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Next Meeting

Tuesday, August 18, 2009

5:30 p.m. **Granny Shaffer's Restaurant**

Randy Martin

Economic Security Corp.

How to get FREE Improvements on Your Rental Units

Come to Meeting For Details!

New Lead-Based Paint Guidelines

Our next meeting will be this coming Tuesday, August 18, 2009. We will have our buffet supper at 5:30 p.m. with our program to start at approximately 6:15 p.m. Cost of the meal is \$10 per person. Reservations are not required and guests are always welcome.

Speaker this month will be **Randy Martin, Director of Weatherization for the Economic Security Corp.** serving Jasper, Newton, McDonald and Barton Counties. He will be discussing the details about how you can get almost **free** work on your houses. This is better than a get-rich-quick scheme, cause it is real, legitimate and simple, no

gamble or scam to it. Most houses can qualify as long as they have good furnaces that are properly vented, roofs that do not leak, and do not have excessive mold. The renters actually have to fill out the simple application and must have income below a certain level, - although many renters in this area will qualify. The landlord is required to pay \$300 per house and can get up to \$6,500 work on their house. That is \$6,200 worth of **free** work improving YOUR house.

If you have 10 houses that qualify, that is \$62,000 in **FREE** home improvements. This may well be the most valuable

meeting we have had. If you don't need this information, you probably don't need your rental houses.

This four county area has funding to weatherize 7000 houses in the next 3 years and is actively looking for houses that qualify. Come to this meeting for all of the details.

Also, Mr. Martin will be passing out copies of the new pamphlet we are required to give to renters about lead based paint. This new one covers other aspects of lead, not just paint. He will also be passing out a new booklet from the EPA about mold, and the forms necessary to apply for the weatherization.

rentlinx July Stats

28 properties listed
107 units
230 property views
4 web-leads

RentLinx

List your properties
Here for on-line
Search of available
Housing units
www.RentLinx.com

Prospects can search by:

Bedrooms
School District
County
City

Association Coverage Area

According to MAA, our Association covers a large area of southwest Missouri, southeast Kansas, northeast Oklahoma and northwest Arkansas. These are the counties which are in our Association's area:

Missouri: Barton, Jasper, Newton, McDonald
Kansas: Linn, Bourbon, Crawford, Cherokee
Oklahoma: Craig, Mayes, Cherokee, Ottawa, Delaware, Adair
Arkansas: Benton, Carroll

If you know someone who is a rental owner or manager or who is considering becoming an owner/manager, tell them about us and all we can do for them!

UPCOMING EVENTS!

The Board is planning several special events.

We are trying to schedule a nationally recognized speaker for September. We'll get you more information when it is available.

October 24 or 31 will be our Fall Educational Seminar. This year, Sara Reeder & Associates will be presenting legal issues of landlord/tenant law. We will also have Judge Schoelburl host a mock trial in landlord/tenant court! Be sure to save these dates. We'll get you more information as soon as we have everything set!

One of our members had obtained some additional information on the Tool Lending Library. Hope you find this information useful.

Tool Lending Library

Joplin has a tool lending library. This would be a library of home and lawn maintenance tools.

You must be at least 18 years of age and meet income guidelines.

The library is located at 120 N. Porter Ave., Joplin, just north of the Public Works Center. Operating hours are 2-4 pm Tuesdays and 9-11 am Thursdays.

For more information, contact Connie Chrisman at 417-624-0820, ext. 570.

This is a HUD project for those with limited income.

Only for Joplin residents and group projects such as churches.

Users are required to put down a deposit which is returned when tools are returned.

Located right next to recycling center.

From Candace Ellett

Thanks Candace!

Associate/Preferred Vendor List

RentGrow—Tenant Screening

800-736-8476

First American Title Co.

417-623-1553

Apartment Finder of Springfield

Sarah Luce Reeder & Associates

Creative Investments, LLC.

Southwest Missouri Rental Housing Association
Minutes of Regular Membership meeting
Tuesday, July 21, 2009, Granny Shaffer's

Meeting called to order by President David Enke

Present: 22 members, 2 guests, and 1 speaker. Total 25

Visitors Present: Malcolm and Heather Anderson.

New Members Present: None.

Treasurer's Report: None available.

Membership Report as of May 5, 2009: Total-to-Date; 50/888 & 5 Associates.

Upcoming Speakers: Rob O'Brien, Joplin Chamber of Commerce.

Tonight's speaker was: Roger Wrestler, CPA.

Tonight we collected \$32 for the 50/50 raffle.

EO, Cheryl Brown gave a brief presentation on RentLinx. There are 23 properties with 82 units listed through the Assoc. and 1700 people have viewed the site.

Cheryl and Daryl Rhodes gave demonstrations on how to get started using the site.

Reminders:

Next Board meeting will be August 4, at Keller Williams office at 6:00 p.m.

Next membership meeting will be August 18, at Granny Schaffer's.

Lyn Enke, Secretary

This publication is designed to provide informative material of interest to its readers. It is distributed with the understanding that it does not constitute legal, accounting, or other professional advertising. Although the published material is intended to be accurate, neither we nor any other party will assume liability for loss or damage as a result of reliance on this material. Appropriate legal or accounting advise or other expert assistance should be sought from a competent professional.

Any advice you may receive from any Director or Officer of the Association is simply our experience or willingness to help and is not to be construed as legal advice. Our intent is to network and to share our experiences with other members. We are not responsible for the legal content of any forms we provide our membership.

Applicant Screening Tricks and Application Fees

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The Advantage of Application Fees

Application fees have the additional advantage of being “self-weeding” of bad tenants. Tenants who know they will be rejected usually won’t apply to rent from you if they know they will lose their application fee. If all the risk is on you, many times they will just go ahead and fill out a rental application, replete the lines, half-truths, and omissions. But if they have to risk their own money, they may just go on to the next landlord—the one who won’t be so careful whom he rents to.

If you do collect an application fee, you are either legally or ethically (depending on whether your state has passed a law about it yet) required to do the following:

- A. Tell them what you are going to check.
- B. Inform them of their rights to dispute any information you uncover. (You don’t have to wait for the disputed information to be resolved, you can go ahead and rent to someone with no black marks on his or her credit report).
- C. Tell them the name of the screening service or credit reporting agency.
- D. Even if you don’t charge an application fee, but you reject them as tenants because of information you received from a credit agency or tenant screening service, tell the applicant that you rejected him or her because of the information you received, and give him or her the name and address of the service or agency.
- E. You need not tell applicants the specific results of the credit report or screening report, only that it caused you to reject them. They need to contact the agency for the specifics. You can, however, give them a copy of their “consumer report,” as defined in the Fair Credit Reporting Act.
- F. Do not charge a fee unless you actually have a unit available to rent at that moment or expect one within a reasonable length of time.
- G. If you charge an application fee, but never screen the applicant, give the money back “within a reasonable time.”

Write all this out as an agreement and receipt that they and you will sign when they pay you the application fee.

Tips for Checking References

The references you get from the applicant are as important as any other information you can get. There are certain references you must have.

First, and most obvious and foremost, is landlord references. Previous landlords will tell you most about what kind of tenant the applicant was. Even though many are hesitant to say anything bad about a tenant for fear of lawsuits, you can still find out an amazing amount of information simply by asking leading questions. Two questions you want to make sure you ask are “Did you know the tenant is moving? And “Why are they moving?” or “Why did they move?”

Second, employer references can provide information about what kind of person the applicant is. You can also ask questions of the employer you might not be able to ask legally on the application, such as number of children, etc.

Third, personal references are always going to be friends or relatives of the applicant. If they are hesitant about saying something nice about your prospective tenant, you have a definite reason to suspect that the applicant will not be a good tenant. Also, check the addresses and phone numbers of the personal references to see if they are the same as any of those of the landlord references or employer references. Some bad tenants would be stupid enough to do that.

Use the phone book and/or directory assistance to verify that all the names, addresses and phone numbers on the application match — that's for landlords, personal references, employers, etc. I cannot stress the importance of doing this too much. Professional bad tenants will have their friends pretend they are landlords and employers. If one thing doesn't match, they'd better have a good explanation. If more than one thing doesn't match, reject them.

If you want to make sure that you are talking to the real landlord, call the customer service department of a title company or the county tax assessor's office. Just give them the address of the property, they'll tell you the name and address of the owner of the property. Then make sure the name you get is the same as that of the landlord reference. Many counties' tax records are online. You can find out the owner of the tenant's previous residence by checking there and avoid having to go through voice mail hell with the county.

If the prospective tenant has just sold his house, ask for the name of the real estate agent who sold it for him. If he doesn't remember, that might make you suspicious. If he sold the property himself, ask for the name and phone number of the buyer.

When you call the real estate agent or buyer, ask about the condition of the property, the sales price, the amount of equity in the property, and anything else you think is pertinent. Ask who the lender on his home was. Call the loan officer, as well.

People who are moving from out of town are high risks (especially if they have no personal references). Find out why they are moving into the area. You can check to see if their references' names, addresses and phone numbers match by checking with directory assistance. "I would like the phone number of Jim Johnson who lives at 1234 Elm St. in San Diego, CA." And call all out of town references: the money will be well spent.

Check at the county court house for criminal record and/or eviction record. Or pay \$20 or less and have a tenant screening service pull a public records report as well as a credit report for you. If you have either a felony conviction or an eviction, it could very well end up costing you big bucks to rent to them.

"From 'Profitable Tenant Selection,' available from ... Robert Cain is a nationally-recognized speaker and writer on property management and real estate issues. For a free sample copy of the Rental Property Reporter call 800-654-5456 or visit their web site at www.rentalprop.com."

**SOUTHWEST
MISSOURI RENTAL
HOUSING
ASSOCIATION**

P O Box 1801
Joplin, MO 64802-1801

Phone: 417-781-3337
E-mail: info@swmorental.com

We're on the Web!
SWMORENTAL.com

'NO CALL' LIST

You may sign up for the Missouri Attorney General's "No Call" List. Call toll-free 1-866-NOCALL1 or log on to:

www.moago.org.

08/11/09

Current Membership

Count:

50 Members Managing

888 Properties

5 Associate Members

Each member of this Association shall:

- Strive continually to promote the education and fraternity of the membership and to promote the progress and dignity of the apartment/rental housing industry.
- Maintain and operate our apartment/rental housing projects in accordance with fair practices and in compliance with the By-Laws of the Association.
- Promote and maintain a high standard of integrity in the performance of all rental obligations and services in the operation of our apartment/rental housing projects.
- Establish high ethical standard of conduct with suppliers and other doing business with the apartment/rental housing industry.
- Endeavor to expose all schemes to misleads or defraud the apartment/rental housing residing public and to aid in the exposure of those responsible.
- Seek to provide better values in apartment/rental housing.

Purpose

- The purpose of this Association shall be:
- To advance the general welfare of the rental housing industry.
- To participate for the purpose of mutual benefit in an interchange of information and experience with all state and local affiliated associations of the National Apartment Association.
- To encourage within the apartment/rental housing industry a high appreciation of the objectives and responsibilities of apartment/rental housing owners and operators in providing adequate privately owned housing.
- To promote the enactment and enforcement of local, state and federal laws beneficial to the apartment/rental housing industry and free enterprise.
- To disseminate useful information to all members and inspire them to further educate themselves in the practical features of their apartment/rental housing operations.
- To advocate a code of ethics to maintain high professional standards and sound business methods among its members for the best interests of the industry and the public.

Upcoming Events and Dates to Remember

August 18 regular membership meeting 5:30 p.m. at Granny Shaffer's Restaurant.

September 1 Board of Directors meeting at Keller/Williams Realty, 7th & Florida, Joplin, 6:00 p.m.

September 15 regular membership meeting 5:30 p.m. at Granny Shaffer's Restaurant.

October 6 Board of Directors meeting at Keller/Williams Realty, 7th & Florida, Joplin, 6:00 p.m.

October 20 regular membership meeting 5:30 p.m. at Granny Shaffer's Restaurant.

October 24 or 31 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR on legal issues and a MOCK LAND-

LORD/TENANT COURT!
With a real judge!

November 3 Board of Directors meeting at Keller/Williams Realty, 7th & Florida, Joplin, 6:00 p.m.

November 17 regular membership meeting at 5:30 p.m. at Granny Shaffer's Restaurant.