



MARCH MEETING

Tuesday, Mar. 20, at 7 P.M.

Meeting Location → **RAAR**

6776 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61108

The Eviction Process

Local Attorney, Alberto F. Altamore

The proper and legal steps

to regain possession of your property!

Cost: Free for members \$15 non-members

JOIN THE RAA!

Members enjoy ...

- ✓ 8 monthly meetings with guest speakers covering a variety of property management topics
- ✓ Winter Member Mixer
- ✓ Spring Banquet
- ✓ a Web link or page advertising your units on the RAA Web site
- ✓ Member networking with current tips, bargains and referrals
- ✓ Knowledge of State and local political issues affecting property managers and owners
- ✓ Monthly newsletter

A one-year membership is \$99.

To join or e-mail RAA, go to

www.rockfordapartmentassociation.org

To join the e-mail group, go to

RAAmembers@yahoo.com

Letter from the President:

This month RAA welcomes back Attorney Alberto Altamore as our featured speaker. Alberto is a RAA member, a landlord and represents many RAA members with their legal issues. For those of you who have not attended one of Alberto's presentations you are in for an entertaining and informative evening. Our meeting topic is the eviction process. Evictions can be very complex with specific procedures you must follow. Sometimes, unexpected issues arise. Alberto will cover the process from start to finish along with tips on what mistakes to avoid.

Whether you are a seasoned veteran or just starting your business understanding the eviction process will help when you need to remove a tenant who has violated their lease but also as a tool in negotiating with tenants to resolve issues. Knowing all your options throughout the process can make the difference between an agreed move out and a sheriff move out. In some cases having an order for possession in hand can convince your tenant to begin honoring the lease agreement again. Those of us who have been in the business a long time know that you never stop learning. I hope you can join us to gain new knowledge and maybe share some of what you have learned over the years with your fellow RAA members.

An Interview with Tom & Mary O'Sullivan Snyder by Jerri Cole

I am so glad that I get to choose who I get to interview. It gives me the chance to pick two of my favorite people, **Tom and Mary (Muffy) O'Sullivan Snyder**. You can't have one without the other. They are a team who have been happily married to each other for 22 years. They still hold hands. Muffy has a very enthusiastic, bubbly, and personal personality and Tom is her soft spoken dependable rock. They have what most people yearn for, good marriage and good business partners, and they know how to have fun!! Tom says: "I have been married to Muffy for 22 years and my life is never dull!!! Together we have 7 kids (6 boys and 1 girl) the Brady Bunch. I enjoy laughter and teasing. I love a good joke!"

Muffy enjoys traveling, scuba diving, dominos, casinos, but most of all being with family and friends. Do you remember the lady who goes around giving out those flashing rings at the Christmas parties? You are right, that's Muffy. Tom enjoys traveling (especially Mexico), watching T.V. Documentaries and reading the newspaper.

Muffy is an EPA Accredited Trainer for Lead Safety as many of you know. Muffy is on the Rockford Apartment Association board and is also the Academy speaker for the state of Illinois. Muffy also is the founder and president of the Kids for Kids Program for Lydia Safe Families (a 22-year-old work program for kids & their parents). Muffy and Tom both are on the Welcoming Committee for Holy Family Church. Tom was secretary for two years and then president for the Kiwanis Club years ago in West Chicago.

Muffy and Tom would like people to know:

Muffy: "I am Christian with a strong faith system. I know my success is a blessing from God. I believe we all came from someplace, and we are going back someday. Every one of us will have to stand before our Maker and explain what we did with the talents He gave us. What did we do to make his world better? My main philosophy in life is to..... GIVE BACK."

Tom: "I am honest, sincere and a bit philanthropic. I am a Christian man, husband, and father."

They became landlords in 2006 when their retirement went south with the stock market and a Ponzi scheme took the rest.

Muffy: "Plus Tom, who is able to do almost anything, was running out of projects around

the house (side note: we have 7 bathrooms in our house, plus an elevator!")

What do you like best about being a landlord?

Muffy: "I love seeing people's faces when they see our units. I also love the lifetime income we are creating for ourselves and our kids."

Tom: "Satisfaction in giving people a new start or helping them in the progress of life. And.....THE MONEY!!!!!!!"

What do you like least about being a landlord?

Muffy: "Being taken advantage of and having to go to court.

Tom: Sloppy tenants that disrespect the work we have put into our units.

Funny stories:

Muffy: We are now known as Miss Muffy and Mr. Tom.

Tom: "While remodeling a house that had mold, we had to take down the some drywall. A squirrel had gotten into the insulation, got stuck, and died. One of the workers unknowingly reached up and grabbed the leg of the petrified squirrel. The screaming and dancing around was as funny as any comedy routine!!!!"

What are your pet peeves?

Muffy: "People who live on a "Pity Potty". People who are always mad about something or putting others people down." I hate "constructive criticism" It is like an impersonal fist fight. It becomes very personal after the first blow! There is nothing constructive about criticism.

Tom: "People who know nothing but think they do. Also people who stand around with their hands in their pockets and yawn when you are talking to them. And lastly, it drives me crazy when people correct me when I am trying to teach them. (I am always right, just ask my wife!!!!) How do I handle it you say? I just say, "If you are wrong then you have to bring the donuts tomorrow." I have had way too many donuts! Ha Ha.

What can Rockford do to help landlords?

Muffy: 'MAKE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS. If tenants trash a unit they should be charged with criminal destruction!"

Tom: "Give landlords a 5-year reprieve on the real estate taxes when they come into and improve a dilapidated property.

Best advice for new landlords:

Muffy: "Charge enough rent. Be kind, be friendly, but be firm. Do little things for tenants, but make sure they pay on time or charge them late fees. (I am still working on that.)"

Tom: "Be cautious, be fair, screen tenants thoroughly, and charge enough rent to make a good profit. Of course, join, and be an active member of the RAA."



▲ *Muffy and Tom O'Sullivan Snyder*

What would March be without a good Irish joke?

IRISHMAN AT LITTLE BIGHORN

Murphy had made a success of his life. He'd emigrated to America, joined the Cavalry and had risen to the rank of sergeant. With any other regiment he'd have been set for life. Unfortunately, his outfit was the 7th cavalry and one bright morning he found himself in the middle of the battle of Little Big Horn. Thousands of Indians surrounded him, Custer and the others were dead, and Murphy began to pray.

"Can anyone up there help me?" he begged as the Indians moved in on him.

"Till help you, Sergeant Murphy," said the wee man, "but you may not like what I set you."

"Whatever it is, I'll take it," said the sergeant frantically.

"Well," said the leprechaun, "Till give you anything you want, rifles, pistols, horses, ammunition, but here's the problem: whatever you ask for, the Indians will each get two of."

"Easy," said Murphy with hardly a second to think. "I'll have a glass eye!"



▲ *Alderman Carl Wasco speaks to RAA members about his candidacy for Illinois State Representative.*



▲ *Rockford City Administrator Jim Ryan discusses upcoming referendum on Electric Aggregation.*



▲ *IRPOA President Andrew Timms speaks to RAA members about the Legislative Conference.*

Ken Becker

Broker - GRI, CRS, CRB
Closed Over 100 Million Dollars



Residential Investments Commercial
1720 Rural St. • Rockford, IL 61107
E-Mail: KBecker39@aol.com

Office (815) 399-8000
Eves. (815) 226-4800
Cell. (815) 670-3300
Fax (815) 399-7733

*Talking Real Estate
with Tim and Tim*



Call in with your questions!

815-874-8255

Excellent Rental Dwelling Rates!!!



Andrew Ferrera

Algonquin | 847-515-2436

Home - Auto - Life - DI - Commercial



www.countryfinancial.com

082010-00930AC

NICHOLSON INC.
ROCKFORD, IL

NICHOLSON HARDWARE
815-963-4821

NICHOLSON LAWN & GARDEN
815-963-5150

EST. 1945

Hales Equipment
a division of Soap Center, Inc.

1607 Fulton Avenue
Rockford, Illinois
Phone: 815.965.8767
HalesEquipment.com

New and Used Coin-Operated Laundry Equipment

- Sales - Service - Leasing

Commission options available

Lots of used equipment on hand!

Let us help with your multi-housing laundry needs!

Serving our customers for 45 years



"The Laundry Professionals"

Bill White

12705 Robin Lane
Brookfield, WI 53005
bwhite@greatlakeslaundry.com

Phone (262) 790-5885
Toll Free (800) 236-5599
Fax (262) 790-5886
Mobile (414) 416-3555

We're the Best, flush the Rest!

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS
SEWER SERVICE, INC.**

*Your Drain Cleaning Specialist
Industrial • Residential • Commercial*

P.O. Box 6332 • Rockford, IL 61125

DOUG M. ROGERS
Owner

Free Estimates
24-Hour Emergency Service
229-1174 or 389-3280

9 Tips for Photographing Your Rental Unit to Maximize Rent

by David Margolies

No matter what you're renting, a little efficiency, or a city block of apartments or a half a neighborhood, one very proven way to maximize rent and to get better quality tenants is through good, "professional-looking" photography.

As we've told you here, photography will definitely help your Craigslist Posting. You'll almost certainly get more responses, but depending on how your photos depict your apartment, or your units or your building, you'll also get better quality tenants. Remember, you're already screening for better qualities of people, right from the moment that posting goes out there.

Even if we're not talking about a beachfront condominium, it pays to take a look at how expensive and really competitive vacation market rentals are doing what they are doing. You can rent to someone willing to live in a fleabag apartment for 100 dollars a month, or you can find someone willing to pay 3 times as much because you presented it well. It's all up to you.

Before we go too far, though, you're going to need a decent digital camera. Newer 5 megapixel cameras are probably bigger than what you need but part of the reason people like digital cameras is that the pictures themselves are basically free. So get a decent one that your comfortable and snap away to learn how to use it. Get used to getting the pictures onto your computer and get some basic software, like Google's Picasa, so you can manipulate them easily and make them look good. More on this in a minute. First things first.

- 1) **Stage Your Property** Some landlords will move furniture into unfurnished apartments just to get the right photos. Think about it. A comfy, ready to move in apartment is a lot more attractive than an empty broom-cleaned carpeted room. Even if you don't go that far, take a little extra time to make sure the place is clean and tidy. Anything you can do to make it look more like a vacation property is going to help, even if you end up saying "no, in fact, it is not furnished," later on.
- 2) **Consider Angles** Don't just walk in and start shooting from the door. Shoot the door and every thing. remember, the photos are free so shoot as many as you can with all the rooms, views and positions will best show the place off. When, where and how can make all the difference!
- 3) **Shoot the Outside – from a Distance** Unless your building is a real travesty, the whole thing, and as much of the neighborhood as you can get in is something that better tenants want to see. If there is

something that will show off the convenience of the place then include that too.

- 4) **Sell the Neighborhood!** Maybe you can't include them all in a Craigslist posting, but there are plenty of ways to include more photos. These should include any parks, restaurants or local attractions. Even bus-stops or subway stairs can make your place seem convenient.
- 5) **Shoot for the Gold** Take advantage of early morning or intense dusk/sunset lighting that give a golden glow to everything. It's intense and it's a secret that all professional photographers use.
- 6) **Sell the Good Points.** Include all your larger rooms, especially bedrooms, living and dining areas and any common or public areas. A bench in the hall way can make an awfully attractive and thoughtful accessory even if it only ever holds junk mail. If rooms are particularly small, you may want to shoot them with a wide angle lens if your camera will handle one.
- 7) **Spend a little extra time looking at your pics** Get them onto your computer and discard the bad ones. Use only your best shots, but experiment with applying some filters to highlight the emotional well being of each space. Trim and crop to leave out any negatives or unattractive angles and you can even, with some practice, make up for the lack of a wide angle lens by pasting some photos together into a larger collaged composition. It's easy and manipulating your photos is a perfectly legitimate way to make your property look good!
- 8) **Captions Do NOT Need to Describe What's in the Photo.** If the shot is of the bathroom, write "New plumbing and fixtures," not "Bathroom." Likewise, the sun coming through the living room window should read "Great light all day," not "Living Room."
- 9) **Publish an Album** ... or a collection of photos. This is particularly important for anyone with a number of similar units. Save yourself the trouble next time; keep your photos online so that you can use them again next time around. You may even find it useful to link to the album or the collection from a current posting.

David Margolies is CEO and President of Tenant Approve, and a well known expert in the Rental and Property Management Industries. His articles appear here and in publications nationwide. www.tenantapprove.com

Networking

✓ One of the benefits of membership in RAA is our email group. By joining the group you can interact with other RAA members on a daily basis. Great information is shared on issues like management questions, referral for service providers, and postings for people looking for rentals. If you are not currently taking advantage of the RAA email group and would like to see what it has to offer just send an email with the name your membership is under and the email address you want added to the group to arenacnst@charter.net.

✓ Are you on Facebook? Please follow the Rockford Apartment Association and Illinois Rental Property Owners Association. Facebook is a great tool to increase awareness of our groups and the issues that we are working on.

✓ RAA is a member of the Illinois Rental Property Owners Association (IRPOA). Our membership in IRPOA connects us to other groups like RAA from across Illinois. These groups work together to ensure that regulations imposed by state government are fair to rental housing providers. RAA makes a contribution each year to pay for our lobbyist but that only provides a portion of the funds we need. Please go to www.IRPOA.org to subscribe to our web site or just to make a donation to our lobbyist fund. Your contribution is cheap insurance to limit unreasonable and costly regulation.

WELCOME new members:

John Statfield

Bob Nieman

Stan Vorgias

Ted & Halina Borowski

SKV CONSTRUCTION

General Contractor Since the '60s

The Original House Doctor • The Complete Remodeling Service
skvconst@foxvalley.net • www.skv-construction.com

- Residential • Commercial • Foundation Repair
 - Mechanical Services • Garages
 - Room Additions • Cement Work
 - Office & Warehouse Work • Structural Corrections
- 10005 Fair Lane
 Union, Illinois 60180
(815) 923-2521
(847) 364-0161
 Fax: **(815) 923-4590**

Great Ad Rates for Your Rental Units!

10% OFF for RAA members!

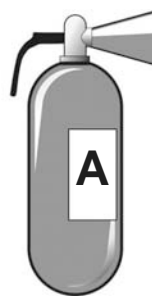
- Buy two weeks, get the third week FREE
- Fax, e-mail, or phone your ad in
- Deadline is Thursday noon before following Wednesday's publication
- All classified ads must be prepaid

Call Stephanie today at
815-964-9767

The Rock River Times
 THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1993

e-mail: rrtimes@rworld.com
 phone: **815-964-9767**
 fax: **815-964-9825**

A-FIRE EXTINGUISHER



SALES & SERVICE • SINCE 1952
 COMPLETE LINE OF FIRE SAFETY PRODUCTS

- ON-SITE RECHARGING
- FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS
- FREE SURVEYS
- EMPLOYEE TRAINING AVAILABLE
- EMERGENCY LIGHTING

616 S 6th St. • ROCKFORD

815-961-8100

Riverside
 Community Bank

Dennis Roop
 Vice President, Commercial Lending
 & Business Development

815.637.7008
droop@riversidecommunity.com

6855 East Riverside Blvd. • Rockford
www.RiversideCommunity.com



Member
FDIC

Great Things Happen!™

Rockford Apartment Association Directory

1-800-RAA-6676 | www.RockfordApartmentAssociation.org | PO Box 2502 | Loves Park IL 61132

RAA SERVICE DIRECTORY

A-Fire Extinguisher	815-961-8100
Coin Appliances Inc. Geoffrey Erdman, gerdman@bizwi.rr.com www.coinappliances.com	800-242-5453
Great Lakes Commercial Sales	800-236-5599
Ken Becker Realtors	815-399-8000
Nicholson Hardware	815-963-4821
Northern IL Sewer Service, Inc.	815-229-1174
The Rock River Times	815-964-9767
Rockford Area Renter's Guide	815-964-6700
Suburban Patrol 616 South 6th Street	815-961-8100

RAA 2010-2011 BOARD MEMBERS

President	Paul Arena	815-243-2924
Vice President	Tim Hoffman	815-988-4004
Secretary	Ken Opperman	815-248-4248
Treasurer	Mike Cavataio	815-397-3320
Nominating Com.	Ken Becker	815-399-8000
Vendor Relations/Advertising		
	Karl Fauerbach	815-877-6077
	Jim Merrick	815-222-7423
Bus. Forms	Ken Hagemeyer	815-519-5583
Membership	Vince Miosi	815-877-3272
Programs Director	Karl Fauerbach	815-877-6077
	Rick Davis	815-690-5288
Marketing/Public Relations		
	Rick Davis	815-690-5288
	Mary O'Sullivan-Snyder	815-988-2755
IRPOA Rep	Paul Arena	815-243-2924
	Greg Osen	815-601-8008
Web Site / Events	Steve Lantow	815-633-9967
*Legal Counsel (Board Advisor) Tom Wartowski		815-978-1572

Rockford Apartment Association Code of Ethics

We, the members of the RAA, recognizing our duty to the public and the intimate nature of the relationship between the apartment resident and the owner, or manager, and being aware of the vastly increasing role of the apartment industry in providing the home of the future, and in order to provide the apartment-residing public with the maximum in quality and service upon the highest standards of honest and integrity, do hereby bind ourselves, with each and every member, together and alone, agreeing that, so long as we remain members of the RAA and so long as nothing contained herein shall be unlawful, we shall:

1. Promote, employ and maintain a high standard of integrity in the performance of all rental obligations and services in the operation of our apartment communities.
2. Maintain and operate our apartment communities in accordance with fair and honorable standards of competition, ever mindful of the purposes of the Rockford Apartment Association and in compliance with the by-laws thereof.
3. Strive continually to promote the education and fraternity of the membership and to promote the progress and dignity of the apartment industry in creating a better image of itself in order that the public may be better served.

4. Seek to provide better values, so that an even greater share of the public may enjoy the many benefits of apartment living.
5. Establish high ethical standards of conduct within the apartment industry in the business relationship between the owner, managers and suppliers of products and services to the apartment industry.
6. Maintain property standards of the appropriate governmental authority.
7. Ensure that every qualified individual, regardless of that individual's race, color, religion, gender, disability, familial status or national origin is afforded the same opportunity to rent an apartment and enjoy the benefits of apartment living.

Financial statement available upon request to members in good standing.

The content and opinions expressed in the RAA newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of, nor are they necessarily endorsed by, the Rockford Apartment Association or its board.



MARCH MEETING

Tuesday, Mar. 20, at 7 P.M.

The Eviction Process

Local Attorney, Alberto F. Altamore

Come to a meeting!

Join and save!

Free to RAA members

\$15 non-members

**Rockford Area
Association Of Realtors**

6776 East State Street

Rockford, IL

RAA rental forms for members only

Forms are available at the following locations. Please call in advance to be sure someone will be available to help you.

RAA Meetings	6776 E. State St.	1-800-RAA-6676
Hurd Properties II LLC	124 Water Street Suite 204	1-815-519-5583
State Line Rentals	6952 Rote Rd. Rockford, IL	1-815-398-8886
Terra Creek Apartments	375 Bienterra Trail	1-815-397-3320

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PO Box 2502 Loves Park, IL 61132



Prst Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rockford IL
Permit No. 1