

Note to Self

4th September 2011

Dear Owners and Investors,

Before I start, I know that many of you are locals so here is my call for help. I have a young lad that is in his 20's that is a really good kid, maybe not the sharpest tool in the shed but he seems like a genuine good guy. He has just lost his job with one of the pool shops, and has been doing his very best to try and find work. I had to go there on Friday, and he was pretty upset.

Normally, I wouldn't do this but he seems to have done everything right. He went to the industrial area in Bungalow and handed out resumes, and then he went onto the internet at the job agency to try and find work. With still nothing he caught the bus up to the airport area and handed out more resumes. His first stop wasn't Centrelink to try and get onto Newstart, his thought process was to try and find a job.

I have one of my other tenants that works for Lifeline and he will be contacting him on Monday to get him started with Centrelink and anything other service that can help him for now. Got to have him getting some money so that he can pay the rent, this way I don't have to compound the problems by issuing him a Notice for not paying his rent. If anyone is looking for a labourer, or has anything going even if it is for a few weeks let me know and I will pass on his details. Refer to Chapter 11 in the Property Managers Guide Book for reasons as to why I am doing this.

I don't know whether I have turned into a cranky old cow, or whether the tenants are starting to give me the heebies a bit more this weekend. Maybe I should start taking my happy vitamins again.

I got a text message the other day from tenant to say their hot water system wasn't working. We never assume that it is a fault that needs an electrician so one of us went out to have a look at it. There is a reset button on the outside of the tank, and it had popped out. The button was pressed in and hey presto hot water system working again. There are times that you do this and it will work again for months, and then there are other times when it is a sign the thermostat is giving way and will need to be replaced. I got another text message - why a phone call isn't possible I don't know - to say that they had no hot water again. This in itself should see me getting cranky as these things happen, but when they send it at 11.30am on a Saturday morning it makes me wonder. Being in a cranky mood I called them straight back and asked why they couldn't have done this during business hours and that they would have to wait until Monday. I love it when they say, oh it hasn't been working for a few days now but I just remembered to send you a text.

Remember last newsletter how I told you I have become a straight to the point sort of girl, and you will also remember my African man who I make crazy with my presence, well he probably has changed his mind about me. He has been in arrears since he moved to the new place and there comes a time when I throw my niceness out the window and send in the tough Gemini twin. I talked to him the other day and he did put money into the account, but not enough to get him out of trouble. I called him yesterday and in my pigeon English said "Money come, no enough, no money Friday - goodbye, you leave". Think I got my message across quite well.

Last night I was reading the paper and having my glass of red when the text message ring went off. It is now 11.25pm so it can only be bad news - or someone looking for my drag alter ego. By the way, I now scan the personal columns looking for my phone number but as yet haven't found it.

It is one of my tenants from City Park saying it was kicking off on the ground floor unit. I gave them a call to try and get more details - thankfully not one of ours. I could hear in the back ground a woman going ballistic - and that was a good 50 metres from where this tenant was standing. They are a young couple and didn't want to get too involved, so I called the Police. As I am on hold yet another tenant calls me to let me know what is going on.

The Police arrive, an email is sent to the owner of the unit who self manages and I thought my job was done. I called the tenants this morning only to find out that one of my flock was involved, she was the screaming woman. She is from PNG and doesn't speak great English. Her ex husband has been involved in the whole process so I called him first. I explained what had happened and that apparently this is the third incident that has occurred with Dorothy. He needed to know that this was serious and if she wanted to stay that it couldn't happen again, as I would have to move her on. I said I would be calling her next, and he made the mistake of saying "I think you should wait until Monday, show a bit of compassion towards her she may have broken her arm." At this point red flag and bull spring to mind. Why should I show compassion to her when she was the one drunk, she was the one who smashed a bottle and threw things at peoples cars, she was the one that had two tenants call me and several others call the Police - she was the one that took me away from my red wine and arm chair.

My latest addition to my old tenants set has moved in. He was living at the Gateway Resort in Woree which really is a motel room. It is 26 square metres in size with no real kitchen and a communal laundry that is coin operated. He moved into a bedsit at Palm Trees, but it was a bit of a juggling involved. Luckily I am an experienced juggler.

You see Terry who was living there was going to move into a new unit we picked up at City Park. This unit was thrashed by the previous tenants and the other agent had to get it all fixed. I knew he would take it, but I couldn't get him to see it for a week - in the mean time my oldie gave notice and arranged for everything to be moved into the unit at Palm Trees.

There was just one small problem - Terry was still living there. I went to see Terry and with batting eyelashes I explained he had to move out that weekend, well no actually he had one day - Saturday to move. How could I have a 78 year old man homeless? Both units are fully furnished so he didn't need to move big things, just his personal items. I knew it wasn't going to happen all in time, so I sent Bart in on Saturday to give him a hand to move, then arranged for the cleaners to go in on Monday. In the mean time the oldie could bring his stuff into the unit on Sunday - even though it was still dirty. He was thrilled because.... he was upgrading his unit. Yep, he thought moving into a 42 square metre unit was an upgrade.

We had a bit of a mould issue in the unit previously, and this was resolved and the unit repainted. About six months ago Terry called to say the ceiling was dripping - this isn't possible as he is on the ground floor of a three storey place and the lounge room has no plumbing in it at all. I went there and sure enough the ceiling was dripping. I called the other agent, and the tenant above said that the washing machine had overflowed. Terry didn't say anything as the guy above as a bit crazy, but now that he was moving on he told me what really happened. Apparently the guy above decided to clean out his unit, so he got the fire hose that is on the landing - AND HOSED OUT THE INSIDE OF HIS UNIT! There was so much water inside that it worked its way through the grout and then through the slab and down into the ceiling of our unit. God I love tenants.

Bart, armed with the strong stuff got all the mould off the ceiling and walls. The cleaners went in and did their bit, and now I have a happy oldie in another unit. I have asked Troy our Gardener now to check in on the three old guys to make sure they are alive and well.

The other reason I have this story in is because of the comment that my cleaner made. She said it was really sad to see this 78 year old guy living in a bedsit with all his worldly possessions piled up onto the bed. As hard as we do it right now, I know that it will pay off and we will never be in this position when we get old. How was that for a subtle hint that you have to do something today so you don't end up in this same situation when you are 78.

Thank you to all of you that have written to let me know you enjoy the emails. I do try to let you know what life is like as a property manager and an investor. Many of you won't know that in a life a long, long, long time ago we sailed our catamaran from Perth to Mission Beach. I have to throw this in, I may have sailed 5000 miles, but I still can't tie a bow line. Yes, I have heard the saying but the rabbit comes out of the hole - is it a left handed hole or a right handed hole? He goes around the tree, but does he go around to the right or to the left. The last bit I can get - he goes back into the hole. I did keep a diary and I have attached the first chapter and a picture for you. Chapter One was easy, Chapter Two we were in Tropical Cyclone Rhonda and wait until you hear what happens.

I hope that you are all happy and well in your world.

Linda

TUCK MAIL AND SAILING PHOTO