

COVER STORY

By Sandra Nortunen, Business Editor

The piano man ... with a message

National speaker tries to recruit property managers

He came in with a joke and out with a song. Mark Kreditor, president of the National Association of Residential Property Managers, spoke at a luncheon Wednesday at the Best Western Hotel in Punta Gorda. Property managers are professionals hired by landowners to manage rental facilities.

His message — intertwined with property manager jokes — boiled down to — "Please join NARPM." Membership dues are \$150.

Just last year, a local chapter was formed and has built up to about 30 members. The chapter oversees Englewood, Fort Charlotte and Venice.

Kreditor said property managers should join the organization for three reasons: education, ethics and consistency in standards.

"NARPM is this web that binds us all together," said Kreditor, after telling the group he was from Long Island, N.Y. Long being spelled L-A-W-N, he said.

People who join are exposed to a network of knowledgeable property management professionals, regular newsletters, workshops, seminars and annual meetings, he said. Kreditor said many people even borrow his newsletters, white-out his name, type in their name and use the letter again.

Kreditor said national estimates indicate that about \$153 billion is paid to plaintiffs every year in lawsuits. A percentage of those lawsuits are from cases between plaintiffs and tenants.

Property managers can avoid such litigation by abiding by a code of ethics, he said.

The NARPM Code of Ethics include a duty to protect the public, a duty to not discriminate, a duty to the client, a duty to the tenants, a duty to the upkeep of property conditions, a duty to protect funds, a duty to the firm, a duty to remain educated and more.

One of the messages



Staff photo by Paul Schmitt

Mark Kreditor, president of National Association of Residential Property Managers talks to a group of property managers from Lee, Charlotte and Sarasota Counties Wednesday at the Best Western Hotel in Punta Gorda. Kreditor's forte is up beat talk, joking around and some of his own property management song parodies.

Kreditor wanted to send to property managers is to educate the public. They need to learn about choosing the right landlord.

"Pick your landlord before you pick your rental property," he said. "Those tenants that care will pick the finest quality and will pay for it."

Landlords who don't have property managers actually lose money by not allowing experts to manage their rentals, he said. Property managers know about issues that landlords might not, such as building codes, tenant-landlord legislation and management.

Marcia Cochie, a realtor and associate property manager at Real Estate Services of Englewood Inc., said she joined NARPM for the education.

"We are licensed real estate agents; I don't think many people know that," Cochie said. "We have to take continuing education classes just like Realtors."

Nancy Speak, president of the local chapter of NARPM,

said the organization has been most beneficial to her with networking.

"The education and sharing have just been wonderful," said Speak, who works at Home and Condo Rental and Property Management in Venice. "Before we were all out there alone, trying to do our own thing. Now we have a network."

Before running out the door to catch a plane, Kreditor decided to sing three songs. One was a tune to Billy Joel's "The Piano Man." Kreditor's version was titled "The Landlord Man."

"It's 1 a.m. on a Saturday; It's a busy day, and I'm in my bed," he sang, while playing the piano. "Then my pager goes off next to me. It better be somebody dead ..."

"It's one of my renters, and he's drunk again. He just called to say hello ..."

When he was done, including an ending harmonica chord, the local property managers stood up clapping.

For more information, call 1-800-782-5252.



A cross between Mark Russell and Billy Joel, Mark Kreditor, president of NARPM, leaves them laughing Wednesday at a local tri-county NARPM meeting. Kreditor did humorous song parodies on many of the problems associated with the management of property.