From the Board Room

OCTOBER 2026

Membership Annual Meeting

Brooks Field Vote

The membership voted on a $50 dues increase on October 19, the day of the annual membership meeting. The increase was necessary to create a funding stream to pay off a $1 million bank loan, which is a part of the Brooks Field Hard Surface Restoration Project financing plan. The project carries a construction cost of around $1.5 million. The difference will be paid for from funds that have been set aside by the Colony in anticipation of the construction and funds contributed by the Medford Lakes Athletic Association. MLAA has also been saving for this over many years. In effect, the project's fate was in membership hands. With the "Yes" vote, the project **will proceed**. Results follow.

In Favor - Yes	297
Opposed - No	104
Total Voting	401

Project Scope: The existing Brooks court complex – which is rapidly approaching unusable status – will be completely rebuilt within the existing footprint. The finished complex will include three tennis courts, two basketball courts, and eight pickleball courts. Because the existing (middle) parking lot will be repurposed as playing court, parking will be relocated. New fencing with limited access gating will be added. The courts will **not** be lit.

What's Next: We are in the process of finalizing loan and contract documents with the target of a fall ground-breaking and a spring opening.

Annual dues (effective January 1, 2027) will now be $775 with a $100 discount for members 65 and over. The Board will continue to offer an installment payment option.

Departmental and Committee Reports

The membership received reports from departments and committees on their activities for the year. These reports will be summarized and sent to the membership in the form of an Annual Report in November. Following is an extract from the President's opening remarks.

By all accounts and metrics, 2026 was an all-around good year. In fact, it was a very good year, one where we realized dividends, which followed several recent and sometimes painful years of problem-solving.

We continued our three-year effort to bring the Colony back to financial health without the distraction of crisis. Recall that we created a new dues structure in 2023 after 15 years without an increase. That restructuring restored our general operating fund to a targeted cash level. Our success was threatened the following year, however, because of a liability insurance crisis and cash-drain, which required a compensating fee increase.

We recovered from both challenges and are now in excellent financial condition. We continue to direct resources toward repairing and improving deteriorating facilities, which had been neglected for years because of no available funding. There is much more to do, but we are making excellent progress. Included in that effort is an agreement about a design solution for decades-long problems at our Brooks Field Hard Surface Complex, which was seven years in the making.

And this was our first full-year of a shared property services agreement with Medford Lakes Borough, which is a major change from our prior operating model. We are still settling into this new arrangement, but it has been a successful step forward for us. A change for sure. But one that we believe will serve us well into the future.

And we continue to offer diverse and robust recreational programing to our entire membership, young and old, which is – after all – our core mission.

We must never lose sight of that.

With all the changes we make, our overarching goal is to ensure that life in Medford Lakes does <u>not</u> change

Lakes Update

The Board also awarded a spillway repair contract in the amount of $33,000. Work is for aluminum plate and valve replacements to the final spillways in the Colony-wide project: the 3 Mirror lakes ($6,500 each) and the (very leaky) Beach 4 spillway ($13,500). With this work, we will have taken correction on all spillways. Payment will be from the Lakes Restoration Fund.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – CHRIS AND JILL SICILIANO

As we look at the strong volunteer spirit in our community, we often see that good things come in pairs. Consider, for example, Chris and Jill Siciliano, and their ongoing and invaluable contributions to our recreational programs and way of life.

Chris grew up in Ocean Township, a Central Jersey shore town. He was an accomplished interscholastic athlete in basketball and golf there, and his passion for those sports helped define his Laker life.



After graduating from Ocean Township High School, he attended the College of New Jersey, earning a B.S. in Finance in 2000. From there, he began his life-to-date career in Human Resource management, outsourcing, and consulting. Along the way, he earned a Master's Degree in Management Information Systems from the Fox School of Business at Temple University.

It is appropriate that Chris and Jill met at an inter-company basketball league game in Cherry Hill. Jill also enjoys a career in Human Resources. And she has an athletic background as a second-generation Laker and student athlete at Shawnee High School (Class of 1998) and Elon University. Their courtship introduced Chris to the Lakes, and he was immediately drawn to the life here. When the time came to find a place to settle and raise a family, Medford Lakes was at the top of the list. (Actually, there was no list. If you married Jill Tursi, you were going to be a Laker.) They purchased their first house on Powhatan Trail in 2007.

Chris combined his commitment to family with his love of sports by becoming active in the Colony's athletic auxiliary, MLAA. With daughters Peyton and then Caitlyn came a side-career as a youth basketball coach, which has lasted for 12 uninterrupted years, working with both girls at multiple levels.

MLAA – always on the lookout for a reliable volunteer – quickly drew Chris into their governance hierarchy. In addition to coaching, he filled the demanding position of Basketball Commissioner for 10 years. From there, he guided a safety improvement project at Vaughan Hall and increased youth and adult participation. For his efforts, he received the organization's annual Service award in 2025.

He also volunteers as the scheduler for the Pinelands Basketball League and coordinates around 350 games per year. He's been doing that job for 12 years. Still an active golfer, his long list of community service includes a position on the Board of Governors of the Medford Lakes Country Club.

Like Chris, Jill's volunteer activity also began as a family affair, supporting her children as a volunteer for the Medford Lakes Home and School Association, the Neeta Theater program, and the local Girl Scouts. She has also coached extensively in the MLAA basketball program.

Jill was the Women's Club President in 2014 when the club had only nine members. She was successful in bringing that organization back to life. Membership tripled during her term.

Jill is also a member of the Canoe Carnival Committee where she has served for over 10 years. She is responsible for float group registration and communication, assists with the Canoe Carnival Ball, and serves as Committee Secretary. She was awarded the organization's Golden Oar Award in 2020.

Chris and Jill are charter members of the Mad Paddlers float group, and co-host that group's build and launch from their property on Lower Aetna.

Chris was installed as the MLAA President in 2026. While overseeing that organization's ongoing operations is daunting enough, he has also set some ambitious goals for his tenure. Of course, reactivating the Pickleball League and building other programs that will use the renovated Brooks Field Complex is at the top of his to-do list. He would also like to build an elementary age volleyball program and upgrade the court facility at Hopkins Field.

And as demanding as their MLAA and Carnival activities will be, they are making time to serve on the Colony's Centennial Committee. Their volunteer careers are destined to become even longer.

Their daughters are also true Lakers and certain to follow in their parent's path. Caitlyn, a Neeta 8th grader, participates in the theater program there, and also on local field hockey and basketball teams. Peyton, a Shawnee Senior and Bronze Shield recipient, is a varsity golfer and Shawnee Theater performer. Peyton was crowned *Ms. Medford Lakes* in 2025.

Thanks to Chris and Jill Siciliano for their years of service to the community. And (as a special thank you) we're looking forward to many more.