

# Residential Resource

The Newsletter of the National Association of Residential Property Managers

May 2001

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*The Mission of NARPM is to increase the professionalism and ethics of residential property managers.*

## Ten Steps To Designation

By Penny Patterson, MPM®, Certification Chair

Since I started serving on the national Certification Committee a few years ago, I've had many NARPM members ask, "What do I have to do to get my designation?" With most of them, after a few minutes' discussion, I am able to say "You've already done all the work — just fill out the paperwork and you've got it." As a NARPM member, you, like these fellow members, are already probably involved in your profession, your community, and in NARPM, and you simply need to do the paperwork. Take the 10 easy steps below, and earn the designation you deserve!

### Step 1

Apply for your designation by mail or online at [www.narpm.org](http://www.narpm.org). You'll receive a letter back from Headquarters congratulating you on starting the designation process and assigning you a mentor. The designation checklist will also be enclosed.

### Step 2

Start saving everything. Your designation file should contain your application, your congratulatory letter and your checklist. Go ahead and read the checklist; do you have other paperwork for the file? Have you taken some of the classes? How will you document your service?

### Step 3

Call your mentor. Mentors are PPM or MPM® designees who volunteer to help candidates through the designation process. Your mentor is your personal trainer; he or she looks forward to helping you decide how you'll prove you took that class or served as chapter secretary four years ago. Touch base with them as soon as possible. If you can't reach your mentor, call Mentor Chair Valarie Bethel-Dobson for assistance.

Now is also the time to request recommendations from your clients. You will receive several forms from Headquarters; make

copies and send out more than you need. Enclose a self-addressed envelope for your clients to return the completed form. Ask each to sign across the sealed flap before mailing it back to you. When the recommendations arrive, put them in your file — do not open them.

### Step 4

Get involved. Serve as an officer or committee member for your local or state chapter; help out at state or regional conferences; offer help to your local rental housing association or Board of Realtors; offer to teach a class at a community college. There are endless ways you can get, serve, and earn points for your designation. If you can't think of any, call your mentor for help. Ask for letters detailing your service from the chairs/president/whoever was in charge; put them in your file.

### Step 5

Take the designation classes and the ethics class. If you haven't already taken any of the NARPM classes, I think you'll be surprised and delighted to discover how great they are. In addition, the Education Committee is working to get them approved for the continuing education credits required by most states for licensing. As always, though, you'll learn new ways to excel as a property manager, both from the great class material and from brainstorming and networking with fellow NARPM members.

Save copies of your certificates in your file; frame the originals for your office walls.

### Step 6

Attend conventions, midyear conferences, and state or regional conferences. Not only will you learn and get points for your designation; you'll have a *great* time. You and your company will benefit from your involvement. You will soon become addicted

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## President 2001

Hello Fellow Property Managers,

I hope this letter finds you enjoying spring and the sun shining on you bringing good health and happiness. The month of May has been proclaimed National NARPM Certification Month.

We salute our members who have achieved designations or work for a company with a professional certification. To the Professional Property Managers (PPMs), Master Property Managers (MPM<sup>®</sup>s), and Certified Residential Management Companies (CRMC<sup>®</sup>s), we commend you for taking the time and dedication to join other professional designees. Encourage others to take that step. If you are a PPM, take the next step to become an MPM<sup>®</sup>. If you are an MPM<sup>®</sup>, begin working towards your CRMC<sup>®</sup>.

Now is the time to focus on ways you can step forward to advance your knowledge and enhance your business. Earning a designation means you care enough to take the time to reach a higher level of professionalism as a property manager. Your clients and colleagues will view you as a professional in our industry. By proudly displaying your designation, you will show others that you are an expert and that their interests are your highest priority. A designation demonstrates a commitment to adhering to a stringent code of ethics and standard of professionalism such that you will be considered a *true professional*.

If you have not obtained a designation, make the investment and commitment *now* to cross the stage in Kansas City at the 13th Annual Convention & Trade Show, and become part of the growing NARPM professionals who proudly display a designation after their name.

A special thanks to the entire Certification Committee, headed by Penny Patterson, MPM<sup>®</sup> (National Certification Chair) and Valerie Bethel Dopson, MPM<sup>®</sup>, (National Certification Vice-Chair), for their encouragement to others and the extra push you gave to those who needed it. Your excitement and enthusiasm to help others obtain their designation is invigorating. Keep up the great work!

Thank you for taking the time to be the BEST! I look forward to proudly shaking the hands of the newest designees.



Melissa Prandi, MPM<sup>®</sup>  
Your National President



NARPM President  
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# To Change a Mind, Change a Heart

By Mark Kreditor, MPM®

To thrive in the residential property management business, a property manager must have the business equivalent of a marathon runner's endurance. Endurance, most simply the capacity to keep doing a really good job day after day, involves many aspects of our characters. But perhaps, of all these aspects, none is tested more often, nor more keenly, than the emotional—our hearts.

It is just not easy, day after day, to tolerate the deeply entrenched ill-will and distrust some tenants hold toward landlords in general, but express to us as individuals. These tenants (who may have had a bad experience or simply adopted the attitude from legend) muster enough restraint to get through the application and lease signing process with what appears to be a respectful attitude towards the management company (landlord) and the lease. However, attitudes change all too quickly, as most of us know, when there is a problem that is that tenant's responsibility under the lease. For emotional and/or pragmatic reasons, such tenants vehemently believe that curing every problem is the responsibility of the landlord. It is suddenly as though the lease agreement never existed. Ironically, these same tenants closely scrutinize landlords and expect adherence to landlord lease responsibilities—down to minute detail. The landlord is considered the evil enemy simply for trying to enforce the written lease agreement, voluntarily read and signed by that same tenant.

Of course, this unfair perception of and general attitude toward landlords is largely unjustified and grossly unfair, but even NARPM members—the cream of the crop—face this ugly stereotype everyday. This attitude from tenants hurts and can even be debilitating. Sometimes it causes us to lose the heart we need to function well. Ironically, it is the tremendous goodness of the NARPM landlords that I know, and knowledge of the many charitable accomplishments of NARPM's leaders and members, that helps me keep bouncing back from these indiscriminate blows to the psyche. In fact, this general goodness goes further by inspiring me to work toward changing this damaging perception of landlords, one tenant at a time, and to encourage others to do the same.

Both individually and through our chapter efforts, NARPM members already give back to their community, their religious institutions, and thereby to the greater good. When I was president and had the honor of traveling to different chapters, it was always refreshing to hear about the special community service projects so many of the chapters were involved in. From painting low-income homes to providing toys for abused children,

there was rarely even a holiday party that wasn't a charitable benefit.

As most of you know, charitable giving is not only your money, but also your time. One of the most wonderful (and often satisfying) contributions of time I have ever made was working with the local tenant's association preparing tenants on what questions to ask potential landlords. There I was, dropping my defenses, and allowing those tenants to look the "enemy"

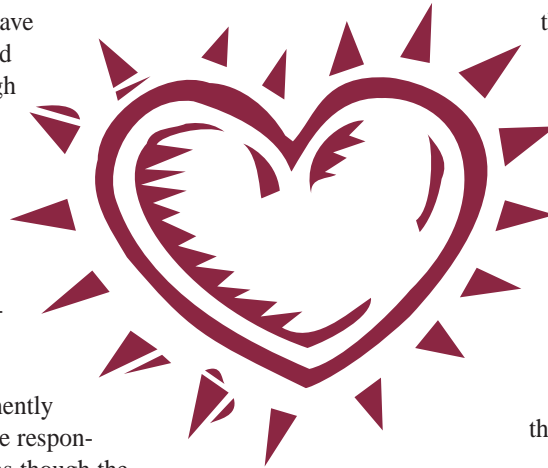
straight in the eye—allowing them to realize—this man is a landlord, this man is not the enemy, there are good landlords. Chapters will be well rewarded by sharing their expertise with the public whenever possible—educating tenants about picking good landlords and similar useful advice.

NARPM members must rise above the general perception of the industry to a higher, more professional plane. One of the most important things we can work toward is educating tenants to seek out landlords with good reputations in the community and in the extension of that community.

NARPM chapters and their members frequently donate monies through their 50/50 raffles and help one another in times of crisis. During the recent Seattle earthquake how many of us were thinking of our friends and the properties they manage and what we could do to help? It has often been suggested that NARPM members should set up management SWAT teams to go into markets devastated by natural disaster to assist other members. I'm sure there were many that helped through this recent disaster in Seattle.

Similar efforts—directed at the general public—are what will ultimately make a difference in the public's perception of landlords and management companies. Giving, in all its many forms, returns dividends far greater and more lasting than any utility stock. Consider new ways for your chapter to continue to give back to your communities, and keep up the good work you're already doing. Maybe at our national convention in Kansas City we can consider giving a community service award to the chapter most innovative in its charitable activities. In any case, the best reward is what giving does for your own heart and the hearts of those to whom you extend a hand. Changing hearts may be the best way to change minds.

*Mark Kreditor, MPM® is Broker/President of Get There First Realty, CRMC®. He is active as the annual fund raising campaign chairman at his children's school and is on the marketing committee of a \$50 million capital campaign going on in his community. He loves to raise money through 50/50 raffle sales at every NARPM event he attends.*



# Creating a Value-added Service — The Annual Property Survey: Part II

By “Rocky” Maxwell, MPM®

The majority of Property Managers have no organized way to provide clients with an annual property survey. This is the second article of a three-part article dealing with the following areas in setting up this valuable, value-added service to your Property Management business.

## B. Developing an Organized Process for Scheduling Annual Surveys

### 1. Strategy for setting time of surveys:

- Initially at new account set up to establish a beginning written and photo history of property
  - Annual anniversary date of owner’s contract to Property Manager
  - Lease renewal time
  - New tenant Make-Ready/Move-In
  - Inspection schedule based on certain number of properties; monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually are all acceptable timing schedules
  - Allow enough time for owner to bid/review/approve/complete/pay for maintenance repairs and renovations to maximize year end-tax benefits for owner
2. **Properties that have been added to your clientele within six (6) months and all properties that have undergone a move-out inspection within six (6) months of Annual Survey should be rescheduled until 12 months have expired since last survey.**
  3. **Request the Property Management bookkeeper run property reports for all active and inactive properties since the last Annual Survey and update the survey schedule. This should be kept updated throughout the year to have an accurate list of properties to inspect.**
  4. **Note on the schedule any properties that have alarm systems or gated entry communities. The Property Manager should have current code and keys as needed in addition to entry keys.**
  5. **Copies of the survey schedule routes are to be given to each inspection staff member for their review and to indicate changes they may want.**
  6. **Maximum number of surveys per day depends on proximity to each other, weather, number in survey team (recommend 2). One person should be able to handle 6 to 9 properties per day and two people from 10 to 15 properties per day.**

7. **Plan on three (3) days a week doing surveys and two (2) days in the office for other work, if you plan on completing all surveys at one time each year. If you have a portfolio of 100 properties the following schedule should be fairly accurate.**
  - 100 properties or less, 20 properties have had surveys within last six months equal 80 properties at an average of 8 properties a day you can complete 24 surveys in one 3-day week and all 80 properties in approximately 3 weeks.
  - Plan on 3-5% reschedule due to bad keys, animals, and miscellaneous problems.
8. **Mail survey notification letter to tenants one week prior to surveys. If given longer notice than one week, they may forget you are coming.**
  - It is not necessary to file copy of letter in tenant file but make a sample copy for each inspection day, should tenants have convenient loss of memory and want to reschedule.
9. **Allow enough time (two weeks) to have outside printers reproduce your survey check list. You should make up enough copies for all your surveys, even if you do them over an extended period of time.**
10. **The day before each survey, have the following materials ready for the Property Manager conducting the surveys:**
  - Copy of day’s survey schedule
  - Sample copy of tenant letter for that day
  - Any needed keys to the properties
  - Maps with properties highlighted, plus magnifier
  - Any notes from Maintenance Department for special attention
  - 9V batteries for smoke detector replacement
  - Door knob messages and “Completed Survey” message to tenant
  - Current tenant list
  - Clipboard
  - Sharp pencils
  - 1-2 rolls of camera film
  - Flash light
  - Post it flags (yellow)
  - Hole punch tool to check for dry rot and smoke detectors (i.e. 3-foot dowel)



**11. At the end of each Survey day:**

- Collect all above items from the person conducting the day’s survey
- Put away all keys
- Repeat process of Item #10 for each new day

**12. Upon receiving the completed survey worksheet:**

- Check reports for any notes affecting schedule, key status, etc., and make corrections for the following year’s survey
- Make two copies (one to Maintenance Department for the processing of needed work orders and one to the office file)
- Send the original to the owner, which will serve as a report of the overall condition of his/her property.

**13. The following tasks should be done on a regular basis to avoid any backlog for work needed prior to scheduling the next annual property survey.**

- The Thomas Guide map book is to be updated by highlighting any new properties. Be sure that a copy of all properties to be inspected is included in the map package given to the staff conducting the surveys.
- It is helpful for the secretary to keep her personal property survey notebook current at all times.

**14. Written report to bookkeeping noting (a) property owners NOT being billed for a survey and (b) any tenant back charges.**

**15. Schedule meeting to review/update next year’s survey.**

*“Rocky” Maxwell, MPM®, CPM®, GRI is President of H.M.S. Development, Inc., CRMC®. H.M.S. is a full-service Real Estate Company and licensed Building Contractor with a specialty in renovation and construction. He has built, renovated, and remodeled over 2500 homes, apartments, and commercial buildings in California and Texas. He served as NARPM National President for the 1992/93 term. He is the senior instructor of the MPM® designation course, Operating a Maintenance Company.*

***Deadlines for Residential Resource***

- July .....May 15, 2001
- August .....June 15, 2001
- September/October ....August 15, 2001
- November .....September 15, 2001
- December .....October 15, 2001

*If you are interested in writing an article, please e-mail an attachment of your article in Word format to [jjacobs@assnmgmt.com](mailto:jjacobs@assnmgmt.com) or send a Word file on 3 1/2" diskette to P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647. All articles are subject to editing & approval of subject matter.*

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## What Are You Waiting For?

*By Greg A. Fedro, PPM*

With another National Conference just around the corner, certification mentors are looking forward to their candidates being presented with their new designations — to us, it's a proud moment, like having a child graduate from college.

If you haven't yet turned in your application for a NARPM designation, do it today! Many times, we discover someone is taking the required courses and working on his/her designation, but hasn't submitted his/her Application for Candidacy. What are you waiting for?

When you submit your application, you will be assigned a certification mentor to be your "coach and training partner." We help you evaluate where you are, give you ideas for your points when you get stuck, and provide motivation to keep candidates on track to complete designation requirements. You don't have to go at it alone; we are here and ready to help. A lot of candidates already have what they need to earn their designations — they just need to assemble everything and turn it in!

The NARPM National Convention will be here before you know it. Thinking about getting your PPM, MPM®, or CRMC® designation? Already working on it but haven't completed your application? What are you waiting for? Do it today!

## When In Doubt, *Don't* Throw it Out!

*By Greg A. Fedro, PPM*

As a NARPM member, you've already taken the first step to becoming more professional at what you do as a property manager. Take it to the next level...earn your NARPM designation and really find out how those little letters following your name give you even more credibility when prospecting in your marketplace. It's true; it works!

As a PPM mentor, I know that NARPM members sometimes wait a year or two before they start pursuing their designations. Or they start taking classes and trying to accumulate points before they submit their Application for Candidacy. When you become a candidate, you'll have a Certification Mentor assigned to help you, motivate you, and answer questions for you along the way.

For whatever reasons, if you haven't become a Designation Candidate yet (even if you're even "thinking" about getting a designation in the future), make a NARPM folder and retain everything you do in it. Specifically, *save* your Convention and Midyear name badges and registration letters, your PPM/MPM® Course completion certificates, and Ethics class registration. If you are serving on a local or national committee, get a letter from the Chair or another officer verifying your service and *save* it. When you start adding up your certification points, it will be an easy task if you keep everything in one place.

Better yet, complete your certification packet and get your designation wrapped up in time for Convention and make "those little letters" start working for you in a *big* way.

## Ten Steps

*continued from page 1*

to meeting with your NARPM family at least two or three times a year. In New Orleans last year, it was my great pleasure to take my two youngest children who are both proud NARPM members. In the past, my staff joked that everything in the office changed upon my return from convention. After New Orleans, we all wanted to change everything. Save your registration letter or your badge from convention in your file.

### Step 7

While you are at convention, join one of the national committees. Your help will be welcomed. Remember, NARPM is an association of volunteers; so volunteer! Besides, you'll get lots of points for your designation. If you do volunteer, ask the chair for a letter detailing your involvement. Put it in your file. By now, you should know several NARPM members with designations. Ask them if they will agree to recommend you for your designation. Usually, they'll be honored. Give

them the recommendation forms; when you get them back, put them in your file.

### Step 8

Now it's time to start putting your paperwork together. Make a copy of your checklist so you can scribble notes right on it; save the original for your package. Fill it out. If you have everything, type a nice cover letter to the Certification Committee detailing how you complied with the requirements in the checklist. Call your mentor; then fax or e-mail your cover letter and checklist (typewritten if possible). Give your mentor a little time to read your letter, then call them and go over the letter and checklist number by number. If anything is missing, or if you can't quite figure out how to document something, your mentor will help.

### Step 9

If both you and your mentor think that it is complete, make three copies of everything (one for your files), put the original in a nice folder and mail the package to Headquarters. Include a nice picture of yourself for PPM and for MPM®. Be sure to send it so it arrives at least one month

prior to the next Board meeting. When Headquarters receives your package, they send the original to the Committee Chair, a copy to an auditor, and they keep one copy. If your package is tentatively approved by the auditor (the Board still has final approval), you'll receive a letter of congratulations.

### Step 10

You will receive your plaque and pin from the National President and the Certification Chair at a special Certification Luncheon at the next convention or midyear. Your photo and your designation package will be displayed at NARPM's Board of Recognition.

After writing out all these steps, I realize the process *appears* like more work than it is—honest! I hope you'll just do it. National President Melissa Prandi, MPM® and I would really love to meet you on the stage in Kansas City.

*Penny Patterson, MPM® is a President and Designated Broker of Double Z, Inc., in Tacoma, Wash. She is currently the Chair of the National Certification Committee.*

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# Connecting to the Internet

By Mr. Internet

It's 2001, we are living in the future, and we all realize the value of the connected world that the Internet has brought us into. We use the Internet for e-mail, for our own Web sites, to view other Web sites, to download documents, to share information, and much more. Most of us use a phone line to connect to the Internet, but there is an array of new options we are being bombarded with. What are the differences in Internet connections? What is DSL? What are the pros and cons of a high-speed Internet connection? Let's take a look at these questions.

## Your Hub — The Internet Service Provider

The Internet Service Provider (ISP) is a gateway to the Internet. Think of your ISP as a hub — once you get to the hub, you can go to any Web site or e-mail address you wish. Some common ISPs are Earthlink/Mindspring, MSN, and AOL. If you are going to connect to the Internet, you need to do it through an ISP, no matter what type of connection you have.

## Two Computers Talking — Connecting to the ISP

Traditionally, we have connected to the ISP, or hub, by “dial-up.” This means we tell our computer to dial the phone number of the ISP's computer, and they talk to each other over the phone line. They convert 1s and 0s to sound and send the sounds back and forth over the phone line, which our computer converts into text and graphics. The drawback to traditional dial-up service is the limited amount of sound that can be transmitted over a phone line. We can only get a certain number of 1s and 0s across a phone line at any time, hence the slow performance of the dial-up Internet connection.

## Breaking the Sound Barrier — Communicating in Digits

To overcome the speed limitation of converting digits to sound, then back to digits, (called modulating/demodulating, from the source of the word “modem”) modern technology has created a system that allows two computers to talk to each other directly in 1s and 0s. This means we can now send the digits across the line as fast as their little legs will carry them! We can replace our phone line with a dedicated cable that will carry digits as digits, and not as sound. This dedicated cable is called a T-span, and is referred to by its capacity (T1 and T3 are popular). If we don't feel like running a cable from our house or office to the office of our ISP, we can use the airwaves and send the digits via satellite, radio waves, or microwaves, much like wireless phones.

## The Best of Both Worlds — Digital Subscriber Line

About 10 years ago, some extremely bright men asked a question, “If people already have a phone cable running from their house or business to a central station, why can't we just use *that* cable to send the 1s and 0s to their destination, instead of installing a separate dedicated cable?” That question brought about the invention of Digital Subscriber Line, or DSL. DSL splits your phone line into two sections — one handles the voice connection while the other handles the data. This means that with

one phone line and no special installation, you can transmit and receive data at high speeds.

## The Good News — What Is So Great About DSL?

- DSL doesn't require or tie up a separate phone line.
- It is always on — you don't have to dial a phone number and wait for it to connect.
- It is fast — downloading at speeds up to 20 times faster than traditional dial-up.
- It doesn't interfere with caller ID or other telephone line features.
- It is easy to connect to a router, allowing multiple computers to share the same connection.
- And it's cheap, often the same price as a dial-up connection when the cost of a phone line is factored in.

## The Bad News — What is Wrong with DSL?

If it's so great, why doesn't everybody have it? There are still a few drawbacks to DSL.

Those 1s and 0s travel fast, but they don't like to travel far. If your house or business is more than about 15,000 feet from the central switching station (or central office), the digits will die before they finish their journey. Until more central offices install DSL switching equipment, it will not be available to everybody.

DSL providers move at the speed of molasses in January in Minnesota. Even though the connection is fast, the installation teams tend to drive turtles around town, resulting in installation turnaround times that are often in excess of two months.

It requires a special modem. While many providers will give away this modem for free as a sign-up incentive to new members, you could find yourself paying \$150 - \$300 for the modem.

It is always on — while this is fantastic, it also opens your computer to the possibility of hackers getting in. This can be overcome through the use of a firewall, which can be a box installed near your computer or a software program installed on your computer.

## The Verdict

Most DSL users agree the benefits far outweigh the detriments. Many users, new to DSL, have been found doing victory dances on their desks. And, although I'm sure someone out there doesn't like his or her enhanced speed and connectivity, this computer guy has never heard of a DSL user going back to using dial-up.

Next month we'll talk about various types and speeds of DSL, cost of DSL, how to choose a DSL provider, how to eliminate risks of an “always on” connection, and alternatives if DSL is not available in your area.

*Mike Anderson of HomeRentals.net prepares this column. If you have a question you would like answered, e-mail him at [mike@homerentals.net](mailto:mike@homerentals.net).*



# Rented Sight Unseen

By Wallace S. Gibson, CPM®, MPM®

A property manager returned from a trip in September and found a letter on her desk from a brand new tenant accusing her of fraud and misrepresentation. He was complaining that the garage in the house he had leased “sight unseen” did not have a double car garage “big enough” for his large vehicles. Within months, the property manager was in eviction court after the tenant moved to a nearby apartment complex with no garage facilities for residents.

As more rental residents switch jobs, move across country, and sell their homes earlier than expected, they will no longer have the luxury of frequent visits to an area to organize their relocation efforts. Often, they have less than a week to secure jobs, enroll children in schools, and find suitable housing. Of these three tasks, the first two seem to take precedence in their schedule trip so they are renting their new residences through the eyes of surrogates, on realtor recommendations, or “sight unseen.”

For the last year, between residents, I have been taking interior photos of my properties and posting them on the Web. Prospects calling on upcoming rental availabilities can access these interior photos from my Web site at their leisure. For my postings on large sites like YAHOO! Classifieds and RentConnection, I have posted a composite of the exterior and three interior photos so that prospects can get a better understanding of the size and quality of the property in addition to accessing area amenities, schools, and neighborhood profiles.

This summer I showed country rental properties to a prospect relocating to the area with his girlfriend for her new job. He walked through my vacant country property, cell phone in hand and guided his girlfriend to the interior property photos on the Web as she sat in their home in Florida. After a 10-minute conversation, he said they wanted to rent the house.

Another pitfall is renting to prospects through surrogates, family, or “their friendly realtor.” When dealing with these situations, it is best to control the information provided to the distant rental prospect — either via Web site listing information with photos, e-mail, or fax correspondence. With this procedure, written documentation is available as to the information provided to the prospect prior to their lease signing. Keeping copies of the Web listings, promotional flyers, and MLS listing data in your property file will make it easier to document the information provided should this be questioned in the future.

As in the case with tenant with the “vintage cars,” the ultimate outcome rested on the wording of the lease signed by the tenant whereby he agreed to take the property and there was no stipulation as to the length or size of the property’s garage space.

With these situations in mind, some “caveat emptor” wording for these situations might be in order. One NARPM member has a “Sight Unseen” Addendum that the residents sign in addition to the lease document.

The TENANTS acknowledge and agree that it is their own decision to lease the subject property without first previewing the premises. Should the TENANTS fail to take occupancy of the property, TENANTS understand that they may forfeit their security deposit and they will be held responsible for the terms of the lease and payment of the rent until the occupancy of a new tenant. It is further understood that the LEASE is not conditioned on any repairs or improvements other than what the OWNER/AGENT is required to do per said lease agreement.

Prior to utilizing such wording, it is recommended that you verify that your state statutes allow for the forfeiture of all or a portion of the tenant’s deposit to cover your advertising and rerenting costs as well as your releasing fees.

With a little bit of advance planning on our part, we should be able to facilitate prospects’ busy schedules and eliminate some of the risk involved with renting properties — “a sight unseen.”

*Wallace S. Gibson is the owner of Landlord Tenant Services and Gibson Management Group, Ltd. in Charlottesville, VA. She has over 30 years of residential and commercial property management experience. She holds the professional designations of Certified Property Manager (CPM®) from the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) and the Master Property Manager (MPM®) designation awarded by the National Association of Residential Property Managers (NARPM). She is the 1999-2000 Chairperson of the Virginia Association of Realtors Property Management Advisory Council and as well as being the NARPM’s 1999-2000 Legislative Chair. Wallace currently serves as a NARPM director.*

## Ambassador Program

### March 2001 New Members

#### Sponsoring Member

Marc Banner  
Tara Chamberlain  
Judith Cook

Lawanda Corbett

John Dovano  
Francine Ferri

Elizabeth Morgan  
Jim Pickett  
Theresa Reed

Rexiene Reynolds  
Susan Scribner  
Nancy Speak  
Ellen Webster  
Ted White

#### Sponsored Member

Lyle Sall  
Pamela McNab-Syverson  
Royal Kuckhoff

Ken Viel

Richard Wolf

Beth Estep  
Connie Hodgkin

Ralph Lee  
Susan Bielser

Gerry Gregory  
Lindsey Green

Marge Bendure

Danya Wolf

Larry Leedy

Sam Harris

Barbara Kameck

Sylvia Gauthier

Dru Lassley

Lynn Waugh

## Affiliate Members Listing By Services

### Access Controls:

Marwest Access Controls, Inc.

### Advertising:

HomeRentals.net

Rent Connection

Rental Advisor, Inc.

Rentalhouses.com

Rental Properties USA, Inc.

Rentals.com

### Appliance Sales:

Sears Contract Sales

### Business Products:

Peachtree Business Products

### Claim Services:

Home Claim Services

### Insurance:

Geo. F. Brown & Sons, Inc

### Legal Services:

Law Offices of DeMartini & Walker

Law Offices of Heist & Weisse, P.A.

### Marketing:

Home Management Network

VIVA.com

### Roofing:

Certain Teed

### Software:

Convenience Living LLC

Old Forest Software, Inc.

CMS Inc. (PROMAS)

Instant Software, Inc.

Property Automation Software Corp.

REMANAGE.com

Winning Edge Software Solutions

Yambay Technologies

Yardi Systems, Inc.

### Tenant Screening:

Accusearch

Backgrounds USA

National Credit Reporting

Rent History, Inc.

For more affiliate information, please visit the NARPM Web site

[www.narpm.org](http://www.narpm.org)

## Meet Your National Board

### Tom Stokes, MPM®, Publications Chair



#### 1. *How did you get started in the property management profession?*

My grandfather grew up in rural south Georgia and worked for the federal government during the great depression trying to help farmers keep their government backed mortgages from being foreclosed. In the late 1930s he settled in Atlanta and after World War II he saw the opportunity to build housing in the northern suburbs. That led to my parents being involved in investment real estate. I graduated from Emory with a bachelor's degree in mathematics/computer science and English literature and expected to teach school, which I did for a couple of years. But while doing that, I earned an MBA from Georgia State University and decided I really needed to be working in the "for profit" sector. Eventually my father and aunt recruited me into the management organization of the family business. After working for them for awhile, I formed a partnership with my long-time peer in the industry, John Mangham, and my cousin Jim LaVallee.

#### 2. *In what extra-curricular activities are you involved?*

I enjoy community theater and occasionally teach continuing education classes for the local community college.

#### 3. *What did you want to do when you grew up?*

Teach school, write, and work with computers.

#### 4. *What is your perceived greatest strength?*

The ability to stay calm in stressful situations and imagine the possibilities of any situation.

#### 5. *What is the size of your company and what services does it provide?*

Our company has 23 employees, and we provide commercial and multifamily property management, as well as home leasing and management services. We also have a fully licensed maintenance division.

#### 6. *How has NARPM impacted your business?*

NARPM has been a source of motivation. My partner John Mangham first introduced me to NARPM in the early 1990s when Rob Fowler was the chapter president and the national meetings were a few dozen people. It's been a source of great encouragement and knowledge for our business and a promoter of the industry within our city.

#### 7. *What future goals do you want to attain in the industry?*

I want our firm to be recognized as Atlanta's most experienced and respected leasing and property management company.

*Tom Stokes is the President and Managing Broker of EpiCity. His expertise with personnel, automation and telephony assists the firm in engaging the highest levels of technology available to property management. Mr. Stokes oversees the operation and management of several office, industrial, and self-storage properties, as well as a portfolio of multifamily properties and 200-plus single-family homes.*

*He holds the Certified Property Manager® designation awarded by the Institute of Real Estate Management; the Certified Apartment Property Supervisor designation from the National Apartment Association; the Certified Commercial Investment Member designation from the Commercial Investment Real Estate Institute; and the Master Property Manager designation from the National Association of Residential Property Managers (NARPM). Mr. Stokes is currently President of the Atlanta Chapter of NARPM and he is a member of the Association's National Board of Directors where he has served as Chairman of the Publications and Marketing Committees.*

*Mr. Stokes received a master's in business administration from Georgia State University with a concentration in Management and a bachelor's degree from Emory University with majors in Computer Science/Mathematics and English Literature. He has taught business and computer classes as adjunct professor of Oglethorpe University. Mr. Stokes is a third-generation native of Atlanta. He and his wife, Helena, and their son, Thomas, reside in Chamblee, GA.*

## **NARPM Road Show — Chapter Six**

*By Andrea G. Caldwell, MPM®*

Have you seen us yet? The Road Show has been pulling into so many towns across the United States that surely you have at least heard our whistle as we came by. It sounds a little like this: Share the Vision! Share the Vision! Share the Vision!

NARPM has made it so easy this year to grow our membership that you should be taking advantage of the benefits that are there for the asking!

If you are a chapter leader, contact us to schedule a chapter revitalization meeting. If you are a chapter member, invite five new members into your group and get your dues free next year. If you are someone thinking of joining, you get *all* your dues back in the first year of your membership by coming to the convention (\$100 discount off the registration) and taking a certification course (\$100 off the cost of the class).



And now onto what has been happening since you last heard from us. Kansas City is still bubbling over with the effects of our new chapter meeting there on April 25, 2001, and gearing up for the national convention to come to town! Central Oregon is geared up to become another car hooked to the train very soon. Savannah, Georgia, is another NARPM hot spot being guided with expert advice by Chapter of the Year, Atlanta!

And the sky is shining in Las Vegas from the very successful NARPM event recently held there. Tulsa, Oklahoma, was thrilled to have the Road Show touch down there, and the route continues on.

The Membership Committee continues to grow as more members are joining the committee every day. Be a part of this expanding effort and contact Chair Andrea G. Caldwell, MPM® at [agetto@aol.com](mailto:agetto@aol.com) or 408/978-8100. And be on the lookout for the NARPM Road Show — coming soon to a town near you!

Ad not available for online issue

**ACROSS**

1. An animal that barks.



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# Welcome New NARPM Members

The following is a list of new members from March 1, 2001, to March 31, 2001

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Marge Bendure<br>Protocol Property Management/GOLD LLC<br>1633 Birchwood Avenue, Ste. 101<br>Bellingham, WA 98225<br>360/734-5420 | Barbara Kameck<br>Premier Realty Associates, Inc.<br>1777 Tamiami Trail #406<br>Port Charlotte, FL 33948<br>941/627-3330                    |
| Susan Bielser<br>Douglas Realty, Inc.<br>4821 Coronado Parkway<br>Cape Coral, FL 33904<br>941/542-6906                            | Royal Kuckhoff<br>Brat Resort Properties<br>PO Box 8327<br>Incline Village, NV 89452  |
| Jeremy Cato<br>All Star Properties, LLC<br>1425 S Noland Road<br>Independence, MO 64055<br>816/833-2282                           | Dru Lassley<br>Sacramento Delta Prty. Mgmt., Inc. CRMC®<br>910 Florin Road<br>Sacramento, CA 95831<br>916/395-7703                          |
| Audrey Conrader<br>VRP Leasing & Property Management, Inc.<br>1600 Tamiami Trail<br>Port Charlotte, FL 33948<br>941/629-0376      | Ralph Lee<br>AA Associates Realty, Inc.<br>831 Cape Coral Parkway, E<br>Cape Coral, FL 33904<br>943/549-9922                                |
| Kimberly DeTrinis<br>Vineyards Properties<br>100 Vineyards Blvd.<br>Naples, FL 34119<br>941/353-3393                              | Larry Leedy<br>Reynolds Realty Inc.<br>5350 E 46th Street, Ste. 147<br>Tulsa, OK 74135<br>918/622-2920                                      |
| Beth Estep<br>Benchmark<br>11204 Montwood<br>El Paso, TX 79936<br>915/593-7218  | Martial Maitam<br>Marwest Access Controls, Inc.<br>8774 Sepulveda Blvd., Ste. 1<br>North Hills, CA 91343<br>800/849-3998                    |
| Karen Geier<br>Callahan Real Estate, Inc.<br>4206 N Division<br>N Little Rock, AR 72118<br>501/758-9555                           | Pamela McNab-Syverson<br>Central Property Management<br>190 N Westmonte Drive, Ste. 100<br>Altamonte Springs, FL 32812<br>407/351-1490 x324 |
| Deborah Glomb<br>Deborah Glomb Realty<br>3850 SE 58th Avenue<br>Ocala, FL 34480<br>352/624-3151                                   | Kimberly Merrell<br>Better Living, Inc.<br>PO Box 26247<br>Prescott Valley, AZ 86312<br>520/772-5700  |
| Lindsey Green<br>Action Now Property Management<br>PO Box 4642<br>Rolling Bay, WA 98061<br>206/842-0623                           | Lyle Sall<br>Residential Property Management, Inc.<br>10 S Cole Road<br>Boise, ID 83709<br>208/322-7979                                     |
| Gerry Gregory<br>Coldwell Banker<br>3325-66th North<br>St. Pete, FL 33707<br>727/381-8515   | Sharon Schoonbeck<br>Premier Realty Assocites, Inc.<br>1777 Tamiami Trail, Ste. 406<br>Port Charlotte, FL 33948<br>941/627-3330             |
| R. Sam Harris<br>Harris Property Group<br>1401 Sea Gull Court<br>Panta Gorda, FL 33950<br>941/505-8939                            | Ken Viel<br>Incline Vacation Rentals<br>940 Tahoe Blvd.<br>Incline Village, NV 89451<br>775/831-3349  |
| Connie Hodgins<br>Chip Realty, Inc.<br>106 W Campbell Avenue<br>Campbell, CA 95008<br>408/866-7092                                | Lynn Waugh<br>Sacramento Delta Prty. Mgmt., Inc. CRMC®<br>910 Florin Road, Ste. 100<br>Sacramento, CA 95831<br>916/429-4565                 |
| Thomas Jennette<br>Higgins North and Associates, LLC<br>PO Box 399<br>Higgins Lake, MI 48627<br>517/821-3434                      | Richard Wolf<br>Benchmark<br>11204 Montwood<br>El Paso, TX 79936<br>915/593-7218  |
|   | Susan Yinger<br>Radcliffe Realty Group LLC<br>220 N Market Street<br>Frederick, MD 21701<br>301/663-6444                                    |

## Needs Assessment

### Letting the Prospect Define the Limitations

By Judy Cook

This is the second of a regular series on fair housing issues. Because fair housing is such an important aspect of our business, we invite you to submit your questions, comments, and concerns for review in upcoming issues. Simply e-mail Judy Cook (judy@cookcompany.net) with your questions and watch future issues of *Residential Resource* for the responses.

A question that arises frequently among property managers is, "How can I be sure I'm treating all rental prospects equally?" The initial interview with a prospective resident sets the stage for the rental relationship. Your responses and behavior at this critical stage of the relationship are the first indication the prospect has of your professionalism and will either "make or break" the rental transaction. Many fair housing complaints are filed at this stage of the relationship. Why does this happen?

One of the errors most often made by property managers is to assume the customer's needs. For example, a person in a wheelchair enters your office. You might immediately assume the prospect is not interested in renting anything but a single-level home. This is not necessarily the case, and could be a dangerous assumption. Another example would be to assume someone of a particular ethnic background would prefer renting in a neighborhood where there is a high concentration of that particular ethnicity.

The surest way to avoid these errors is to have a predetermined list of questions you ask every prospect prior to showing a property. The benefits of this approach are two-fold. First, you avoid the possibility of making inaccurate assumptions that could result in a claim of discrimination. Second, you save valuable time for both yourself and your prospect. After conducting a standard interview, you are well-equipped to determine whether any properties in your inventory will suit the prospect's needs.

In the numerous fair housing training sessions I have facilitated, a popular project has been to develop the "needs assessment" form. You might consider brainstorming with your office staff, or your local NARPM® chapter members, on additions to the basic questions that follow.

### Interview Question/Response

1. My name is Judy. What is your name?
2. May I have your telephone number?
3. How soon are you planning to move?
4. How many bedrooms do you need?
5. Number of bathrooms?
6. Do you require a garage?
7. What area of town are you interested in?
8. How many people will be occupying the property?
9. What is your desired rental price range?
10. Do you have any pets?
11. Are you locally employed?
12. Do you have local landlord references?
13. Do you have any 'special needs'?
14. Do you prefer a one-or two-story home?
15. Do you need a fenced yard?
16. What other requirements in a rental property do you have?



You will find that during this interview process, the prospect will provide you with a great deal of information, expanding on his answers to the questions you ask. At this early stage of the process, you will often be able to determine whether or not the prospect is able to qualify financially to rent from your company. It is an efficient and fair way to handle your rental prospects. It also cuts down on the "no-shows" for scheduled rental viewings. Once it is clear to both you and the prospect that a particular property may be a perfect fit, the prospect is more likely to show up as scheduled for viewing.

Develop a form for this process, and keep the completed forms in a chronological file. If a fair housing claim is ever filed against you, this documentation will serve as evidence of your fairness and consistency in handling rental calls from prospects.

Next month, we'll discuss drafting, communicating, and enforcing rules and regulations for your renters. If you have a particular question or concern in the area of fair housing, we encourage you to share it with the NARPM® membership. E-mail Judy Cook at judy@cookcompany.net with your questions.



**Making Use of Tenant Statements**

Everyone is familiar with owner statements. Those are the papers you send to the owner each month, hoping they will keep him from calling you. The tenant statement serves a similar purpose and is of particular importance during the moveout process.

Providing a comprehensive tenant statement during tenant moveout can stave off disputes about why monies were withheld from a security deposit and be significant if it evolves into court action.

The key is to be extremely detailed when setting up the charges and be specific by attaching a memo to the transaction.

An example would be deducting \$60 for cleaning. Without further explanation, a tenant's response would be "cleaning what?" and a judge's ruling would be - "Disallowed." Along with the charge and amount should be the specifics "oven coated with grease and burned-on food." If appropriate, identify not only the damage but also what repairs were made. For example, an \$85 damage charge would include the memo "paint over drawings on back bedroom wall." Itemizing the deductions from a tenant security deposit can save you future headaches.

The ability to produce a comprehensive tenant statement as described above is a standard feature in PROMAS products. If you would like a sample statement or a demo, call Terri at 888-591-5179.

Mike McCall



**CONTACT**

sales@promas.com  
 888-591-5179  
 541-504-0612 fax



**Property Manager's Source**

**You Make the Ethics Call**

By Rick Ebert, MPM®

Prospect A, who has dark hair and is of Hispanic descent, inquires of Property Manager B, the manager of a 30-unit apartment complex, about upcoming availability of a rental unit. Property Manager B tells her that they have no vacancies and that none are expected in the near future. Prospect A leaves her name and telephone number with Property Manager B who agrees to call her if a unit should become available. Not hearing from Property Manager B for a long period, and during the summer season when one would normally expect vacancies to occur, Prospect A again visits the apartment complex. Again, Property Manager B states that they do not have any vacancies and none should be expected.

Sensing something is amiss, Prospect B enlists the aid of a fair complected Hispanic with blond hair, Prospect C. Prospect C visits the apartment complex and inquires of Property Manager A about the availability of a vacancy. Property Manager A states that they have had a few vacancies the past few months and gives Prospect C an application form to complete for an existing vacancy. Prospect C then telephones Prospect B about the vacancy. Prospect B goes to the apartment complex a few hours after the telephone call only to be told by Property Manager A that there are no vacancies.

Prospect B files an ethics complaint charging discrimination. Property Manager A denies that there was an available unit to rent and claims that the application for rental was given to Prospect C in error.

**Ask Yourself:**

How do these kinds of comments and actions reflect upon our industry. What would you do differently, if anything? Would the property manager's actions and comments be an ethics violation?

**You Made the Call:**

Article 2 states: "The Property Manager shall not discriminate in the rental, lease, or negotiation for real property based upon race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or handicap, and shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws concerning discrimination."

Rick Ebert, MPM®, is with Austin Landmark Property Svs., CRMC®, in Austin, TX.

**PPM Changes**

By Penny Patterson, MPM®, Certification Chair

As you learned in April's Resource, the PPM designation was challenged and must be replaced. We have been given until the end of 2001 to decide on our new designation. This is great news as we will have time to thoroughly research the replacement before going forward. Let's hope we have some word within the next few months about whether our preliminary choices will be challenged.

Did you notice that the MPM® designation and the CRMC® designation are now printed with the trademark insignia? When the new designation is chosen, it will be registered and trademarked as well. By registering the replacement and obtaining a trademark on it, we can be sure that our association will never have to change our designations again.

# 2001 PPM/MPM® Certification Classes

Date	Location	Class	Instructor
May 14	Orlando, FARPM Conf.	PPM Maintenance	Kit Garren, MPM®
May 15-16	Orlando, FARPM Conf.	MPM® Risk Management	David Holt, MPM®
May 15	Orlando, FARPM Conf.	PPM Technology	Jean Storms, MPM®
May 16	Orlando, FARPM Conf.	PPM Marketing	Fred Richter, MPM®
June 18	Ft. Worth, TX	PPM Marketing	Mark Kreditor, MPM®
June 18-19	Ft. Worth, TX	MPM® PP&ER	Sally Backus, MPM®
June 19	Ft. Worth, TX	PPM Operations	Mark Kreditor, MPM®
June 20	Ft. Worth, TX	PPM Maintenance	Kit Garren, MPM®
June 21	Atlanta, GA	PPM Tenancy	Wallace Gibson, MPM®
June 23	Oakland, CA	PPM Marketing	Ray Scarabosio, MPM®

## Interested In Sponsoring Certification Classes?

Opportunities are available to chapters that would like to further member education, promote certification, and increase their chapter funds by sponsoring a Certification class. However, it takes time to plan a class — so give your chapter five to six months lead time if you wish to sponsor one of these events.

Please find out more by calling Sylvia Hill at 408/997-7100 or e-mailing her at sylvianarpm@aol.com. Sylvia can provide you with the details you need to make a Certification class a successful venture.

To register for classes, complete the registration form and mail or fax with payment to NARPM Headquarters. For more information call Headquarters at 800/782-3452.

## PPM/MPM® Class Registration

### FEES

	Preregistration*	On-site†
<b>PPM Classes</b>		
Member	\$195	\$225
Nonmember	\$250	\$280
<b>MPM® Classes</b>		
Member	\$395	\$450
Nonmember	\$450	\$505

\* To receive the preregistration price payment must be postmarked, faxed, or e-mailed 30 days prior to the class.

† Attendees must pay the on-site fee when registering on-site or sending payment in less than 30 days prior to the class.

### CLASS INFORMATION

- On-site registration begins at 8:00 am. Class hours are 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.
- PPM classes qualify for 6 hours of NARPM certification.
- MPM® classes qualify for 12 hours of NARPM certification.
- All materials will be given to students on the day of the class.
- All attendees are required to make their individual hotel reservations.

### CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations must be received in writing. If cancellation notice is received at least 30 days prior to the class, a full refund will be issued less a \$25 processing fee. If cancellation notice is received less than 30 days before the class, a 50% refund will be issued. No refunds will be made on the day of class; however, the registration fee can be applied to a later class with a \$25 transfer fee.

Due to low registration, a class may be cancelled with 15 days prior notice. Registration fee would be credited to a future class.

(Please print or type)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

### List Classes

Name of class	Class Date	Cost
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
		Total \$ _____

### Method of Payment

I have enclosed a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Ck/M.O. # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as follows:

VISA  MasterCard  Discover  American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cardholder \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize Association Headquarters to charge my credit card. I understand that my billing statement will read "Association Headquarters."

### Two Easy Ways to Register

**1. MAIL** your form with payment to NARPM, P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647.

**2. FAX** your form with credit card payment to 512/454-3036. Please do not mail the original.

## “Rocky’s” Maintenance Corner



### Mildew’s and Don’ts

By “Rocky” Maxwell, MPM®

Bathroom walls that break out in dark, rash like stains are most likely suffering from mildew. Take the following steps to prevent mildew from gaining a foothold in your bathroom.

Improve ventilation with a properly-sized exhaust fan. Humidity from steamy showers causes most mildew. A wall- or ceiling-mounted exhaust fan, located as close to the shower as possible, will help keep your bath dry. The fan should move a minimum of 1.07 cubic feet of air per minute (CFM) for each square foot of bathroom floor space.

Paint new walls, or repaint old ones, with mildew-proof paint. Premium brands, which often offer warranties promising five years of no mildew, are formulated with special resins that contain none of the organic foods that mildew spores feed on. Before you paint over mildewed areas, kill growth by clean-

ing the surface with a solution of two cups bleach to two gallons of water, followed by a clean water rinse.

To protect wall coverings, paste lining paper to the surface before hanging patterned wallpaper. Apply the lining paper with mildew proof pastes and adhesives.

Grout around tile with an epoxy based grout. Unlike cement based grout, epoxy formulations cure to a hard, smooth surface that is impervious to mildew.

Seal cement-based grout with acrylic sealer. Use a small roller or foam brush to spread the sealer on the grout lines. Apply the sealer 72 hours after grouting, and repeat annually to maintain protective barrier.

Caulk around sinks, tubs, and showers with mildew resistant products. Even mildew resistant caulk may need to be replaced yearly.

## It’s Not Just for Baking II...

By “Rocky” Maxwell, MPM®

The use of common baking soda in Home Maintenance areas is often overlooked, but it is environmentally friendly, affordable, and available. Try the following tips in your home or rental.

Before the carpet layers put new carpet down, sprinkle a box of baking soda over the floor — but not on hardwood floors — or the pad to be covered by the carpet. Don’t let the carpet people sweep it up before laying the carpet — it will freshen the room and neutralize the odors. Distribute the baking soda evenly with a flour sifter or shaker.

Add a small amount of baking soda to your vacuum bag to fight the dirt smell that vacuums can sometimes get.

Use a paste of baking soda and water to remove black scuff marks from linoleum floors.

*“Rocky” Maxwell, MPM®, CPM®, GRI, is President of H.M.S. Development, Inc., CRMC®. H.M.S. is a full-service Real Estate Company and licensed Building Contractor with a specialty in renovation and construction. He has built, renovated, and remodeled over 2500 homes, apartments, and commercial buildings in California and Texas. He served as NARPM National President for the 1992/93 term. He is the senior instructor of the MPM® designation course, Operating a Maintenance Company.*