



# BECKER & POLIAKOFF COMMUNITY UP-DATE

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CURRENT NEWS FOR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

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## Community Association 2006 Holiday Survey

CONDUCTED ONLINE FROM NOV. 5 - 20, 2006

BY THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP LOBBY (CALL)

RESULTS BASED ON 459 RESPONSES FROM  
PROPERTY OWNERS IN FLORIDA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

NOVEMBER 28, 2006



### Introduction & Methodology

The results contained in this report are based on responses from 459 participants in a survey of Florida Community Association property owners, conducted online in the state of Florida between November 5 and November 20, 2006, under the auspices of the Community Association Leadership Lobby (CALL).

More than 4,000 previously identified owners of property in Florida common-interest ownership communities -- including condominiums, homeowner associations, cooperatives, mobile homes, timeshare and condo hotels -- were invited by email to participate in the insurance survey.

Participants were directed to an Internet landing page, where their responses were filtered with an initial question asking if the respondent owned property in a condominium, homeowner association or other type of community association in Florida. Those who responded "No" to this question were not allowed to complete the survey.

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This survey report has been shared with members of the news media and is available for viewing online at the website of the Community Association Leadership Lobby: [www.callbp.com](http://www.callbp.com)

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CALL *cont.*

## ABOUT THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP LOBBY (CALL)

Established in 2003 by the law firm of Becker & Poliakoff to work toward enhancing the quality of life and protecting property values for Florida's community association residents, the Community Association Leadership Lobby advocates on behalf of more than 4,000 member communities, including condominiums, homeowners' associations, mobile home communities and cooperatives throughout the state. For more information, visit the CALL website at [www.callbp.com](http://www.callbp.com).

### Survey Questions and Response Data

Listed below are the actual questions asked and responses collected in the Survey.

1. The first question asked if a respondent owned property in a condominium, homeowner association or other type of community association in Florida. Those who responded "No" were not allowed to complete the survey.

#### 2. Indicate the type of community association in which you own property:

Percent	Response
78.1	Condominium
0.2	Condo Hotel
3.6	Cooperative Association
15.5	Homeowners Association (HOA)
2.3	Mobile Home Community
0.2	Timeshare

#### 3. Please indicate the location of your unit/home:

Percent	Response
41.3	Southeast Florida (Key West, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, W Palm Beach, Stuart)
34	Southwest Florida (Bradenton/Sarasota, Fort Myers, Naples and Marco Island)
5.7	Central West Florida (Crystal River, Clearwater and St. Pete/Tampa)
6.8	Central East Florida (Port St. Lucie, Melbourne and Daytona Beach)
2	Central Florida (Ocala, Orlando, Kissimmee/St. Cloud and Winter Haven)
2.9	Northwest Florida (Pensacola to Panama City)
0	North Central Florida (Tallahassee, Lake City, Gainesville, Cedar Key)

**CALL cont.**

0.9	North East Florida (Jacksonville, St. Augustine)
6.3	Other

**4. How much does your association spend from its annual operating budget on Holiday-related decorations, parties and/or employee gifts or bonuses each year?**

Percent	Response
44.6	0 to \$99
12.3	\$100-\$199
16	\$200-499
27.1	\$500 or more

**5. Does your association place Holiday decorations in common areas of the property during the month of December?**

Percent	Response
78.2	Yes
21.8	No

**6. If you answered “Yes” to #5, do those decorations include (choose all that apply):**

Percent	Response
78.8	Christmas Decorations
36	Hanukkah Decorations
1.7	Kwanza Decorations
37.2	Non-denominational Decoration

**7. If you answered “Yes” to #5, how does your association decide on what kind of decorations and where they are placed?**

Percent	Response
22.9	The Board of Directors decides
23.5	A specially appointed Committee decides
0.3	It's spelled out in the association's Governing Documents
39.9	It's decided by tradition in the building
13.5	Other (please specify)

CALL *cont.*

**8. Does your association have any restrictions on individual association members placing Holiday decorations on the outside of their properties?**

Percent	Response
34.7	Yes
65.3	No

**9. If you answered "Yes" to #8, how does your association deal with individual property owners who do not abide by those restrictions? (choose any that apply)**

Percent	Response
25.9	Takes no action
53.7	Letter of warning from the Board
9.3	Authorizes Management to remove the decorations
4.3	Imposes Fines
3.1	Takes Legal Action
19.8	Other (please specify)

**10. Does your association usually throw some type of year-end Holiday party for association members in December?**

Percent	Response
37.4	Yes
62.6	No

**11. Will your association throw some type of year-end Holiday party this year?**

Percent	Response
39%	Yes
61%	No

**12. How will your association pay for its year-end Holiday party this year?**

Percent	Response
16.8	From the annual operating budget

**CALL cont.**

20.8	Monetary contributions from individual property owners
33.6	Pot-luck contributions of food an beverage from individual property owners
28.8	Other (please specify)

**13. Does your association give end-of-year or Holiday monetary gifts or bonuses to association employees?**

Percent	Response
55.1	Yes
44.9	No

**14. If you answered "Yes" to #13, how do association members contribute to these end-of-year or Holiday gifts or bonuses?**

Percent	Response
52.2	From the annual operating budget
30.5	Voluntary contributions from association members collected by the association
17.3	Voluntary contributions from association members given individually to employees

**15. If you answered "Voluntary" and collected by the association, does the association post a list of all contributors in a visible place on the property?**

Percent	Response
8.7	Yes
91.3	No

- END -

CALL *cont.*

## FLORIDA CONDO, HOA HOLIDAY DECORATIONS MARKED BY SPIRITUALITY, TOLERANCE AND INCLUSION, SURVEY SHOWS

### From Panhandle to the Keys, Community Associations Relax and Cooperate, Celebrating Year-End Holiday Season in Variety of Ways

FT. LAUDERDALE, FL (Nov. 28, 2006) – As year-end holidays approach, the spiritual “reason for the season” will be on display in lobbies, entrances, hallways and other common areas of the majority of condominiums and homeowner associations throughout the state of Florida, according to results of a statewide survey of community association members released today.

Nearly 80% of respondents to the survey, conducted online from Nov. 5-20 by the Community Association Leadership Lobby (CALL), an organization representing more than 4,000 Florida condominium and other community associations, said their communities choose to place holiday decorations in common areas of the property during the month of December.

Of those, fully 78.8% said the display includes Christmas decorations, while 36% said their association displays Hanukkah decorations in December, indicating that many condo buildings and homeowner associations (HOAs) choose to publicly celebrate both the Christian and Jewish holidays. An additional 1.7% said their association would celebrate Kwanza.

While 37.2% said the holiday display in their association would remain non-denominational, survey organizers said the responses show that the religious and spiritual messages of the holidays remain substantial in most Florida community associations.

“Clearly, most community associations in Florida recognize the spiritual origins of the holidays and tend to deal with different religious and ethnic traditions in a spirit of tolerance and inclusion,” said Donna D. Berger, Executive Director of CALL and a community association attorney and shareholder with the Florida-based law firm Becker & Poliakoff. “The survey also showed that the display of decorations is sanctioned by association tradition in 40% of the cases, while the association leadership establishes the decorations policy more than half the time, either by a specially designated committee or a decision by the association’s elected Board of Directors.”

**CALL cont.**

A total of 459 property owners in condominiums, HOAs and other community associations from the Panhandle to the Florida Keys responded to the survey, conducted in an effort to identify trends and “best practices” in how Florida community associations deal with issues related to year-end holiday decorations, association parties and employee gifts and bonuses.

**Key survey findings include:**

- ▶ While more than 60% of associations shy away from throwing a year-end party, of those that do go in for a community-wide holiday bash only 16.8% are willing to foot the bill directly out of the annual budget.
- ▶ Nearly half (44.6%) of respondents said their association earmarks less than \$100 in their annual budget to spend on these year-end holiday items, with 28.3% spending from \$100-\$500 and 27.1% saying their association spends more than \$500 each year.
- ▶ Slightly more than half (55.1%) of associations give year-end gifts or bonuses to association employees -- of those, 52.2% have created an annual budget item for that purpose, while 47.5% fund employee gifts or bonuses through voluntary contributions from association members.

“A clear consensus is yet to emerge among associations on the question of whether and how to provide year-end holiday gifts or bonuses to employees,” said Ms. Berger. “Often at issue for those that do provide employee gifts or bonuses is how to do so equitably, and on that point associations appear nearly evenly split between those that prefer to guarantee an amount through an annual budget line item and those that leave the amount to be determined by voluntary contributions from individual unit owners.”

The survey also found that fully 65% of associations place no restrictions when it comes to holiday decorations and of those that do, nearly 80% said their association takes no action or sends a warning letter with no follow through in the case of a property owner who flaunts the restrictions.

“We found it interesting that the survey responses showed a more relaxed attitude on the part of community association leadership regarding enforcement of restrictions on what individual owners can display on doors, balconies and front yards,” said Ms. Berger.

**CALL cont.**

The survey's sponsor, CALL, is a statewide organization established in 2003 to advocate on behalf of the interests of Florida's community associations by the law firm Becker & Poliakoff, which has the largest community association law practice in the state.

The full report on the survey results is available online at the website of the Community Association Leadership Lobby: [www.callbp.com](http://www.callbp.com).

**About the Community Association Leadership Lobby (CALL)**

The Community Association Leadership Lobby is the leading organization working to enhance the quality of life and protect property values for Florida's community association residents. CALL advocates on behalf of more than 4,000 member communities, including condominiums, homeowners' associations, mobile home communities and cooperatives throughout the state. More information on the Community Association Leadership Lobby can be found at [www.callbp.com](http://www.callbp.com).

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**NOTE:** If you have questions or comments about this survey, please contact Michael Tangeman at The Pen Group Communications, 305-529-1944 or [michael@thepengroup.com](mailto:michael@thepengroup.com).