

# The Best of the Best

## CAI - NE Recognizes Volunteer Contributions

Each year, the Community Associations Institute (CAI) recognizes the achievements of volunteers and communities throughout New England. The annual awards banquet spotlights the efforts of community associations, volunteers and professionals who excel in the operation and management of associations throughout the chapter. It doesn't matter if the community is small or large, self-managed or professionally managed, associations are always complex organizations that require volunteer and professional support in order to carry out their multi-faceted duties as a community, a government and a business.

The 7th Annual CAI-NE Awards Banquet, held on Feb. 7 at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, MA, honored several individuals, associations and companies who support the goals and objectives of the industry and who protect, preserve and enhance the community association lifestyle. Chosen from a record number of nominations received by the committee, these award winners and their efforts, which serve as a shining example of what volunteers and others can do to put the "community"

back into community association, are highlighted on the following pages. We salute and congratulate all of these award winners.

### SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR PROBLEM SOLVING Quail Run Condominium Trust Woburn, MA

This award honors a community association that has faced and, through extraordinary team efforts, resolved a difficult situation. This award recipient, a 77-unit townhouse-style complex, faced a significant challenge with the premature failure of its cedar siding. Faced not only with the daunting task of replacing all the cedar clapboards with vinyl siding, which was the recommendation of a number of professional consultants, the board also was confronted with the opposition of unit owners to the vinyl siding option.

To more clearly demonstrate its problem and explain its rationale for vinyl siding, the board issued a complete package of information at a special meeting of the owners; the package outlined the problem, alternative solutions and the board recommendation. In addition, a detailed slide show developed by the board helped owners to better understand the problem. The board recognizing that there was some opposition to vinyl siding, initiated a series of cluster meetings and arranged for a guided tour to demonstrate some of the problems with the existing siding, which resulted in a more complete owner understanding of the problems and various solutions. A special unit owners meeting was held with 85 percent voting either in person or by proxy, and the



Accepting the Special Achievement Award for Problem Solving are Quail Run Condominium Trust homeowners (top l-r) Joel Seidman, Joel Alpert (bottom l-r) Carol Bergeron and Jack Deasy.

proposal to switch to vinyl siding was approved with 91.9 percent of the beneficial interest.

The entire board participated in this process and spent many hours working with various committees and unit owners explaining the reasons for the board's recommendation. This effort resulted in a better understanding, and many who were initially opposed to vinyl changed their minds leading to an almost universal acceptance of the vinyl option.

It was their consensus building that played a major role in the resolution of the siding failure problem, and it was their team effort and special achievement of the board that is recognized.

## WHAT DO COMPANIES AND CONDO ASSOCIATIONS HAVE IN COMMON?

by Carol Bergeron

- **THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE** create a compelling vision that people want to follow
- **THE CHANGE PROCESS** proceed in a way that produces desired results

### Highlights of the change process we used:

1. Recognized and investigated the problem from unpopular perspectives.
2. Created a sense of urgency given the limited timeframe in which resources were available to fix the problem.
3. Worked together as a team to create a shared vision and strategy for achieving new goals of the community.
4. Enlisted input from experts thereby raising the credibility and confidence in our analysis, solutions and recommendation.
5. Employed several approaches and mediums in communicating with and educating unit owners. We proactively shared what we knew, answered questions and addressed the practical and personal concerns of unit owners.
6. Engaged unit owners to further develop solutions adopted by the community. Implementation starts summer 2003.



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