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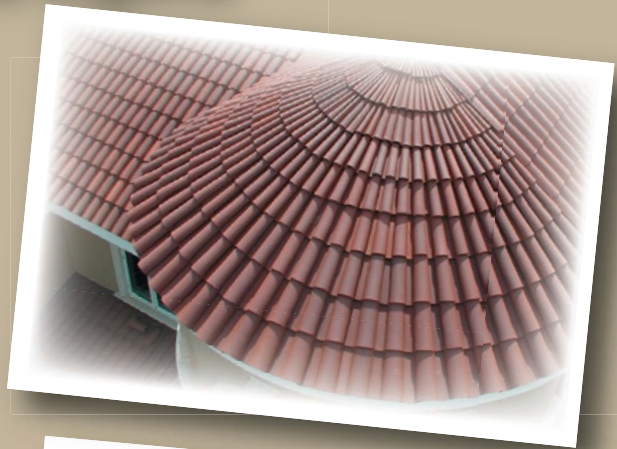
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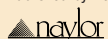
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FAA Calendar

June 28-30

**NAA Education
Conference**

Boston Convention Center
* Committee Meetings 2
Days Prior

August 6-7

**FAA Leadership Lyceum
& Board of Directors
Meeting**

Southeast Florida, Site TBD

October 10-12

**FAA Education
Conference**

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November 8-10

**NAA Assembly of
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PRESIDENT'S Message

by Susan Truesdale
Winthrop Management

It's springtime, and FAA and the local associations are in high gear with many activities. At our most recent board meeting in April, our local directors and staff reported a very active schedule of events — award ceremonies, golf and volleyball tournaments, extensive education programs and charity fundraisers to help victims of domestic violence, wounded soldiers, homeless people, people with mental and physical disabilities and children in need. It is amazing how active our locals are throughout the state, and nearly all have reported strong membership gains. My hometown Bay Area Apartment Association has reached a record 105,000 units, just to name one.

Our association had a very successful legislative program in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C., with record numbers of members attending both events. It is so exciting to see our members representing their companies and their industry with dignity and intelligence, to see them catch the passion for the political process as we try to improve the laws regulating our operations. The things we talk about, such as changes to landlord/tenant law, aren't terribly exciting, but the members who participate always say how much fun they have on our visits. If you haven't attended our legislative events, think about getting on the bus or plane next year.

We have also managed a transition from our former Vice President of Government Affairs, Chip Tatum, to

a new Government Affairs Director, Laura Heiselman. I want to thank Chip for his amazing work on FAA's behalf, not only representing us with legislators and agencies, but coming up with great ideas for fundraising, usage of technology and improved communications. Luckily, we still get to see his smiling face as Executive Vice President of AAGO. Laura emerged from a pack of 14 very strong candidates and has hit the ground running. She has a strong background in fundraising and has already helped to come up with some great ideas to enhance our conference fundraisers. We are very excited to have her working on our behalf.

One long-term project has finally come to fruition: the FAA website at www.faahq.org is online and it's amazing. The home page is clean, easy to navigate and attractive, and it is chock full of information about the association and its activities. A statewide calendar of state and local association events will help you plan your participation more easily than ever before, and you can update your membership records yourself in the membership section. PSC members who buy a link also have their logos appear on the site. It has taken a great deal of work, but the website has been brought into the modern age and it's great!

Finally, I want to call attention to the work done by Lori Trainer of Southern Affordable Services and Katie Wrenn of Milestone Management as chairs of our Housing for the Homeless Task Force. Lori was inspired by a 60 Minutes story last spring on the great number of homeless children in Florida, and worked with her longtime employer, Concord

Management, to devise a way that apartment owners could provide unsold units for homeless families for a year. Late last fall, FAA decided to get involved and try to expand similar programs statewide. Jeff Rogo with BAAA has also been working assiduously with housing agencies in that area to get a program off the ground. We want to see it in every major metro area in Florida.

It is a complicated mission, to attract members to participate in a way that makes sense, while also screening the families and enabling them to succeed in getting back on their feet. Our members make concessions such as not charging application fees and first months' rent, while suppliers have begun helping to provide household goods that these families have trouble securing for themselves. Housing agencies and charities serving the homeless provide the residents with the support services they need, while some companies such as Westgate Resorts and Sea World have agreed to provide jobs. It is a multifaceted effort addressing a complex set of needs, but it is having a great effect. Lori said that as of early May, our 100th homeless family has been placed in member apartment communities. This far, only 10 have washed out, nearly all for problems we often see in market-rate properties, such as moving in someone who is not on the lease.

I am very proud and excited about this effort. If you can render any assistance — gift baskets of household items, food, appliances, discount coupons and, of course, housing units, we'd love for you to get involved.

GRASSROOTS: Advocacy News for FAA's Roots – Our Local Affiliates!

by **Laura Heiselman**

Government Affairs Director, FAA

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVOCACY – WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Advocacy is critically important to the success of our Association at the local, state and federal levels. Thankfully, we have myriad resources at our disposal to help keep us educated, informed and engaged in the issues that impact our bottom line.

FAA is recognized in Tallahassee as an educated group that warrants attention. My experience has always been a warm reception, a listening ear, good questions and assurances that our positions will be considered. This would not be possible without all our members who realize the importance of supporting APAC.

Not being involved in Legislative matters can affect your job, your income and the investors who provide these opportunities to us. It's a rewarding feeling to know, with the help of everyone involved, we made a difference!

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

For the 2012 Legislative Session, we were primarily focused on three issues: Landlord/Tenant Law Revisions, Swimming Pool and Spa Contracting, and Expert Witness Testimony.

Landlord/Tenant Law Revisions – Support – DIED in Senate Budget Committee

SB1830, Senator Anitere Flores (R-Miami)/ HB921, Representative Kelli Stargel (R-Lakeland)

This bill would have helped landlords and tenants

The apartment industry has an interest in supporting changes to the existing landlord/tenant law that provide balance and fairness for both landlords and tenants. Thanks to the

efforts of the sponsors, this bill would have accomplished that goal in many different areas of Chapter 83 Part II.

- It would have eliminated many “gray” areas... Due to many existing ambiguities in the current law, it is not uncommon for judges to interpret language for eviction procedures, monies due, etc. in many different ways. This ambiguity is not beneficial to the landlord or the tenant as it creates uncertainty in situations that according to the lease contract are very clearly defined.
- It would have protected tenants... FAA understands and supports adding to the law certain protections for tenants that are already provided as an industry standard practice, but are not specified in state statute. One specific example is reciprocity. If a landlord requires a tenant to give a certain amount of written notice prior to vacating the premises, then it is only fair that the landlord should be required to give the same amount of written notice to the tenant if they do not intend to renew their lease agreement.
- It would have protected Communities... A provision in Florida Statute §83.56(5) (C), known as the “45-Day Rule,” has been manipulated by certain advocacy groups and the courts to allow the worst of the worst tenants to have a loophole protecting them from eviction. With certain types of affordable housing communities, under current law, a tenant who commits a crime could not be evicted if the landlord's responsibilities to evict were not met within 45-days of an incident occurring regardless of whether or not they were aware of it. This bill would clarify that the landlord would have to meet their obligations within 45-days of being notified of the incident. Florida Legal Services has indicated they

are supportive of this particular change to Florida Law.

- It would have protected our industry... Many of the provisions of this bill support the rental housing industry by correcting burdensome areas of current landlord/tenant law that benefit neither the tenant nor landlord. Examples include clarification of what is or is not acceptable in an eviction action, what responsibilities are required of both parties to the lease, allows for removal of certain problem tenants more easily, etc. While at the surface some may seem to skew heavily in favor of the landlord, the facts are that the only potential victims are bad tenants who have been protected despite their actions that violate the lease and community policies. This bill strengthens our ability to maintain a resident profile that is conducive to a healthy and vibrant apartment community.

Pool & Spa Contracting – Oppose – DIED in Senate Community Affairs Committee

SB1544, Senator Thad Altman (R-Melbourne)/ HB1259, Representative Larry Ahern (R-St. Petersburg), Co-Sponsor: Representative Franklin Sands (D-Plantation)

This bill was unnecessary

This bill would have required licensure for apartment onsite maintenance professionals to perform even the most routine and basic tasks on pools and spas. These tasks include cleaning, filter maintenance/replacement, testing, etc. Our personnel are already required by the Department of Health to be Certified Pool Operators (CPO®). This CPO certification makes them more than qualified to safely and efficiently maintain a pool or spa within the apartment community.

- Would have resulted in exponentially higher costs/rents ... If this bill were to have passed, and apartment owners were required to use “licensed” contractors, it would have resulted in much higher operating costs and an escalation in rents.
- Unlikely Passage ... We recognized that based on the bill’s lack of movement in the Senate or the House committees that its passage was unlikely during this session. However, it is an important enough issue that we felt it necessary to advise you of how devastating this would have been for an industry finally beginning to rebound from a downturn in the economy.

Expert Witness Qualifications – Support – DIED in House returning Messages

SB378, Senator Garrett Richter (R)/ HB243, Representative Larry Metz (R), Representative Michael B. Weinstein (R), Co-Sponsor: Representative Matt Gaetz (R)

This bill would have helped the apartment industry

The apartment industry, like many other industries, has been plagued by frivolous lawsuits in recent years. Many of these, especially those related to injuries or crime, are based on extremely loose interpretations of a landlord’s duty to “maintain the premises.” Additionally, many “Expert Witnesses” for plaintiffs are not held to a higher standard of qualification and are able to provide opinions on matters on which they are truly not experts. A prime example would be Expert Witnesses who supposedly specialize in security matters. This costs our industry millions of dollars in legal costs, increased insurance premiums, exposes us to greater liability, and encourages less scrupulous trial attorneys to take on cases with virtually no merit.

- Would have protected affordable housing... Affordable housing providers are especially vulnerable to lawsuits and many are finding it increasingly difficult to find an insurance carrier. This bill would have likely made it easier for them to secure insurance and

continue to be able to provide quality affordable housing.

- We stood with the business community ... Many business interests supported this bill, and the Florida Apartment Association stood with the business community in support. Any effort to institute tort reform that protects industry will be welcomed and you can count on our industry to provide data or any other resources to expedite these changes in the current and subsequent legislative sessions.

Issue Fact Sheets are available on these and other topics relevant to our industry by visiting: <http://www.naahq.org/governmentaffairs/issues/Pages/default.aspx>

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all our members who took time out of their busy schedules to represent our industry and our state at the national level! Your continued involvement is vital to the successful communication and advancement of our shared goals! ●



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Florida Apartment Industry *MAKES AN IMPACT* in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

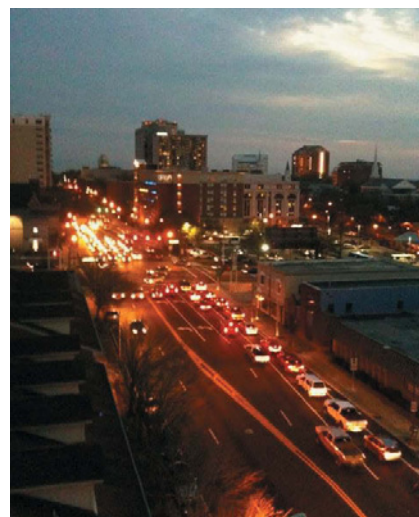
by Bobby Davis, Editor

FAA 2012 LEGISLATIVE DAYS – SPEAKING WITH A UNIFIED VOICE

Over 140 delegates attended FAA's 2012 Legislative Days in Tallahassee –nearly a record-breaking crowd! Members who attended received a federal update from Alison Berry, NAA Manager of State & Local Government Affairs, and were briefed by Chip Tatum and Laura Heiselman on FAA's priority issues that would be addressed on the hill the next day. In what is certain to become a staple at Legislative Days, attendees were delighted by the acting prowl of BAAA's Jeff Rogo (an

encore performance), AAGO's Mark Ogier and Carey Bradburn, FAA's Harry Heist, and Chip Tatum as "Legislators Behaving Badly" and the association members who cope with them. These fun skits showed us how to successfully lobby our lawmakers and emphasized the importance of listening. Many thanks also go to Ashley Ligas, SEFAA's Government Affairs Director, for organizing and narrating the "Dos and Don'ts of Lobbying."

Ashley reported that a record 20 SEFAA members attended, including a lot of first-timers. They flew up together on Tuesday, before the rest of the group arrived, and dropped in on 19 offices



The night view from Hotel Duval in Tallahassee.





(above and p.10 bottom) FCAA members enjoy their legislative appointments in Tallahassee.

for which they didn't have appointments scheduled beforehand. She noted that supplier members sponsored each of the management members to attend Legislative Days. As one supplier told her, "We support our clients, who support our business."

In addition, we were provided a Session update by one of our Tallahassee lobbyists, Kelly Mallette, and we honored the 2011 Legislator of the Year, Senator Jack Latvala.

NAA's Alison Berry said, "This was my first time participating in FAA's Legislative Days, and I was impressed and encouraged by what I saw. It's obvious that the members are activated and engaged, and it was great to see so many people who live and work in our industry ably representing multifamily interests at the capital."

"FAA Legislative Days continues to get better and better," said FAA President-Elect Linda Paolo of WRH Realty Services. "We had a packed house for the briefing and it was nice to have someone from NAA with us for the briefing and during our visits

in Tallahassee. The briefing went smoothly, as the Legislative Days Handbook held all the information that we needed for our legislative visits. Everyone liked the skits, which gave the members some idea of what to expect during the visits. In addition, the 2012 Legislative Days Talking Points were informative and easy to follow. I especially liked the committee information so we could relay to the Senators and Representatives exactly where the bills were the day of our visit.

"Our AAGO meetings went well," Linda continued. "Most everyone we spoke with was aware of the Landlord/Tenant Law Revisions bill and we did not receive any opposition. More reps are familiar with FAA and everyone knows Ron Book and Kelly Mallette.

"On a personal note, after I completed my meetings I was heading to The Capital Grille for lunch and The Governor was walking to the Capital so we shook hands as I introduced myself."



SCAA's Legislative team in Tallahassee.

FAA also recognized its generous APAC donors of \$100 or more at a dessert reception with lawmakers at the Hotel Duval's trendy Level 8 terrace.

"Our APAC event attracted about 10 legislators, including Senator Latvala, and the incoming Speaker of the House, Chris Dorworth," Ashley said. "We'd like to get more FAA members there next time, but it was a very nice event."

"The venue for the APAC donor event could not have been better – outdoors on a beautiful night, on the eighth floor

overlooking the city," Linda said. "The signature APAC drink was a nice touch."

Many of our members have attended Legislative Days for several years. One such example, Dana Caudell of Madison Apartment Group, a Regional Property Manager and Legislative Chair of AAGO, finds great value in participating in Legislative Days. "Not only have I met people in the industry who have now become close business associates, but I always come back from FAA's Legislative Days with a sense of

pride for my personal and Association accomplishments.

"A lot of people do not realize what goes on behind the scenes legislatively and how many bills we have been able to get passed or amended in our favor. If I could share one thing with our associates, it is our duty to defend our industry and being involved on all levels by joining a committee and attending Legislative Days is imperative to our success."

Donna Reiter, Regional Sales Manager for Appliance Warehouse of America, Legislative Chair at SCAA and BOD for the Legislative Committee for AAGO, echoed Dana's assertions. "After attending Legislative Days for several years now I find that every trip teaches me something and I arrive back with a better knowledge of how the process works."

We would also be remiss not to thank Reuben Parker and Roto-Rooter (www.rrsc.com) for their generous sponsorship of our FAA Legislative Days Handbook! Reuben always comes through in the clutch.



(left) Part of the AAGO team with Senator Gary Siplin, fourth from left.

(below) SCAA members visit one of their legislators.





The White House glistens in the spring sun.

NAA CAPCON 2012: APARTMENTS – “THE NEW AMERICAN DREAM”

The State of Florida sent 36 delegates to this year’s NAA Capital Conference in Washington, D.C. It was a little different this year, as Congress was not in session. But there was still plenty to do.

While there, we were briefed on various issues of importance to our industry, had an opportunity to meet with and learn from our colleagues from throughout the nation, and lobbied Congressional staffers on Capitol Hill. Many attendees were Hill veterans who had participated in CapCons over the last several years. Ron Wenzel, FAA’s Executive Committee Secretary/Treasurer has attended CapCon for over five years.

“I think it’s vital to the continued success of our industry that we all attend or make every attempt to attend CapCon when possible. It’s important that we show our appreciation for those lawmakers who understand and support our positions and to voice our feelings about how current or proposed law[s] may impact our bottom line. It’s also a great time to meet with other associates from throughout the country and share our issues, successes or challenges.”

“We met with some aides from our district and ended up talking to them about federal pool legislation,” Ashley Ligas said. “Having dealt with this issue in Florida, it was ironic. Tom Masterson, Mary Linneken and I had some fruitful discussions.”

We also had some first-time attendees at this year’s event. Rob Johansen, Legislative Chair of the Emerald Coast Apartment Association and 2012 President of the Mobile Bay Area Apartment Association, feels strongly about making your voice heard. “Whether you’re directly in the multi-housing industry or indirectly involved, such as a vendor, lobbying our Congressional leaders is of the utmost importance. We’re best equipped to keep them informed when it comes to policy decisions that could have an impact on our industry. I encourage everyone who is involved in multi-housing to get involved with your local affiliate and exercise your right to speak up. It truly makes a difference and shows those who make key legislative decisions that we, as a whole, care.”

Our main issue areas of focus were:

1) Highlighting the burdensome, duplicative and inconsistent regulations coming down from federal agencies, particularly the EPA.



Geoff Harlan and Lori Krull have a bit of trouble navigating Washington, D.C.



Lori Krull and Jordan Petras enjoy a refreshing pause.

2) GSE Reform – multifamily programs were not part of the meltdown, are not broken and produced net revenue for the U.S. government.

3) Tax Reform – advocating for a comprehensive overhaul to our tax system that won’t unfairly burden apartment owners and renters relative to other asset classes.

The Capitol Conference brings FAA members together with the national apartment industry and NAA, and is a valuable learning experience just for that reason. It is also a heady experience walking the hallowed floors of the House and Senate buildings and seeing Washington’s many beautiful memorials, museums and national treasures.

“Thank you to everyone who attended this year’s event!” said FAA Government Affairs Director Laura Heiselman. “Together, we amplified the needs of our industry in a consistent, clear and unified voice. I encourage you to continue to get to know your lawmakers and regularly engage in the political process. Relationships are key to maintaining our effectiveness in protecting our interests. Lawmakers and their legislative staff appreciate hearing directly from you, their constituents!” ●

Caution: Spring Might Bring Killer Bees to Your Community



by Bob Belmont,
Massey Services

Most people think of bees buzzing in the sky as just part of spring, but now that Africanized honeybees (also referred to as “killer bees”) have made their way to Florida, we need to be more cautious. The common honeybee you see in Florida is generally the non-aggressive European honeybee, but, unfortunately, killer bees look nearly identical to them. For that reason they cannot be easily discerned from one another, even by a good entomologist. Given that your apartment community might attract some dangerous insect residents without your knowing, it is important to understand how much more serious the threat of killer bees are compared with the common honeybees.

First of all, Africanized bees reproduce more quickly and create more hives than the common honeybees.

Beginning in spring, half
the bees in a
hive will

swarm to create a new one. A common beehive will have one to three swarms each year, while killer bees swarm up to 16 times per year. That means that they can establish new hives all over Florida and possibly in your community more quickly. These colonies can establish nests in a wide variety of locations, such as inside covered water meter boxes, manholes, exterior walls, hollowed areas of trees, discarded tires, roof eaves, chimneys, crawl spaces, sheds, abandoned vehicles and trash piles.

Not only do killer bees build more hives, they are much more aggressive. Over 80% of a killer bee colony will aggressively attack and pursue their threat for as far as 500 feet from their hive, versus a very small portion of common honeybees chasing you no more than 80 feet away from their hive. However, all beehives should be eliminated only by a Certified Pest Control Operator, as recommended by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Apartment communities need to address swarm and hive issues as soon as they are identified to protect their residents and the property for two main reasons:

1) To protect your residents from a stinging incident.

About two million people in the United States are allergic to bee stings and just one or two stings can place them into anaphylactic shock. Allergic reactions are also more common among children, the elderly and pets. Severe allergic reactions can result in death, contributing to nearly 100 Americans that die every year from bee stings.

2) Hives can be built in hard to reach areas and become more difficult to eliminate the larger they grow.

For example, hives built in a wall can't simply be sealed up if an established hive has been in the wall for more than a week, because, most likely, a honeycomb has been created. If a honeycomb is left intact, it can leak honey, which could stain walls, baseboards and the carpet. The abandoned honeycomb can even attract new bees, which will clean out the old hive and resume residency!

The best way to reduce the chances of bees moving into your apartment community is through PREVENTION.

Here are a few Prevention Tips your maintenance personnel should follow:

- Inspect routinely for any bee activity and make sure to inspect weekly from March to July.
- Bee-proof all buildings by detecting gaps and voids on the walls and eaves of the buildings where small gaps (1/8 inch or larger) could allow bees to enter. Then seal these gaps, especially around and behind conduits, electrical boxes, plumbing accesses and chimneys.
- Remove any unnecessary possible nesting sites that can be taken off of the property or properly stored (i.e. discarded tires, abandoned vehicles or trash piles).
- Screen openings in eaves, vents, cavities of trees, fence posts, water meters and utility boxes with 1/8 inch hardware cloth.

If you do find bees moving in and setting up shop, contact Massey Services for a free, no-obligation inspection and estimate for eliminating bees on one or more of your properties.

Bob Belmont is a Board-Certified Entomologist, Pest Prevention Training & Technical Director for Massey Services, Inc. in Orlando, Fla.





How to Avoid Over-Insuring Your Apartment Property

by **Ryan Cassidy**
and **Evan Seacat**,
Franklin Street

In our day-to-day work, we consistently see multifamily properties that are over-insured. Many apartment managers and owners are paying for insurance they don't need or aren't taking advantage of various opportunities to lower their premiums.

Because the insurance business is complex and requires a lot of education to stay on top of the latest issues, it can be tough for apartment managers and owners to know how to determine whether the property is over-insured. So here are a few tips that can help ensure you're paying the lowest rates possible for your apartment property while still having effective coverage.

1. Once a year, have an insurance agent who specializes in commercial real estate provide a free assessment to review your insurance policies. Because the agent works in the insurance field day in and day out, he or she will be able to recognize whether you're paying too much for coverage and suggest ways you may be able to lower premiums. The type of construction of the buildings on the property may entitle you to insurance credits, so make sure the agent personally visits the property to see the buildings and note potential savings.

2. Make sure your insurance company has an accurate record of the property's "replacement cost." Because of the tough economy, the cost of labor and materials provided by contractors in recent years has declined. This means the costs to replace recently constructed buildings may be lower than what the insurance company is estimating. Make sure the insurance company is covering your property for the accurate replacement cost, and not a penny more.

3. Tip Two leads nicely into Tip Three: Be aware of "inflation guard." Some insurance companies automatically raise

the property's building value by between 4 and 8 percent annually to account for inflation. Many times, the building value is not actually going up at a rate of 8 percent. Providing the insurance company with an updated appraisal will ensure you're not paying more than necessary.

4. Estimates on building value fluctuate with the market, so get an updated property appraisal every 12-24 months, especially if you haven't done so in a few years. If your insurance company is still insuring the property based on the building value at the height of the market a few years ago, you could be paying too much in premiums. Get an estimate from more than one appraiser to get an accurate figure, and send the updated building value to your insurance company to be sure you're paying a fair premium.

5. Take a close look at your wind mitigation coverage, as your property may be eligible for credits that lower insurance premiums if the buildings' roofs meet certain requirements. This type of credit became available more than 10 years ago,



but we still frequently see accounts where apartment communities are not taking advantage of this money-saving opportunity.

6. Consider making improvements to your community's buildings. Insurance companies look favorably on construction components such as hurricane shutters, high-impact glass, new roofs, fire sprinkler systems, and burglar and fire alarms.

Ryan Cassidy and Evan Seacat are Directors of Insurance at Franklin Street in Ft. Lauderdale. For more information, please contact them at evanseacat@fsfp.com and ryancassidy@fsfp.com

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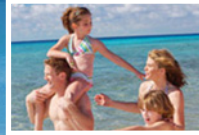
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Superior Property Management: Do You Know What It Looks Like?



by Jeff Goldshine,
Finlay Management President

The significance and importance of “Superior Property Management” is a discipline of real estate that rarely gets the attention and focus that it truly deserves. No matter what condition our financial markets are in, what is important to an owner is the continual laser focus on the asset.

A manager is hired to maximize the value of your asset. Sounds wonderful, right? These are great “buzz words” to hear, but what exactly does this mean? How does an owner truly evaluate the “BEST” management company? Is there a handbook to guide this most important decision?

Sorry to say, there is no easy answer to the most important decision that a multifamily owner will make. This exercise should not just be limited for a newly-acquired asset, but a reevaluation of your existing management company in place. The following is a guide to help

you decide who the right management company is for you!

SIZE OF ORGANIZATION

“The bigger, the better!” Really?

Many large property management companies in our industry manage 50,000 units or more. You will receive a presentation from senior executives that will feature an engaging PowerPoint presentation from a handsome team of professionals. You will be wowed by the array of marketing techniques, attractive financial packages, as well as an impressive client list.

You will hear why the “Big Guy” is better than everyone else. It all feels good, and deciding on the “Big Guy” is comfortable. Many have made this decision. Before you make this decision, though, here are some things to think about:

- Will you ever see these people again?
- What leverage will you have to get the attention you want?
- What is the quality/experience level of the Vice President or Regional Manager who will work your property? Can you meet them?
- At what frequency will your asset be seen?
- What is the internal financial review process before the owner sees the financial package?

- Is managing the asset a number-one priority, or is getting your business and adding to portfolio count more important?

THE MID-SIZE/SMALL OPERATOR

The local or smaller operator may not have the name recognition of the larger organization, but you need to explore the quality of the operation and reputation of the owner. Are they willing to take on challenging assignments and not just trophy deals? How strongly is the owner aligned with the success of the company?

The management presentation may not be as slick, but look hard and gauge the commitment to excellence and reputation.

- What involvement will the presenters have with the asset being considered?
- What is the quality and experience level of senior management and Regional Manager?
- Evaluate financial reporting and flexibility.
- Who answers the tough questions? Who is the contact person?
- Understand internal financial review process.
- Who provides the leadership and drives results?
- Are they hungry for your business?



THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSET: PEOPLE

There is so much to evaluate and understand. Success only occurs with a constant focus on getting the BEST team to perform.

Areas to explore include:

- Understand the hiring, training, and development process.
- Is there a proactive performance evaluation process?
- How are people managed and motivated?
- Ask to hear success stories.
- Drug/Criminal background check?

Explore the “people management” focus with the perspective management companies. Determine if a person counts as an individual or just a number.

BACK TO BASICS: GOOD OLD-FASHIONED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT!

Aside from the glitz of the presentations that you will see, focus on the “basics.” Do not lose sight of how

properties should be operated. Do your homework on this aspect of the business.

A few items worth mentioning:

- Understand the process of managing revenue/expenses.
- Process for maintaining successful curb appeal?
- How important is emphasis on rent collection procedure?
- Property manager understanding of “bottom line.”
- Property and team appearance.
- Marketing, training and outreach programs?
- Accurate tracking of marketing sources and personnel performance.
- Mechanical expertise/preventive maintenance/capital improvements.
- In-house vs. Contractor mentality.
- Leadership to drive success.

In closing, the art and science of “Superior Property Management” is comprised of myriad moving parts. It is not a one-size-fits-all business. Choosing a property management company should not be made on the

basis of a PowerPoint, stylish brochure or cosmetics.

The industry is a continuing and evolving business that blends new technologies and products, with basic management and respect of people, marketplace and customer service. Experience, common sense and “commitment from the top of an organization” do matter. Consider who will best represent your financial and professional interests, be proactive in the goal of maximizing your bottom line, and will be most responsive and communicative when you need answers. Choose wisely.

Jeff Goldshine is multifamily industry veteran, who has been responsible for the management of over 60,000 units in his 35-year career. Finlay Management is an experienced, specialized multifamily management firm with expertise in market-rate, senior and affordable housing. Jeff can be reached at jgoldshine@finlaymanagement.com or 240-426-2605.

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Apartment Industry Aims to Provide Housing for Homeless Families



by Bobby Davis, Editor

Did you know that one-third of our nation's homeless children live in Florida? This was the question Lori Trainer and other FAA colleagues asked Congressional staffers while visiting with them in Washington, D.C., on March 14. The majority of the people with whom the group spoke were shocked by that staggering fact.

"It was a nice change to share the good that Florida landlords were doing with lawmakers, a sharp contrast to the traditional Capitol Hill visit," Lori said. "What better way to use power for good than to leverage empty apartments in an effort change the lives of homeless families? We as landlords have what I like to call 'empty airline seats.' As hard as we try, most of us will never be 100% full with a waiting list. Our 'plane' is flying; why not

offer that empty 'seat' to a homeless family and change their lives?"

The Council on Homelessness estimates that about 60,000 Floridians are homeless, with maybe 10,000 in the Orlando area, and that Florida ranks third in the nation in the number of homeless people. Orlando and St. Petersburg rank in the top 10 cities with the most homeless. The Great Recession, lack of access to inexpensive healthcare and rising prices for food, fuel



and other basics have brought a growing number of families into the pool of homeless citizens. The apartment industry has decided to get involved in trying to provide housing to people who have been struck by misfortune.

CONCORD GETS THE BALL ROLLING

New Moves Partnership came as a result of the growing number of homeless children in Central Florida. Many people saw the 60 Minutes episode that aired in March 2011 and spotlighted the more than 1,000 children in Seminole County that go to school every day, yet don't have a home to go to at night. The owners and leaders of one of our management company members, Concord Management, saw this and felt compelled to take action, and New Moves Partnership was born.

Since the creation of this program, coalition partners have been working with countless agencies across Central Florida, including: Pathways to Home, Harbor House, Jobs Partnership of Florida, Jewish Family Services, Catholic Charities of Central Florida, Homeless Services Network and Osceola Public Schools.

According to Lori, other apartment management companies and suppliers have gotten involved, with more needed. In addition to Concord, AGPM and Meadow Wood Property Company have already placed some families in formerly unused units, while Pinnacle, Milestone, Landmark and Greystar are getting involved. Both Appliance Warehouse and Mac-Gray have offered to provide free washers and driers, and House of Floors has offered carpeting. In the Tampa area, CORT provided a bed set to a family moving into a new apartment.

Robert Griffiths, a BAAA Past President, has been very active in getting independent rental owners to participate in the Bay Area. In many ways, Jeff Rogo noted, small owners are the best prospects for this program because they have lower rents, and they often have larger units. A big issue with families is size. If they have three or four children, a four- or

five-bedroom apartment is out of their price range, and a two-bedroom unit is too small for their needs. Melissa Cannata of Pinnacle has a Pasco County community that has several four- and five-bedroom units available.

The specific benefit being offered to each family varies based on their current financial situation. Companies that own and manage may have more flexibility than

fee management companies. The package could range from no rent to a laddered package with gradually increasing rent. A structured rent and deposit program allows the family to save some money at the beginning of their lease term and gradually increase so at the end of the lease they're ready to resume a traditional lease agreement. We hope that participating in the New Moves Partnership is a beginning





to self-sufficiency — a hand up, not a hand out.

“Most people who are homeless don’t have assets or money for startup costs, so we never charge an application fee, we never charge a deposit and we typically waive the first month’s rent,” Lori said. “They don’t have money for furniture, pots and pans and other home goods. We start rent, depending on their income, and

increase it over time for the year they are in the program. We don’t want them to end up where they are now at the end of the program.

“We insist that the people who do get housed on member properties have a case manager from charitable or housing agencies, because they often have other problems that led to their homelessness — health problems, inability to manage a

budget, domestic violence, etc. Being in an apartment won’t solve all their problems. We want to help good people who have had a terrible misfortune get back on their feet.

“I recently received a referral from Jewish Family Services for a family, which I gave to Jill Mitchell at AGPM, and she is working to accommodate them. I am working as a kind of broker between the many charities I work for and the apartment management companies.” Lori also got a referral from Catholic Charities in Naples.

“I’d not only like to get more management companies and owners involved, but get companies like Publix, WalMart, and Target to provide coupons that the new residents can use when they move in to get some basic necessities. It’s like the old Welcome Wagon approach. If anyone has contacts with companies like that, please send them to me,” Lori said.

BAY AREA INITIATIVES

The Bay Area Apartment Association has been working locally with government agencies and non-profit organizations for about a year, in addition to supporting FAA’s newer effort. Robert Griffiths and Jeff Rogo, BAAA’s Government Affairs Director, have worked with officials in Pinellas County since April 2011 on the Apartments Homeless Families Initiative, and through the Pinellas County Low-Income Housing Leadership Network, which is a collaboration between social service organizations, government, private industry and private organizations.

“At a Leadership Network meeting last April, we were talking about how occupancies were going up, and some signs that rents were going up in the apartment industry, and a representative from the city of St. Petersburg reported on the great number of homeless families in Pinellas County. It clicked for all of us that we need to do something to match up vacant units in apartment communities with these homeless families,” Jeff said.

“We are now working with social service agencies to transition people out





of shelters and into permanent housing. The agencies identify families that are capable of paying some rent, government is providing funding for initial deposits and the apartment industry is working with both to find vacant units most convenient to these residents — close to public transportation or schools, for instance.

“The social service agencies have promised six months of case management, working with these families to make sure they maintain their budgets, pay their rent, help them with their problems. Gulf Coast Legal Services is educating these families about lease responsibilities. The City of Largo and Pinellas County have been providing some funding for deposits, and we have spoken with some companies that would provide bonds to assure the property manager that the initial deposits will be paid as well as the rents.”

Jeff has also been working with officials in Pasco County, the Hillsborough County Homeless Coalition and Metropolitan

Ministries in Tampa, but talks remain at a preliminary stage. BAAA hopes to use Pinellas County as an example to spread the program throughout the metro area. It can be a challenge, he noted, to bring all the different pieces together.

“In Pinellas, we are partnering with the county’s Health and Human Services Coordinating Council (HHSCC), which oversees the Low-Income Housing Leadership Network and some other networks. HHSCC facilitates cooperation between the apartment industry, the social service agencies and government entities. There are a lot of details to work out, and the funding is a major challenge.”

APARTMENT ASSOCIATIONS JOINING THE EFFORT

In 2011, FAA members, including a coalition of management companies and supplier partners, worked with community leaders to combat this epidemic by offering housing to more than 80 Florida families.

At the February FAA Board meeting in Gainesville, FAA established a task force led by Lori Trainer of Southern Affordable Services to work on a program that would provide apartment housing for a year to worthy homeless families. The FAA task force aims to join the efforts of members across the state and create a resource for people looking to get involved or start their own program. Harry Heist and representatives from Legal Aid and DCF added to the brainpower. Katie Wrenn with Milestone in Jacksonville is assisted Lori. Marc Rosenwasser has pushed the National Apartment Association and is also working to expand efforts nationwide. He is very passionate about getting the apartment industry to help alleviate the problem of homelessness.

If you are interested in learning more about this program or would like to get involved, please contact Lori Trainer and ltrainer@sashousing.org and Jeff Rogo at jeff.rogog@gmsgroup.com. ●



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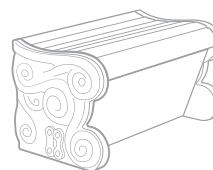
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