



# NOVEMBER MEETING

## Tuesday, November 19

The R.A.A. would like to invite you to our  
**Networking / Vendor Information 6:30 P.M.**

**General Meeting 7:00 P.M.**

### Bed Bugs in This Area and How to Deal With Them

Vick Wilder, Winnebago Co. Health Dept.

**Tues - Nov. 19th at 7pm**

Cost: FREE for members, \$15. non-members

During this past summer the Rockford Apartment Association has been working with the City of Rockford on the design of software that will notify property owners of incidents involving police at their properties. Recently, RAA members who have registered contact information have been receiving notifications by both text message and email. I am happy to report that the system appears to be working as intended. The programmers are continuing to make improvements to the system so if you have suggestions please contact RAA using the contact us feature of our web page at [RockfordApartmentAssociation.org](http://RockfordApartmentAssociation.org).

If you have not yet registered with the city, I encourage you to do so. It will be required after January 1 2014. To register go to [rentalregistry.rockfordil.gov](http://rentalregistry.rockfordil.gov). The system to register is simple to use but if you do have problems RAA will be hosting a help session before the registration deadline. We will have an announcement in late November with a date and location.

The notification of police calls is a provision of the Residential Quality Support Ordinance which the City Council passed in January. This ordinance is intended to identify properties where disruptive behavior is repeatedly occurring and offer the property owner assistance in correcting the situation. The standard to trigger action under the ordinance is three incidents occurring within 120 days which result in an arrest or citation for disorderly conduct, offensive use of property or felony and serious misdemeanor crimes. When this standard is met the owner will be asked to attend a meeting of a Housing Board and provided a suggested plan to correct the situation. If the owner meets with the Housing Board and follows the advice provided there can be no further penalty on the property owner. If the owner chooses not to meet or fails to follow the advice and the nuisance behavior continues the owner can be faced with serious penalties

**Meeting Location** → **RAAR**

6776 East State Street  
Rockford, IL 61108

### 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](http://www.rockfordapartmentassociation.org)

**To join the e-mail group, go to**  
[RAAmembers@yahoo.com](mailto:RAAmembers@yahoo.com)

### WELCOME new members:

*Rebecca Phillips*      *Ashley Nicosia*

*Chuck Hansen*        *Cindy Cuppini*

*Lucretia Ristin*        *Mike Tokes*

*continued on page 2*

*continued from cover*

including an injunction on renting their property.

The notifications are intended to alert property owners that activity at a property may be escalating to the point it is becoming a problem. There is no need to over react if you receive one notification. You may want to discuss the incident with your tenant to determine if there is cause for concern. You will not be penalized for one incident. Also, acts associated with domestic violence do not qualify as nuisances under the ordinance and will not be reported at all to the owner. Victims of domestic violence should not be discouraged from seeking help. Remember that the goal of the ordinance is to first try to correct the behavior and not to evict people. Evictions are bad for both the property owner and tenant.

Both the City and the RAA board hope the ordi-

nance will improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. By fostering cooperation between property owners, our residents and local government we can minimize the occurrence of disruptive behavior that occurs in some rented property. Neither responsible property owners nor responsible tenants should be harmed by this ordinance, but tenants who have no respect for their neighbors and property owners who ignore the problems will be held accountable.

I believe you find this communication software a useful tool to assist you in providing quality rental housing. Please register before our November meeting. We will take some time at our meeting to discuss the new ordinance and answer any questions members might have. I hope you can all join us this month.

—Paul Arena, RAA President



### **Let's Get to Know DAN KELLY** by Jerri Cole

In the last newsletter, I said that almost all landlords are caretakers. Almost all of us try hard to provide the best we can for our tenants. It is HARD WORK, even with the best of tenants. We usually start out in some of the poorest areas and work our way up to better areas that are not as draining on us. Many cannot handle the stress and just simply get out of the business altogether.

Then someone like Dan Kelly comes along. He must have loved puzzles as a kid because he is trying to piece together the crime puzzle in Rockford. This is a big puzzle and it takes a lot of dedication and energy to solve it. He knows it takes everyone working together and is doing his best to get us involved. He is right, that is the only way it is going to work. Thank you, Dan, for all the hard work you are putting into this project. One more landlord making a difference!!!!

"I am the oldest of nine children and have been married to Sandi for 25 years. My sense of humor includes the lowest form, the pun. I am vocal on local issues and am very opinionated, yet I am tolerant of other points of view that are wrong."

"I love to travel. There are not many days off in the landlording business so I tend to block off weeks at a time and travel frequently to any place that has water or a mountain. Prauge, Sydney, San Juan, Chitzen Itza, Beijing, Estonia, Oslow, Russia as well as Florida and South Carolina are a few of the places I have enjoyed. When I get free time, I take a walk with nature in a local park. -- or Kayak the Kishwaukee River.

"I love to meditate and I have a compassionate heart for all. As a for-profit landlord I work mostly with affordable housing issues and clients. Many

clients need affordable housing due to the fact that full time minimum wage brings in only \$1,473 a month and the average Social Security Disability Income for those that were working is \$983. These clients many times are in homeless programs, reintroduction programs or struggle with mental illness. I have worked with The Carpenters Place, Rockford Rescue Mission, MELD, Janet Wattles and Jailhouse misistries to help place these individuals. Providing permanent housing to these individuals allows them the opportunity to make positive changes they need to in their lives. I rarely have vacancies since word of mouth gives me a list for screening and renting." "I MAY NOT MAKE MUCH MONEY WITH THE TENANTS I HAVE YET I AM THE RICHEST MAN AROUND BECAUSE OF IT!!

"I became a landlord in 1988. I found a duplex on

N. Main St. and thought we could make extra money by changing the whole block. I rented to two nice girls. When the boyfriend was not allowed back in one day, he shot their dog in the living room through the picture window."

"The thing I like best about being a landlord is rehabbing a unit and fixing things that break. The thing I like least about being a landlord is being on call 24/7 and phone calls that are never timely and I have never done an eviction that I liked."

Clubs or Organizations? "The Carpenters Place and Shelter Care Ministries have been organizations that I have been affiliated with."

Pet Peeves? "Whiners and paid for politicians. They solve no problems and offer no solutions."

What can Rockford do to help landlords? "Winnebago County has taken a leadership role to solve crime by introducing the KNOCK OUT CRIME" initiative. They have adopted county codes to fit this program that holds individuals, not properties, accountable for improper behavior. I see the County Administration, Board, Sheriff and Health Department all on the same page with solving crime. Being involved with Neighborhood groups is the best way for landlords to help with crime issues. Once a landlord screens and places a tenant things can and do go bad. Having access to neighborhood groups for networking and problem solving at the grass roots level is the best way to control and change neighborhoods for the better."

"I feel that my role in ridding areas of crime is to make others aware, including tenants without pointing fingers. With awareness we can identify the real problems and make a plan for action and accountability. Once we are focused on solutions, not blame, we can accomplish so much!!! Easier said than done!!!! IF ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS IN A NEIGHBORHOOD CAN FOCUS ON THE ISSUES THEN THEY CAN DEMAND FROM CITY ADMINISTRATORS APPROPRIATE ACTIONS DETERMINED FROM THE GROUP. THE MORE ON BOARD WITH THIS, THE MORE GROUPS CAN DEMAND. LANDLORDS NEED TO BE PART OF THIS PARTICIPATORY PROCESS THROUGH NEIGHBORHOODS."

Best advice for new landlords? "Involve yourself in the community you invest in and have a powerful network like the RAA. You can't do this alone anymore. There are too many players and you must be mindful or you will step on a landmine. Keep high ethical standards or this is not the business for you to get into."

"Landlording can be very rewarding or very overwhelming. Make a good business plan and be prepared for plan B. As you grow and expand, make sure you plan for an exit strategy or succession for your business."

## **Curb Appeal** by Brian Kern

Many have heard of the "Broken window theory" which briefly states that minor problems left unchecked will lead to bigger issues. Police departments and scientists believe that their observations are proving this theory. People claim to "feel or know" when they are in a crime ridden area, even though they haven't read the statistics of the neighborhood. The truth of the matter is that most of this is noticed by what is seen. The theory points to the belief that properties that are run down will accept and encourage crime. In these areas, investors can see property values drop. Investors will point out all the bad issues of a property to lower the purchasing price. But, it works both ways. When it's time to sell everyone wants top price.

What can property owners do to protect their investments and discourage crime? It goes back to curb appeal. Pull up to a property as if it's the first time you are seeing it. What needs to be repaired? Are the gutters and siding hanging properly? Is there chipping paint? Is there graffiti that should be removed? Are there broken windows? Are there missing shingles? Do the exterior lights work? Are there missing or broken railings and spindles? Do fences need to be mended or removed? These items may need money to correct, but there is one major area that is overlooked that takes time. It's called overgrowth. Trees, bushes, brush and weeds need to be trimmed down and in some cases completely removed. Left unchecked these can damage the foundation and structural integrity of a building. Limbs can tear away at shingles and siding. Roots can destroy a foundation. Overgrown bushes and brush allows criminal activity to go unnoticed, since it is out of sight. It is usually advantageous for police and neighbors to be able to see through a property. Hopefully, with these items looked after, the investor will have created a better neighborhood environment and will be able to sell at a higher price.



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## 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 such as management, service providers, and prospects. If you are not currently taking advantage of the RAA email group and would like to see what it has to offer, send an email with the name your membership is under and the email address you want added to the group to [arenacnst@charter.net](mailto:arenacnst@charter.net).
- ✓ Are you on Facebook? 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 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. 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](http://www.IRPOA.org) to subscribe to our website or just to make a donation to our lobbyist fund. Your contribution is cheap insurance to limit unreasonable and costly regulation.

## Radio Show

Did you know you have a radio show? One of the reasons the RAA exists (and keeps us a legal not-for-profit) is to educate people on the issues and regulations that effect the local Real Estate and rental business. As a member of the RAA you help get the word out about those issues on a local radio show.

The radio show airs on NTA radio 100.5 FM every other Monday (well mostly every other Monday) at 9:30 A.M. and goes until 10:00 A.M. It is on the Doug McDuff State line Showcase and usually has VP, Tim Hoffman on air but other RAA Board members do occasionally fill in.

What do I mean by almost every other Monday? Well some months have 5 Mondays and we air the show twice per month. You can always (I hope) hear us the Monday before our regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The second show should air two weeks prior or two weeks after, depending on the monthly calendar. If that confuses you (it sometimes confuses me!) just go to our website where all the upcoming shows for the year are posted.

So if you want to keep up to date on what the RAA Board is working on, promoting, or just trying to get the word out about, tune in. You just might learn something.



On October 19th RAA put on a half day "Rent To Own" seminar. Tim Hoffman, Greg Osen, Terry, and Susan Heilman presented an overview on what is "Rent To Own", various contracts that may be used such as Lease with an Option, and Contract For Deed, and the advantages verses a normal lease. The main advantages are Long-term tenants, owner mentality, and an exit strategy. The event was well attended. A future follow up session is planned that will invite potential tenants that may be interested in this option.



Dean Impey

Hours:  
Mon. - Sat. 7:30-6 & Sun. 9-3

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Two blondes were sipping their Starbucks when a truck went past loaded up with rolls of sod.

"I'm going to do that when I win the lottery," announced Blonde #1.

"Do what?" asked Blonde #2.

"Send my lawn out to be mowed."



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## RAA SERVICE DIRECTORY

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<b>Riverside Bank, Dennis Roop</b>	815-637-7008
<b>SKV Construction</b>	815-245-6098
<b>Stateline Rental Properties</b>	815-398-8886
<b>The Rock River Times</b>	815-964-9767
<b>TRI-B Hardware &amp; Supply</b>	815-399-2828

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## 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.



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## NOVEMBER MEETING Tuesday, November 19

**Bed Bugs in This Area and  
How to Deal With Them**

**Vick Wilder, Winnebago County Health Department**

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***RAA rental forms for members only***

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State Line Rentals	920 22nd Street	1-815-398-8886
Terra Creek Apartments	375 Bienterra Trail	1-815-397-3320