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Community Advocacy Network supports associations

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The Community Advocacy Network has its roots firmly planted in the city and unincorporated areas of [Delray Beach](#) and is looking to help homeowners associations cope with a challenging economic landscape.

CAN was started by Fort Lauderdale lawyer Donna Berger of Katzman Garfinkel & Berger. She serves as executive director and has helped keep the organization in tune with the condo, townhome and homeowners associations that make up the Alliance of Delray Residential Association.

"We started in 2007," Berger said. "I had run a similar organization at a previous law firm. With CAN, I wanted to start an organization that meets all educational needs of board members. That's our goal, and we do that through newsletters, e-mail alerts and community advocacy designed for common-interest homeowners."

Representing [Palm Beach County](#) at meetings (the next meeting is set to take place Sept. 1 at the South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road) is Barbara Zee, a member of CAN's [Palm Beach County](#) Advisory Council.

Zee provided members with copies of CAN's "Hurricane Preparedness Guide for Community Associations" at the group's meeting in May. The 19-page brochure gives homeowners information on storm preparation, including document and record security, contract reviews, facilities prep, communication and emergency board powers.

"The 'Hurricane Preparedness Guide' is a classic example of what we do," Berger said. "We want the boards, property managers and community [to be] ready."


CAN worked on Florida Senate Bill 1196, a condo reform package aimed at bringing relief to struggling community associations. The bill was supported by state Rep. Maria Sachs of District 86 and was signed into law by Gov. Charlie Crist June 24 at the Hagen Ranch Road Library, 14350 Hagen Ranch Road.

CAN just finished a survey of 762 community association decision-makers and members, ranging "from Brickell Key to Jacksonville," Berger said. The survey addressed professional management vs. self-management by a volunteer board of directors. CAN found 25 percent of Florida community associations are self-managed by board members with the help of nonmanagement employees and third-party service providers. Of the 75 percent that are professionally managed, more than half of the respondents said they were satisfied with their manager or management company.

To view the full CAN Florida Association Management Survey Report, visit <http://www.canfl.com/Documents/CAN%20Assoc%20Mgmt%20Surv.pdf>. CAN's website is <http://www.canfl.com>, and its blog is <http://www.condolaw.blogspot.com>. Berger can be reached at dberger@canfl.com or by phone at 954-315-0372.

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