

Renting to family? Dear Dave,

Katherine

I have cousins who are Dear Katherine, thinking about moving back Renting to family can work to Connecticut from Vir- out just fine, as long as there cupied rental house. Do you ahead of time. Both par-



Groundhog Day, February body weight. 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. But what adapted for digging, with is it, why is it called such, short but powerful limbs and where did it come from and curved thick claws. They are what does it mean?

Legend says it is the day fur: a dense gray undercoat that the groundhog comes and a longer coat of banded out of his hole after a long guard hairs that gives it a winter sleep to look for his distinctive "frosted" appearshadow. If he sees it, he re- ance. gards it as an omen of six more weeks of bad weather clude bears, bobcats, coyand returns to his hole. If the otes, large hawks, eagles and day is cloudy and he doesn't owls. Young groundhogs are see his shadow, he takes it often preyed upon by snakes. as a sign of spring and stays above ground. This event hog will use a high-pitched occurs each year with Punx- whistle to warn the rest of sutawney Phil in Pennsylva- the colony. If the groundhog nia.

Groundhogs, also known fend themselves with their as woodchucks, are the larg- two large incisors and front est members of the squirrel claws. family. The groundhog can grow to over 2 feet long and rowers. Groundhog burrows weigh as much as 30 pounds. usually have 2 to 5 entranc-They can live up to 6 years es to provide them a means in the wild and as long as 10 of escape from predators. years in captivity. Though They have also been known they are usually seen on the to build a separate "winter ground, they can climb trees burrow" for the purpose of and are also capable swim- hibernation. The tunnels

In the spring, females will deep. This can pose a seriwelcome a litter of up to six, ous threat to agricultural and which will stay with their residential development by mother for several months.

Since they are mostly her- and causing problems with bivorous, their diet consists building foundations. Burof wild grasses, berries, rows provide a home not fruits, tree bark and agricul- only for sleeping, but for tural crops when available. also raising their young and They will binge and pur- hibernating. posefully put on weight in James L. Cummins is exthe summer, reaching their ecutive director of Wildlife maximum mass in late Au- Mississippi, a non-profit, gust. They become lazy and *conservation* organization prepare for hibernation in founded to conserve, restore October.

By February, the hibernat- and plant resources throughing groundhogs will have out Mississippi. Their web lost as much as half their site is www.wildlifemiss.org.

ginia. They'll be renting for are clearly understood rules a while, and I have an unoc- and boundaries in place think renting to family is a ties should understand there

Groundhogs are very well

covered with two coats of

Common predators in-

When alarmed, the ground-

becomes threatened, they de-

They are excellent bur-

can run as much as 5 feet

damaging farm machinery

and enhance fish, wildlife

lord should do as outlined in the rental agreement. As a landlord, you have the right to expect the rent to be paid early or on time, and for the tenant to respect the property and guidelines in the rental agreement. A landlord also has the right to evict a tenant through fair, legal process if they violate the terms of the

business dealings, you're wearing the landlord cap, and they're wearing the renter's cap. At Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other family events, the caps come off and you're family. But you don't get to play the cousin card as a way to keep from pay-

ing rent, and you don't get to play that game to avoid your duties as a landlord.

Phrases like, "Well, I just thought because you're my cousin" have no place in these situations. Make plans to have a full-blown. in-depth conversation about every aspect of the rental agreement and relationship before anything is signed. If you don't, there's a possibility someone will develop a sense of entitlement about something.

And that's no good in any type of relationship!

Dave * Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 13 million listeners each week on 585 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.



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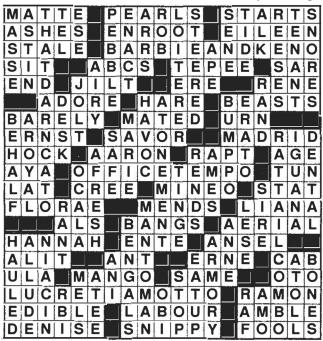


ant relationship with regards to all aspects of the rental

agreement. Tenants have the right to expect a landlord to make needed repairs promptly, pay the taxes and insurance on a property on time, and do all the other things a landagreement.

must be a landlord and ten-

When it comes to these



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