdown Ritual:** Close out the day with a simple habit, like writing a quick to-do list for tomorrow, then logging off completely.

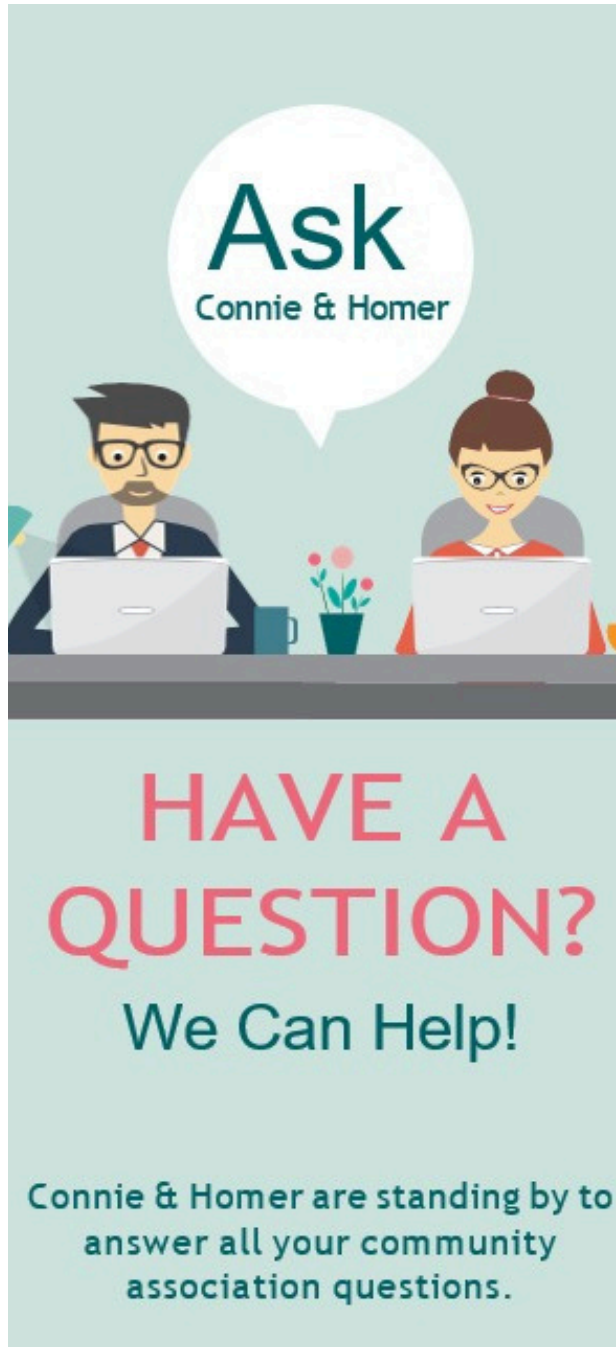
**Move Your Body:** Whether it's a workout, yoga, or a leisurely walk, movement helps process stress and improves mood.

**Screen-Free Wind Down:** Give yourself at least 30 minutes without work emails or social media before bed.

**Gratitude Check-In:** Reflect on one positive moment from your day, no matter how small.

These small, intentional habits can help reduce stress, increase focus, and prevent burnout—helping you show up as your best self at work and beyond. Try incorporating just one or two into your daily routine this week!

# trending now



Got Community Association Questions? Connie & Homer Have Answers!

From board meetings to budget questions, vendor issues to violations—Connie & Homer are here to help!

Send your community association questions to [info@sevagai.org](mailto:info@sevagai.org) and watch for answers in The Anchor and Currents Jr.!





“Our community has a 'no overnight street parking' rule, but the new board says they don't want to enforce it anymore. Can they just ignore a rule like that?”



### **Can a Board Ignore a No Overnight Street Parking Rule?**



No—a board cannot simply stop enforcing a written rule without following the proper amendment process.

- Selective enforcement can lead to legal challenges if some homeowners are penalized while others are not.

#### **If the board wants to change the rule, they must:**

- Review the governing documents to determine the amendment process.
- Consult legal counsel to ensure compliance.
- Seek homeowner input if a community vote is required.
- Formally amend and communicate the change to all residents.

#### **What Happens If the Board Ignores the Rule?**

Failing to enforce a rule while keeping it in place creates liability risks. Homeowners could challenge violations due to inconsistent enforcement, and the association may be held responsible if an issue arises, such as a blocked emergency vehicle.

#### **The Bottom Line**

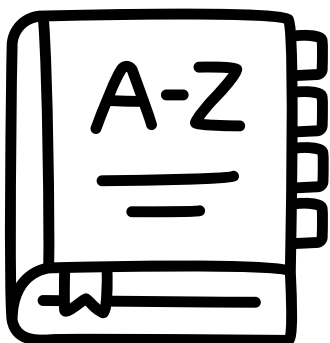
Boards can change rules, but only through formal amendments, proper voting, and clear communication. Ignoring a rule without due process can lead to legal and operational issues. If considering a change, consult your community manager and legal counsel to ensure compliance.

# ASSOCIATION TRANSLATOR:

## TURNING JARGON INTO COMMON SENSE

Understanding HOA terminology can feel like learning a new language. Here are five common terms translated into plain English to help you navigate community management like a pro!

- ◆ **Fiduciary Duty** – The legal obligation of board members to act in the best interest of the association, making decisions that protect property values and financial health. Think of it as managing the HOA like it's your own investment.
- ◆ **Quorum** – The minimum number of board members or homeowners required to hold an official meeting and vote on decisions. No quorum = no official business gets done!
- ◆ **CC&Rs (Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions)** – The rulebook of the community, outlining what homeowners can and cannot do with their property. These are legally binding and help maintain consistency and property values.
- ◆ **Special Assessment** – A one-time fee charged to homeowners when the HOA needs extra funds for unexpected expenses, like major repairs. Not popular, but sometimes necessary!
- ◆ **Reserve Fund** – The HOA's savings account for big-ticket items like roof replacements, road repairs, or pool upgrades. A well-funded reserve keeps the community financially stable without surprise costs to homeowners.



Got an HOA term you'd like us to translate? Send your suggestions, and we'll feature them in the next issue!

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