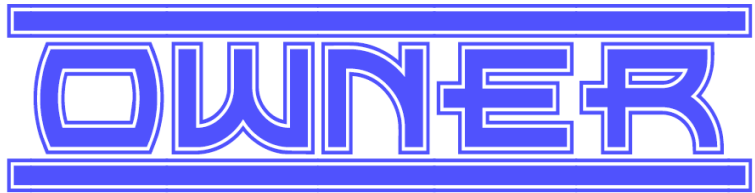




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Representing the Interests of the Rental Housing Industry in Southeastern Wisconsin

### Take me out to the ballgame ...with my fellow landlords!

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Cost:

\$45 if purchased prior to June 15.

\$55 if purchased between June 15 and the date of the event. (Purchased tickets will be distributed at the June 17th meeting.)

We are limited to 50 tickets for this event.

Details

- Full buffet featuring: bratwursts smothered in sauerkraut, hot dogs, grilled sirloin burgers, chicken tenders, pasta salad, Wisconsin mac & cheese, mixed green salad with assorted toppings and dressings, kettle chips, assorted cookies, and unlimited soft drinks.
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### General Membership Meeting

Monday, May 20, 2019

Doors open for networking at 5:30 pm

Our program begins at 6:15 pm



This month:

### How to Grow Your Business

Join us this month as we welcome a panel of experts to discuss strategies and pitfalls of growing your rental property business. Set up systems that enable you to be efficient and hear what those who have been there have to say and what they found to be the best plans, resources and opportunities.

This is a great meeting to recommend to guests who are just getting started owning rental properties as well as those who have been in it for a while and are looking to grow. Just let us know at the registration table that you have a guest with you.

We love meeting new people!

Our Panel of Experts:

Mike Cottrell, The Equitable Bank  
Graig Goldman, RE/MAX Lakeside Milwaukee  
Steve and Ann Belter, owners of Belter & Associates, LLC and one or two more landlords still in the works.

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### **AASEW Mission Statement:**

*"The Apartment Association of Southeastern Wisconsin is your primary resource for education, mutual support and legislative advocacy for the successful ownership and management of rental property."*

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## PRELEASING TENANT SCREENING

By Ron Hegwood  
AASEW President

The ultimate goal of a landlord, or any business owner for that matter, is to make more money in less time. The most fundamental struggle in the battle for improved profitability is keeping units well-leased. It may seem counterintuitive to suggest an action that potentially slows the leasing process is actually a beneficial one, but the goal of this month's article is to highlight the value a defined screening system can bring to your leasing efforts.

### WHY SCREEN?

When used successfully, screening is a true bottom-line boosting activity. It's important to view your leasing efforts holistically. By this, I mean understanding how your processes affect your end results. Not possessing a proven screening process increases the probability of signing an unfit tenant. There are negative consequences, intended and unintended, to missing the warning signs on the frontend. An eviction is expensive and time-consuming, sometimes taking months. Unfit tenants can cause physical damage to the premises and trouble reliable tenants you intend to retain. **A vacant unit is better than one rented to the wrong tenant.**

### SET DEFINED CRITERIA

It's hard to create solutions without identifying your trouble spots. I challenge you to do a self-audit on your tenant roster. Where do you experience problems? Are these problems preventable? How did these problems slip through your approval process? Are similarities shared? By doing this, the hope is you begin to uncover what materially affects your leasing efforts. Only then can you begin to shape your criteria. In short, you must define and adhere to your criteria. Behavioral history repeats itself, both good and bad - keep this in mind and use this to your advantage. This applies to both landlords and tenants.

Many factors come into play when deciding who may or may not prove a reliable tenant: income level, employment status, credit score, rental history, criminal records, personal referrals, etc. Identify your priorities and decide how you plan to quantify them. These decisions are not universal to all landlords. Criteria will differ dependent on your area, tenant base, apartment mix, rental rates, etc. Some landlords may favor in-place income over credit history. Others may

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choose to look past isolated, non-violent criminal records. Ultimately, you are outlining how your "*minimum viable tenant*" is judged and identifying what your "deal breaker" activities are.

When implementing your criteria, it is, of course, important to know and comply with the law. The Fair Housing Act (FHA), has well-defined criteria which must be adhered to by all landlords. No steering. No discrimination. Race, ethnicity, religion, gender, familial status, and disability - all protected classes. Staying consistent in the execution of your defined criteria will help limit your risk of unintentionally violating any fair housing laws.

### LEVERAGE RESOURCES

Today, information is easily accessible if you know where and how to find it. The screening process is all about the power of verification. Yes, any tenant you lease to will fill out a detailed application prior to any eventual approval, however, for some potential tenants, lying and slipping through the cracks is the best chance of getting approved. Remember, verify everything: CCAP, credit checks, public records, prior landlords, referrals, even cross-referencing social media can be useful resources to do so.

If you don't have the resources or bandwidth to handle it yourself, outsource what you can. One added benefit to outsourcing is removing the emotion out of any decision, further protecting yourself against unintended housing violations. There are numerous services available that offer prescreening and full screening resources

*Continued on page 5*

## “Cash for Keys” -- Pros and Cons

By Dawn Anastasi  
AASEW Board Member

What is “Cash for Keys”? Simply put, it’s a method of getting a tenant out of your property without filing an eviction. It works by offering a tenant money to leave -- the amount depends on the agreement between you and the tenant. It may also involve more than money, such as renting a moving truck for the tenant.

### Pros:

- The landlord does not have to wait for the court system in order to get a bad tenant to leave their property.
- “Cash for keys” can cost less than filing an eviction and paying an attorney to show up in court which is a financial benefit to the landlord.
- Tenants who are getting paid to leave might be less likely to damage your property on the way out.
- “Cash for keys” might be an effective way to get rid of squatters without going through a formal eviction.

### Cons:

- Because no eviction is filed on the tenant, some people may argue that this is “hiding” the tenant’s bad behavior from future landlords who look on CCAP to check prior eviction history.
- Another argument is that giving money to a bad tenant is “rewarding” the tenant’s bad behavior.

“Cash for Keys” doesn’t always work; a tenant may refuse to agree to this arrangement. And this is also a reason to always call references -- just because a tenant doesn’t have any evictions on their record doesn’t mean they were a good tenant!

“Success is not the key to happiness.  
Happiness is the key to success.  
If you love what you are doing,  
you will be successful.”

*Albert Schweitzer*



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*The President's Corner, continued from page 2*

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## Community Spotlight



### What is Habitat for Humanity?

Habitat for Humanity is a global nonprofit housing organization working in local communities across all 50 states in the United States and in more than 70 countries around the world. Habitat's vision is of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Habitat works toward our vision by building strength, stability and self-reliance in partnership with people and families in need of a decent and affordable home.

## ReStore

### What is a Habitat for Humanity ReStore?

Habitat for Humanity ReStores are nonprofit home improvement stores and donation centers that sell new and gently used furniture, home accessories, building materials and appliances to the public at a fraction of the retail price. Habitat for Humanity ReStores are owned and operated by local Habitat for Humanity affiliates, and proceeds are used to build strength, stability and self-reliance locally and around the world.

*Join us at our May meeting as we welcome Waukesha Habitat for Humanity's Benjamin Sheehan as our guest speaker. Learn more about what they do, and how we can be a part of making communities better together.*

for a nominal fee. Think of this fee as an insurance policy. A fixed cost that effectively mitigates more substantial loss in the future. Alternatively, think of screening as a 10x activity. That is, whatever resources screening costs you on the frontend, in time and money, you will spend 10x that to remedy any potential eviction and re-leasing on that backend shall any issues arise.

### IMPLEMENT PROCESSES

Organize a repeatable procedure that aligns your intentions, defined criteria, and available resources. Revisit your self-audit. The idea is through identifiable and measurable metrics within the screening process, you can systematically improve the overall health of your tenant roster. Better tenant prospects would logically increase your retention rates, subsequently lowering your turnover and raising your overall occupancies.

So how do you structure your processes to promote your desired results? An easy tactic commonly used incorporates prequalifying. This can come in different forms. Both create a pre-screening process before any detailed application is reviewed.

First is to have a series of initial questions that must be addressed before any formal property tour is scheduled. The idea here is to conserve your time, energy and resources for only those candidates who are able to pass the sniff test. This is more about disqualifying rather than prequalifying.

Another easy tactic I've had success with is the simple inclusion of application fees. This encourages serious inquiries while weeding out unqualified applicants without any added expense. These are just a handful of ways to structure your procedures in a way to emphasize your end goal. Many others exist.

Your applicant numbers may see a dip. You may see a slight increase in releasing time. You may spend more of your resources to do so, but remember, the whole goal is to prioritize quality over quantity. In the long run, you will save time, money, and headaches.

Your job, as a business owner, is to properly allocate resources and structure your business plan in a way to maximize profits. If you take one thing away from this month's post, remember that screening is truly a 10x activity. Screening is an indispensable, profit-producing activity that contributes significantly to your operations long-term health. Thirty extra minutes spent on the frontend on screening could eliminate months of potential eviction and releasing proceedings down the road. You cannot eliminate evictions entirely, but, as we've discussed, by including the business practices addressed above, you will dramatically help to limit and mitigate the frequency and impact evictions have on your business.

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# What 9 Pro Real Estate Investors Wish They'd Known When Starting Out



by G. Brian Davis | BiggerPockets.com

For all its advantages, real estate comes with a risk: mistakes are expensive, because properties are expensive.

I've made bad stock investments for \$1,000 and lost my \$1,000. But the stakes are higher when you're working with assets worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Fortunately, you don't have to learn by making your own mistakes. You can learn from other investors' expensive mistakes!

Take the easy way rather than the hard way—all for the price of simply paying attention to what they have to say.

Here are tips from nine professional real estate investors, who have earned (and lost) thousands of dollars, to help you learn faster than they did.

## 1. Buy for Income

Mark Moss, founder of Signal Profits, explained to me how his journey has been a jagged one.

"At first, I started fixing and flipping homes, and my first property made me more than I was making in a full-time job," he said.

"Over time, I realized that holding onto the rental properties for income was my ticket to retiring at a young age and so I started collecting rental properties. At the time, finding properties I could make \$1,000 per month net was pretty easy and I knew if I got just 10, I would be set for life."

But then he grew interested in developing multi-million-dollar commercial projects.

"I sold and refinanced *all* my rental properties to get the capital I needed to do these larger projects. And in 2008, when the financial markets crashed, I was wiped out," he continued.

Mark didn't let it scare him away from real estate. But he did learn firsthand the risk of liquidating his entire portfolio to pursue high-risk, high-reward investments.

His parting advice: "Only buy properties that produce income, so you can carry and hold them through any market cycle."

## 2. Learn How to Fire Contractors Quickly

Jerryll Noorden is a real estate investor in Connecticut and the owner of We Buy Houses In Connecticut.

"It is always hard to fire a contractor, especially when they are knee-deep in the renovation. That's because if you fire them, you have to start over; good luck finding a contractor willing to take over someone else's work," Jerryll explained.

"Still, if you do not, things will not get back on track simply because you wish it so. Fire, cut your losses, and move on."

## 3. Look at Future Trends, Not Just Past Performance

Brian Ma is a real estate investor and owner of Flushing.com. He explains why investors need to look both at the past and the future when making investment decisions.

"As a commercial and residential real estate owner in the Flushing, N.Y. area during the last 15 years, I didn't appreciate the unpredictable nature of development trends," he said.

"When I first began buying properties, I only was interested in what the past had revealed to have been the best buys, namely properties in the downtown area. I wholly missed out on the larger trend that manifested in the surrounding suburb areas where the development returns were greater, because I failed to look beyond the past as evidence of the future trend.

"Granted, I did very well on almost all my deals, but that was due to the generally rising trend of real estate in the area. But had I been more risk-seeking and open-minded in my investment approach, I would have been able to buy for pennies on the dollar properties that increased exponentially in value as the downtown trend expanded outwards."

## 4. Trust Your Gut About Red Flags

Stefano Grottoli owns Orange Sun Investments, LLC, and shares this story about trusting your gut.

"The first event that I ever went to was an event organized by a local real estate investor, and believe it or not, I learned so much in that event, and it actually led to my first ever deal. The guy offered to joint venture with me on a fix-and-flip project, and I was so excited about finally landing my first deal! It wasn't that hard after all," he said.

*Continued on page 14*

## Late Fees are NOT Free Money

By Carrie Maas  
AASEW Member

On a recent visit to room 400 at the Courthouse, we heard a new argument against Landlords receiving late fees from a Court Commissioner. His view was that late fees are **only** an incentive and if the incentive is not working, then you do NOT need to receive them in your judgment total. Late fees are **NOT** just an incentive. It is **NOT** free money. It is money well earned.

No Landlord wants to charge a late fee. We would much prefer to have our rent given to us on time. That is all we really want.

Late fees help the Landlord recoup the *time* he or she is out. When rent is late: we call the tenant, we text the tenant. The tenant has changed his or her number and we can't get in touch. So then, we go to the tenant's door to knock or leave a note. Many times payment arrangements are made but quite often he or she fails to follow through and again we call the tenant, we text the tenant, thus starting the process all over. Eventually after the failed promises or failed attempts to reach the tenant, a 5-day Notice is mailed regular and certified mail. Again, we continue to reach out trying to get this month's rent.

Sometimes the tenant will finally reach out in the middle of the night expecting us not to answer. This way they can say they tried to contact us to set up a payment arrangement or to explain why rent is late but they couldn't get in touch with us. We answer mainly because it might be an emergency, but second because we want to speak with our tenants personally and understand why we have not received rent.

We often remind Court Commissioners that we have mortgages, property taxes, trash collection and water bills that we must pay. We would receive late penalties on everything listed above if we did not have our payments in on time. We truly doubt that same Court Commissioner who said late fees were only an incentive would say that our penalties for our late payments to the city or county would not be warranted.

**Remember this article when you go to Court and fight for your late fees. They are yours not just because your lease states the fees exist, but because you have earned those fees.**

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## Does Your Late Fee Work?

By Carrie Maas  
AASEW Member

Many Landlords deal with tenants that have difficulty paying rent on time. Each Landlord hopefully has found their answer to this problem. If not, consider what we have done.

After two decades we have finally come to the conclusion that our late fee system was not working. Even with late fees, still too many of our tenants were not paying rent on time. Our late fee was just a fee they were willing to pay. It made no difference. So we changed our policy.

We have always had rent due on the first. Absolutely no grace period is given because many tenants looked at rent as not being due until the final day of the grace period. (This does not necessarily mean we actually charge late fees from the 2<sup>nd</sup> on. It just allows us the ability to if we needed to.) We did this so 5-Days could be sent out as early as possible in the month. This allows us to go after (theoretically) tenants who are not planning on paying their last month's rent and are trying to use their security deposit for that purpose. When you have been a Landlord for long period of time you have a sense when your tenant is deciding to pick up and leave with no plans on paying their final month's rent.

Now, before restructuring the change we reached out to a Court Commissioner and Rent Assistance. We did this to make sure our change would be upheld in Court and supported by Rent Assistance. But remember, every Commissioner has their own opinion and every Rent Assistance case may be different.

We started a **two tier late fee system**. We did this after many years of hearing our tenant base get upset with us for "harassing" them regarding rent. They have stated many times that we should not be alarmed if rent is not paid on time. They will pay rent and the late fee. "Doesn't matter if we pay it on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or on the 31<sup>st</sup> of the month. You will get it."

It was because of this laissez faire attitude we introduced the following into our leases and into our Non-Standard Rental Provisions.

If rent is paid in full from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month; the tenant shall pay a late fee of \$50.00. If rent is paid or paid in full from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month, the tenant shall pay a total late fee of \$100.00 for the month. The due date for rent payment is the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each calendar month. Weekends and holidays do not delay or excuse Tenant's obligation to pay rent on time.

We have seen a great change in early rental payments and payments received in full by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. We have incorporated the following late fee language into our Housing Authority contracts.

A late fee of \$50.00 will be charged if rent is paid after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month but before the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month. From the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month to the end of the month an additional late fee charge of \$50.00 will be charged. And yes, it has been accepted by Housing with no problems to date.

This is not the cure but it has incentivized some tenants to settle their rent in a more timelier manner. Do not be afraid to make changes that fit your rental base and your rental business. Just do a little homework before hand and ask for advice from the powers that be.

Ninety percent of all millionaires  
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*Andrew Carnegie*

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Real estate is a contact sport.

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## AASEW CLASSIFIEDS

Do you have a property for sale? Are you looking to buy? Do you have equipment to sell, or something you are looking for? Do you have a job opportunity to offer? AASEW Classifieds can help! Bring a quarter page ad to the next meeting and post it on our board or use one of the forms provided at the meeting. This is a great way to advertise! After the meeting your sale item or job offering will be shared in the "What Happened" email. Reach our membership with just a quarter page ad! Questions? Call or email Kathy. She will be happy to help you get it set up!

At our general membership meetings, AASEW members are invited to fill out a quarter sheet form to advertise properties or tools they either would like to sell or they would like to buy. Members are also able to post job openings. We are in hopes this will continue to improve our members' experience. Forms are available at the meeting registration table as well as online. You are welcome to fill it out and bring it with you to the meeting.

#### *Please note:*

*All Business Members listed in this directory are current business members in good standing with the AASEW and are offered only as such.*



## AASEW Vendor Appreciation Event

Are you a current business member of the AASEW?  
Would you like to be?

We are celebrating the fantastic business members that support the AASEW members and hoping to meet a few new ones as well.

Do you know someone who has a business that would be of interest to local landlords and property managers?

If so, please share this invite for a free event to meet and greet other business partners and hear how the association can work with you.

Hope to see you there!!

Please register at <http://www.aasew.org/aasew-vendor-appreciation-event/>



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# AASEW BUSINESS MEMBER DIRECTORY

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### **Bruck Law Offices**

322 East Michigan Street  
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alysa@milwaukeecabinetry.com  
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t: (414) 431-2997

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Patrick.harrigan@gainexchangecompany.com  
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*Please note:*

*All Business Members listed in this directory are current business members in good standing with the AASEW and are offered only as such.*

*Continued from page 7*

## **What 9 Pro Real Estate Investors Wish They'd Known When Starting Out**

"I started talking with this investor about our JV, and then the first signs appeared: I was dealing directly with one of his employees, and the guy took days to reply to my text messages, didn't answer my phone calls, didn't reply to my emails, and thereon. I started to get upset about it, but I wanted to land my first deal so *bad* that I didn't trust my gut and did a JV with the guy anyway.

"Don't get me wrong. He is an honest person and a good guy, and so is his boss. But he was extremely disorganized and unresponsive," Stefano explained.

"After a couple of months, he finally came up with the deal that we were going to JV: a single family, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, 2,100 square feet, that needed mainly a cosmetic rehab. Wow! It seemed to good to be true.

"So I went to take a look at the house. The first bad sign? Dirt road to get to the house. The house was in a rural area. And then, I started to do a little research about it on Zillow, Trulia and Realtor, and I learned that the house was not connected to the city water and sewer system, and instead had a water well and a septic system.

"I also learned that the house had an underground oil tank. I sent an email to the guy, asking him about the septic tank and water well, if we had an inspection, and if we were sure about the house. Never got an answer. But still, I wanted to close my first deal so bad that *I didn't trust my gut* for the second time! Every inch of my gut would tell me to run away from the house, but I decided to move forward anyway," he said regretfully.

"Well, it turns out that everything went sideways as I imagined. We had to replace the whole septic system, which was around \$29K. We also had issues with the water well, which cost around \$2K for remediation, and we were LUCKY that the underground oil tank didn't have any leaks and the soil under it was fine. The project also went sideways on the management side of it because of disorganization and lack of priority. A rehab that should've taken around four to five months to be completed took almost a year to be completed."

Stefano wrapped by telling me that the house miraculously broke even, but what it didn't cost him in dollars, it cost in sleepless nights.

### **5. Do Regular Inspections**

Nichole Stohler and her husband are multifamily, single family and hotel investors with 19 years' experience. She was emphatic about the importance of regular inspections.

"Save yourself from expensive repairs and clean up down the line. You may find out that the resident's apartment/home isn't even as clean as a convenience store bathroom.

"We had a nice family in one of our rental houses. They talked about folks coming over from church to help them move in, and the daughters were excited to plant a garden in the back yard. Fast-forward to when they moved out and the house could have been on an episode of House Hoarders," Nichole recounted.

"Yes, you should expect to clean, repaint, and do some repairs when turning over units, but you shouldn't have to rent 40-yard dumpsters to haul out the trash and junk."

Personally, I recommend semi-annual inspections. Beyond helping you catch problems early, it also demonstrates your seriousness and respect for the property, and sets expectations for tenants to treat it with similar respect.

### **6. Finding Good Deals Takes Patience and Work**

Don Wede is the president of Heartland Funding Inc. and emphasizes that real estate investing takes work.

"New investors imagine that there is a magical deal tree and you can just go up to it and pluck a good deal right off. They need to learn that finding good deals is hard work and one must be persistent and patient that the deals will come," Don pointed out.

"Of course, it also requires that you are using proven lead generating tactics. To piggyback on this problem is the lack of dedication to education in real estate investing. Learning real estate investing is like jumping into a whole new industry, and education is paramount if one is going to succeed and thrive."

### **7. Check Properties at Different Times of Day**

Vivian Young with Website Greenlight shares this story of a near disaster.

"Go see the property at different times of the day and week. Check the traffic during peak morning and evening rush hours. The property might be on a street that Waze is directing traffic through! Drive by the neighborhood on a Friday and Saturday night to see if your neighbors like to party hearty. You'll either want an invite or end up picking a fight!" she warned.

"We averted what would have been a real estate fiasco. We only saw the house twice, both times at 10 a.m. The street was quiet with only a few cars. We opened escrow and spent more time there as we went through the inspection process," Vivian continued.

**Continued on page 15**

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## *What 9 Pro Real Estate Investors Wish They'd Known When Starting Out*

“One morning, we noticed the contents of the garbage cans on trash day along the street. They were full of empty pizza boxes, beer cans, and junk food bags. And the neighbor had left the headlights on in their car in the driveway. We did the neighborly deed and rang the doorbell to alert them. Who opened the door? A young man in his boxers, bleary-eyed with a strong stench of beer about him. Mystery solved. That house and another up the street were frat houses!

“In the end, the house didn't pass inspection for other reasons, but we were lucky to avoid reliving our youth—been there, done that!”

### **8. Show Your Good Tenants That You Appreciate Them**

Domenick Tiziano, founder of AccidentalRental, shares this story of good faith and good will.

“You'd be surprised how far a small gift will go in creating goodwill with your tenants. A tankless water heater broke on a Friday night, and after calling around I realized I couldn't get a technician out to work on it until Monday. Fortunately, the tenant was understanding about it and could shower at the gym to get by, but they were very anxious about getting it fixed.

“When it was fixed, I sent the tenant an Amazon gift card for their troubles and to thank them for their patience. They weren't expecting anything, so they were shocked and delighted. I never had any other complaints or issues with them, not once,” Domenick recalled.

“It pays to be fair and show your tenants that you understand when they have been inconvenienced—even when it's ‘not your fault.’”

### **9. See Opportunity Where Others See Difficulty**

Doug Brien, CEO of Mynd Property Management, offered the example of rent control for looking deeper where other investors are afraid to go.

“My fear of rent control caused me to miss out on decades of great Bay Area real estate investing. For instance, I own a property in Uptown Oakland near Lake Merritt, in a city with some of the highest rents in the country. If I would have acquired that building just one year earlier, my monthly returns would have been in the thousands. That was a hard lesson to learn,” he recounted.

“If I would have hired a local advisor or property management expert to help me navigate rent-control laws, I would have been better off. After consulting with a local expert who helped me explain the benefits of owning rent-controlled properties, I started

acquiring them in Oakland and Berkeley. Now, I have 12 buildings throughout California, and I am a firm believer in holding these assets for long-term appreciation. I don't believe in flipping. Instead, I believe in investing in communities and providing people with shelter.

“Furthermore, I have learned that rental appreciation in these highly populated markets outweighs the complexities of rent-control laws. But perhaps equally important is the steady rental income one can rely on for decades by acquiring rent-controlled properties,” Doug went on.

“Since rents are capped at a certain level each year by the cities of Oakland, Berkeley, and San Francisco, for instance, residents living in rent-controlled units in these areas tend to be happy with their living situation. Since they're paying under-market rents, they tend to lease the same unit for as long as they possibly can. Rarely have I seen a resident vacate one of my rent-controlled buildings. As a result, rent-controlled units are virtually 100 percent occupied. So I don't have to spend any money on advertising or turning over vacant units.

“In addition, rent control leads to fewer available units on the market, thus driving rental rates up on a broader basis. High demand leads to increased rents in non-rent-controlled buildings located in nearby submarkets.”

### **Final Word**

I've lost hundreds of thousands of dollars from real estate. I'm far poorer than I should be today because of my mistakes.

I made those mistakes because I was cavalier when I first started investing. I thought I knew what I was doing, because I had worked with a few investors on loans. I didn't read any books, and I only casually read blogs and articles about real estate investing.

I learned my lessons the hard way. Don't do what I did.

*Never  
underestimate  
yourself.*



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## Anyone Can Be Watching Now

By Carrie Maas  
AASEW Member

Everything we do must be above reproach. Even when we think no one is watching.

Have you ever opened the wrong unit door? Or maybe accidentally entered a unit to fix something only to realize that you are in the wrong apartment? Traditionally after agreed upon notice of entry has been given, you knock a few times real hard, you call out "Maintenance or Landlord" in a loud voice as you open the tenant's door. But the moment you see the inside of the wrong unit and have realized your mistake, do not remove your hand off the doorknob, quickly retreat and re-lock the door. Normally once the door is locked I will re-knock in case the tenant was in their unit and didn't see me. If there still is no answer I will contact the tenant immediately by phone and inform them off my mistake. Do NOT wander about their unit.

In today's world home cameras are easily found and easily affordable. So, if you do accidentally enter a tenant's unit or even open the door, call or text them to let them know. Many people today have cameras that are motion activated so they will be notified that there was motion in their unit.

Remember to inform your employees to contact you if they make the mistake of entering or opening the wrong unit door. Stay ahead of the possible controversy and you will be fine.

Always be proactive and not reactive.



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Tristan R. Pettit is an attorney at Petrie and Pettit, SC located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He concentrates his practice in the area of landlord-tenant law, representing landlords and property management companies throughout the state. Tristan presents seminars on landlord-tenant law and related matters throughout the state, and is a past president of the Apartment Association of Southeastern Wisconsin, Inc., currently serving on its Board of Directors.



Would you like to submit an article for publication in the AASEW monthly newsletter?

Here are the current submission guidelines:

- Deadline for all submissions is the first of each month.
- The newsletter will be delivered electronically to the membership on the 10th of the month.
- Limited print copies of the newsletter will be available at the General Membership Meeting following its publication.
- We are happy to accept one article per author per newsletter.
- Please keep article to approximately 500 words in length.
- Any edits made to an article (generally for length) will be approved by the contributor before it is published.
- All articles must be properly attributed
- The Editorial Staff reserves the right to select articles that serve the membership, are timely and appropriate.

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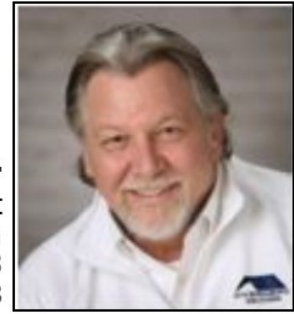
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Vendor booths go on sale August 1, 2019

Registration for attendees opens in September.

### **Save the Date: AASEW Landlord Boot Camp**

Saturday, October 26th at the Four Points Sheraton near the airport

Registration is now open. Sign up at [www.aasew.org](http://www.aasew.org)

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