

Message from the President...

We have not sent out a newsletter in several months, but we are committed to getting our newsletter out to you on a much more consistent basis.

Changes at Del Val Property

Open Call Date - We are starting a new monthly open call night where we will have a ½ hour to one hour teleconference where owners and prospects can call in and discuss property management issues. We will talk about specific issues related to your property and more general topics about real estate investing. The floor is yours!

The first call is scheduled for **Wednesday October 26, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.** and the call in information is as follows

Dial-in Number is 1-712-451-6100

Passcode is #655249

The calls will be recorded if you cannot make the call during this time slot.

New Owner Statement - We are also creating a

new owner statement that will be used starting in October 2011. The new owner statements should make it much easier for owners to see income, expenses and cash flow for each property. I would like some feedback on the new format and what we can do to make it more readable and useful.

Tenant Applications - We have hired Delores (De) Mattie to handle the processing of tenant applications. We believe that having one person dedicated to tenant applications will improve the processing of tenant applications. As a result, we expect better information on which owners can make decision to approve or decline potential tenants.

Accepting Credit Cards - We will also be accepting credit cards for rent payments in the next month or two. This should allow tenants another way to pay rent and improve collections.

We are working hard to make improvements to our services to provide a better service level to our owners. We certainly encourage owners or prospects to give us feedback on what we are doing right and what we are doing wrong.

Thanks,

Mike Lautensack

President

Del Val Realty & Property Management

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Top 6 Tips for Turning Your Home into a Rental Property

The [housing market](#) is in bad shape. The most recent [Case-Schiller home price index](#) showed only a modest 0.1% increase in home prices for July 2011, but that still leaves many areas of the nation at 2002 prices, and even lower in others.

Maybe your home has been on the market for a long period of time and you've determined that you can't sell it at a value that allows you to break even. Maybe you have an extra home due to an inheritance or other gift that you don't want to sell or maybe you want to supplement your income as a landlord.

Regardless of your reason, you'll first need to get your house in order both financially and physically. There's a lot to do before you take on your first tenants but very few come with extensive cost.

Insurance

Although you have homeowner's insurance on your home, that isn't enough if your home serves as a rental property. Any time you have people on a property that you own, you take on some degree of responsibility for their [safety](#). What if a tree falls on the home injuring your tenants? What if there is a gas leak causing an explosion? What if something relatively minor turns in to a major legal headache?

Next, what if you purchased this property for the sole purpose of renting and that tree caused so much damage that extensive repairs have to be made making the house unsuitable for renting? A [homeowner's insurance](#) policy for renters will often include reimbursement for lost rental income.

Permits

The requirements will vary by locality, but in

order for a residential property to serve as a rental property, a permit is required. The purpose of the permit is safety oriented. Often, an inspector from the local government will inspect the house for various safety hazards including electrical, heating, adequate exits from the home, and other health and safety concerns. These permits aren't expensive, but they are required.

Repairs and Upgrades

In addition to the basic requirements, remember that just as you would if you were selling your property, anything you repair or upgrade adds value to the home and makes it more appealing to those who are comparing your rental property to others. Make sure it is clean, freshly painted, and anything that looks severely dated should be replaced providing the cost isn't outlandish. You have to build the costs of the upgrades into your rental rates so don't go overboard.

What Will You Charge?

List all of your costs and what you would like to see as a monthly profit. Don't forget to add in to your costs a premium for any repairs you'll have to make during the course of the lease. Once you arrive at a rental rate, check rental rates in the home's area for a house as close to the same as yours. This gives you an idea of how competitive your rate will be to others.

Finding a Tenant

Before you look for tenants, be sure to understand Fair Housing laws, which originally came about as a way to prohibit discrimination based on sex and race. Those laws have changed and are now more complicated. On top of Fair Housing laws, you have to run a [credit check](#) which is more difficult for individuals.

Even if you were legally allowed to judge them based on your intuition, experienced landlords will tell you that first, there is never a perfect renter and second, gut feelings are often wrong. You will most likely need the help of an attorney if you plan to make your own application and

contract, but a property management group can help you with the rental paperwork.

Property Management Group

If your rental property is not a short distance from where you live or you don't want the headaches that come with the day to day tasks of being a landlord, consider hiring a property management company to serve as the landlord for you. A property management company will handle all paperwork, take care of the repairs, collect rent and communicate with the tenants. The company will often charge an average of 10% of your rent for this service.

Property Management companies will also assist you with the legal procedures for evicting tenants. One of the largest worries that comes with renting a property is when a tenant doesn't pay. Evicting a tenant is a legal process that takes a lot of time and resources to complete. Although the landlord can't control the actions of their tenants, avoiding eviction procedures whenever possible is advisable due to the cost, time and potential damage to the property as a result of disgruntled tenants.

Welcome New Owners This Month...

- Bari Simpkins
- Glenn Davis & Sylvia Matthes
- Harry Strauser
- Michael Daws
- Sarah Price
- Donna Thomas
- Scott Ellis
- Al Dell'Angelo
- David Ehrman c/o Gimmie Shelter, LLC
- Ed Fisher
- Diane Vellarose

Please feel free to refer friend or colleague to Del Val and get 2 FREE months of Property Management

Meet Sonya Prince...

Sonya Prince joined Del Val as our **Virtual Assistant** in March 2011.

Sonya was born Lansing, MI and raised in Johnsonville, NY a small farm town of Albany, NY. This is where she graduated from Hoosic Valley High School in 1996.

After high school, Sonya went on to receive a Bachelor's Degree from University Maryland earning her degree in Business Marketing and Management. While at Maryland University, Sonya was top of her class.

Sonya and her family currently reside in Slingerlands, NY where she lives with her husband and 3 kids.

Sonya Prince, a marketing and business professional, has worked with national publications such as, Vibe, Double XL and the SOURCE. She has also worked on marketing and promotional teams with Re-Max Premier, C-Mac Realty, Capital Asset Management and Acrobat Realty.

Sonya joined Del Val Property as Virtual Marketing/Administrative Assistant in March 2011. Sonya is Real Estate Licensed in Albany, NY.

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Real Estate Investors Make
90% of the Money?**

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[Del Val Facebook Page](#)

Mike Lautensack – 215-695-3007 Ext 240
<mailto:mlautensack@delvalproperty.com>

Chip Robinson – Rent / Buy or Sell Questions
215-695-3007 Ext 230

Jim McEachern – Maintenance Director
215-695-3007 Ext 270

Terri Ulaner – Administrative Assistant
215-695-3007 Ext 250

Other Important Information...

7 Cool Home Improvement Tools

These days, it seems like there's always a home improvement project to be done. And we're always looking for ways to get them done more easily. Luckily, Woman's Day magazine put together a list of pretty [cool home improvement tools](#) – ones that won't break the bank and will help you avoid breaking your back.

Why Banks are Charging

Debit Card Fees

You probably heard recently that Bank of America was going to add a \$5 monthly charge to its account holders who want to use its debit cards. The news made its way around the social networking sites, and outrage seemed to be everywhere. But as this Motley Fool article points out, it's hard to blame B of A. The [new charges are simply unintended consequences of a rule](#) that was supposed to HELP us.