

ORCA TALES

December 2005 “We can tell you more about them than their mother” Volume 12 Issue 12

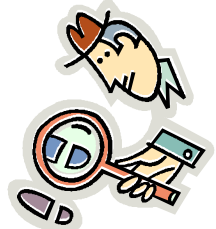
Seven Ways to Become a Landlord Detective and Find Former Tenants

First use the information on their application:

1. Call the employer they listed and ask if they still work there. If not, ask if there is a forwarding phone number. Be sure to get the full name of the company and address if they are still employed.
2. Use the personal references and emergency contacts also listed on the application form. Call in the evening and politely ask if they will give you “Mr. Brown’s new phone number.” They may have it and give it to you. Be careful that you do not misrepresent your intentions, and you cannot harass anyone in attempting to get information on collecting your debt.

Once you use up the sources on the applications:

3. “Go Postal!” You can send a letter to their last known address and write “Address Forwarding Correction—Do Not Forward” on the outside of the envelope. Put your address on the envelope and the post office will send your letter back with the new address on the envelope.
4. You can also check Internet white pages and email addresses with various search engines. You can use The Internet Sleuth at www.sleuth.com or Lycos People Find at www.lycos.com. You will be surprised at the people you can locate.
5. If they have returned to college, you can track them down through the alumni directory or the UT Austin web center at www.utexas.edu which has links to web sites of nearly every US college and university.



Next, let your fingers do the walking:

6. If you know the county where the person used to live, you can call the county courthouse and ask if your ex-tenant holds property in that county, if they are registered to vote or if they were married in that county. Finding out if they have married is especially helpful if you are trying to find a woman who may have changed her name through marriage.
7. If you find they are in the county, check with the water, garbage collector, power or cable companies. These utilities often require deposits and forward them to a new address when someone moves. Some will cooperate and give this information over the phone.

Or ca *WISDOM*

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a pod, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.

Got Forms?

As an ORCA Information, Inc. member (**part of the pod**), you have access to many rental forms and notices at no charge. Please contact us at ORCA for any forms you may need. Also, remember that they are all located on the website as well. Just a click away at www.orcainformation.com!



5 Ways to Protect Your Vehicle

1. Lock your doors. As unbelievable as it may sound, some people are still not locking their vehicle.
2. Take your keys with you. The WA State Patrol has reported that nearly 1 in 4 vehicles are stolen with the victims own keys. Now that colder weather has moved in, don't give in to the temptation of warming your vehicle unattended.
3. Park in well-lit, well-traveled locations. Avoid parking near dense landscaping and in areas of extreme darkness.
4. Take your belongings with you when you leave. Anything can serve as a magnet for a vehicle prowler. Avoid leaving change, CDs, electronics, purses, wallets, brief cases, and anything else that might attract a thief to your car.
5. Utilize several different layers of security. Consider installing a Club, car alarm, or kill switch.

Receive Invoices via E-Mail

Monthly invoices at the touch of your mouse
Save time, Save a tree

No envelopes to open
No paper cuts
Just point and click



Contact Bookkeeping at:
bookkeeper@orcainfo-com.com
or call

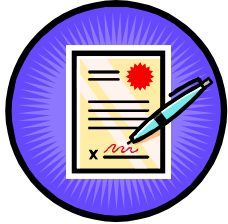
800-341-0022 / 360-588-1633
ext. #112 for Michele or #102 for Katie

Make life a little easier, call or email us today!

If your tenant skips out, let the IRS skip in!

Ok, picture the scariest thing in the world. (Other than a gang of Hell's Angels moving into your building.) It is a letter from the IRS, right? If you are anything like me, you have had it up to here with the "professional tenants" - those people who have the law figured out and know just how to get the most out of it, thereby stiffing you for (sometimes) many months of uncollected rent.

And then, just when you get them evicted (after a minimum of \$500 in legal fees, plus whatever additional time they manage to live in your unit without paying a nickel in rent) and you have a judgment of several thousand dollars, they disappear. You know your chances of collecting the judgment and/or unpaid rent are slim to none. In my 25 years of experience I have only collected one judgment and that was only after I programmed his employer's telephone number into my automatic dialer. Well, I finally got smart and found a way to make them pay (literally and figuratively).



Revenge can be sweet and this one is particularly tasty. The only drawback is that you won't be able to see their faces. Here is what you do - file a Form 1099-C with the IRS. This is a miscellaneous income statement called a "Cancellation of Debt." (Your chances of collecting the rent they owe you are just about nil anyway.) You are telling the IRS that they received income in the form of unpaid rent, a debt they owe to you. The best part is that if they have failed to declare this as income on their return (a snowball has a better chance in you-know-where than this has of happening), the simple act of your filing the 1099-C automatically triggers an IRS audit, or, at the very least, a letter from those friendly folks.

Just make sure you get their social security number when they submit their rental application and do your best to make sure it is a valid one. You need this bit of information to do a credit check anyway. You simply take a few minutes to fill out the form (supplied by the IRS), mail it to the last known address of the party involved and enjoy yourself. You also need to send a copy to the IRS and state computers. This should not have effect on your tax liability because you have not received the income and have charged off the legal expenses. (This is true in my case, but check with your tax consultant for your own situation).

I have verified this with both my tax consultant and the IRS. If you have any doubts or questions, just call our friends at the IRS at 800-263-9700. The forms are available from the IRS by calling 800-829-3676.

**by Norm Corwin, reprinted from Northwest Rental Owners Association*

Dear Clients and Friends,

From our pod to your pod
We wish you a very Merry Christmas
And the happiest and most prosperous New Year.
Wishing you the best now and always.

Rebekah Near
CEO

