



journalnotes

We have all heard a story about someone learning to swim simply by being pushed into deep water. I don't believe this is by any means a safe or good way to learn, but in a sense four years ago, I pushed my own daughter into the deep end. I can't believe that this month, she will graduate from college. It seems like yesterday that we sent her off to the great unknown of an out-of-state college. Quite frankly, at the time, we wondered if she would sink or swim! Excuse a little motherly pride, but she did swim, and very well!

Mastering the great unknown takes courage, whether it is college, career, or retirement. Sometimes, we can't see around the corners of our lives and must continue based on faith. In the same way, directing and managing an association often involves courage and faith—faith that even an unpopular course of action is the right path and courage to stick with it when the going gets rough.

We saw this demonstrated in many of our 2009 *FLCAJ*/Becker & Poliakoff Communities of Excellence Award entries. Diving head-first into unknown or innovative areas, these communities show the results of faith that they were headed along the right path and also the courage needed to follow through. We hope that, as we begin to profile the winners, you will benefit from their experiences. Each month, we plan to present not only a new winner, but other noteworthy entrants, explaining how each excelled in an area such as civic involvement, disaster preparedness, communication, environmental initiatives, or safety and security.

We begin these profiles in this issue with a feature on the Community of the Year—Pointe Royale Condominium Association in Ft. Myers. Pointe Royale is truly a Community of Excellence and won first place in two categories.

The most often-repeated comment that we heard at the award presentation in Tallahassee was that each community learned from the others by hearing what the various communities had accomplished. I know our readers will feel the same way.

And on another subject, we know our readers will enjoy and benefit from the convenience of the Florida Management Company Directory we have assembled and printed in this issue. This particular project is the result of many requests for a directory of this type broken down by region. We hope that our first directory will be a helpful tool. (We have other directories planned for future issues, and are always open for suggestions!)

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