



**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**JAN. 2024**

**TENANTS' NEWSLETTER**

Happy New Year everyone! With several evictions underway, much like last month, January will be a month full of pursuing justice for our neighbors and securing housing. We are focusing on prioritizing our agenda items into an action plan for this upcoming year, alongside maintaining our voice on behalf of our neighbors in need, specifically resident members at the Rand at Tillery. Shelter is a basic need for all, and until everyone in Knoxville has access to safe and healthy housing, we look forward to continuing to advocate for renters' rights.

## **ABBREVIATED CALENDAR**

**Jan. 1st - Happy New Years!**

**Jan. 9th - Knoxville City Council @6PM (400 Main St)**

**Jan. 11th - County Commission Meeting @1:30PM (400 Main St)**

**Jan. 23rd - Knoxville City Council @6PM (400 Main St)**

**Jan. 25th - SOCM Chapter Meeting @6PM (600 S. Chestnut St)**

# RESIDENT TESTIMONY

By Hannah Freeman



If anyone would have asked how my experiences were at Tanglewood a year ago, I would have said I loved my home and proudly recommended a showing. Plenty of privacy. Spacious outdoor area for pets. Units are a bit run down, but worth the asking price. Wonderful neighbors and a gracious leasing office; overall, a safe place. I never expected new ownership by Rand Property Management to change my home from a peaceful haven into an unrecognizable wasteland. In the past, short six months, the Rand at Tillery leasing office has doubled rent upon signed renewals for all residents, filed evictions on over ten longterm residents (five during this holiday season), and neglected residents' maintenance requests, while focusing on frivolous projects such as new sidewalks and mass tree cutting. Even with community-wide opposition to their actions, and a nearly empty parking lot from additional forced vacates, Rand continues to be uncooperative with any type of negotiation with residents. Our property leasing manager laughed at neighbors for even attempting to get a meeting with management. Out of the original 63 residents that came forward to petition the new ownership, over 20 have or are currently faced with housing insecurities. After months of anticipation, I was given a 30 day, non-renewal notice after speaking out publicly regarding my concerns with the company. I was lost and no longer felt comfortable in a place that had been my home. Even though this year has been challenging in more than one way, I'm so grateful for the people that I have met and who have supported me in getting through a difficult time. We have built community from sharing this experience together, and having people together is powerful. In a time that being cynical is easy and being cooperative is hard, my neighbors proved to me that, together, we can overcome the hardest obstacles. I am excited to usher in the new year in a new place and continue to fight for tenants' rights and basic needs.





# EVICITION DEFENSE

By Lilith, PSL and SOCM Organizer

Evictions carry a terrible burden for Tennessee renters. Composed of a multi-month legal process, rather than a singular event, it comes with an immediate mark on your record regardless of the outcome. It is an anxiety filled time of finding a new home with this working against you. If you are lucky you can get legal support in court. Nationally upwards of 90% of landlords are represented in court while only 3% of tenants can say the same. Legal outcomes predictably match this. Most cases are defaulted on the side of the landlord. With the new expanded legal access from the city, it is the advice of KATU that you apply to Legal Aid of East Tennessee for representation, and call your representative to ask when we can get a full right to counsel in eviction court. Please read the eviction defense guide at [SOCM.org/projects](http://SOCM.org/projects) and talk to your neighbors today.

## NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT

For January, KATU would like to recognize Brandon Mischlich for his strength and endurance during a challenging time. As a local student and veteran, Brandon is an exemplary member and neighbor. He continues to fight for the basic needs for all at City Council, homelessness vigils, and in the courtroom. When most people would hide in the face of adversaries, Brandon courageously continues to step up and speak out for his community. In meetings and events, he brings more passion to the conversation than anyone else. His dedication keeps us all motivated to do more. We are extremely thankful for everything Brandon has done in voicing our cause, and excited to continue working alongside him.



Photo by Lee S.





# KEEP UPDATED



Please feel free to reach out via email or our website contact page at:

[knoxvilleareatenantsunion@gmail.com](mailto:knoxvilleareatenantsunion@gmail.com)

and

[knoxvilleareatenantsunion.com](http://knoxvilleareatenantsunion.com)



## SUPPORT SERVICES

### **KNOX CO FOOD PANTRIES:**

[HTTPS://KNOXCOUNTY.ORG/HEALTH/PDFS/FOOD/FOODRESOURCEGUIDEFLYER23.PDF](https://knoxcounty.org/health/pdfs/food/foodresourceguideflyer23.pdf)

### **EVICTION DEFENSE GUIDE:**

[HTTPS://WWW.SOCM.ORG/PROJECTS](https://www.socm.org/projects)

### **Rent**

#### **CAC (2-1-1)**

2247 Western Avenue  
M-F Hours: 8AM-4:30PM  
(865) 524 - 3345

#### **Home Source of East TN**

109 Winona St, Knoxville  
M-F Hours: 8AM-4:30PM  
(865) 637-1679

#### **Volunteer Ministries**

M-F Hours: 9:30AM-2:20PM  
(865) 673 - 0235

### **Utilities**

#### **Ladies of Charity**

120 W Baxter Ave  
M-F Hours: 9AM-4PM  
(865) 247 - 5790  
\*up to \$75

#### **Compassion Coalition**

M-F Hours: 9AM-5PM  
(865) 251-1591

# 2024