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# THE PRESTIGE PRESS

## Sorry To Intrude, But...



In May all of the Regional Property Managers, Regional Vice Presidents and most of the Leadership team met for a two day retreat and I presented some thoughts on Day 2 that I have summarized below.

If you had a spouse, family member or close friend that was behaving in a way that was putting their life at risk, would you feel obligated to intervene or at a minimum would you feel like you would try to communicate with the person to see how you could help them change their behavior? I believe that most of us would make an effort to help and everybody at the retreat said that they would definitely try to get involved. Most of us spend more time with our co-workers than we do with any of our friends and I can honestly say that many of the people that I work with are some of the most important people in my life. With that perspective I am choosing to intrude and encourage those of you who are smokers to stop behaving in a way that is killing you.

My dad was a chain smoker and one day while he was working on his automobile he lit himself on fire when he dropped a match on his gas and oil soaked overalls. He suffered 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns over 90% of his body and lost one of his lungs and only had 50% capacity in his other lung because of this accident. He never did quit smoking and subsequently contracted emphysema. He was required to use a respirator every three or four hours because his remaining lung could not function without help. In spite of his condition he smoked 2-3 packs of cigarettes a day and he continued to smoke for the entire 20 years that he lived after his accident. My father died when I was 10 years old and I really only have a few lasting memo-



ries of him. One thing I still clearly remember is when I would get up in the middle of the night and search for his cigarettes and then would break them in half and go outside and throw them into the bushes. I would return to bed but would always be woken up by the sound of my father wheezing outside my bedroom window as he was scavenging for his broken cigarettes. Another vivid memory was driving with my dad when he would have an attack and he would drive like a maniac until he found a place that had an electrical outlet so that I could set up his respirator. The respirator was packaged in three different suitcases with two of the cases weighing in excess of 30 pounds each. I was charged with loading and unloading them into the car as well as assembling it when my father was short of breath. This may not sound like much, but I was 6 or 7 years old and barely weighed as much as the two heaviest suitcases. I always knew that my dad would die if I didn't get the respirator set up and I can't tell you how many times I thought I wouldn't be able to set it up on time. Over the last three years of his life he spent more than half of his time in the hospital and I got to shuttle between four or five family members and friends home.



I always felt a big empty space in my life because of the loss of my dad and it took me many years to realize just how much I resented him for his absolute and total selfishness. Selfish because he chose cigarettes instead of doing the responsible thing and extend his life by quitting smoking so that he could raise his son. I can't tell you what I would have given to just have a few more years with him or to have just had him in good enough health to play catch with me or go to a movie with me. If you are a smoker and you have children, then I am going to suggest to you that you put yourself and your child in the scenario that I lived through and described above and see if you really don't think that quitting



smoking is worth the aggravation. You can always come up with an excuse to not stop smoking, but I can't think of a more selfish thing to do than to kill yourself slowly by smoking. If the yellow teeth, raspy voice, leathery skin, yellow nails and bad breath isn't enough to get you to stop then imagine what you will put your loved ones through when they witness you go through a long, slow and agonizing death. Imagine what wonderful memories that your children, family and friends will miss out on. You are probably the single most important person in several other people's lives and you are going to hurt them in ways that you won't be able to imagine if you continue to smoke.



I want to challenge all of you smokers to quit. To accomplish one of the most difficult things that you can possibly attempt. If not for yourself, then do it for all of us that love you and all of us that need you in our lives.



# The Accounting Arena

Concessions Forms, Concessions Forms, Concessions Forms. I bet you're all tired of hearing about them. However, they are here to stay as long as we are giving concessions to our Residents. These forms have been put in place to protect Managers at the site, our owners and the Residents from fraud and to strengthen our internal control systems. They acknowledge that the Resident is aware of being given a credit, the terms of the credit, and that no fraudulent activity is occurring.

Here are a few tips that may help to make the process a little easier for everyone:

1. Add the concession form to the packet of information Residents are given when they sign their leases.
2. Explain to the Residents that they need to fill in all required information: phone number, signature and date they are signing (all concession forms must be signed by the Resident). We do make random phone calls to Residents to confirm that they did indeed sign this form, and they are aware of the credit they are receiving.
3. Make sure, as the Manager that you are filling in the name of the property and the correct property number or name. This is especially important if you are a Manager at more than one property. The Resident's name should be the name listed in Powersite as head of household. Also write the correct unit number on the concession form.
4. The amount of the concession is very important in that it is the same amount as you are giving. Quite often these forms come in with a different amount on them than what is being given. If you are giving a one-time concession, fill in the "One-time Rent Concession" portion. If you are giving a recurring concession, you will fill in the "Monthly Rent Concession" portion. Please make sure in either section that you have the correct dates covered by the concession.
5. For M2 properties - set up a "Schedule Rent Change" for the month that the concession form expires. This will prevent the Resident from being given a credit after the concession has expired.
6. For M2 properties - put a note in your Outlook calendar to remind yourself to make sure the concession isn't given after it has expired or to fill out a new form when the Resident renews his or her lease.
7. Once this form is completely filled out and the Manager has signed it, fax it to your Regional Manager for their signature and ask them to forward it on to your Property Accountant (for RD properties, it should be submitted to Rental Accounting). If they are going to be at your site soon, they can sign it then, and you could forward it on to the Property Accountant.



These forms should be sent to the Property Accountant (Rental Accountant for RD sites) as they are given. Do not wait for a request to submit them.

By following these steps it will make everyone's job of tracking concessions and strengthening our internal controls so much easier.



## Ramblings from your RVP... Dustin Miller

So you have all heard somebody say it, “What we do isn’t really that hard.” or “Its not rocket science.” We didn’t have to pass the bar exam or endure 10 years of medical school to obtain our jobs. So then why does this industry have such a high turnover rate? Why do we sometimes feel overwhelmed? Why does performance sometimes become stagnant?

I think one of the answers is that there is an ever-increasing amount of “things” that get thrown at us every day. While any one single item in itself is not difficult, the volume of tasks always seems to increase. One thing you should know is that we recognize this and are working to simplify systems and processes. It’s Paul Spencer’s mantra. I’m confident that day-to-day processes and systems will become easier and more efficient.

The second reason for some of the frustration is the not knowing how to structure these tasks and work flow.

So, what can you do to make the process of apartment management easier? Here are a few tips that have worked for me and have recently worked to increase performance at a few of our communities.

I write this article from the perspective of the Site Manger. If you’re not the Manager, please continue to read on. You have some skin in this game as well. If you’re not being asked to participate in a format as outlined below, please seek it out. It will help you perform at a higher level.

### **Initiate a daily meeting with your Maintenance Supervisor and discuss the following items.**

- What is the status of **Unit Turns**?
- What resources are needed to get all vacant units market-ready?
- Are the vacant units being turned within the company standard of 3-5 days?
- What is the status of all outstanding **Resident Service Requests**? Are the requests being completed in 24 hours, per company standard?
- Discuss ongoing priorities, such as, special projects and capital improvements.
- How does the property look? Is the **Curb Appeal** up to standard?



### **Initiate a daily Meeting with your Assistant Manager or Leasing Consultant and discuss the following items.**

- What is the up-to-the-minute status of delinquent rent? What activities will be taken today to increase **Collections**?
- Do we have any Notices to vacate? If so, how do we change their mind?



- Review current **Occupancy**.
- What is the status of all applications? How do we move them in today?
- What is the status of **Compliance** relative to re-certifications and lease renewals? How do we get everyone complete at the 120-day mark?
- What marketing and outreach activities will you do today to increase occupancy?

It's my belief that these quick meetings can generally be accomplished in 15-20 minutes each. Imagine within the first hour of the business day all staff members have a clear idea of the status of operation in the key **Big Six** areas. Everyone has shared input, discussed the roadblocks, and has a clear agreed upon commitment for the day. You, the Manager, can now focus on removing roadblocks, communicating with your Regional Manager on areas where you need support, and tackling issues that require your expertise and experience.

At the end of the day, plan on spending a few minutes with these same team members to see what was accomplished. On some days more than what was planned will get finished, and some days less. Focus on forward progress, and constantly regroup and refine direction. You are on track if you can answer 'yes' to the following questions:

- Have we done everything we can to collect all the rent that is due?
- Have we done everything we can to renew all of our current leases?
- Have we done everything possible today to get all our units market ready?
- Have we done everything we can to market and lease our vacant apartments?
- Have we made our community better today than it was yesterday by our actions?

Property Management is not simple. It's a lot of hard work, and it takes dedication to be successful. We can, however, try to simplify the animal and make it manageable. How about giving the format I've suggested above a try? I guarantee that if you do this for one month, 20 workdays, you will increase the performance of your community and set the stage for a less stressful summer! Don't believe me? Contact Keith and team at Golden Crest and Shelly and team at Cascade. These groups of All-stars have recently made dramatic improvements at their communities by taking on this approach. Please give it a try. You have nothing to lose and perhaps improvements in Occupancy and Collections to gain. (Think.... Dash for the Cash!)



## The Big Six

- **Occupancy**
- **Collections**
- **Compliance**
- **Service Requests**
- **Unit Turns**
- **Curb Appeal**



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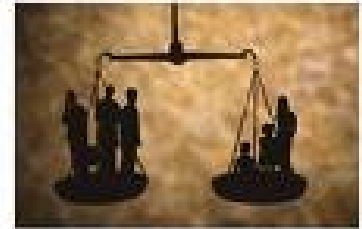
*Do the Right Thing!*

# Five Signs of Job Burnout...

## And What to Do About It

Do you think you never have or never will experience work burnout? Consider these statistics:

- The American worker has the least vacation time of any modern, developed society.
- In 2007, 20 percent of workers said they would be checking in with the office while on vacation.
- More than half of workers say they work under a great deal of stress, and 77 percent say they feel burned out on the job.
- Forty-four percent of working moms admit to being preoccupied about work while at home and one-fourth say they bring home projects at least one day a week.
- Nineteen percent of working moms reported they often or always work weekends.
- Thirty-seven percent of all working dads said they would consider the option of taking a new job with less pay if it offered a better work/life balance.
- Thirty-six percent of working dads reported they bring work home at least one day a week and 30 percent say they often or always work weekends.



These statistics, taken from CareerBuilder.com surveys of American workers, demonstrate the pressures employees in the United States are under to be available to the office, despite responsibilities -- or plans -- away from work. All this, coupled with longer work hours and many individuals handling the workloads of two, can easily lead to worker burnout.

If you think burnout on the job is just an excuse used by the weak to get out of responsibilities, think again. Stress and burnout can affect your immune system and has been linked to migraines, digestive disorders, skin diseases, high blood pressure and heart disease. It causes emotional distress as well.

"Job burnout is a response to work stress that leaves you feeling powerless, hopeless, fatigued, drained and frustrated," writes Dr. Audrey L. Canaff, a UC Foundation Assistant Professor in the Counseling Program at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in her article on WorkplaceBlues.com. "But since job burnout is not an overnight occurrence, it's important to recognize its early signs and to act before the problem becomes truly serious."



## Consider these five warning signs of burnout:

**Sign No. 1: Your co-workers are walking on eggshells around you.**

If you find yourself becoming cranky and irritable with co-workers you used to get along with, it may be more than just typical interpersonal dynamics.

**Sign No. 2: You come in late and want to leave earlier.**

You used to wake up in the morning excited for another day, but now every day you dread heading into the office. Once lunch passes you start watching the clock, counting the minutes to the end of the day.

**Sign No. 3: Apathy has replaced enthusiasm.**

You feel no motivation, no sense of accomplishment and have no desire to be challenged. Those who have burnout lose their motivation to perform, as well as their feelings of pride for a job well done.

**Sign No. 4: You've lost camaraderie with co-workers.**

You're no longer interested in the company network. You used to go to lunch, go out for drinks and participate in other company functions but now have no desire in socializing in or out of the office.

**Sign No. 5: You're feeling physically sick.**

You always feel exhausted, have headaches, feel tension in all of your muscles and are having trouble sleeping. These physical signs are common indicators of job stress, and demonstrate that this can turn into a physical problem.

If you are experiencing these symptoms, it's time to make some changes. You can start by talking to your boss or someone in your human resources department about how you can confront the problem together by redefining deadlines, delegating or outsourcing a project or two. In her book "Stress Management for Busy People," Carol A. Turkington recommends taking these proactive steps:



- Learn to say no
- Reevaluate your goals
- Reduce your commitments at work and at home
- Learn stress management skills
- Get plenty of rest and eat a healthy diet.

Finally, give yourself a break. This means taking your vacation days, no matter how important your job is, and taking little breaks every day to re-group, re-energize and unwind. Remember, if you don't take care of yourself in the office, your work will suffer and your health may pay the price, too.

# The RPM Review...



Do you know that you do not have to be perfect to be happy or successful? I didn't...I have spent many years trying to achieve perfection. I have always thought that I had to be the perfect mom, wife, employee, daughter, etc. and it has physically and emotionally exhausted me! I have never expected perfection out of anyone else but myself and I am sure I am not the only one out there that has experienced this.

I recently had a chance to watch a presentation by Marcus Buckingham. For those of you that have not read any of his material, he is a best selling author and consultant who has spent several years researching and documenting pre-conceived ideas of what success actually is and how you go about reaching it. He addresses more than 250,000 people around the world each year. Marcus claims that his "strengths revolution" is the key to finding the most effective

route to personal success—and the missing link to the efficiency, competency and success for which many companies constantly strive. This particular presentation was about individual strengths and weaknesses and what would happen if people spent 75% of their days working to their strengths and working around their weaknesses. I know what you are thinking right now...how can we spend that much time doing what we are good at and we like the most. It is called work for a reason, right?

Let me ask you this...do you think that you will ultimately be more successful in life focusing on what you love doing or focusing on getting better at the things you are not as good at or that you currently do not like? If you believe that you will be more successful concentrating on your strengths, you are actually a minority. In America, only 3 out of 10 people believe that – the other 7 think the only way to be truly successful is to continuously work on your weaknesses. As a matter of fact, we even have a tendency to raise our children that way. I myself spend more time focusing on my children's poor grades than on their A's. This is something I would never do to the people I work with, yet I do it to my children. If you look at the average employee review in this country, 20 out of a 30-minute annual review is spent on goals someone else has set for you or items your supervisor has said you need to improve. Who do you think knows your strengths and weaknesses better than you? Don't you think you should know them better than anyone else?



Mr. Buckingham had a great way to define these two items. He defines a strength as something that makes you feel stronger and better about yourself before you do it, while you are doing it and after you are finished doing it.

Strengths are the things you do well consistently and energetically. A weakness is something that drains you, whether you are good at it or not. If it leaves you feeling exhausted, possibly even miserable or you find yourself dreading and avoiding the project, it is a weakness. That does not mean we can avoid doing anything we do not like but we can learn how to manage around these items and not allow them to change our behavior. Like it or not, we really do not change who we are from birth. So often, people say, "Wow, he or she has really changed". We grow and learn how to manage around our weaknesses but deep down, we remain the same person until we die. We may hate confrontation as a child and get used to it as an adult but we still don't have to like it and it certainly may not exhilarate us.



The core beliefs his organization teaches are

- 1) You were born different from everyone else
- 2) You are the best teacher about what makes you different
- 3) You must learn this in order to perform better, contribute more and achieve your greatest personal success.

If you look at the greatest companies in the world... the training systems are probably the same but within that company, you will have teams working at very different levels. The teams that function at the higher end of the spectrum are most likely the groups that have learned how to leverage their strengths and offer them to the entire company, for the betterment of the organization, as a whole. These teams have proven to have more long-term employees, better communication and increased productivity.

With that in mind, I will now mention that writing is NOT one of my strengths and I will leave you with the link to Mr. Buckingham's website and one of my favorite videos. I hope you will find it as interesting as I did and take the time to incorporate some of his ideas into your life.



[http://www.marcusbuckingham.com/site/why\\_strengths/video.php](http://www.marcusbuckingham.com/site/why_strengths/video.php)

Submitted By: Tracie Robinson, RPM

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## VA Benefit Seminar

Heritage Place at Ridge Valley in Milford will be hosting a VA Benefit Seminar put on by the American Association For Wartime Veterans. They will be providing information to Wartime Veterans and/or their spouses about the Improved Pension Program. This is a tax-free pension benefit to help our Wartime Veterans and spouses with the cost of independent or assisted living. Many American Wartime Veterans are unaware that they may be entitled to this Federal Program mandated by Congress and administered by the Veterans Administration. Qualifying veterans and/or surviving spouses may receive up to \$1,554 per month. This event is being marketed with the help of our local VFW centers, American Legions, Senior Centers and local papers. It should be well attended and give Heritage Place at Ridge Valley an opportunity show the community of Milford our new retirement community.

The VA Benefit Seminar is being held on **June 26, 2008 at 6:30 pm**. The event is open to the public and also the residents of Heritage Place at Ridge Valley.

If anyone has any questions or would like to attend, please call 248.676.2121

Submitted By: Gloria Krass  
Leasing Consultant  
Heritage Place at Ridge Valley

# Working With Seniors

Who are these strange looking people and what the heck are they doing?

November 2007



May 2008



If you guessed Dishwashers, Tool and Dye Operators, or sanitation Workers then *you* haven't attended the "Working with Seniors" class yet! The WWS class is in its second year and the most recent session was held on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The class is held twice yearly and is designed to increase participants' awareness of the challenges and limitations our residents may face as they grow older. It is presented in an interactive format that allows attendees to obtain information that may be of benefit in the work setting as well as in their own personal lives. Feedback from participants indicates that the class is "eye-opening", "informative", and "highly recommended".



*Be on the lookout for the next session in November and be sure to join us there!*

Submitted By: Kelly Green  
Service Coordinator Program Director



# The Game of Life

By: Karen Mead

In an ever increasingly fast-paced world, society has taken on an "on-demand" nature. We have fast food, microwaveable meals, video games and movies streamed to our televisions and personal computers via the internet or cable company, express self-service lines at the grocery store, and a hoard of instantaneous services and features that promote convenience and better quality of life.



With the push of a button, we can receive photos and emails on our mobile phones. We can even diagnose our ailments and symptoms through a few clicks of our mouse. Everything seems to be moving at warp speed. We hardly have time to take a moment to catch our breath, and it is relatively easy to become overwhelmed.

I recently found this subject becoming part of almost every conversation I was having with family, friends and colleagues. As I have been contemplating what subject to write about this month, it came to me during my evening golf league as I was attempting to hit the ball from a sand shot and found myself complaining about what a bad golfer I am. Now, let me preface this with those of you who know me well, know that I can be pretty hard on myself on the golf course. I know most of you who have had the great pleasure of being on the course with me are laughing at the thought. As I made the shot, which only went about 2 feet, I said to my golf partner, "Why can't I hit the ball like Tiger Woods? He makes it look so easy."

Watching Tiger Woods play is very inspiring; he does seem to make every stroke look simple. The game of golf is very similar to the game of life. Tiger has a tremendous ability to stay focused. When the camera is on him, during play, look at his eyes - he never waivers from his end result.



Even when he has an "impossible" shot (which most of mine are) he takes his time, looks at it from all angles, decides on a solution, takes a few practice swings, steps up to the ball, looks out to where he expects the ball to land and then hits ball. More often than not, the ball will land exactly where he wants it to go. People will say, "That was a miracle shot," or "What a lucky shot." It really isn't a miracle or luck; other golfers could do the same if they were focused.

Tiger also has the ability to stay in the "zone," or the ability to be in the moment. There is no past, no future, just the moment of focus so that the ball lands where he has envisioned.

How does this affect your and my life? Well, I know that I am not going to be a pro golfer, that is for sure. But we do have our own dream of how we want to live. And, if we follow Tiger's example and our focus never waivers from our end result, then the likelihood of winning what we desire is increased. We will more than likely experience some challenges, but if we look at all of our options, decide on a course of action, take a few practice swings (which I like to refer to as failures), step up and do what's needed, then put it into action, we will strengthen our chances to win this game called "Life."

So the next time you find yourself moving at warp speed and unable to catch your breath, stop, take a deep breath and focus. "Take time along the way to stop and smell the flowers," is a quote my Father has always used since I was little a girl. Truly live by it and you too will win the Game!

# Has it Been "One of Those Days"?

So you've had a bad day at the office. Nothing seemed to go right, from disastrous client meetings and bungled reports, right down to the deli giving you the wrong sandwich order at lunch.

It happens to everyone at one time or another. But now how do you deal with it when you leave work? Are you going to stomp home and slam all the doors? Take it out on the dog? Let's hope not. Here are some suggestions for putting a dreadful day behind you.

## **Breathe deeply.**

On your way home from work, take a few deep breaths to take in some extra oxygen and calm your nerves. It's simple, effective, and can be done on the bus, train or while you're driving.

## **Don't walk in the door right away.**

If you still feel that swell of anxiety or anger, don't open that door! Instead, turn right around and go for a stroll around the block. Look at the sky; listen to the birds. Try to distance yourself from thoughts of the office and the horrible day you just survived, and just drink in the calm.

## **Don't drink.**

You may be tempted to drown your sorrows with a few belts of liquor. This isn't a good idea. Because alcohol is a depressant, this may only deepen your gloomy mood. It also will make it that much harder to "get back on that horse" the next morning if you're suffering from a headache or hangover.

## **Exercise.**

One of the best ways to shed all that extra stress from a day gone south is to strap on your tennis shoes, grab your iPod and simply take off. Do you like to ride a bike? Jog? Take the dog for an extra-long walk? Whatever mode you prefer, just do it. Burn off the stress through exercise and not only will you have an instant attitude adjustment, you'll be doing something healthy as well. (And your dog will thank you!)



## **Take up a hobby.**

Love to work crossword puzzles? Build ships in bottles? Paint? Knit? Become immersed in your favorite hobby. Focusing on planning or finishing a project will take your mind off the office and ease your tension.

## **Don't rehash it.**

Avoid recapping the whole big, ugly day to your spouse or your best friend. It could refuel your frustration or anxiety, and you may not get the empathy you're looking for.

## **Laugh.**

Sometimes things go so wrong all you can do is throw your hands up and laugh. Laughter is gaining strides in the medical community for helping in all kinds of health situations. So purge those stress hormones from your body with a good, hearty guffaw.



## **Escape with a book.**

Lose yourself in a good book or movie. Nothing sweeps you away from the moment like your imagination.

There are many positive things you can do to combat a bad day at work. But one of the most important things to remember is tomorrow is another day. Try to wake up with a brand new outlook to face a brand new day.

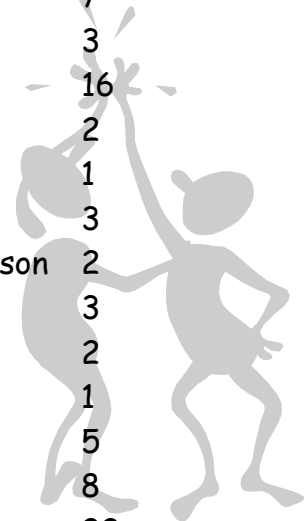
# Happy Anniversary!



We appreciate your contribution toward helping us become the best, most respected property management company in the industry. Thank you for all of the hard work you do!

Congratulations to the following individuals on their Anniversary!

<b>NAME</b>	<b># of Years</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b># of Years</b>
Nafisa Abdalla	1	Ernesto Numa	1
Rasheed Ali	1	Amy Ollila	1
Harold Amy, Jr.	5	Paul Pietraszewski	1
Daryl Anderson	1	Roberto Ramirez	1
Thomas Backers	5	Donald Retzloff	2
Shavone Ballard	4	Daniel Robinson	4
Daniel Behan	5	Russell Rockentine	1
Klayton Benbow	1	Matthew Vansluyters	1
William Bolish	1	Armanda Vida	1
James Bullock	2	Phillip Waters	2
Ozie Cato	1	Tricia Deplanty	14
Shauna Clark	2	Jaimie Emenhiser	3
Ronald Cloud	2	Lisa Nichols	14
Mikka Davis	1	Mike Battle	7
George Dehelian	2	Mary Bawal	3
Gary Dill	2	Laurie Hattis	16
Raymond Edel	10	Jeffrey Hensley	2
Clarice Furgerson	11	Dennis Hulburt	1
Floyd Haley	7	Albert Meccia	3
Linda Hansen	3	Mary Mitchell-Sampson	2
Michell Hillier	1	Randy Rolston	3
Lisa Ingram	1	Dean Salva	2
Amelia Lake	3	Dan Sanders	1
Larry Lange	4	Thomas Terryn	5
Leroy Lowe	2	Valerie Syers	8
Michael Nowosad	8	Ardith Weeks	22



# Compliance Corner

*A little humor from the  
Compliance Department...*

## Who Do These People Think I Am?

### I am the site manager.

I make sure everyone pays their rent; that units are ready for occupancy; that the ad is in the paper; that I show available units and try not to violate fair housing law. I have to apply the proper landlord/tenant law if the neighbors don't want to stop the opera lessons in their apartments before 10 p.m. and be prepared to deal with children who are practicing their carving skills on the hallway carpeting. Let's not forget that the lawn has to be mowed and the flowers planted, and that I must make certain that supplies are ordered or oversee the staff who do that. I go to court, I go to the post office, I go crazy trying to keep everyone happy. I create newsletters, post late-rent notices, and let folks who have forgotten their keys back into their apartments because I live on site and am so happy to help out in emergencies. Now I am supposed to do Sec. 42 compliance work. Who do these people think I am? **GOD?**



### I am the compliance officer for the management company.

I am the person everyone hates. The site managers think that I am too strict. The owners think that I am too strict – until they get a Form 8823, and then I am not strict enough. I have to make sure that the site staff is doing compliance correctly. I review their files, make lists of everything that is not done right, and track the files until they are finally able to be approved. I spend hours on the phone trying to explain the regulations. *Why don't people just do as they are told?* My fax machine never stops. I even wake up in the middle of the night thinking about compliance. Oh, and did I mention that the owner financed this acquisition/rehab project with HOME funds and bonds, put multiple set-asides in place, and then some market-rate units to top it all off? Who do these people think I am? **GOD?**

### I am the developer/general partner.

It was my idea to do this deal. I am the one who decided that this would be a mixed income acquisition/rehab, financed with HOME funds and bonds because that was the only way it worked. The market survey said it was a good idea. The management company never fails to remind me that I should not have done this. I took the risk on this project and I have guarantees to meet. If things don't go well, I am the one who writes a check or takes the credit adjustment from the limited partner. I went through the laborious process of applying for the tax credits, of deciding how to take points in order to get the allocation, and then how to finance this project. I have put my own money on the line. I lie awake at night trying to think of ways to get this deal leased up or how to get out of this deal, and all the while my mind really wants to move on to the next one. The syndicator's asset manager checks up on me all the time. I have to send detailed reports to the state housing finance agency every year, and if they issue a Form 8823 on a building, I can kiss my developer fees good-bye. Oh, I forgot – they are already deferred. Who do these people think I am? **GOD?**

### I am the asset manager.

I work for the investor/syndicator. I watch everything relating to the fiscal and compliance operations of the project. I travel extensively. I try to hold the management company accountable for whatever is going on.

Management agents don't seem to appreciate what I do. They do not send me the reports I ask for, and even if they do, they always have an excuse for everything that's going wrong. There are too many properties in my portfolio for me to ever be able to do my job to the level I believe I should. And my "property watch list" is growing. If only the stock market would do so well. Oh, and if the general partner crashes and burns, my company may be the one who takes over as general partner, which usually means it's crisis time and I have to work some miracles to save the deal. Great. Who do these people think I am? **GOD?**

### I am the investor.

I have put a tremendous amount of money on the table to make this project work, and I did it in good faith, right upfront. Yes, I do expect every dollar of my return on my investment. I will audit these projects because I can't just relax, not with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) involved. Oh, I know the general partner is supposed to take all the risk, but I would be kidding myself if I didn't watch the backside of this deal. I try to make certain, in a limited sort of way of course, that the general partner is managing the project well. I try to make suggestions, offer help, without overstepping the boundaries established for me by my attorneys. I want more of this great tax benefit. I am not GOD, but GOD, I love this program!



### I am the state agency.

I get to select which projects will get tax credits each year and listen to all the disappointed developers complain when theirs is not selected. I have to try to figure out unclear regulations from the IRS, and answer questions from people all the time. They think I know everything. Try as I will, I just can't solve all their problems. I have to consider the political structure of the agency, the state government, and then try to set guidelines that work for everyone. HA! After all that is done, I get to go out and inspect files and units on projects all over the state each year. Let me tell you some of the things I have seen. Projects that don't exist at all, or on projects that do exist, I audit files that very nearly do not – exist, that is. Then I write up audit findings, which I report to the owners and managers. Many of them nearly faint when I mention that a Form 8823 will be issued. Then they want to argue and get me to change my mind. I can't wait until the next round of tax credit applications so that I can start this process all over again. Who do these people think I am? **GOD?**

### I am the IRS.

Congress handed me this program back in 1986 and I have been trying to understand and interpret these regulations ever since. I think that most people are doing a great job of complying and that this is truly a wonderful housing program. But honestly, some of the questions people ask make me wonder. Like, "Is there a problem with my credits if I can't locate the first-year files?" Or this one ... "Can I use a household to qualify more than one unit in the first year of the credit period?" I monitor our 8823 database; I check tax returns; I look for offenders – the people who just don't get it, or if they get it, obviously have no intention of taking our regulations seriously. Those are the guys I am after. They don't deserve these valuable tax credits. I try to make things as clear as possible, but every time I clarify something, someone thinks of something else that isn't working. I give the states quite of bit of leeway to make the program work in their state, and I expect them to monitor compliance systematically. I have recently published a guide for states to use so that they know when and how to submit Form 8823s and define corrections. Then I write a revenue procedure to help owners with problems or a private letter ruling to help one owner deal with a specific situation. Suddenly my phone is ringing off the hook. Who do people think I am? **GOD?**



### I am Congress. I am GOD.

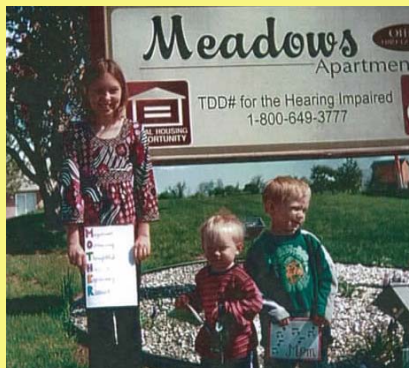
# Thoughtful Youth at Meadows Apartments

The youngsters at Meadows Apartments in Freeland wanted to do something special for some elderly residents at Liberty Square Apartments in Linwood. When Betty, the manager, mentioned that sending them some Mother's Day cards would be great, they were so excited. They made some beautiful cards and the gals at Liberty Square were thrilled.

Betty is delighted and proud of the kids from the Meadows. They have raised their own vegetable gardens and have learned how to care for them and have been able to watch them grow. They help with yard work by cleaning up the pine cones that fall and they truly care about the environment, no papers will be found on the lawn.

Betty wants to thank them for making her job so much fun as she enjoys watching them take care of their community and watching all of them grow.

Pictured: Sage Kryzvosinski, Levi Nickells, Case Perry, Brooklyn Gee, Sophia Eleisch, Andrew La-France, not pictured: Madalyn Holbrook and Hayden Hileman



# How can I get computer support?

## Help Desk Options

Support Service: KMG Prestige helpdesk is happy to provide support for all aspects of computer and printer operation. This includes computer hardware troubleshooting, computer networking and software questions. We also provide recommendations for computer and printer upgrades.



**Phone Support:** Call 989-772-7009 then select Option #5 to hold for up to five minutes for the next available support person. If your call is not answered in 5 minutes you will be given the opportunity to leave a message. This message will send a notification to the help desk so that everyone is aware we have a message pending. You can expect these messages are retrieved within 2 hours of being left.

**E-Mail Support:** [help@kmgprestige.com](mailto:help@kmgprestige.com) You will receive a notification back within 15 minutes letting you know the assigned service request number. This message will also have links that can be used to check the current status of a service request or if you wish to let us know additional information. If you use Outlook for your E-Mail Client then click on one of the links, add your information then send. Please do not change the subject line of the message when using one of the service request status links. If you use Web E-Mail the links do not work so you will need to create a new message to [help@kmgprestige.com](mailto:help@kmgprestige.com) and use one of the following *without* the Quotes:

- 1) To Get a list of All outstanding Service Request Start a New E-Mail to [help@kmgprestige.com](mailto:help@kmgprestige.com) with a Subject Line of: "**All Status**" The rest of the e-mail can be blank. In about 15 minutes you will get an e-mail back with a list of all outstanding Service Request.
- 2) To Send Additional Information to us regarding a specific Service Request use the following for the Subject Line: "**Append: #**" Where # is the Service Request Number. Use the message area to type in your additional notes, this could be something like, "I will be out of the office until Friday" or anything you feel we need. Note that when a work order has been created in our system you will automatically receive a notice that a new Service Request exists and that is the number that should be used.
- 3) To Check the Status of a Specific Service Request use the following: "**Status&body=#**" Where # is the Service Request Number. The rest of the e-mail can be blank.

### What should I provide when requesting help?

When calling or e-mailing the Help Desk, The following information will help to resolve your service request faster:

- Ø Who is requesting the support: First and Last Name plus your Property Name or Support Center Location.
- Ø Urgency: Urgent, Important, General
- Ø Contact Information: Also any special contact information like you will be leaving the office at a specific time. This will help to reduce phone tag.
- Ø Description of Problem.





- Ø What programs were you using when the problem occurred?
- Ø Can you repeat the problem or does it seem to happen at random?
- Ø Does this happen from all computers or just the PC you normally use
- Ø The more information you can provide as part of the request the faster we can resolve your issues.

When calling or e-mailing support, please express your level of urgency, for support required. Help is provided based on the order in which a request is received as well as the level of urgency required.

### Urgency Levels:

- Ø **Urgent:** System down or process not working that must be completed today.
- Ø **Important:** Unable to access a program or process that is required but does not have to be completed today.
- Ø **General:** General System questions or how-to help.



### What happens when a service request is resolved?

Our helpdesk software will automatically e-mail you with any notes that we have made as part of our resolution process. Please take a minute to review the information. We do not consider a request for service complete until you also agree so please if an issue is still not resolved let us know by referencing the original service request so we can reopen that one and see what all has been done so far.

Submitted By: Samuel Brooks  
MIS Director

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"It's the latest innovation in office safety.  
When your computer crashes, an air bag is activated  
so you won't bang your head in frustration."



# What's Cookin'?

## COOKIE SALAD

Cookie "Salad" you say??? EWWWWW!!! No, it's not a salad, it's a dessert. Very easy, very quick and very good!!!!

2 packages French Vanilla INSTANT pudding  
 2 cups buttermilk  
 1 8 oz container Cool Whip  
 1 can mandarin oranges – drained  
 About a dozen filled cookies. (Best is Keebler low fat filled chocolate)



In a mixing bowl put buttermilk. Quickly whisk in pudding. Mix in cool whip. Fold in oranges (keep about 6 or 8 pieces to decorate top) and crumble up cookies (break up into pieces, do not crush).

Put mixture into either large serving bowl or you can put into individual dessert bowls. Decorate top with oranges and stick a cookie in the middle if you wish.

Best thing about this is you can make the whole thing sugar free and it tastes just as good. If you can't find French vanilla pudding, plain vanilla will work. You can also adapt to other flavors and fruits.

Serves about 6-7 very generously, or in my family maybe 3. MMMMMM YUMMY!

Submitted by: Bobbi DeWitt



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### We want to hear from you!

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