

ILA Fall Seminar

November 6th was a particularly profitable day for the attendees of the 2001 ILA Fall seminar.

This year's keynote speaker was attorney Mark Hanson of the Whitfield & Eddy law firm. Drawing from his expertise in legal matters and common sense, he gave an excellent informative presentation. Mark talked about matters concerning the screening perspective tenants and legalities of property management. Mark also gave to all the attendees a very useful handout depicting his talk along with helpful forms for landlords.



Also featured at the seminar was:

- **Thelowa.Net** – ILA's web & media marketing consultants, covered the benefits of the new **Apartments For Rent Search** section of the ILA website to members. They described the usage and entertained questions from the membership. The dialog gave insights for greater exposure, more advertising opportunities, larger landlord profits and reduced advertising costs for members. Be sure to read upcoming newsletters for some exciting news concerning this.



- **Sergeant Deb Richardson** – Officer James Bowersox of the Des Moines Police Department stepped in for Sgt. Richardson who had other obligations. Officer Bowersox gave an astute and clear presentation so we could better understand how to protect our property, our tenants, and ourselves. Besides raising our awareness of criminal activities, Officer Bowersox reminded us of the work that law enforcement is doing, and of our responsibilities and ways to assist.

ILA Fall Seminar – Continued to Page 2 ...

DIALOGUE WITH DIRECTORS



December – Interesting isn't it. As 2001 comes to a close, we are mindful of our accomplishments this year, and look forward to next year.

The members have seen some changes in ILA this year. We have worked hard as an organization to provide better and improved services for our membership. We continue to grow as an organization in membership and in services for you.

We are continuing our commitment to represent the membership in the areas of Legislative and Local regulation. Conversely, we rededicate ourselves to disseminate information that we find important to landlord ventures.

Many programs and events are being planned. We are already working on the Spring and Fall Seminars for 2002. Our web site is growing as a useful vehicle of information and more content. We have more and more landlords using the web-site Apartment Search to advertise their properties. Our Tenant Screening service is being used at a record rate. And our newsletter serves as our monthly news bulletin.

We are excited about the prospects of 2002, and we appreciate your support during 2001.

We wish you the best of Holiday Greetings of the season, and we will see you again next year.



This Month's December 2001 NewsBrief	
• ILA Fall Seminar Review	• Advertising For The Perfect Tenant
• Dialog With Directors	• The Perfect Tenant Control - Part 2
Directors: • Dennis McDonald • Dave Sollenbarger • WebSite: www.iowalandlord.org • Email: ilaservices@iowalandlord.org	

ILA Fall Seminar – Continued from Page 1 ...

• **Joe Kelly** – ILA's Iowa Legislative Lobbyist gave an insightful overview of his work with legislation issues that may affect landlord's and their operations. With a candor familiar to all of us who know Joe, he told us of issues at the local and state level that concerns and influences us. He reviewed some of the accomplishments of the previous legislative session, and talked about some of the upcoming legislation of interest to us.



• **Tenant Pilot** – Trina Koeppen and associate staff members of Tenant Pilot gave an excellent presentation of how new technology can be used to assist us in better property management. Besides the informative speech, they demonstrated a web-based property management system specializing in automated rent payment and deposit, along with other management tools.



We thank all our speakers of the 2001 ILA Fall Seminar for their useful information and insights.

The High Cost of Rent Control - Part 2

The social implications of rent control fall mainly on the poor. These costs include a drop in the quality of existing housing stock and reduced access to new housing. Poor families suffer a marked decline in existing housing as the quality of existing housing falls in response to reduced maintenance. The middle class can move out, but for many reasons, the poorer families lack this option. Poor families are also at a disadvantage when it comes to finding new housing. In a tight market, there may be more people looking for housing than available rental units, thereby giving housing providers substantial discretion in choosing among competing potential renters. In an unregulated market, this consumer selection process is governed by the level of rents. By restricting rent levels rent control causes housing providers to turn to other factors, such as income and credit history, to choose from the competing renters. These factors tend to bias the selection process against low income families, particularly female-headed, single-parent households.

Rent control is most often justified as an anti-poverty device. But there is strong evidence that higher income households are the principal beneficiaries of most rent control laws.

By eliminating rents as the basis of choosing among a pool of potential consumers, rent control opens the door for discrimination based on other factors. Rent control forces housing providers to look to income and credit history in choosing among competing consumers, factors which sharply bias the selection process against poor and young consumers. In some cases, consumer selection decisions also may be based on a potential consumer's race, sex, family size or other improper or unlawful factors. This may occur regardless of the rigorous enforcement of Fair Housing laws.

The reduction in housing caused by rent control also can slow the process of racial and economic integration of many communities, by limiting the opportunities of certain classes of renters to reside in rent-controlled communities. In many middle class communities rent control has raised a relatively impenetrable barrier to economic and racial integration.

Rent controls are designed to supplement consumer income at the expense of rental property owners by holding below market levels the permissible rate of return on rental property investment. There is ample evidence that such transfers are highly inefficient. One study concluded that housing users gained in benefits only 52% of what housing providers lost. This is due to the tendency of consumers in rent-controlled units to 'hoard' housing and to be over-housed, a tendency that further exacerbates the underlying housing shortage. More importantly, such income transfers pose fundamental questions of fairness. Why should the public burden of providing subsidized housing to the poor and middle class be borne solely by the providers of rental housing? The fairness issue, as well as many of the other arguments against rent control, apply to commercial real estate as well. Controls on rents of retail, office, or industrial space deter construction and unfairly transfer income from the property owner to the business using the rental space.

The answer to the problem of scarce housing and rising rents is increased housing supply, not rent control-induced disinvestment. One way of stimulating the supply of affordable housing is through direct financial assistance to needy renters, whose increased purchasing power will lead to expansion of the quantity and quality of housing in the local market. This demand-side approach is already in place through proven federal and state programs. Targeted programs to subsidize the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing can be an effective complement to direct renter assistance. Removal of inappropriate regulatory barriers to housing construction promotes housing affordability for both the renter and the provider.

Advertising For The Perfect Tenant

You are hoping that your rental advertising will attract the attention of prospective tenants who are looking for a place to rent and that you find good tenants as a result of your advertising. Unfortunately, people who are looking for a place to rent aren't the only ones likely to be attracted to your advertising. People who want to determine whether you are practicing any kind of illegal discrimination in your advertising or in your selection process are likely to be attracted also. These people have no intention of renting from you. They do have every intention of making you suffer dearly if they can prove that you are practicing illegal discrimination in 'thought, word or deed'. They may work for some fair housing agency, or they may work for themselves and earn their living by bringing discrimination claims against landlords. In either case, they are looking for signs that you are discriminating against children or American Indians or the handicapped or any other protected group.

They are also looking for signs that you favor protected groups over others.

If they conclude that you are discriminating illegally, they will file a claim against you with HUD or with some other government agency and demand that you pay them some money to settle it. If you refuse to pay and they refuse to drop their claim, they will get all the free investigative and legal assistance they need to help them prove their case. You will have to hire assistants and pay for it out of your own pocket, and if the claimants can prove that you were discriminating, you will have to pay the claim and the penalties out of your pocket as well. Your insurance company won't help you at all unless you have purchased a special policy to protect yourself from such claims.

Because your advertising is the first indicator of your rental policies and because it is the first thing to attract the 'discrimination police' or 'discrimination opportunist', be very careful what you say when you advertise and be very careful how you say it.

A statement in your advertising like this, "adult non-smoker preferred" would be advertising for trouble. The word "adult" can be taken as evidence that you are discriminating against children. The word "nonsmoker" is all right to use in advertising because smokers are not in a protected category.

Stating that your rental property is "close to the Jewish Synagogue" would be advertising for trouble regardless of whether you meant to help people determine the property's location with the synagogue reference. Some people would say your advertising shows that you prefer Jews over Catholics or Moslems.

Be careful in your advertising, and do not suppose that you will be able to fend off any discrimination-in-adver-

tising claim brought against you because you made some innocent mistake and didn't know any better. Government agencies charged with the responsibility of enforcing fair housing laws presume that you know what you are doing and that what you are doing is by design. As far as they're concerned, that is a given. They are deadly serious in their efforts to root out illegal discrimination in housing, and they will not absolve you of any wrongdoing merely because you say that you were confused or uninformed or careless and that you would never think of discriminating illegally and that you will never do it again. If your advertising signaled some kind of illegal discrimination on your part and you were accused of discrimination illegally, you will have to pay the consequences.

You can avoid trouble in your advertising by concentrating on the property itself. Describe it and its amenities when you advertise. Make no reference whatsoever to the type of tenant you are looking for. You are looking for good tenants who are clean, who have a good track record as tenants, and who pay their rent on time. That is all. Make no mention of your preference for tenants of a certain age. Make no mention of the property's restrictions for the handicapped which might be construed as an ill-concealed effort to discriminate against people who have that handicap. Make no mention of its closeness to a certain landmark which might be construed as your preference toward tenants with a special interest in that landmark.

Play your advertising straight, and you'll stay out of trouble. (by Leigh Robinson, 'Landlording' 9th edition)

The Perfect Tenant

Do you know who the perfect tenant is or is not? Is it someone who is quiet, pays their rent in cash and does not cause any problems at the property? That seems to be the perfect tenant. Or does it sound like a possible terrorist? One who pays in cash may not have the necessary documents to open a bank account. They might not have a regular job or might not be the person who is actually renting the property. The perfect tenant doesn't complain or request repair services for long periods of time. No matter what condition the property is in, eventually something will go need repairing. The tenant may appear to be perfect but they are actually only wanting to appear perfect. To avoid what may appear to be a perfect tenant, your lease should require semi-annual or quarterly inspections and require enough documentation so you will know to whom you are renting. This may include driver licenses with pictures (make a copy for your records) and passports or visa documentation. (from Mr. Landlord, October 2001)

4-PLEX INCOME PROPERTY FOR SALE



This rental has 4 units. Current monthly rent \$ 1,665.00. New roof, furnace & exterior paint. Older home converted into 3 one bedroom apts. and 1 two bedroom apartment. Good rental history. Located 1 block South of Drake University (1118 26th Street, Des Moines).

Off street parking in rear of building. Bus route with-in a block, and convenient access to I-235.

Professional management available.

Current monthly rent = \$ 1,665.00/month

Excellent Location • 1118 26th Street in Des Moines
On the bus route • Close to Downtown & Drake University
Tenants pay all utilities • Current rental certificate

Listing Price:
\$69,900.00

Inquiries and offers to
Cornerstone Management Co.

• (515) 274-1628 •

www.IowaLandlord.Org/WebAds

ILAWA003/11

Would you like to list your property on the Iowa Landlord Association Apartment Rental Search but you're not on the Internet?



**Iowa Landlord Association
Apartment Search Service
Listing Form**

Make copies of this form, fill out the form and FAX to: 515-255-0675

You can mail or fax in your listing directly to our office if this would be easier for you.

To list your property, please fill out this form and send a picture of your property to our office.

Have you a rental property you wish to sell? Advertise it on the web site! Call us for details.

Interested in banner ads on our website?

ILA Rental Property Search Listing Rates

- Listing Prices = Members - \$50/mo., Non-Members - \$100/mo.
- Pictures/Logo inclusion = \$10/submission
- Picture/Logo image preparation (if needed) = \$35/hr.
- Photography Services = \$50 trip fee; \$35/hr after 1 hour; Materials at cost; Service available in the Des Moines metro and Polk County surrounding areas; Services are on a scheduled basis; Contact information@iowalandlord.org for arrangements.

As an **INTRODUCTORY Special**, we are offering Reduced Rates and in some cases - **FREE** listings in the month of December!

- Listings placed in **January, 2002** are back to the full published rates above.

(HINT! For the cost of an ILA membership - Non-members can purchase their membership, save money and experience ALL the benefits of ILA membership!)

Your Company: _____
 Your Name: _____
 Your Company Address _____
 Your Phone number for contact _____
 Property Address: _____
 Property City, Zip: _____

Monthly Rent Price: \$ _____ / Month
Number of Bedrooms: Studio/Efficiency 1 2 3 4+

Type of Housing: Condos, Townhomes, or Duplexes
 Unfurnished Apartments Furnished Apartments
 Single Family Dwelling Short Term Rentals Senior Community

Utility Arrangements: None Supplied Some Paid All Paid

Accommodations and General Amenities – Please check the items associated with this property:

Air Conditioning:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dishwasher:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheelchair Accessible: ..	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microwave:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stove:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash Compactor:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Balcony / Patio:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refrigerator:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Garbage Disposal:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dining Room:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fireplace:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pet Friendly:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer High				Laundry Type:	
Speed Broadband				<input type="checkbox"/> Washer / Dryer	
Internet Accessibility: ..	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cable Ready: ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Washer / Dryer Connections	
		Garage:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Facility	

Community Accommodations and Amenities

Club House:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage Facilities: ..	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gated Access:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Transportation: ..	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tennis Courts:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playground:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fitness Center:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Pool:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whirlpool / Spa:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Run Dates of Your Listing

Date Begin: _____ Date End: _____

Your Email Address: _____

**** Don't Have A F.A.X. - - Just copy and mail your form to us. ****

Need to Rent ???
 advertise your rental at:
[**www.iowalandlord.org**](http://www.iowalandlord.org)