



Landlords of Linn County

Landlords Leadership

Vacancy Rate:

Data unavailable at time of print.

New Members:

Linda Miller
Heaven's Best Carpet
Cleaning

Renewals:

Daniel Feld
Charles Seamans
Jennifer Loeb
Sheryl Jahnel
Terry & Deb Pesek
Rick Easton

Upcoming Events for Landlords of Linn County

*** May 2009 Meeting will be an evening meeting at the Forest Ridge Apartments—1220 Sierra Dr NE. 7:00—May 14, 2009. Refreshments will be provided.

Judy Stevens will be presenting ideas for curb appeal from a master gardener's point of view. Judy is a local realtor with over 20 years experience.

*** Mold and Your Health: A Free Conference for People Concerned about Mold
Date: Sat. May 16, 2009

Time: 8:30 am to 12

noon (registration begins at 8 am)
Event Location: Hallagan Center,
Mercy Medical Center, 701 10th
Street

SE, Cedar Rapids

Speaker Topics Include:

- * Mold: A Fungus Among Us
- * Post-Flood Information about

Air Quality in Homes

- * Free Home Inspections for
Children with Asthma

- * The New HFA Inhalers
While adults are listening to the
speakers, children will attend an
asthma education class.

- * Families from flooded
neighborhoods in Linn County and
nearby

counties will especially benefit
from this event!

- * Children, teens, and adults

with asthma will also learn important information.

* For more information, please call Dr. Lyla Schweiger at (319)365-9146.

This event is sponsored by the Linn County Asthma Reduction Coalition and its community partners.

*** June 25, 2009 the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Office will be coordinating a Fair Housing Conference. Details inside.

*** The Second Annual Landlord University is slated for September 2009. More details to come.

Inside this issue:

Fair Housing	2
Save on Screening	2
SF 224	3
Increasing Fees	3
Vendors	3
Fair Housing Conference	5
Vendors	8

Up Coming Meetings

May Meeting

Judy Stevens
Master Gardner

May 14, 2009
7:00
Forest Ridge Apts.
1220 Sierra Dr NE

June Meeting

12:00 Noon
Metro Buffet

Speaker
TBA

For meeting topic ideas, please email feuss99@Hotmail.com. The Landlords of Linn County Board of Directors would like to hear your ideas for program topics. Meetings are typically noon-1pm on the second Thursday of every month.

Fair Housing Blogging

The [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) designates April as Fair Housing Month to spread the word about your rights when buying, renting or financing a home. This week is [Fair Housing Education Week](#), where HUD representatives visit schools to teach children and their parents about [housing discrimination](#).

The [Fair Housing Act of 1968](#) prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women,

and people securing custody of children under the age of 18), and handicap (disability) when renting, selling or financing a home. It also makes HUD the primary enforcement agency, so if you think you have a housing discrimination case, [file your complaint with them](#). Keep in mind the law does not protect people who can't pay their rent or mortgages.

I wonder how much of a problem housing discrimination is. According to [recent remarks from HUD's Secretary](#), there were more than 10,000 complaints of housing discrimination last year, though [an older study](#)

estimates that there are 2 million instances of housing discrimination each year. I've never been discriminated against and none of my friends believed that they had been a victim of housing discrimination. Of course I wouldn't consider my friends to be a scientific sample, and most of them believed that housing discrimination would be hard to identify because it might not be overt.

So what do you think? Have you or anyone you've known been the victim of housing discrimination?

FHEO now has a Blog page Check it out!

http://blog.usa.gov/roller/govgab/entry/ever_heard_of_housing_discrimination

["Quarrel not at all. No man resolved to make the most of himself can spare time for personal contention."](#)

Abraham Lincoln

ScreeningWorks-Savings

As a vendor member of the Landlords of Linn County, ScreeningWorks is pleased to provide the membership with promotional discounts on our tenant screening service. ScreeningWorks supports the tenant screening needs of the small and independent rental owner marketplace (1 – 200 units). For an overview of the service, please visit the website <http://www.screeningworks.com> and review the "Take a Tour" section which provides an online presentation of the service and a

sample applicant screening results report.

The service provides instantaneous and comprehensive resident screening information and includes the following for Iowa:

Criminal Statewide, Eviction Statewide, Credit Evaluation, National Address Search, National Sex Offender, OFAC – US Treasury Dept. Database, and Social Security Fraud Number Check

Use this Promotion Code, **IA888save77**, when screening each applicant

and receive a 10% discount off each applicant screen. This promotion code is valid until May 15, 2010. If you have any questions, please call our customer support line at 888-401-7999.

We are pleased to be a supporting vendor member of the association.

Thanks

- Andy C

SF 224 Passes—Joe Kelly Provides Insight

105.11 is the Iowa Code subsection which outlines those who are not subject to licensing from the Plumbing Board. New subsection 13 states that the law shall not prohibit a rental property owner, or the employees, from performing routine maintenance. ***In other words, you don't need a license to do routine maintenance.***

NEW SUBSECTION. 13. Prohibit a rental property owner or employee of such an owner from performing routine maintenance on the rental property.

NEW SUBSECTION. 17. "Routine maintenance" means the maintenance, repair, or replacement of existing fixtures or

parts of plumbing, HVAC, refrigeration, or hydronic systems in ***which no changes in original design are made.*** Fixtures or parts do not include smoke and fire dampers, or water, gas, or steam piping permanent repairs except for traps or ***strainers.*** Routine maintenance shall include emergency repairs, and the board shall define the term emergency repairs to include the repair of water pipes to prevent imminent damage to property. "Routine ***maintenance***" ***does not include the replacement of furnaces,*** boilers, cooling appliances, or water heaters more than one ***hundred gallons in size.***



Court Fees Increase

The following fee increases have passed the Senate and House for court fees. Governor Culver is expected to sign them into law soon. This can be found in SF 478.

Civil Filing is increasing from \$100 to \$185.

Small Claims Filing is increasing from \$50 to \$85.

Appeals in Small Claims are increasing from \$75 to \$185.

Mechanics Lien Filings are

increasing from \$20 to \$50.

Please watch for those increases so you are not taken by surprise.

Information provided by Joe Kelly.

"There can be no real individual freedom in the presence of economic insecurity."

Chester Bowles

Vendor Members of the Month

Heaven's Best Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning

Heaven's best specializes in their unique "dry in one hour" process that yields exceptional results and greatly reduces typical carpet cleaning dry times. Call Kent today—393-4589

www.heavensbest.com

CSG Appliance Recycling

CSG specializes in appliance removal and recycling in the Linn County Area. Contact Calvin Enlts for your appliance removal needs at 721-9599.

Apartment Finder

The Apartment Finder allows owners and managers to advertise apartments for lease and rent everywhere in the USA. Apartments may be searched on-line or in the apartment magazines available at many grocery stores locally. Contact Gail today for advertising rates—515-266-0993 or visit their website at www.apartmentfinder.com.

One Members View—

Difficult residents can cost us time and money. Screening applicants remains one of the most important steps in limiting our risk. An example of how helpful screening can be occurred this weekend. The applicant arrived on time for the apartment showing, completed the application, had the appropriate income verification and seemed like a slam-dunk. He was from out of state and had only been in Iowa for about nine months. There was limited information to check in Iowa—he was staying with friends and so didn't have a landlord reference to call. He had a pending DUI charge on Iowa Courts Online but no other charges. On the application he listed having lived with his parents in his home state. Still looked like a good candidate. But, wanting to know more I used www.screeningworks.com. For \$25 I was able to research his past evictions (there were many), address history, and criminal history (high dollar theft). I received a credit risk assessment (high risk). The tool also checked the sex offender list, Treasury Dept database, and did a social security number fraud check. Quickly, this candidate slipped from "looks good" to denied for falsifying information on his rental application. I have used Screening-Works several times. One frustrating aspect is that the user has to register for just one state. As a result I have separate registrations for several states. I am sure there are other tools available. I found this one from the business cards in the Landlords of Linn County newsletter. After using it the first time I received an e-mail from the rep offering a promotion code. It can be shared so it is listed below. It may expire in May (I'll still try it after 5/15) but I'm sure additional promotion codes will be available. Please share if you have tried other screening products. It is helpful to know what works (and what isn't a value for the money).

IA888save33 (10% off each applicant screen; valid to May 15, 2010)

Marriage (50% off for married couple, spouse; works with the above code as well)

Susan Smith, Mission Builder Property Management

FAIR HOUSING CONFERENCE

Education After the Flood

June 25, 2009

Intensive One Day Conference

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Sponsored by at the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission



Speakers:

Stella Adams, founder/CEO of S J Adams Consulting which performs research and policy development in the areas of fair housing, and fair lending.

Jill Fenner, Director Fair Housing Center of NE and LA Family Housing Advisory Services, Inc.

Registration fee: \$25.00 (lunch will be provided)

Questions : Call (319) 286-5036 or e-mail civilrights@cedar-rapids.org

Make check payable to:

Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission

Send registration form & check to:

Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission

425 Second Street SE, Suite 960

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

Fair Housing Conference - Registration Form

Please fill out and return with registration payment

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone # _____

E-mail address _____





Industry Insight: A Look into the World of Criminal Records

By Mike Lapsley, president and CEO of RentGrow, Inc.

For this month's newsletter, we sat down with our Public Records Manager, Lisa Legere, to provide some insight into the world of public records and criminal background screening.

Q&A with Lisa Legere, RentGrow's Public Records Manager

Lisa, what are "public records"?

Lerege: In the context of resident screening, the term "public records" typically refers to criminal records, sex offender records, and civil court eviction records and filings.

As RentGrow's Public Records Manager, what do you do every day?

Lerege: As a public records manager I have two primary roles: 1) I oversee our team of public records analysts, and 2) I manage our public records data sources and products.

I am constantly striving to improve our delivery and turn-around for our customers. I help the team with complex customer questions related to specific public records.

In addition, I constantly research the available public records data sources around the country to ensure that we incorporate the strongest records sources into our products. I work closely with RentGrow's entire management team to make sure we are delivering public records in a manner that pleases our customers.

Where do Criminal Records data come from?

Lerege: Well, first I should clarify that state and federal law enforcement has its own database of criminal records. The general public does not have access to that database, nor does any private property management company or screening firm. RentGrow and other screening firms' access databases primarily constructed from department of corrections and courthouse records. There are thousands of courthouses and corrections departments across the country. There are hundreds of data companies that retrieve and package those records into databases.

At RentGrow, we get our records from public records data providers that stand out on a regional basis. As a private and independent company, we have the unique advantage of researching and selecting the very best data providers on a local level, then weaving them together to create the best comprehensive criminal screening. We also provide records from the national sex offender registry.

Why do the contents of criminal records vary from state to state? And why is there the possibility of "false positives"?

Lerege: With credit information there is a national standard for the format and information included on the reports, and all credit reports include Social Security Numbers (SSN). This is not the case with public records such as criminal and court records. The various courthouse reporting practices and state laws regulate the format and information provided on public records. For reasons of privacy, nearly every state and courthouse excludes SSN from public records. In certain states, the public records even remove date of birth or address. Because there are no SSNs on these records, in the event of a common name, results may require additional research to ensure there are no "false positives."

As a professional screening company, we recognize that even the best available public records have these inherent inconsistencies and limitations. The best thing we can do for our clients is to be experts in our field and take care of filtering, deciphering, and servicing the records for our customers. This makes the landlord's job much easier and saves time.

I understand there are national and statewide criminal databases where you have instant access to information, but we've all heard of county-level searches. Why would someone want to run a county-level search? How do you retrieve data on a county-level search?

Lerege: First of all, there are a few states that don't report substantial criminal information to automated state or national databases: specifically Massachusetts, Delaware, Wyoming, and South Dakota. In those states, a county-level search is really the only viable option.

Even in states where automated data is available, the databases can have limitations and some customers opt to conduct supplemental county searches to be extra thorough. The upside of a county search is that the records are very detailed and accurate. However, because it's a manual search, it has downsides: turn-around varies from next-day to a few days, the geographic scope is narrow, and it costs more than the automated searches.

We retrieve county-level search requests by partnering with professional court runners/researchers around the country. When a customer requests a county search, it triggers one of those researchers to physically go to the county courthouse, check for files, and return the results.

Lisa, thanks for your time!

Lerege: Thanks. As the Public Records Manager, I can confidently say our team is always working hard to improve our operations and be the best in the industry when it comes to delivering public records.

ScreeningWorks, a service of RentGrow Inc., is a member of this association and is currently offering association members a 10% discount off their tenant screening services. For more information about this article or ScreeningWorks services please go to www.ScreeningWorks.com or contact ScreeningWorks customer service at 888-401-7999.

www.landlordsoflinncounty.com

PO Box 851
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

President

Keith Smith

721-7141

smithke@mchsi.com

Vice-President

Julie Freeman

350-4072

jmfjaf@aol.com

Secretary

Kim Frederickson

366-0434

gatewaykim@imonmail.com

Treasurer

Stephanie Feuss

329-5378

Feuss99@hotmail.com

Board Members

Dick Rehman

393-6100

rhrehman@ImOnMail.com

Bob Randklev

533-6927

BobR@skogman.com

Laura O'Leary

396-6726

phunapts@aol.com

Michele Formanek

396-3817

Garry Grimm

364-6172

gegrentals@aol.com

Joyce Steffen

363-1233

bapjs@cedar-rapids.net

Ken Klingler

377-9175

kkmk77@msn.com

Lobbyist

Joe Kelly

joe@iamha.org

Support Our Vendor Members

ACCOUNTING

John Freeman

APPLIANCES

Coinmach
Lampe Appliance Service
Metro Appliance

BANKING

Family Merchants Bank

CARPET CLEANING

Actually Clean
Corridor Carpet Cleaning
Eastern Iowa Carpet Cleaning
Heaven's Best Carpet Cleaning
Service Master by Avenue of Saints

FLOOR COVERINGS

P & W Floor Covering
Randy's Carpets

HEATING & A/C

Colony Heating & Air Conditioning
Greenes Heating
Parker Plumbing and Heating

MOLD REMEDIATION

Service Master by Avenue of Saints

PLUMBING

Parker Plumbing and Heating

PROCESS SERVING

ASAP by Rex Cook
Attorneys Process Service
Investigations by Ivy
Iowa Process Service

RECYCLING

Conservation Services Group

RENTAL CONDITION/INVENTORY

Guardian Home Inventory Service

YARD CARE

Linn County Lawn Care
Tim's Lawn Service

ADVERTISING

Apartment Finder

APPLIANCE RECYCLING

Conservation Services Group

BATH TUB RESURFACING

Bath-Tub Resurfacing Inc.

CRIMINAL REPORTS

Investigations by Ivy

GENERAL LABOR

Labor Ready

GENERAL CLEANING

B & J Cleaning Service

MAINTENANCE

Burkle Remodeling & Maintenance
Ken's Home Improvement Co.

PAINTING

Jim Heskje Painting Specialist

PRESSURE WASHING

Jim Heskje Painting Specialist

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Preferred Property Management

REMODELING

Burkle Remodeling & Maintenance
Better Built Home Enhancements

RESIDENT SCREENING

Screening Works – Rent Grow

The more powerfully intelligent way to clean!

**ACTUALLY CLEAN
FLOOR & FURNITURE**
Carpet & Upholstery
Water Restoration
Odor Decontamination
Spot Dyeing & Repairs



Jason Bailey CR (319) 447-0882
IC (319) 688-9626

**Apartment
Finder™**
ApartmentFinder.com

Gail Cudworth
PUBLISHER

4505 75th Street
Urbandale, IA GA 50322

tel: 515.266.0993
tel: 888.533.0298
fax: 515.265.5196
cell: 515.681.1882
email: qcudworth@apartmentfi

Attorneys Process Service
C/O Mike Barry
PO Box 2272
Cedar Rapids, IA
319-431-7000
www.iowa-process-server.net
mike@scubalaw.net



ASAP
Accurately Served And Professional
PROCESS SERVICES



ALL CIVIL PAPERS SERVED PROFESSIONAL IMMEDIATELY
MEMBER: NAPPS (National Assoc. of Professional Process Servers)
United States Process Servers Assoc.
Landlords of Linn County

REX COOK
PO Box 607
Lisbon, Ia 52253

Phone (319) 455-2490
Cellular (319) 560-5750
Fax (319) 455-5041

B & J Cleaning Service
1015 Summit Ave SW
Cedar Rapid, IA 52404
319-350-5827

Better Built Home Enhancements
PO Box 196
Walford, IA
319-210-2455
betterbuilt@southslope.net

Bath-Tub Resurfacing Inc.

Repair and/or Refinish

Porcelain
Fiberglass
Acrylic
Formica
Cultured Marble



Bathtubs
Showers
Vanities
Counters
Tile Surrounds

162 COLLINS RD. #320
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52402

BO CANTRELL
TOBY CANTRELL

Burkle Remodeling & Maintenance

*Specializing in all aspects of
maintenance and
home remodeling projects.*

Dustin Burkle
Owner

Phone: 319- 265-0535
Cell: 319-573-1250

Email: BurkleRemodeling@ImOnMail.com



Coinmach
*Keeping America Clean
One Laundry Room At A Time*

Ryan White
Account Executive
3104 Riverport Tech Center Drive
Maryland Heights, MO 63043

314-209-0777 ext 13
314-209-9777 Fax
800-227-2418
314-220-8110 Cell

coLony HEATING AND
AIR CONDITIONING
FIREPLACES • GAS GRILLS
364-HEAT

P. J. KALB
Sales

2224 16th Ave. S.W.
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Tel: 319-364-4328
FAX: 319-364-5935

pjk@colonyheating.com

Calvin Ehls
Project Manager
Appliance Recycling



Conservation Services Group

712 58th Avenue Court, SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Tel 319.369.0463
Cell 319.721.9599
Fax 319.369.0471
calvin.ehls@csggrp.com
www.csggrp.com



CORRIDOR Carpet CLEANING
Cedar Rapids, IA
"For All Your Carpet Cleaning Needs"

Dan Feld
Owner
(319) 363-5009
corridor@mac.com

Fully Insured
Visa & Mastercard
Accepted



CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING
319-377-2492

FMB
FAMILY MERCHANTS
BANK

Jason R. Hall
Chief Executive Officer/Senior Lender

600 Boyson Road NE • Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
jason_hall@mycrbank.com • www.mycrbank.com

OFFICE 319.378.8100 CELL 319.325.8565 FAX 319.378.8105

GREENE'S

SINCE 1963

"Where customers send their friends"

REFRIGERATION • HEATING
COOLING • RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL

PAUL L. GREENE
2342 Ridge Trail NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402



greeneshvacr@mchsi.com

364-6684
560-HVAC (4822)
361-HEAT (4328)

Kim Bingham



(319) 310-0963
Info@guardianhis.com
www.guardianhis.com

7836 16th Ave Trail
Luzerne, IA 52257



KENT VONBEHREN
Owner / Operator

319-393-4589
www.heavensbest.com

DRY IN ONE HOUR

INVESTIGATIONS
By Ivy

Ivy S. Meeker, Owner
PO BOX 1001
Marion, IA 52302

Licensed Private Investigator
Cell: 319-551-7295
i.meeker@mchsi.com
www.InvestigationsbyIvy.com

Iowa Process Service
C/O Linda Mathews
PO Box 10843
Cedar Rapids, IA
319-981-4062
iowaservicecr@aol.com



Interior / Exterior
Residential / Commercial
Free Estimates • Insured

◆ **Pressure Washing**
◆ **Workmanship**
Guaranteed

319-521-6180

John Freeman, CPA

222 Edgewood Rd. NW
P.O. Box 8778
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52408-8778
Phone (319) 396-5660 Fax (319) 396-3273
www.jfreemancpa.com
Member of American Society of CPA'S



Tracie Gutknecht
Branch Manager

3200 16th Ave SW, Ste C
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319.862.0462 • 319.862.0464 (fax) • 319.651.9336 (cell)
tracie.gutknecht@laborfinders.com • www.laborfinders.com

LAMPE APPLIANCE SERVICE, INC.

REPAIRS & PARTS MOST MAKES

- DISHWASHERS
- WASHERS
- REFRIGERATORS
- DRYERS
- MICROWAVES
- RANGES

Over 35 Years in Business

KitchenAid
Frigidaire
ROPER **Whirlpool**
GE **MAYTAG**
HOTPOINT
Kenmore

COMPETITIVE RATES!

319-363-3826
1802 E Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids

Servicing These Brands & More!

Linn County Lawn Care "The Only Company That Treats Your Lawn Like The Only Lawn"

Joseph Rambo **Contact:** Angela Carlyle
PH 319.202.7232

Services That We Offer
Free Estimates
Complete Lawn Maintenance, Pet Waste Removal, Spring & Fall Leaf Removal, Landscape & Tree Mulching, Snow Removal & Ice Control Residential & Commercial

METRO APPLIANCES
SALES • SERVICE • PARTS
NEW and USED Major Appliances

CROSLEY **LG**
HOTPOINT **Frigidaire**

Bruce Porter (Owner)
Kris Moore (Sales)
Liz Marx (Sales)
366-7281
(800) 296-7281
Mon. - Fri. 8:30-5:30
Saturday 9:00-3:00
620 Center Point Road NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

PAUL WALDER

(319) 363-9894

P & W FLOOR COVERING
CARPET & VINYL INSTALLATION

1700 34th ST. NE • Cedar Rapids, IA 52402-5540



Kirk Simmons
Service Manager

780 West Main St.
Robins, IA 52328

Bus: 378-9888
Fax: 378-9173



Tim Conklin
Owner/Agent

108 Emmons St
Hiawatha, IA 52233
ph (319) 294-2955 fax (319) 294-2960
timc@ppmiowa.com www.ppmiowa.com



Andy Cruickshank
Director of Market &
Product Development

andy@rentgrow.com
www.rentgrow.com

RentGrow, Inc.
307 Waverley Oaks Road, Ste 301
Waltham, MA 02452
Tel: 800.736.8476, x230
Direct: 781.332.3330
Fax: 781.290.0687



5454 Center Point Rd. N.E., Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
Ph: 319-393-1400 Fax: 319-395-9255
Toll Free: 1-800-540-2706
<http://www.randyscarpets.com>
jimzachar@randyscarpets.com

Carpet
Ceramic Tile
Vinyl Floorcoverings
Window Treatments
Wood Flooring
Area Rugs
Wallpaper
Furniture
Blinds

Jim Zachar

Screen Your Residents
Before You Hand Over The Keys!



ScreeningWorks
RESIDENT SCREENING MADE SIMPLE

www.screeningworks.com

©2008 ScreeningWorks, a service of RentGrow, Inc. All rights reserved



Kelly Harris
Sales Representative & Estimator

**Disaster Services &
Residential/Commercial
Cleaning**

**ServiceMaster by
Avenue of the Saints**
915 Blairsferry Road
Marion, IA 52302
Cedar Rapids: 319/365-9265
Iowa City: 319/354-6328
Fax: 319/365-2913
Cell: 319/533-5825
Direct Connect: 18188
www.smbavenueofthesaints.com



LAWN SERVICE

Making Lawn Care Affordable

Tim Ahrens 319-270-0712