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**MAILING: P.O. Box 5341
 Dearborn, Michigan 48128**

Volume 30

January 2015

Number 12

NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY JANUARY 6, 2015

**NETWORKING & DINNER
 RED LOBSTER**

13999 Eureka Rd • SOUTHGATE

Next to 7-11, near Trenton Rd.

6:00 - 7:15 Dinner and Networking

7:30 Meeting

SPEAKER/TOPIC

JEFF CAMPEAU is a partner with the accounting firm Mellen, Smith & Pivoz, PLC in Bingham Farms, Michigan.

He will be speaking about current tax issues facing real estate professionals as of January 2015.

His focus will be on proper tax reporting to avoid Internal Revenue Service scrutiny, and valuable tax planning considerations.

MS&P is a full-service certified public accounting company with over 20 staff members, and has been in existence since 1971. Mr. Campeau has been with MS&P for his entire 26 year career.

For Any Questions Please Call:
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 or 24hr recording (313) 437-2945

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Hosted by our New Director

- Bobbi Nied-Broderick

**3RD TUESDAY MEETING
 JANUARY 20, 2015 @ 6:00PM**

WHEN 3rd Tuesday of the month

Join us for a casual evening with like-minded individuals to share your stories, discuss your issues and learn more about our investing community!

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 We hope to see many of you there, and feel free to bring a friend or two.

For More Info: Bobbi (734) 946-6280 or Bill 734-934-9091

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Tell us the companies you use and see if we can advertise for them.

FOR RENEWING MEMBERS: Any questions/comments on how to better our organization??



NEXT MEETINGS

MONTHLY MEETING

- Tuesday January 6, 2015
- Tuesday February 3, 2015

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Tuesday January 13, 2015
- Tuesday February 10, 2015

Investor Get-Together — January 20th
Meeting Starts at 6:00pm

Real Estate Investors Association of Wayne County

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The Handyman

Say no to cracks in your concrete and mortar

Whether you have a cement driveway or a brick home, you surely have some concrete or mortar cracks to deal with. While it would be nice if these pesky cracks never appeared, it isn't realistic. For an informative video on the subject, visit MasterHandyman.com, click on Video Advice and look for Repairing Driveway Cracks.

"Concrete doesn't bend, it breaks, so homeowners are going to have cracks in their driveways" said Ken Calverley of KC Masonry, (877) MASONRY, kcmasonry.com.

The infamous Michigan freeze and thaw cycle was even more dramatic this winter, causing slabs to heave and sink, resulting in cracks and a widening of expansion joints. Calverley says that the best way to lessen the amount of cracks is to have the driveway poured properly in the first place, so that the base is more stable. He starts with crushed concrete and then adds steel reinforced mesh before pouring the cement thick, almost like oatmeal, not soupy. The more water in the mix, the less stable it is.

Because concrete cracks, Calverley said contractors will add cuts or expansion joints in the driveway to make it crack where it should. He said if the contractor did the job right, you can leave the cracks alone.

Fortunately, if you hate looking at the cracks, you can fill them yourself if you use the proper method and products. Not only will it look better, but it will eliminate that perfect environment for weeds to grow.

For cracks less than 1/2-inch wide, you can fill them by using a crack sealant such as Vulkem 316 from Tremco, tremcosealants.com, or Concrete Crack Filler by Sakrete, sakrete.com. When cracks are 1/2-inch wide or wider or you are dealing with expansion joints, first clean out any weeds and debris with a linoleum knife or crevice tool, then sweep or blow out the crack. Next, fill in the crack with play sand and tamp it down, and fill in the remaining space with a polyethylene backer rod, leaving about 1 1/2 inches below the concrete surface. Now you're ready to fill the crack using Quikrete's Self-Leveling Polyurethane Sealant; Sikaflex Crack Flex Sealant by Sika, usa.sika.com; or Loctite PL S10 Polyurethane Concrete Crack & Masonry Sealant, loctiteproducts.com.

In addition to concrete, winter freeze and thaw cycles can also cause annoying cracks in the mortar lines on your home's brick or chimney. Empty mortar joints permit wind and water to enter the building envelope, so you need to repair them now so they don't lead to further damage. If just a little tuck-pointing needs to be done, you can do it yourself but wear goggles. Clear away the loose mortar with a cold chisel and brick hammer. Clean out the damaged area with a whiskbroom, and then fill in the joints with Quikrete's Mortar Repair or Sakrete's Concrete & Mortar Repair Tube.

This time of year, cracks in your basement walls may also become more noticeable. In most cases, this is not a DIY project, especially if the crack is leaking. If the cracks aren't leaking, you can do a quick fix using hydraulic cement, but that is not a permanent solution. To fill a crack, it is best to inject polyurethane or epoxy into the crack. I recommend calling a company such as Foundation Systems of Michigan, (877) DRY MICH, drymich.com; Mr. Sponge, (248) 583-1115, mrsponge.com; or SAS Services, (800) CALL-SAS 1800CALLSAS.com.

If you would like to suggest a question for this column, e-mail askglenn@masterhandyman.com. If you want to talk to Glenn Haeg, call his "Handyman Show" on WJR-AM (760) at (866)ASK GLENN, (866) 275-4536, between noon and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Reprinted from the Detroit Free Press & submitted by Wayde Koehler, Pres, R.E.I.A. of Wayne County

SPEAKERS COMMITTEE

Jerry Kirschner

248-867-0744

If you have any suggestions for speakers, drop us a line at: www.reiawaynecounty.org

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Section 8 Questions???
Call Jane Scarlett

Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency
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. John O'Neil	603.848.8689	jr_oneill@yahoo.com



DETROIT ACTIVIST TAKES TO STREET, INTERNET TO FIGHT ILLEGAL DUMPING

By Keith Matheny - Detroit Free Press Staff Writer

There's just something about illegally dumped garbage, lining Detroit's curb sides or piled up in its vacant lots, that stirs east side Detroit resident Rick Robertson to act.

"I feel like they are violating me when they dump in places like that," said Robertson, 56, as he overlooked a lot on Chene Street that included piles of garbage both bagged and strewn; old furniture and tires; and a decrepit, abandoned trailer.

Robertson, director of Organization for People, a nonprofit volunteer training program, has lent his time and efforts to curb illegal dumping in the city since the early 1990s. He recalls major grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to curb the problem; later, a Detroit Police Department special detail; then a fleet of city pickup trucks dispatched to deal with the trash.

But the grants dried up, the city's financial problems mounted, and now the garbage piles up worse than ever, he said.

Tired of waiting on local government solutions, Robertson is taking it to the streets, *per se*, seeking to create a sort of neighborhood watch for illegal dumping - eyes, ears and cameras that can catch the perpetrators of one of Detroit's most chronic blight problems in the act.

Robertson has started a blog - unlawfuldumping.blogspot.com - and a hotline at 313-640-6400 for residents to report illegal trash disposal, submit photos, share information and pressure city officials into taking more action.

From his years working the issue, Robertson said he's learned how the game works.

"Whenever you find roofing material, concrete, wood, trash, or whatever still on a property, and there is no container already there to take the stuff to proper disposal then there is a good likelihood that those items will become fodder for the cottage industry of illegal dumping," he said.

Landlords of evicted tenants, looking to dispose of worn-out furniture, mattresses and other items, are another frequent illegal dumping contributor, Robertson said. Most often the materials are moved away by low-cost, fly-by-night waste haulers, he said.

"If you pay a guy with a pickup truck \$40 or \$50 to haul that trash, the chance of it ending up in proper disposal is slim," Robertson said.

(continued next page - Mike Topolewski Sr)

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(contined from Detroit Activist/Illegal Dumping)

Mike Topolewski Sr., owner of Perigee Manufacturing on Intervale Street in northwest Detroit, says because his business is “kind of off the beaten path ... we’ve been deluged with the unwanted waste of people.”

“Once one pile starts, it attracts other piles of trash,” he said. “When people realize they can do it, they do it more.”

Topolewski’s business security cameras once captured an illegal dumper leaving waste from the back of his pickup truck.

“We zoomed in on his license plate and he had a teddy bear bungee-corded over his plate,” to hide it, he said.

A more controversial aspect of the approach Robertson advocates is observing, and photographing, neighbors’ trash accumulation that looks like a precursor to illegal dumping.

“If I take a picture of you stacking 20 tires on your property, then there’s a report it was illegally dumped, it’s reasonable to assume that environmental inspectors at the City of Detroit can go out and ask if you have verification of where the trash was taken,” he said.

“If a landlord knows people are now riding around like we are and taking pictures of this kind of stuff, hopefully it gives him a second thought to go get a container.”

Messages left with the offices of Mayor Mike Duggan and emergency manager Kevyn Orr were not returned. Orr in his bankruptcy blueprint in February called for spending \$520.3 million over the next six years to clean up blight within the city.

Prest Street resident Beverly Pettus supports Robertson’s efforts.

“Lately people have just been coming and dumping mattresses, furniture and garbage by the” nearby Lodge Freeway, she said.

But Pettus said she doubts she’ll heed Robertson’s call to question neighbors whose trash accumulation looks suspicious.

NEW Member Application

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when you come to the
meeting. We need your
email address so we can
send you the newsletter &
alerts and updates!!***

“I don’t think I’ll put myself in that position,” she said.

Robertson said he doesn’t claim to have all the answers. He knows only that waiting on the city or anyone else to solve the illegal dumping problem hasn’t worked.

“What you discover is, there are individuals who care,” he said. “I want to empower that individual to do something.”

Contact Keith Matheny 313-222-5021
or kmatheny@freepress.com

***Reprinted from the Detroit Free Press & submitted by
Wayde Koehler, Pres, R.E.I.A. of Wayne County***

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

SHOULD LANDLORDS BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN A RENTAL UNIT?

House Bill 5230 would tag any house that is damaged by “fire, wind, or flood, or that is dilapidated and becomes an attractive nuisance to children or a harbor for vagrants or criminals, or enables persons to commit a nuisance or a unlawful or immoral act on the premises” as a nuisance property. The bill would also add “human trafficking” to the list of nuisances that can trigger a local government seizure of a property.

Under Michigan current nuisance abatement laws, local governments can compel property owners to clear debris, repair buildings, and stop illegal activities involving gambling, drugs, and prostitution. If the property owner fails to comply, a court can issue an order allowing the property where the nuisance activity occurred to be seized and forfeited. The nuisance activity must be proven with a police report. Once a property owner is informed of the illegal activity, the simple resolution is eviction of the residence occupying the unit where the illegal occurred.

HB 5230 would significantly expand the nuisance law by opening the door wide open to any local government declaring a “dilapidated” property a nuisance by simply saying that the property has become an attractive nuisance. The RPOA envisions a significant abuse by local governments if this bill is passed.

While the RPOA believes that landlords should cooperate with authorities in the efforts to eliminate human trafficking-including eviction of the tenants involved in the crime-the RPOA can’t support a bill that opens a wide door to abuse by local governments. Imagine dealing with a fire that has destroyed your profitable rental unit only to find a local official claiming the property is now an attractive nuisance to a crime and they are going to seize it.

The RPOA supports adding human trafficking to the list of nuisances under the current law, but it can’t accept a law that will declare any property in disrepair a nuisance property subject to seizure and forfeiture. The RPOA will be working over the summer and fall to change the language in the bill.

SQUATTER BILLS PASS SENATE

The Michigan Senate passed a package of bills dealing with squatters in residential property. The bills (HB 5069, HB 5070 and HB 5071) aim to help the owners of homes where people have set up camp for free. “Squatting is becoming far more sophisticated,” said Rep. Kurt Heise (R-Plymouth), the sponsor of the bills. He said that squatters are referencing lists of foreclosed or vacant homes to pick a place. In addition, he said there were advocates out there telling the squatters how to use the legal system to their advantage in the situation. “Squatters, modern squatters, and the well-educated squatter is using those rules to their advantage,” Heise said.

The bills provide that a property owner’s actions would not unlawfully interfere with an occupant’s possessory interest if the occupant were trespassing and allow a property owner to enter premises by force if the occupant took possession of the premises by force or trespass.

The RPOA of Michigan (RPOA-M), a supporter of the bill, worked closely with Rep. Heise on the language of the bill to ensure its effectiveness. Clay Powell, Director of the RPOA-M, says that the organization is pleased with the final language in the bill. The bill will give property owners the authority and right to remove squatters from their properties without having to evict them as if they were a tenant.

Powell cautioned property owners not to confuse this new law and squatters with additional persons moving into a rental unit. The law does not give a landlord the authority to throw out persons that have unknowingly moved into a rental unit with another tenant. “if a tenant is in violation of their lease by allowing additional persons to move in them without the knowledge and/or consent of the landlord, landlords must pursue action against the legal tenant to either resolve the situation or through eviction for violation of the lease.”

(More Legislative News Continued Next Page)

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

(continued)

SUPREME COURT RULING: LAND CONTRACT HOLDERS AND LANDLORDS NOT LIABLE FOR NUISANCES

Several months ago we reported that the outcome of a case coming before the Michigan Supreme Court was critical I for landlords and land contract holders. In the case, SHOLBERG v TRUMAN, the plaintiff argued that a land contract holder should be liable for a nuisance on the premises. A lower court found that land contract holders could be held liable. The case centered on a woman dying when her car struck a horse that was standing in the road. The horse was owned by the land contract buyer. (More ...) The lower court held that the land contract seller was also liable. In short, the Michigan Supreme Court reversed the lower court's decision and found that a land contract holder cannot be liable for a nuisance on the premises where that land contract holder does not have control or possession of the premises.

This case was important to the rental industry due to its implications and the liability landlords may have faced regarding their tenants' actions. The resulting Supreme Court's ruling clearly prevents landlords for being held liable for their tenant's wrongful actions or negligence. The RPOA provided financial support for an amicus brief in support of the defendant. Click here for the full opinion. http://publicdocs.courts.mi.gov:81/opinions/final/sct/20140610_s146725_71_0:1_sholberg-op.pdf

Reprinted from Rental Property Owners Association -
MICHIGAN LANDLORD — WHERE LANDLORDS GO FOR HELP

& submitted by Wayde Koehler, Pres, R.E.I.A. of Wayne County

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— **MEETING AGENDA** —
RED LOBSTER ON EUREKA • SOUTHGATE
Next to 7-11, near Trenton Rd.
6:00 - 7:15 ... Dinner and Networking
7:30 - Meeting — (\$20.⁰⁰ FOR GUESTS)

How to Handle Residents that Hoard

by Lynn Dover

Resident hoarding can cause significant health and safety problems, both in the hoarder's unit and in neighboring units.

Hoarding can create pest infestations, mold problems, increase fire risk, interfere with entrance or exit of the unit or exceed maximum load bearing floor capacity.

These things, of course, make it difficult to keep the surrounding residents happy.

Hoarding is rarely self-reported by the hoarder. Instead, it is often discovered by maintenance staff making a repair in the hoarder's unit or in a neighboring unit. Hoarding can create a problem for the surrounding units such as water intrusion, mold or a pest invasion in the neighboring unit.

Not just a matter of poor housekeeping, hoarding is believed to be a form of anxiety disorder and/or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCE). Depression can also be a component.

HOARDING IS LOOSELY DEFINED AS:

- The acquisition of a large number of possessions that appear to be useless or of limited value
- Living spaces cluttered so they can no longer be used for their intended purpose and
- Causing significant distress or functional impairment.



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Hoarding items may be valuable collectibles or trash or anything in between. Units can be literally packed floor to ceiling and wall-to-wall, with just a small path for movement in the unit.

Because hoarding is caused by one or more psychological disorders, compulsive hoarders are generally considered

disabled. Federal and state fair housing laws protect people with disabilities, including mental disabilities. Fair housing advocates contend that before eviction of a mentally disabled resident whose disability is causing the person to violate the terms of the lease or rules, good faith efforts must be made to accommodate the resident's disability. This generally requires that the resident be given an opportunity to come into compliance so that he or she can remain a tenant.

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EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

- Setting scheduled unit re-inspections and establishing goals that the resident must meet
- Providing the resident with a list of community resources that can assist the hoarder
- Working with a fair housing and/or mental health advocacy group assisting the resident to develop a plan to bring the unit into compliance

When dealing with a hoarding situation, the focus should be only on solving legitimate health and safety issues rather than attempting to achieve ideal housekeeping habits.

It should be recognized that even if the hoarder meets minimum health and safety standards, the unit may not be in an “optimal condition.”

Hoarders may not recognize the severity of the problem or be equipped to resolve the hoarding problem on their own. Some hoarders believe their hoarding is beneficial because they are savers, not wasters. Others deny that any problem exists. As a result, it may be helpful to involve a neutral third party such as a fire department, code enforcement or health inspector who can inspect the unit and identify code or other health and safety violations.

ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENT

Even if health and safety issues are initially resolved, a hoarding resident may “slip” and re-hoard again in the future. Therefore, a written “Accommodation Agreement” should be considered, providing periodic unit inspections and a specified time period for correction of future health and safety issues.

No two situations are alike. Each hoarding situation requires analysis based on the facts of the particular case. It is advisable to see legal advice before taking any action to terminate a tenancy if compulsive hoarding may be involved.

Lynn Dover is a contributor to propertymanager.com. Reprinted with permission of the Wisconsin Apartment Association News. Reprinted from AOA News and Buyers Guide, & submitted by Wayde Koehler, Pres, R.E.I.A. of Wayne County

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TERMINATION OF THE TENANCY MAY BE POSSIBLE IF:

- The person is a clear, direct and immediate threat to the health and safety of other community residents
- There are serious health and safety issues that cannot be mitigated through accommodation
- The resident has caused serious monetary damage to the unit and will not reimburse the landlord for the cost to repair the unit
- The hoarder will not engage in the accommodation process or cooperate to bring the unit back into compliance

Seniors Get A Boost Online

Course in MSU study turns 300 people into engaged surfers

By Robin Erb
Detroit Free Press Medical Writer

Depression, a common problem for older adults, might have an easy antidote: The Internet.

According to new research by a Michigan State University professor, computer use among retirees reduces the risk of depression by more than 30%.

And don't worry that Grandpa doesn't yet understand this newfangled Internet-thing.

It's never too late to learn, said Sheila Cotten, lead author and a professor of telecommunication, information studies and the media.

In earlier research, Cotten and others led 300 seniors through an eight-week course to get them proficient online. Many had never used a computer before. Their average age: 82. The oldest: 102.

"If you start out with some very basic training... and get them to see how Internet use can be beneficial to them, they get over that fear and they get engaged," Cotten said.

Her latest research was published online last week in the *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*. Cotten and her team sorted through data of 3,075 men and women who were retired and 50 or older. The participants were part of a larger, unrelated study and had been surveyed four times between 2002 and 2008. Researchers wanted to focus on retirees - those who no longer have jobs that force them to interact in person or online

With other factors held constant - such as whether the seniors lived with other people - the authors found that roughly 7 in 100 Internet users were estimated to have depression, whereas 10 in 100 non-computer users were estimated to have depression.

In other words, Internet use led to a more than 30% reduction in the probability of depression.

It's not clear what the participants were doing - checking e-mail, shopping or searching for information. And that doesn't matter, Cotten said: "It's really about being able to connect and communicate and find information you need."

The results don't surprise Annena McCleskey.

At 70, she's recuperating from hip replacement at Maple Manor in Novi, a facility that opened last month with a bank of computers near the dining area. As the long-term care facility begins to fill up, staff members hope to keep residents connected to loved ones.

McCleskey keeps her Mac Pro laptop and cell phone nearby, regularly texting and calling loved ones, including a grandson in California. She tracks her medical records online, too. And she has been checking out restaurant discounts and playing Solitaire.

"I didn't want to be in a closed situation, where I'd be removed from my buddies and everything," McCleskey said.

While she's using a walker and her mobility is limited, she said, the laptop "brought my family to me, my friends to me and my games to me."

For others, keeping in touch might mean an introduction to Facebook, said Amy Patterson, activities director at Maple Manor in Wayne.

But that's OK, Patterson said.

Staff can introduce seniors to e-mail and to Facebook. And simple, big-lettered instructions on index cards can help. Finally, they let the seniors' support network - friends and family - know their loved one is online. The e-mails and Facebook friend requests start.

One picture of a grandchild, Patterson said, and human nature takes over.

"They figure it out. They start pressing buttons and getting to the next picture and next picture and the next picture."

With staff help, they can store passwords and eke out short-cuts, Patterson said: "You can't count it out - six clicks to when they can get to their kids and grandkids."

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Wayde Koehler, Pres, R.E.I.A. of Wayne County

TIPS TO INTRODUCE OLDER LOVED ONES TO THE INTERNET

- Show loved ones how the Internet can be useful - to communicate with relatives or research medical information.
- Consider needs and disabilities. A tablet or touchscreen computer may be easier to operate than a keyboard and mouse. Some companies make computers specifically for seniors.
- Start with the basics if you're training someone. Be patient.
- Send frequent e-mail messages or find other ways to keep them engaged
- Keep security issues in mind. Show seniors ways to stay safe online and what information not to give out.