

THE VOICE

COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS

MARCH 2008 VOLUME 4 ISSUE 3

Let's Discuss Solutions: Enforcement of the Laws

This issue focuses primarily on Enforcement of the law and the need for you to be involved. Also the June 3rd election is fast approaching, tell all voters - NO on 98, YES on 99.

We hope you share this issue with your friends and neighbors. They need to be involved also.

The Threats. The threats are real. You know this if you've been reading THE VOICE. Threats to rent control—AB1309 and Proposition 98 (the Jarvis Initiative).

Other threats occur daily in many parks—interference of sales, out of control managers, failure to maintain, unfair business practices, harassment, intimidation, etc. Too numerous to count!

Is New Legislation “The Solution”?

We think not! GSMOL's focus has been and continues to be on new legislation; however legislation is at best a partial solution. New legislation usually focuses on new issues—like condo conversions. It is a reaction to an action by the park owners. It is defensive.

A new law becomes part of the civil code (MRL, Title 25). Laws must be ENFORCED to be effective, i.e. if a law is not enforced, it is NOT AN EFFECTIVE LAW.

A simple test: are you happier in your park today, than you were 5 years ago? Or 10, or 20? We think not. In fact, we believe there are more problems today than ever before. Stop and think about it. Has this focus on legislation really helped us?

Enforcement

Enforcement of civil code laws, like the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL), requires an attorney who understands the MRL, a pot full of money, and time. And parks have attorneys who are very well paid and good at what they do. This is what every mobilehome owner is up against. When mobilehome owners are not willing to step up and enforce the law, park may be more motivated to disregard the law because there is “no downside.” For example, when a park interferes with sales of our homes, they stand to make lots of money and lose very little if they are sued.

From a residents point of view, often the last resort is to retain an attorney and go to Superior court. The cost could be thousands of dollars, and the outcome is not guaranteed to favor resident. If the resident loses, he could also have to pay the costs of the park attorney! This simple fact often stops mobilehome owners from suing their park owner.

The Attorneys

Some mobilehome owners tell us about their experiences with attorneys: “I've called the attorney and he is not interested.” The attorney wouldn't return my call.” “The attorney wanted \$10,000 as a retainer.” “I feel the attorney did not offer me a reasonable response, considering I had asked for nothing for free, but had offered to send him some material evidence and pay him for his time to go over it and just tell me my options.”

Although we do have a list of qualified attorneys, often times it is extremely **See Page 3 Solutions**

THE VOICE is published monthly by the Coalition of Mobilehome Owners—California for the use of its members. THE VOICE welcomes articles of interest to mobilehome owners.

CoMO-CAL, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization committed to protecting the rights of mobilehome owners in the state of California.

All persons living in a mobilehome are eligible for membership on an equal basis, except management, owners and employees of owners.

FRANK WODLEY
EDITOR—THE VOICE
800-929-6061

Purchase your Park

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 831-688-1293

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 650-375-8043 DVD on purchasing your park—on request

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Solutions continued from Page 1. difficult to find one you can afford, and one who is both qualified and willing to take your case. If you have had good experiences with an attorney, please let us know!

The Wrong Foundation

Remember what Donald Devore wrote in his book "Mobilehome Wars (available thru CoMO-CAL for \$10):"

"The reason I say this is to impress upon you that the only way we will end the "Mobile Home Wars" is to get rid of, and bury the Mobile Home Landlord/Tenant Laws forever. This law should be repealed in every state that uses it. Existing Real Estate Land-lease Law is the proper law to use to regulate manufactured housing on leased land. The Mobile Home Landlord/Tenant Laws will never protect the dual property relationship that exists in Manufactured Housing Rental Communities. California, Colorado, Arizona, Florida, and other states have spent 27 years in frustration trying to make this law work. It will never work because it is the wrong premise of law in a land-lease relationship."

Real Solutions

What have you read in THE VOICE about possible solutions? Organization, right? Uniting, right? Being involved...

The solution starts with you. YOU ARE THE SOLUTION, not CoMO-CAL. We will assist you; however no advocacy group can do anything for you unless you first help yourself.

In other words, we do not have ESP. You have to come to us when you need solutions. Don't expect us to come to you.

Last month we wrote a column "Let's Make It Simple." We listed the solutions: get educated, be informed, be active, form a HOA in your park, network, belong to a statewide advocacy group, and get others on board.

Four Cents A Day

If just 10% of mobilehome owners joined CoMO-CAL, we wouldn't have nearly the problems we have today. And if they can't afford four cents a day, we will let them join FREE. NO ONE can say "I can't afford to join CoMO-CAL." Simple as that!

Be Active

A first step: Take an interest in park issues. Help form a CoMO-CAL chapter and support it. It can also be a fun group—have potlucks, play bingo, etc. It must be PRO-RESIDENT!

Form Relationships

This requires communication. Find friends and neighbors you can trust. Build relationships. Any strong group requires communication, and trust.

CoMO-CAL has a strong relationship with the Modesto Advocacy. Why? Because we communicate and trust each other. When we send them an email, they respond quickly and visa versa.

CoMO-CAL wants to form a relationship with every park in California. But this requires your willingness to communicate and trust us.

What Happens When We Are Organized?

We will know where the problems are. We can put bad managers on notice we are watching them. We can picket and demonstrate. We can get the media involved. We can go to our City Attorney. We can pursue this as a "senior abuse issue." Maybe we can get grants to help us.

We can't fight a war without an army! We must organize. That is our only chance. Pledge you will help us. Get a new member / make a donation.

Editors Note: I wrote this article 2 weeks before receiving the article by Bruce Stanton (pages 4 and 5); however the key points in each are the same! Please take the time to read each one.

ENFORCE YOUR RIGHTS...ITS UP TO YOU! By: Bruce Stanton, Attorney

As I travel throughout California meeting with mobilehome residents, the issue of “enforcement of the laws” is almost always discussed. Homeowners want to know how they can ensure that a park owner follows the law. They want to know what can be done if the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) is violated, or if they are suffering from unfair treatment not found in any specific law. Usually, they will ask me something like: “Who is going to protect me?” or “Who will enforce the laws for me?” Expecting an easy answer that gets them off the hook, they may not always like my response. But it is important that I communicate reality to them. And so my answer usually ends with the sentence: “It’s up to YOU!”

For the last 30 years, many laws have been passed at the state and local level which protect mobilehome residents. Mobilehome resident organizations annually wage battles in Sacramento to pass new laws that are needed and to fight against laws that would damage the interests of residents. Passing protective laws is certainly an important part of providing protection to residents. In many cases it is an important first step towards righting an injustice.

But once the law is passed, who enforces it? If a park owner violates a law, who typically is responsible for seeing to it that justice is done? And who needs to be watching carefully to see that laws are not violated? The answer to each of these questions is the same: It’s YOU! The plain truth is that laws do not enforce themselves. The most detailed and perfect statute can be drafted, carried and passed through the houses of legislature. But until someone stands up to demand its enforcement, it is only a deterrent. Sometimes just having a deterrent in place is enough to discourage violation of the law. But often times it is the person who the law is designed to protect who must stand up, “blow the whistle” and simply say: “Enough is Enough!” Only when a resident decides to take a stand and do something about it will justice truly be accomplished in most cases.

There are some laws which can be enforced by government authorities. Most local rent ordinances, for example, state that a park owner who vio-

lates the law could be guilty of a misdemeanor. If a resident believes that a violation is occurring, he or she should contact the local City Manager or City Attorney to determine if the local government can or will enforce the law. This is always preferable, since the public officials whose salary we are paying can do the work, and the resident can be spared the cost of hiring his or her own attorney. But most laws do not work this way. Few violations of the MRL, other than certain nuisance actions, will be enforced by local or state governments. MRL violations are civil disputes which need to be handled by the civil courts. Many times this requires the representation of an attorney, or intervention by a mediation service. In these cases, the burden of enforcement is clearly on the residents.

So what does enforcement look like? What does the resident have to do? The following are some simple steps to remember as you contemplate how to enforce your legal rights.

1. **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.** There is no substitute for this. Every mobilehome resident should have a copy of the MRL, which is distributed by most park owners annually. You can go on line to download a copy of the complete MRL for free at: www.sen.ca.gov/mobilehome. You can write to the Senate Publications Office in Sacramento to purchase a copy for \$5.25. Or any resident should be able to go to the park office and request a copy. The MRL requires a park owner to distribute a copy to all residents each year where a “significant change” of the MRL provisions is made by the legislature. Also find out whether your local city or County has ordinances relating to rent control, park conversion or condominium conversion. Read these laws and try to understand them. Ask questions of your neighbors or the organizations of which you are a part if you do not. You can’t know if your rights are being violated until you first know what your rights are!

2. **BE VIGILANT.** Once you know the laws, you need to be watch carefully to ensure that no violations are occurring. This requires one to pay attention. Read the notices that you receive. Review your rent notices carefully. If something seems like it isn’t

right, the chances are it may not be. It may be necessary to watch out for your friends and neighbors living in the park who don't know how to be vigilant, or cannot understand their rights due to age, infirmity or language barriers.

3. **ORGANIZE AND UNITE.** A common reaction from residents faced with a violation of their rights is to shrink from the task because they are afraid of how the park owner might retaliate against them. Left alone to fend for themselves, they often feel inadequate, intimidated and afraid of the consequences. And they might be unable to afford an attorney or the costs of enforcing their rights on their own. But if they unite with others, the possibilities might be endless. If 20 residents unite, each one has the power and finances of 20. If 100 residents unite, they combine awesome financial power and influence. This can occur in various ways. Join a state-wide organization to become educated and help support state-wide causes, such as the defeat of Proposition 98 in June. Join your local park association. And band together when necessary to fight unfair rules, unauthorized rent increases or pass throughs, or to oppose park conversions. In each case, residents send a powerful message to park owners that they speak with one voice, and cannot be individually intimidated into silence.

4. **DO NOT BE INTIMIDATED.** Fear of retaliation has prevented many residents from standing up for their rights. I can never guarantee that a resident will not be on the receiving end of harassment or intimidation. Notices to pull weeds or paint the mailbox might come more regularly. The park might be watching for each and every violation of the rules, no matter how small. This kind of conduct comes with the territory in many cases, and residents should be on their guard. But it should be remembered that the park can NEVER evict anyone without just cause. No one should abandon their rights due to threats or intimidation which has no basis. Such conduct by management could result in violations of the MRL that would entitle the resident to recover civil penalties for "willful violations". If the park owner thinks that a resident can be easily intimidated, they are more inclined to try and do so. But if a resident makes it clear that he or she will not back down from the enforcement of their rights, no matter what it takes, the harassment may stop. And a resolution to the problem

becomes far more likely.

5. **GET QUALIFIED HELP.** If the resident determines that the City Attorney or local government will not be involved, and the resident or group of residents cannot handle the matter on their own, professional help should immediately be sought. Look for an attorney in your area who has expertise in mobile-home law. Get proper advice about the available options. If litigation is required, hiring an attorney is a must.

6. **STAY COMMITTED.** Often the enforcement of rights takes time. This requires the residents to stay engaged for the long haul. The park owner's strategy might be to wear down the will and incentive of the residents. Don't let that occur! Once you start the process, keep at it. Invest your time, your talents and, where necessary, your money. After all, you are protecting your home, and your way of life. Otherwise, all that you have previously put into the process could be lost.

7. **SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF STATE AND LOCAL LAWS.** It is critical that each mobilehome resident join the effort to pass good laws and defeat bad ones. Stay tuned to what is happening both in Sacramento and your own town. Join as many organizations as you can, so that you will be well informed about how to help pass needed legislation. And once those laws pass, read them so that you will know your rights (this takes us back to Step 1).

Any resident can do all of these things if they are willing. If each does his or her part, mobilehome owners can be a mighty force to be reckoned with. Remember, it all starts with YOU. YOU have the power. YOU just need to be willing to use it!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: MR. STANTON HAS BEEN A PRACTICING ATTORNEY SINCE 1982, AND HAS BEEN REPRESENTING MOBILEHOME RESIDENTS AND HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS AS A SPECIALTY FOR OVER 20 YEARS. HIS PRACTICE IS LOCATED IN SAN JOSE, AND HE IS CURRENTLY THE CORPORATE COUNSEL FOR THE CALIFORNIA MOBILEHOME RESOURCE & ACTION ASSOCIATION (CMRAA)

Editors Note: CoMO-CAL employees Mr. Stanton to write articles and answer legal questions for us. This article was written exclusively for CoMO-CAL and for no other advocacy group. We thank Mr. Stanton for his assistance.

L.A. CITY ATTORNEY ROCKY DELGADILLO FILES CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST OWNER OF NEGLECTED VALLEY TRAILER PARK

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2008 (213) 978-8340

Criminal Complaint Alleges Residents Forced to Drink Out of

Garden Hose and Live in Hazardous Conditions

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo today announced his Safe Neighborhoods Division has filed criminal charges against two corporations and their executives for failing to maintain safe and habitable conditions at a Van Nuys trailer park.

Hedamar Development, Inc, President Hedy Magna and Vice President Mark Magna, as well as Valley MHP, LLC, were each charged with six criminal counts for unsafe electrical equipment and wiring; unsafe plumbing in the laundry facility; failure to provide each lot with a drinking water outlet; permitting contamination of drinking water; and failing to connect units to outlet with approved gas connectors. Each count carries a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail and/or a \$400 fine.

The owner of the property could face suspension or revocation of its permit to operate a trailer park facility and may face additional civil penalties

from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

The Woodley Trailer Lodge is a 26 space facility built in 1926. Inspectors with the HCD first received complaints in November 2007 and found dilapidated and missing electrical service equipment and exposed live conductors in 25 spaces. The laundry room had been demolished, leaving open drains and a lack of laundry facilities for residents. In addition, residents were forced to use a garden hose for drinking water in 25 spaces.

Violations were noted and the owner of the property required to immediately correct all hazardous conditions. On December 17 and December 28, 2007 the park was re-inspected noting little progress in addressing the violations.

Results of the investigation were forwarded to City Attorney Delgadillo's Safe Neighborhoods Division for prosecution by Deputy City Attorney Tamar Galatzan.

Arrest is scheduled for March 3 in Department 101 of the Van Nuys Superior Court.

Apartments

Re: Rent Control. In Larry Gross's letter about rent control he made grossly inaccurate statements. First, under the referred to ballot initiative, no tenants would lose their rent-controlled apartment any easier than under today's laws. Only by voluntarily vacating their unit would they lose it.

Gross also lambastes all apartment owners as wealthy. The fact is that most apartment owners

are mom-and-pop owners who have toiled hard to be able to invest in property, and then they are required to subsidize other people. Even the current redistribution fees the owners are required to pay tenants to vacate exceed a whole year's rent.

Victor N. Viereck, Valley Village

Editors Note: Larry Gross runs CES, Coalition for Economic Survival, a tenant's advocacy group in L.A. He is working hard to protect rent control and is against Proposition 98.

The California Association of Realtors Opposes Rent Control

I am a Realtor in Santa Barbara and a mobile home owner in a rent-controlled park. I have discovered that the California Association of Realtors (C.A.R.) is the biggest and strongest force against rent control in California. It always have been against rent control.

For instance, it was C.A.R. which sank AB 1542. AB 1542 would have helped protect residents in rent-controlled parks from having their parks forcibly converted to condos. Condo conversion would result in the loss of rent control. The bill was vetoed by the governor, who acted according to instructions in a letter sent to the governor from C.A.R. I have a copy of the letter.

C.A.R. also supported AB 1309, which would have gotten rid of rent control over a several year period, and would have immediately rendered the homes undesirable for a New Buyer. C.A.R. even had its staff at the entrance to the state Assembly door to try to convince Assembly members to pass AB 1309 when the vote was to come up.

On the June ballot, there will be a measure called Proposition 98, also known as the Jarvis Initiative. Prop 98 would instantly make the equities of rent-controlled mobile homes worth little more than scrap by the manner in which Prop 98 would get rid of rent control for anyone wanting to buy your home. C.A.R.

supports the proposition.

Worse still, C.A.R. opposes Proposition 99, the proposition that would nullify Prop 98. Prop 99 would also provide more protections to our mobile home rent control.

Almost all California Realtors, including myself, are members of C.A.R. A number of us Realtors in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo have sent many communications to the C.A.R. leadership explaining to them that getting rid of rent control would mean that over 100,000 California homeowners would immediately lose their equities. We have explained to them that if there was no rent control for new Buyers, there would be no Buyers.

But we need more voices to convince the leadership. There are over 200,000 members of C.A.R., so we need more Realtors to speak up. **If you know a Realtor, please ask the person to tell the C.A.R. leadership to stop opposing rent control.**

It would also help greatly if you were to explain to the C.A.R. leadership what losing rent control would do to your home value.

Here is the contact info for the C.A.R. leadership:

James Richard Richard Realty 805-698-6929
richardrealty@aol.com

Not USSR

Re Rent control: Relieving rent control in L.A. is fair. The cost of owning income property has skyrocketed at a percentage far beyond that of present rent controls in L.A. If landlords can't change fair rents, they will be forced to convert to condos, or go out of business in L.A. It's simple arithmetic.

Rent control in Santa Monica has caused a shortage of rentals, just as gasoline price caps in the 1970's caused a shortage. If priced too high on the other hand, units won't rent. The market will regulate rents fairly for all. This isn't the USSR.

Charles L. Murray, Moorpark Letters to the Editor- L.A. Daily News

Meet Your CoMO-CAL Leaders - Frank Wodley, CoMO-CAL President



CoMO-CAL's President and Founder is Frank Wodley. He is an eleven year resident of Chatsworth Mobile Home Park in Chatsworth, northwest of Los Angeles. Born in 1943

(Seattle, Washington) he attended the University of Washington, eventually getting a M.S. in Analytical Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin.

Frank has been a general building contractor since the late 70's and still works part time building residential additions. This last year Frank worked full time on CoMO-CAL.

In the mid-1980's Frank was the President of a personal growth institute, the Sirkin Institute, which provided him with experience in newsletter publishing and a desire to help others.

A family man with a grown daughter and 13 year old son, Frank's concern with mobilehome issues started when his manager tried to evict him in 2002. Frank became a member of GSMOL in 2002, President of his Chapter in early 2003, Associate Manager for the San Fernando Valley in mid-2003, a GSMOL Convention Delegate in 2004, 2006 and an observer at the GSMOL Convention in 2008. Frank has been outspoken critic of the present leadership of GSMOL after attending many Board of Directors meetings in Garden Grove, and making two inspections of GSMOL's records. Issues such as ELF and membership

loss have been Frank's concerns.

Frank tried to change the focus of GSMOL from legislation to working on issues we face daily in our parks by making positive suggestions at Board Meetings and through a "recommendations committee."

The idea to form CoMO-LAC actually came from communication with leaders around the state, especially with Elaine Hostetter, then President of SCMOA. Frank formed CoMO-LAC after preliminary meetings in Glendora late in 2004 at Joy's Mobile Home Park on historic Route 66.

From day one, Frank has written, printed, and mailed the newsletter and other informational material from his singlewide mobilehome in Chatsworth. He also runs the office, keeps track of membership, etc. The buck stops at his desk, so if you have a problem with your membership, call Frank, he is happy to help.

Frank's bottom line: "Mobilehome owners are suffering all across the nation. My focus is on them and their plight. We must draw a line in the sand and say we won't take it anymore. I applaud anyone or any group who is working for mobilehome residents. This is not about CoMO-CAL, this is about the right of mobilehome owners to live in peace, without stress, without intimidation or harassment. Please join me in this fight."

Meet Your CoMO-CAL Leaders - Bob Hites, CoMO-CAL Vice President



In photo:
Right: Bob Hites
Left: Frank Wodley
Taken in Modesto

Robert C Hites was born in the mid-west – Des Moines, Iowa in 1943. He is the oldest of ten children: 8 sisters and 1 brother. He grew up on a farm and graduated from Runnells High School in 1960. Bob entered the United States Marine Corp in April 1961 and completed Marine Corp boot camp July 1961.

Sent to language school in Monterey, Ca in 1962, Bob speaks Greek, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. He spent two years in southeast Asia 1969 to 1970 as part of General Westmoreland's intelligence staff.

Bob holds a associate degree in political science from Alan Hancock junior college in Santa, Maria, California and a bachelor degree in ethnic relations from the University of Southern California. He retired from the Marine Corp in 1983 as a gunnery sergeant.

Bob has traveled extensively all over the world and has received numerous military awards. He is a life member of VFW and American Legion.

Since 1983, he has worked in the private sector of northern California designing and selling alarm systems for homes and businesses.

Bob first became an advocate for mobile home owners in 1991 as a Chapter president of GSMOL chapter in Del Wayne estates in Yuba City, California.

Currently Bob lives with his wife Patsy in Alpine Village in Marysville, California where he is President of the Alpine Village Homeowners Association. He is also a member of GSMOL, CMRAA, the Butte County Home Owners Association, the California Alliance of Retired Americans, a CARA team leader.

Bob is a Vice President of CoMO-CAL and works primarily in northern California. He has gone into many parks helping residents He believes that you have no rights unless you fight for them.

President's Note: Bob is a gem. He came to CoMO-CAL in April 2007 and we communicate daily. He is loyal and determined. Although he has some serious medical issues, he has traveled countless miles across northern California and taken hundreds of phone calls helping member and non-member alike. We all should appreciate the hours of volunteer work he does for us. Bob is one of a kind! He IS Always Faithful! And he is my dear friend. Thank You Amigo!

Message Board

If you have internet access, our Message Board is a must. You can post a message asking a question or just observe what others are saying. Also all our newsletters are easily accessed. Our website is:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/comocal/>

Donations

We need your donations. We send thousands of copies of THE WHISPER to non-members across the state. This is just one program we do for Free. And it does cost us money for printing and mailing.

Please make a donation. Perhaps send us \$20 when you renew, instead of the usual \$15.

LISTEN UP #1 by Bob Hites, CoMO-CAL Vice President

There is always something to talk about and bring to light regarding just what ADVOCATE people do. We are here to provide assistance and guidance. We obviously do not have all the answers. However, we do, hopefully point YOU in the right direction. We do not claim to be the answer to everyone's particular situation or problem. But we do offer and provide communication, information, and unity to our members and even if YOU are not a member, but a mobile home owner, residing in a mobile home park.

A mobile home resident who belongs to a very large group of people that can influence not only their neighbors, but public opinion. However, the status of a group can change over time as political parties come into power. That is why YOU must be registered to vote and make sure you cast YOUR BALLOT. The biggest function of an advocacy group is to provide information. These advocacy groups provide information to politicians, Board of Directors, constituents and members of all mobile home residents that are willing to get involved. It takes TEAMWORK, DEDICATION, UNIFICATION, and EDUCATION.

Further, you must not follow your leaders blindly. YOU must ask questions and hold YOUR leaders accountable for their actions. YOU must know all the facts before you can make a logical and timely decision. It is generally thought that mobile home owners must be enticed with some type of benefit to join an advocate group. The reason for this is that mobilehome owners do not need to be a member of a particular group to reap the benefits of that advocacy group.

An advocate group dedicated to improving mobile home residency standards will fight for the general goal of improving mobile home living for every mobile home resident. So there is no real incentive to join an advocate group and pay dues if they will receive that benefit anyway.

Advocacy groups MUST receive dues and contributions from its members in order to accomplish its agenda. Every advocate group does not, in turn, receive monetary help from every mobile home owner. There are many that simply can not afford the yearly dues.

That is why CoMO-CAL works with ALL mobile home owners. We do need your support and we do need your help in providing information to the 1.5 million mobile home owners in California. By YOUR involvement you can exert influence on so many others.

People say they are afraid. People say they will be evicted from their homes. People don't want to get involved or can't due to medical problems.

But, I say to YOU now that taking a stand and fighting for YOUR rights and YOUR investment is a FREEDOM and YOU AND ONLY YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Please join an ADVOCACY Group. CoMO-CAL, GSMOL, CMRAA, BCMOA, NEIGHBORHOOD FRIENDS or.....

·
Get involved with your mobile home park.
Get involved with YOUR LIFE.

SEMPER FI – ALWAYS FAITHFUL

BOB HITES Vice President of CoMO-CAL

A Double Dose of Listen Up by Bob Hites

Did I hear what I thought I said?, or did I read what I thought I wrote? Strange but true. Actually it is unbelievable. Mobile Home residences for the most part do not want to be involved with the issues that truly affect their very means of living. How many of you can afford to lose your homes? None, I am quite sure. You say what a ridiculous statement. Who would take my home? I own it. Well folks, look around. How many are up for sale in your park? How many have been sold? What kind of problems are the seller and/or the buyer encountering. Many.. And the list is growing and it is to large to include in this article. The threats are real. The people are serious. The people are looking out for their own welfare and not for yours.

Just ask any advocate in the mobilehome or manufactured home industry. The problems are way out of hand and what does the home owner do. Stick their heads in the sand and look the other way like the situation is going to go away. Well I have a news bulletin for you: IT IS NOT GOING AWAY!

The situation is only going to get much more involved. This is only the tip of the Iceberg. Just wait. If rent control is abolished in California and the park owners and apartment owners are successful and your rent doubles or triples and you end up selling eggs or pencils on the street don't say you were not forewarned. Advocates spend numerous hours of preparation and mostly at their own expense trying to get the word out to mobile home residences only to find a small percentage of listeners and readers. How do we know this? It is quite simple. We put out fliers, e-mails, newsletters and we get very little feed back. When we do get an inquiry it is way too late for assistance. You folks wait until the

chips hit the fan and then you call. Help, I am in a situation and I don't know what to do. Well, we are not miracle workers, and we are not 911 and we are not your doctor. A very famous English statesman Sir Winston Churchill once stated :

“One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half.”

Churchill made that statement in 1939 and he is talking about you and me right now. We have to meet these threats.

We have to UNITE as one and stand as a UNIT a force to be dealt with. You and I cannot afford to allow these dangers to continue to spread. We have to take control of the situation and take control of our destiny. It is your money, your investment and your home. Please join me and other advocate groups as we are determined to stand for our rights. We could use your help in standing up for yours. If you would like to reply I can be reached at 530-743-2965 or my e-mail is anvil95993@yahoo.com.

I live in a manufactured home. I am an advocate for mobile home owners. I believe in you WHY can't you believe in us?

SEMPER FI – ALWAYS FAITHFUL

ROBERT C. HITES

Vice President of CoMO-CAL

Finding the right contractor

In an effort to provide more services to our membership and our numerous associations, CoMO-CAL is asking that you submit your questions on items that you need information on for home repairs and improvements, both for inside and outside. Your questions will be answered on a first come first serve basis and there will be a monthly article each month giving tips and tricks on how to fix, repair, and replace items that require maintenance around your home. Please submit your questions to CoMO-CAL via the internet to comocal@yahoo.com.

Our first installment is Called

Finding the right contractor

Before you hire a general contractor, do your research. This will ensure that you are hiring a reliable, competent individual or firm who can complete the task for which you are hiring them. We suggest you use this list as a guide:

1. Avoid the “nice man” who comes randomly to your door.

2. Choose a contractor carefully.
3. Shop quality first and value second.
4. Gather evidence that the individual or firm is reliable.
5. Call a contractor referral service.
6. Check references.
7. Make a list of questions before calling references.
8. Verify that the contractor has insurance.
9. Verify licensing.
- 10...Check with the Better Business Bureau in your city.
11. Get a detailed estimate.
12. Make a decision based on overall value.
13. Make sure your contract includes a payment schedule.
14. There may be other questions and don't be afraid to ask.

CoMO-CAL This and That

Expiration Date: Your expiration date is on the mailing label, at the top right corner. If we have made a mistake, let us know and we will fix it.

Membership Cards: Some have asked about membership cards. Unfortunately it is a lot of work sending out membership cards. Your label has the same information.

Thanks for your support: We have a long list of members who have given us support, including promoting CoMO-CAL, distributing materials,

making a donation(s), sending us newspaper articles or other information, etc. Bob Hites and I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all of you. Unfortunately the list is too long to print in this issue—perhaps next month. If you DO NOT want your full name published on this list, let us know by March 10th.

Contractors: If you have a contractor or handyman you would like to recommend, send their information along to us and we will share it with other members.



THE WHISPER

COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS

INFORMATION FOR OWNERS OF MOBILE HOMES

VOTE JUNE 3rd to Save Rent Control!

Why You Should OPPOSE Prop. 98

The Landlords' Hidden Agendas Scheme to Eliminate Rent Control and Renter-Protections

Wealthy apartment and mobile home park owners are spending millions on a deceptive campaign to pass Prop. 98 for their own financial gain. These landlords want voters to believe that Prop. 98 - dubbed the Hidden Agendas Scheme - is about eminent domain. But their hidden agenda is to eliminate rent control so they can make hundreds of millions of dollars by raising rents on seniors and working families.

Unless defeated, Prop. 98 - The Landlord's Hidden Agendas Scheme - would:

- Eliminate rent control and other renter protection laws. Proposition 98 would phase out rent control in California. It would prohibit future rent control laws and abolish rent control on units once existing tenants move. As a result, Prop. 98 would jeopardize affordable housing for thousands of seniors and widows on fixed incomes, single mothers and working families.

- Attack protections for mobile home owners. Under Prop. 98, mobile home park owners could not be prevented by state or local governments from pursuing what are called "condo conversions." Under condo conversions, park owners can force mobile homeowners to buy the space their home occupies at a cost of hun-

dreds of thousands of dollars per unit. This would leave mobile homeowners stuck in a lose/lose situation - forced to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for the land underneath their units, or tens of thousands to relocate. Unable to pay either of these costs, many seniors and low-income mobile homeowners could be forced out of their homes altogether.

- Destroy value of mobile homes. Because Prop. 98 would eliminate rent control as soon as the current tenant vacates the property, mobile home owners will face extreme difficulty trying to sell their units. Potential buyers will be discouraged from purchasing the mobile home because rent control protections on space will be lost when units are sold - destroying the equity in these life-long investments for many seniors.

- Gut laws that protect renters. Proposition 98 would also jeopardize dozens of laws that protect renters.

YES on Proposition 99.

The Homeowners Protection Act

Also on the June 2008 ballot is a real eminent domain reform measure that will constitutionally protect homeowners, without the hidden agendas and adverse consequences of Prop. 98.

IT IS YOUR MONEY! Please support us. Be involved.

Meeting in the San Fernando Valley

CoMO-CAL is working hard to get information out to all mobilehome owners. Recently we sent out about 500 fliers asking residents to attend a local meeting. Two issues that were listed:

HELP PRESERVE RENT CONTROL IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY PROPOSITION 98 & 99 - THE NO ON 98/ YES ON 99 CAMPAIGN

We are sorry to report only 26 showed up.

Don't you know you will lose thousands of dollars if Proposition 98 passes? Do you even care? How do we reach homeowners about important issues?

The issue of rent control is extremely important to mobilehome owners, especially those living in rent control areas. Without it, your rents could double, many of you would not be able to sell your homes (they would have NO VALUE), and you would have to just walk away if you couldn't afford the higher rent. This is not conjecture, this is real. Many park owners will settle for nothing less than to see all rent control a thing of the past.

Just what park owners want

This is just what park owners want. They don't want us to organize, communicate, educate, and be involved. You are playing right into the hands of park owners!

I Don't Want to be Involved

How many times have we heard this? But if you live in a mobilehome park, you are involved, whether you like it or not. Your park owner has one goal—to maximize return on investment. The issues are real, we're not making them up. Don't bury your head in the sand and pretend your immune from these issues. Just wait till you try to sell! Or you get a letter saying your park will go condo or you lose your rent control.

I want to check out CoMO-CAL before I join

Go ahead and check us out, we have nothing to hide. We are mobilehome owners just like you. We are tired of sitting back, doing nothing. We want change, but real change takes a grass roots effort. A few people can't do it alone. What do we have to do to convince you we are ON YOUR SIDE?

You'd think the it cost thousands of dollars to join CoMO-CAL. But it only costs four cents a day! And we give a 90 day guarantee of a full refund if you are not satisfied. Anyone can join for FREE if they tell us they can not afford the \$15 annual membership fee. So cost should not be a factor in joining us.

I have a problem

We hear this every day. You have a problem because you didn't want to be involved, you didn't care enough to be informed, you didn't want to be part of the solution or you questioned too long whether you should join CoMO-CAL.

Now you want an easy answer - let me have an attorney for nothing, give me advice for nothing..... Well answers are just not that simple and nothing is free. Four cents a day is all we need! And if just 10% of you joined us, there would be real change! Quit complaining about issues, be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

We work hard

We work hard for all mobilehome owners. We don't do this once a month or once a week, we do this every day. We are volunteers. WE DO NOT get paid! It is about time you did your share and supported us. Be informed, be active, and care about what is happening to you. We do this for you, not for us!!! Please support us. Do it today. Do it for YOU! Do it for all mobilehome owners!

THANK YOU

Distribute THE WHISPER - Make a Difference

Please follow these steps:

1. Separate THE WHISPER from this issue of THE VOICE. It is the previous two pages (pages 14 & 15).
2. Make copies for your friends, neighbors, the whole park or even other parks
3. Distribute them. Do not put them in U.S. mailboxes. You can, however, put them in residents "tubes" or on porches. Make sure they will not be blown away.

is important that we get this information to every voter in the state, not just mobilehome owners. So tell everyone you know.

VOTE NO ON 98

VOTE YES ON 99

Remember the election is June 3rd, 2008. We will have window signs soon. Let's defeat 98 together!

Thank You

This WHISPER is about Proposition 98 and 99. It

CoMO-CAL

(COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS-CALIFORNIA)

P.O. Box 4821, Chatsworth, Ca 91313-4821.

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (Print Please)

NAME: _____ Date: _____

PARK NAME: _____ SPACE #: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____ CITY _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ ZIP _____

APPLICANTS PHONE NUMBER (_____) - _____ - _____

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____

Check # _____ Amount: \$ _____ Money Order () Amount: \$ _____

MEMBERSHIP (\$15.00/12 Months, \$40.00/36 Months) 90 day full money back guarantee

PLEASE INCLUDE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO "CoMO-CAL" & THANK YOU FOR JOINING

MAIL TO: CoMO-CAL, P.O. BOX 4821, CHATSWORTH, CA. 91313-4821

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CoMO-CAL is a non-profit California Corporation dedicated to serving mobilehome owners in California. Our purpose is to educate, communicate and unite. We are MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

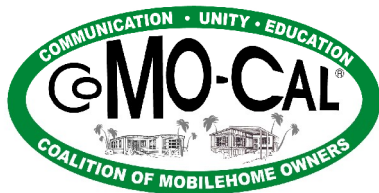


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<http://comocal.org>



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Our purpose is education, communication and to unite

SERVICES WE PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS

1. 12 issues of THE VOICE. Usually 20 pages long, filled with important information no mobilehome owner should be without. Articles from around the state of California. Tips and Suggestions. Important laws explained so you can understand how you are protected.
2. Website: **comocal.org**. Members have access to all issues of THE VOICE, attorneys who know the MRL, important links to government, advocacy groups, etc.
3. Small Claims Court Assistance: We will pay your fees up to \$30.00 and help with your paperwork. (Some restrictions apply.)
4. Questions / Problems: Our staff is ready to take your call to advise you regarding questions and problems you might have.
5. We have several attorneys to help with litigation or give advice.
6. Above all, a way to UNITE and have a VOICE.
7. Ultimately, we give home owners hope that someone is working for their interest.

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