

THE VOICE

COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS
JULY/AUGUST 2008 VOLUME 4 ISSUE 7&8

CoMO-CAL Has A Voice In Sacramento

Some of you with email know what has been happening with the “Condo Conversion” bill SB900. CoMO-CAL now has a voice in Sacramento and we are speaking out for you.

Last year a similar bill, AB1542 was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger. His letter to the Members of the California State Assembly is as follows:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1542 without my signature. I am greatly concerned about housing affordability and homeownership for all Californians. I understand the sanctity of the home and the importance of having stability in your living situation. This need for stability was eloquently expressed by the many seniors throughout California who have written to me on both sides of this bill.

I also recognize that compared to other housing issues there is a uniqueness regarding mobilehomes and all the varied manners of ownership, leasing, affordability, and opportunity. It is because of this uniqueness that laws were enacted to create statewide standards for mobilehome parks.

The intent of current state law is to provide an opportunity for home ownership to those mobilehome owners who desire to own both their home and the land it rests on. The law also offers protections for low-income individuals against unwarranted rent increases.

While the bill’s intent is to preserve low-income housing, it also extends rent control in certain circumstances to mobilehome owners in much of the state no matter what their income level. It is unclear what state interest is served by the

extension of rent control for those who do not have an economic disadvantage. In addition, establishing two statewide standards for rent control seems confusing and unnecessary.

It is clear that mobilehome issues require a comprehensive approach to ensure that low income individuals and families are protected, homeownership opportunities are afforded to those who choose them, and stability of the home and property is preserved.

I urge the Legislature over the coming year to find a solution that provides true balance for all the stakeholders involved in mobilehome issues.

Sincerely, Arnold Schwarzenegger

CoMO-CAL feels SB900 should be about condo conversions. It should enable local governments to stop “sham” conversions initiated by park owners to break rent control or double their profits when they sell.

As recently amended, the bill dealt primarily with rent control, the very reason why the Governor vetoed AB1542 (read the bold print in his letter).

SB900 is Dead

Ultimately, SB900 was pulled by Senator Corbett who, in a brief statement at the time of the scheduled hearing, stated that she was concerned that to proceed with the bill might adversely impact pending litigation between local governments attempting to protect homeowners from park conversion, and park owners who have initiated the condo-conversion of parks.

EDITOR—THE VOICE

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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.

Purchase your Park

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The Formation of a Statewide Organization

Donald DeVore, author of Mobilehome Wars (available thru CoMO-CAL for \$10) and a 30 year advocate, wrote the following in his book:

*Now, I will share what some of my thoughts and advice about forming a statewide organization to represent homeowners. What I am about to say might upset some of those who already have a statewide homeowner organization. **First order of business is that each and every manufactured housing community should form a community Home Owner Association.** Then, the Home Owner Association should pick two Delegates to sit on an Advisory Council for a statewide organization. This Advisory Council should elect officers to run the organization and act as an advisory council to make sure the organization has goals and objectives for those they represent. **Through membership fees, funding should be made available to pay the Staff and Officers of the statewide organization. Also, you will have to have money to hire attorneys and professional lobbyist to represent you and your interests.** If you set up District Reps., you will need to compensate them for their expenses for traveling from town to town in your district.*

You need to have a monthly publication so that all homeowners can find out what is going in their area, the state, and the State Legislature. It costs money to put a monthly publication. Personally, I feel that the state organization should be the umbrella organization over individual Home Owner Associations. I feel that the individual Home Owner Associations should operate in an independent manner. Each community in different parts of the state has different situations to deal with. I feel it is more appropriate that the individual organizations endorse the actions of the state organization through their votes and Delegate representation. This way, you don't have a few people at the top of the state organization telling individual organizations what to do, or how to do

it. You already have some of the landlords acting like dictators. You don't need anyone in a homeowner organization to be a dictator also. You need a democratic organization and representation.

Today CoMO-CAL has members in over 500 parks; however we have only one or two members in 50% of these parks. We will be sending letters out to all these members asking for their help. You have a unique opportunity to get something accomplished in your community. Tell others about CoMO-CAL, distribute information, etc. We will back up your efforts. If the park thwarts your work, we will get our attorney involved. It is our right to inform mobilehome owners. Don't be afraid, there is a law against the park retaliating against you.

Don't wait for a letter from us. You have a good idea if you are the only member in your park. Take the bull by the horns, call a few of your friends and neighbors and have a small get-together. This can be the beginning of a park HOA.

CoMO-CAL is well on its way to being the #1 advocacy group in California. We now have representation in Sacramento, we are the only group with a monthly newsletter, a message board and an e-mail ALERTS. We are democratic, in fact we ask you to contribute - make suggestions, comments, criticism. Our ultimate goal is to make a difference, to help YOU and all mobilehome owners across the state.

We have a lot of resources. We have members with over 15 years of experience in advocacy. We have lots of ideas. Don't sit back and think you can just read THE VOICE and everything will be fine. It doesn't work that way. Please believe us. Please trust us. We are on your side.

Editor's Note: The following article was written to show what could happen if our membership continues to be inactive. It is not yet reality. But it points out the fact that YOU MUST BE ACTIVE - we are not in the business of entertainment. The problems we write about are real and affect the majority of mobilehome owners in the State of California. We need you to step up and volunteer—to distribute information in your park, to be a park representative for CoMO-CAL and/or to help organize your park. We need donations. We can not and will not continue as a one or two man

operation!! If CoMO-CAL were to shut down, you might as well kiss goodbye any chance to resolve any problems in your park (unless you have a strong, dedicated HOA). So what is it worth to you to keep CoMO-CAL running - it is worth a few dollars or a few hours of your time—you be the judge. Don't think that anyone else is doing it!! They are NOT. We are the best chance you have to resolve some problems in your park and across the state of California. Please don't just read this—support us!!

CoMO-CAL TO SHUT DOWN in 2009 by Frank Wodley

As of January 2009, CoMO-CAL will be history. We will discontinue all operations, including the VOICE, THE WHISPER, the 800 number, the message board, and the ALERTS. We will no longer be available 7 days a week to chat with you. CoMO-CAL lasted only four years. Our few assets will be donated to another charity. This grand experiment proved to be a failure.

Why has CoMO-CAL reached the end of its road? Have all the problems and issues in mobilehome parks been solved? Are most mobilehome owners finally happy living in mobilehome parks? Are managers treating residents with respect and courtesy? Or has another advocacy group, or government agency finally taken on the burden of really helping residents?

The simple answer to all these questions is NO. Few problems have been solved. Many residents are not happy living in mobilehome parks – they are still being intimidated and harassed. Many managers do not treat residents with respect and courtesy. And no one is helping residents. No one!

So has CoMO-CAL failed the people it was dedicated to serve? Has CoMO-CAL leadership/management failed? Why was CoMO-CAL not successful? What happened? Certainly there is a need for an advocacy group that is honest and can be trusted. There is a need for communication and education. There is a need for someone residents can call and get advice from.

In our estimation, CoMO-CAL did not fail the people it was dedicated to serve. The people failed CoMO-CAL. The very people CoMO-CAL was dedicated to help, these are the people who did not and would not support CoMO-CAL. There are about 1.5 million people living in mobilehomes in the state of California. Less than 0.1% of the people became members of CoMO-CAL. That's less than one out of a thousand residents. And less than 10% of those really supported CoMO-CAL. About 100 donated money to the cause, and about 25 contributed in other ways, like distributing THE VOICE and THE WHISPER or writing an article.

Did CoMO-CAL reach out to mobilehome owners who were not members? Yes CoMO-CAL mailed fliers, the Whisper, information on Proposition 98 to member and non-member alike. Thousands! Tens of thousands. So what was the response? In fact there was little response, perhaps only a couple percent responded or joined CoMO-CAL.

So what was the biggest hurdle CoMO-CAL faced? Was it the WMA – the park owners group? Was it the managers or the park owners, or other employees? Or was it other advocacy groups?

No actually the biggest hurdle was mobilehome owners. The vast majority did not want to join CoMO-CAL. And they had a variety of reasons. They couldn't afford the \$15 a year, or they didn't trust CoMO-CAL to keep their information confidential, or they belonged to another advocacy group. They

didn't want to get involved with such a "group" or their park manager might retaliate against them if they did. They didn't join because "what do advocacy groups do anyway?" Nothing. Or they didn't join because they had their own attorney or were capable of handling any problems on their own. Or they didn't have any immediate problems. Or they decided to get out of their park and never buy another mobilehome. The reasons go on and on.

So who wins? Certainly the park owners win – especially those who abuse residents and break the law. There is no one watching them now. And many continue breaking the law on a daily basis. Other advocacy groups will cheer the demise of CoMO-CAL also. Why? Because they knew CoMO-CAL provided services that they could not. THE VOICE was published monthly and no other advocate publication contained so much useful information. When members and non-members called or emailed us, someone was there. So they will be cheering.

So who loses? Mobilehome owners are the big losers. Those people who did not want to get involved. Those people who did not have the time to bother reading information sent to them. People who did not have four cents a day to join. Now they are really on their own. When they run into a problem or issue, they will have no one to call for advice. They will have no list of attorneys to consult. They will have to take their chances and randomly pick an attorney out of the yellow pages...

On a Personal Note

It breaks my heart to think CoMO-CAL will shut down. In fact I feel sick at the possibility. I'm not a quitter. My first involvement helping mobilehome owners came in March 2003 when I became GSMOL Chapter President in my park. Why have I been involved? One only has to look around to see all the abuses mobilehome owners face. This happens everywhere, not just here in California. Many park residents live on fixed incomes, many are seniors, the vast majority do not know the laws or know they have rights and have no place to turn should they have an issue – like an eviction notice. Many residents can't fight for themselves! I wanted to help them.

CoMO-CAL represented a real opportunity to make a

real difference. As of this date, CoMO-CAL has collected \$67,000 over a 43 month period. In that time we have published about 40 issues of the voice for our members, and have sent out tens of thousands of fliers to non members. We have answered countless questions over the phone and by email. We have a voice in Sacramento. And we have united active mobilehome owners across the state. We have a statewide network and communicate today as never before.

What about Proposition 98. We have been writing about 98 for 17 months! More than any other group. And we were the first to alert folks to Prop 90. CoMO-CAL sent out about 10,000 fliers telling residents to vote against 98 and for 99. We were part of a large coalition of organizations, and we played a role. If Proposition 98 had passed, it would have cost me \$50,000! That's a fact.

So did CoMO-CAL do any good? Or accomplish anything? You be the judge.

So What's the Problem?

So you say "Terrific Job CoMO-CAL. What's the problem?" The problems are simple.

A) CoMO-CAL doesn't have office staff.

One person (Frank) does everything, from printing the newsletter, to logging in members, sending out renewals, writing the newsletter, writing THE WHISPER, studying the law, answering the phone, keeping the financial records, paying the bills, etc. ONE PERSON!

B) You don't respond to our requests

How many times have you read we need someone to pass out fliers, or we need a "contact" person in a park, or we need an area representative? How many times have we asked "How angry are you about what's happening to you?" How many times have we had a survey in THE VOICE? We have asked you for your email address—just send an email to comocal@yahoo.com if you're not already on our Alert Network. Have you responded?

We have scheduled many meetings in the San Fernando Valley at the Chamber of Commerce office.

Have you attended?

How many times have we asked you to tell others about CoMO-CAL? I'm sure you are sick of all these requests. But you are several thousand, I'm but one! I can't do it all on my own. I need you.

(By the way, Bob Hites (and before him Kathy Mattes) has been a terrific help. He is also frustrated that so few care enough to help us help them. He has driven countless miles around Northern California meeting with resident groups and individual home owners. He spends much of his time counseling residents with problems. And those who have responded by donating money or distributing material—thanks so much!)

C. We can't do everything on \$15

We can't do everything we need to do on \$15/year. Our biggest expense is printing. Others include costs for our website, our Alert network, membership to the Chamber of Commerce, to CARA, postage, attorney costs, etc.

You may ask "why not increase membership dues?" Well we don't want to increase membership dues because we want membership to be affordable for everyone. And we have a policy that those on fixed incomes who can not afford \$15 per year, may send in what they can afford. We have members that have paid nothing - we want everyone to receive our information.

D. Mobilehome owners don't care

I am serious! I am very frustrated that most people just do not seem to care about their own welfare. Do they think we are making up these issues – like 98 or the new rent increase. The list of issues is endless if you live in a mobilehome park.

We have sent countless informational fliers into parks, and also mailed letters asking residents to join and support us. How many have responded? Less than 3%.

If people will not help themselves, I'll be damned if I will devote my life to this work. I can retire, go fishing and enjoy myself. Don't get me wrong, I have enjoyed these 6 years. I consider you my family and I

am grateful for all the friendships I've made along the way.

Is CoMO-CAL Worth Saving?

Don't think that CoMO-CAL is just about THE VOICE or THE WHISPER, because it isn't. Behind the scenes we are really accomplishing things. We are networking across the state of California like never before. We are putting members with issues in touch with members with answers and solutions. We are working on rent control, condo conversions, management problems, utility problems and other issues. Of course you never see this, but together we are making a difference. All this without much support from the general membership. Just think what we could do if everyone contributed!! We could accomplish amazing things.

Guarantee

We have written time and time again, CoMO-CAL could do wonders if just 10% of mobilehome owners joined us. Just 10%! I guarantee results!

The bottom line is simple! Join us, support us, and be active. The alternative is NO CoMO-CAL and NO HOPE! We firmly believe that.

CoMO-CAL is Different

Yes, CoMO-CAL is different from any other advocacy group. Others want your membership fee and would rather not hear from you for another year. We are different! We not only want to hear from you, we NEED to hear from you. You are our eyes and ears. Only you can alert us to problems in your park. That's part of being ACTIVE.

We answer our phone 7 days a week from 8am to 9pm. Everyday! So call us, say hello. Don't be a stranger.

What Is It Worth?

What is it worth to you to have CoMO-CAL working for you? We have just saved residents in the San Fernando Valley about \$75,000. We did our share to defeat Propositions 90 and 98, which would have meant many of us would have been homeless. What is this worth to you? Is it worth \$15? Obviously some members don't think so because many do not

renew. On the other hand, some feel just the fact that we have a list of attorneys is priceless. There are serious problems in our parks. Please support our efforts! Thank You.

Can CoMO-CAL Be Saved?

That's up to **you** – not anyone else. If **you** want CoMO-CAL to continue past January 2009, **you** need to become more active.

What do we need to survive? Please Help Us Help YOU

- A "Contact Person" with email for each park

We have members in over 500 parks today. We need you to step up and be our "contact person." We may ask you to distribute THE WHISPER or other material. You will tell us about your park and issues you face. In other words, you will be the "liaison" between CoMO-CAL and your park.

- Area Representatives

CoMO-CAL needs representatives around the state. It doesn't have to take much of your time. We need representatives for San Diego, Riverside, Santa Maria, Hemet, the Palm Springs area, Santa Cruz, the Bay area, etc. Only then can we begin organizing those areas and getting information out to many more mobilehome owners. It is not enough to have a few members here and there.

As our representative you will be the link between CoMO-CAL and all parks in your area. Of course we will support you, giving you names and addresses of all parks in your area. We will help you reach-out to those parks with and without CoMO-CAL members.

- Volunteers to help with office work in the San Fernando Valley

I need help folding and stapling newsletters, keeping records, inputting data into the computer, etc.

- Donations of money and time

If we are to continue, you need to make a small donation – of money/or time. If you have long distance, volunteer. If you have a computer, volun-

teer. Certainly most of you can afford to donate at least \$5. Show us you want CoMO-CAL to continue. Call us, email us. Tell us you need us and will support us.

Of course many of you live on fixed incomes. We understand. Don't give it another thought if you can't make a donation of money. But you can donate in other ways. You can promote CoMO-CAL to your friends and neighbors. You can volunteer some of your time to distribute information in your park. You can be an advocate for us. We don't ask this for us. Remember, you have a voice if we grow our membership—don't do it for us, do it for you, your friends and neighbors.

On the other hand, many of you live in mobilehomes worth several hundred thousand dollars. You may also have money in savings. Unfortunately it is up to you to help save CoMO-CAL and those less fortunate. Come on – donate for yourself, donate for those who are on fixed incomes, donate for all mobilehome owners in the state of California. You can afford it, many others can't. One CoMO-CAL member has donated \$4000! Of course we don't expect you to donate that much, but would you really miss \$100 or \$500? Where else can you donate money and have it all go to helping someone?

- More communication from you to us—about your needs, about your issues, etc.

We appreciate any communication from you. We take many phone calls and emails. Don't depend on CoMO-CAL calling you.

- Your help in getting more membership

IT IS WORTH 4 CENTS A DAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE!

We can't fight a war without an army. More members mean we get information out to many more homeowners. And remember SIN: Strength In Numbers.

If you have a suggestion, if you have a comment, please I'm open to anything. I really would hate to see CoMO-CAL shut down, and don't think it can't happen. The next six months will be the test – you can keep us going, or say goodbye. It's up to you.

Nighmare in Calimesa

The following was part of the “Prop. 98 is an attack on real people” campaign against Prop 98. What it does not state is that Donna Matthews has been a GSMOL Assistant Manager serving residents in the Inland Empire for over 20 years.

Donna is my hero. She helped me when we wrote the recommendations report for the GSMOL Board of Directors and strongly believed we need more enforcement of the MRL to protect mobile-home owners. We have continued our friendship and correspond regularly.



“What people don’t realize is that both the mobile home parks owners and mobile home owners have an investment. Without rent control it will be one investor taking advantage of another investor. We won’t have the bargaining power or the money that the owners will have. The landlords will raise the rents as high as they want. The rents will be so high and nobody will be able to rent the space. We would lose the value in our homes. If we lose our only nest-egg, where will we go?” -- **Donna Matthews, 83, Calimesa**

Donna lives in Plantation on the Lake mobile home park in Calimesa, Riverside County and is

facing an eviction threat over a disputed trash bill. Donna’s original agreement specified that a garbage bin and trash pick up would be provided as a part of her rent. Out of nowhere, 22 years later, Donna received a bill for \$73.80 claiming she was two months behind on her trash bill. But Donna has never paid rent late and the trash fee was part of her rent. The landlord gave Donna 10 days to pay the fee or leave the park. Under protest Donna paid the fee, but her landlord is still trying to evict her through the court process.

So why is CoMO-CAL writing about Donna? Just to make a point. Here is a lady dedicated to helping others. A lady who has worked with the Mobilehome Residency Law for many years. A lady who is perhaps the longest standing manager for GSMOL. Yet, she may lose her home!

On June 30, 2008 Donna, her attorney, and a small group of friends attended her court hearing. The judge, his mind made up, decided she paid the trash fee on time; however he ruled that her eviction notice will stand. She has until August 7, 2008 to sell her home and leave. The decision was beyond belief, and of course her attorney is going to appeal. But what happens if the appeal is not in time or against her - she could well lose her home. And on top of that, Donna has to pay court costs and costs for the park attorney.

If this can happen to Donna, it could happen to any one of us. In my estimation, this is nothing short of “senior abuse.” Of course the park has been after Donna because she is an advocate for us.

This should be a “wake-up” call to all of us. We need to change the law, we need to organize, and we need to unite. If not, we could be the ones losing our homes. We sincerely hope this turns out okay for Donna and her family.

Solutions to Problems: This is Not Nuclear Science

Do you live under rent control? If you do, do you know what the allowable annual rent increase is for 2008 for your area? You may ask “Why do I need to know this information?” Unfortunately you have no rights under the MRL unless you know what they are and you have no rent control unless you understand something about it

With a lot of hard work, CoMO-CAL helped defeat Prop 98 which would have taken away our rent control. However the battle is not finished, in fact the battle is just beginning.

As I write, we have identified a serious problem with the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (rent control) here in Los Angeles. As of July 1st, 6600 residents, in about 60 parks, should be getting a 3% annual increase – that is allowable under the RSO.

So what’s the problem? The problem is we have identified at least 6 parks, with about 1000 residents, where management is passing out 90 day notices indicating the increases are 4%. And the number of parks giving illegal increases could be much greater.

When residents receive a rent increase, most simply rely on the park and DO NOT know if it is legal or not. That’s where CoMO-CAL comes in. We know the law. We know 3% this year is allowable. Look at your own situation. Do you know if you are under rent control. Only about 25% of residents live in rent control areas. If you have signed a rental agreement longer than one year, you ARE NOT under rent control. Many parks get around rent control by only offering “long term” leases (longer than one year).

So what did CoMO-CAL do? We asked the WMA and the Los Angeles Housing Department for suggestions. What was their response? Clint Lau, a WMA representative, suggested talking with the manager. The LAHD suggested a resident getting 4% file a complaint with the LAHD and an investigator would be assigned.

We believe both suggestions come up short! Residents under rent control need to do their homework, i.e. find out, from a trusted source, what the allowable increase is. Your particular city should have that information. Or you can always contact CoMO-CAL—we can find out for you.

The LAHD said file a complaint. Well what about all those residents getting 4% or higher that DO NOT know their increase is incorrect. How are they going to know to file a complaint?

So what did CoMO-CAL do next? We asked our email network to step up and help us contact these 6600 residents. Alas, only three replied to volunteer.

CoMO-CAL has a list of the 60 parks under rent control. Using the HCD website, we tried to call each park to: 1. See if they knew they were under rent control, and 2. To ask them what the allowable increase was for 2008. The results are below.

A. We were able to contact most managers in parks with over 100 spaces. Those with less than 100 usually did not answer their phone.

B. 40% of the time the phone number for the park was either missing or a wrong number, i.e. the HCD needs to update their list of parks in California.

C. Most managers were courteous and knew the increase was 3%. Some didn’t have a clue. Some just said something without really knowing, i.e. they were faking it as usual.

D. About one-third didn’t know what the increase should be or believed it to be something other than the allowable 3%.

No other advocacy group, or governmental group is watching out for you.. NO ONE! Our goal is for every rent control area in the state to have a CoMO-CAL “watch dog.” If there are problems in L.A., there must be problems in other areas also.

Purchasing Your Park

ADVANTAGES OF A RESIDENT OWNED MOBILEHOME PARK

CONTROL YOUR FUTURE

1. We would not face rule changes by the owner such as changing the park to a family park.
2. We would decide the park rules.
3. We would elect officers of a new Home Owners Association.
4. We could bring issues before the Home Owners Association for action.
 - Rule enforcement.
 - Rule changes.
 - Repairs or maintenance needed to the park.
 - Improvements to the park.

Any other items we think are of importance to the park residents.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

1. We would not face the possibility of a condo conversion by the owner.
2. We would not face future rent increases from the owner.
3. We do not need to make a profit like the owner does.
4. The monthly fee we would pay only needs to cover our expenses.

The monthly fee would probably decline over time as we pay down our purchase expenses and build a reserve. It is highly unlikely that we would have to increase the monthly fee that is set at the time of purchase. This has been the experience of other resident owned parks.

The Process To Purchase The Park

HOW DO WE BUY THE PARK

1. We would form a new Home Owners Association (for Vera Carson only) or (Park Villa only)

Each space that participates (by buying a share) will be a member of the new Home Owners Association.

2. The Home Owners Association would buy the park.

Each space that is a share owner of the Home Owners Association would be a part owner of the park.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST EACH OF US

We can only speculate at this time because we do not know what the purchase price or other expenses would be. It would also depend on what financing program we use (private, government assistance or a combination of both).

See attached example based on the price asked when Vera Carson was for sale in 2007 and the owners expenses listed on the for sale flyer at that time.

HOW DO WE PAY FOR IT

1. Each space that participates will buy 1 share of the new Home Owners Association. The money paid for the shares will provide the funds needed at the time of purchase.

Down payment, closing costs, Home Owners Association reserve and any other expenses that are needed at the time of purchase.

2. The monthly space rent will be replaced by a monthly Home Owners Association fee. This fee will cover ongoing expenses required to run the park.

Mortgage payment, property tax, insurance, gardener, common area utilities and other such expenses.

3. There are a number of organizations both public and private that can assist us in obtaining the funds needed to buy the park.

- Low cost state government loans. These loans usually require more paperwork to qualify and take longer to complete. Some loans to low income borrowers may also limit who you can sell to and how much you can charge (buyer must qualify as low income and sale price must qualify as low income).
- Commercial bank loans. These loans usually charge a higher interest rate but require less time to get and do not contain future sale requirements.

Possible assistance from the City of Carson. The city did provide some financial assistance in the form of a low cost loan to the residents of Nu-Way Mobilehome Park when they purchased their park. Any assistance from the city would depend on money being available for them to use and the case we could make to them for assistance.

WHO WILL MANAGE THE PARK

The members of the Home Owners Association would decide if they would manage the day to day operations or hire a management company to do the management.

RESIDENTS WHO DO NOT PARTICIPATE

Any resident that does not participate by buying a share of the Home Owners Association would remain as renters.

- They would pay their rent to the Home Owners Association.
- They would be subject to rent increases (just as residents are today).
- They would not have any say in the rules of the park or how the park is managed.

When a resident that does not participate wants to sell their mobilehome the new buyer will be required to buy a share of the Homeowners Association as a condition of sale. Over time this will result in all spaces being owners of the park.

CHANGES AFTER ORIGINAL PURCHASE

Any resident that does not participate in the beginning will be able to join the Homeowners association at a future date buy buying a share of the Homeowners Association.

When a participating resident sells their mobilehome they will be given back the amount that they originally paid for their share of the Home Owners Association.

When a mobilehome is sold all new buyers will be required to buy a share of the Homeowners Association whether the seller is a member or not. Over time this will lead to all residents participating in the ownership of the park.

Editors Note: This article was written by Tom King, resident of Vera Carson MHP, in Carson. CoMO-CAL supports residents groups who are interested in purchasing their park. In fact we have published several articles on the subject, many were written by David Loop.

There are many organizations that help residents purchase their parks. Deane Sargent (PMC Financial, 650-375-8043) has made a DVD on purchasing your park and will send you a copy FREE upon request. You can email Deane at dsarg7344@aol.com.

We have an informational flier: What you need to know before you purchase your park.

Call or email us for a copy. We are here to help!

THE QUESTION IS???????????

I will start by using the immortal words of a famous United States President, John F. Kennedy, when he said "ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU, BUT WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY." Yes, those were famous words and spoken over 40 years ago. But today they still ring true. Now I will change them just a little and ask YOU. What can you do to help your advocacy group? The answer will be quite simple. YOU need to get involved with your life style. YOU need to use whatever means YOU have to get involved whether it be time, or money YOU need to get into, behind, involved with the world that YOU live in.

I have spent most of my weekend calling numerous people and introducing myself and asking them to renew their membership within CoMO-CAL. The excuses I have heard. People pay several hundred dollars per year for homeowners insurance to protect their homes and belongings but cannot afford to pay \$10.00 or \$15.00 per year to help fight against evictions, intimidation, abusive park manager/owners, rent increases, and a list of complaints that fills any suggestion box. It is down right criminal some of these abuses.

We receive complaints all the time. Telling us they looked CoMOCAL up on the web. We ask have you joined. They say "No, but I will send a check in." Very good. We take the time and spend the resources to assist you and we take down your e-mail address, then only to find that a letter or number has been left off and/or the telephone number is invalid, or some other flaw. You call, we respond. We ask for assistance, we ask you to support us and only a few step up and are accounted for. The majority of callers are looking for quick fixes to their situations or

problems. Even when we give the answer they do not go forward with any actions and we learn that they have been evicted. We learn that the manager is still running rough shod over these folks. It is sad that YOU people sit back and allow another American to treat you as dirt and do not stand up for your rights.

I for one am shocked at the complacency of the American public. I can see why we are in such dire straits with our politicians and government, I can see why are gas prices and food prices are sky rocketing because we do not hold anyone accountable. Only a few of us have the grit to take a stand and fight for what we believe in. The rest of you are cowards and lack the ability to say enough is enough.

I have been writing these articles for over a year now and I have seen very little IMPROVEMENT. The spirit has gone and that is not good. We, YOU and I, must be prepared at all times to stand and fight. Not so much with punching someone in the face, but to stand and fight with words, written and spoken. Mostly written as that is where WE win with the written word.

So come people, let's show some spirit. Let's show that we are AMERICANS and are not going to live as though we were in a third world country. Please support us, we need you just as much as you need us. All advocacy groups have a need and a requirement to be part of their organization. It takes time, resources and money to accomplish our tasks and goals. We are all volunteers. Please join us and help us, help you. Once again, I can be reached for comments at 530-743-2965 or an-vil95993@yahoo.com. Once again, I am Robert C. Hites, I believe in you, you need to believe in us. Thank you,

LISTEN UP

Me personally I like helping people. I find that very rewarding. However, most people I find will wait until the last minute to start asking questions or start building a defense for whatever situation they are involved in. I realized some time ago that people don't plan to fail, they failed to plan. That in itself makes it very difficult on those of us that try so very hard to accommodate those that have not planned.

There is something wrong with this picture. You know you have a problem, situation or some type of problem that you have lost sleep over, fretted about, argued with your significant other and just stumbled along. Then you decide to contact an advocacy group like GSMOL, CMRAA and CoMO-CAL. Yes, these folks have resources, yes the groups have volunteers that are skilled in various subjects and have either retired from a career that placed them in positions of authority. These men and women like what they do or they would not be involved today as a volunteer. I am sure they will agree with me that they are not magicians and can solve the world's problems with a nod of their head.

I know that they wonder where these folks went to school. Where did they get that idea? Not to say that some of the ideas are great and need to be put into use. But waiting until the last hour to file eviction forms or writing down an incident that happened three weeks ago, or trying to recall a telephone call from a man who is upset over the color of his trash cans is at best difficult from the onset.

But this is the task at hand. This is the challenge to reach out to you folks who fail to plan. I know if we were all alike we would have a messed up world, but let's have some common sense in these matters. I mean an eviction process is a serious situation that needs immediate attention from the first ring of the telephone or the first letter from park management. There are laws, rules, proce-

dures, and agencies that are highly skilled in stopping evictions. There are agencies that can be contacted via telephone call or e-mail that will respond. But I can assure you they do not want to respond on the final hour.

So, I ask you to get involved if you have problems don't wait until the last minute. Bring to our attention. We want to help, we can help but you need to support us in order for us to support you. Let me give you a prime example of what GSMOL does with the Legislative Action team (Mr. Jim Burr). His team and his efforts take a great deal of time and thought to process all those AB (Assembly Bills) and SB (Senate Bills) those efforts just didn't happen they were thought through and over and over before it went to print. That takes time, dedication and the willingness to help all of us that live in mobile or manufactured homes.

Another group is your home owner association leaders and committee members. Again a group of talented, dedicated and resourceful people. They ask nothing other than your support and a willingness to get involved with your life styles and your homes. It takes a great deal of effort. These folks are not looking for 15 minutes of fame, they have been there done that and they know the value of doing a job that helps each of us maintain and contain our lifestyles.

CoMO-CAL puts out a monthly newsletter that is second to none and contains valuable information and a list of resources that can assist each of us. Again they ask for your support in providing e-mail addresses so that information can get to you in a timely manner. Support is critically important. All of these organizations need our help, they need our wisdom, they need to know that you care and are willing to share your comments, knowledge and resources.

Continued on next page bottom

WIN \$200 & Help us Grow

Bob Hites and Frank Wodley are contributing \$300 for a contest to see who can get the most new members for CoMO-CAL. Our new “Membership Application” on the next page has a section: “Sponsored By.” Use this application - print your name in this sponsored by section, print it front and back, then cut the page in half and pass them out to all your friends and neighbors. The back explains the services we offer. Simply have your friends and neighbors mail in the application with a check - your name is already on them giving you credit.

For every new \$15 member you sponsor, you get one point, two points for a \$40 member. The contest starts August 1, 2008 and continues

through September 31, 2008. Winners will be announced in the November VOICE.

Points will be totaled on October 1, 2008. The sponsor with the most points wins. First place receives \$200 cash. 2nd place \$50, 3rd place \$25, 4th place \$15 and 5th place \$10. So this is your chance to make a few dollars and help us grow our membership.

Note: a sponsor need not be a single CoMO-CAL member. It can be an HOA or a group of members. In that case, the prize would go to the HOA or collectively to the people doing the work.

This is your opportunity to grow your organization. Good luck. And thanks

Welcome! Donna Helwig Joins the CoMO-CAL Team

We welcome Donna Helwig to our growing team. Donna has led a group of Windsor residents in their fight to keep ROP, Inc. from purchasing their park. In the end, they were successful in reducing the proposed rent increase of \$217 to \$117 saving residents thousands of dollars a year.

The park just had elections for a new HOA and eight out of nine seats were won by members of

Donna’s group. Donna is now the HOA President. Congratulations to Donna and group members.

We applaud their efforts and support them 100%. It shows what a small group of residents can accomplish for their friends and neighbors.

They have raised some funds by asking residents to recycle aluminum cans and plastic bottles.

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So in closing lets all try to plan ahead. It will make life much more enjoyable for all of us. Send in your membership applications. Send in your e-mail addresses, send in your comments. Let your leaders and volunteers know what you think. I am can be reached at 530-743-2965 or at

anvil95993@yahoo.com.

WE CAN HELP YOU BUT YOU MUST HELP US AS WELL. THANK YOU FOR READING...

BOB HITES CoMO-CAL VICE PRESIDENT

CoMO-CAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (Please Print)

(COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS-CALIFORNIA)

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

NAME: _____ Date: _____

PARK NAME: _____ SPACE # _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____ CITY/ZIP _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (PRINT _____ ZIP _____

APPLICANTS PHONE NUMBER (_____) - _____ - _____

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____ CHECK () MO ()

MEMBERSHIP (\$15.00/12 Months - \$40.00/36 Months)

Guaranteed Satisfaction (full refund within 90 days) SPONSORED BY: _____

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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SERVICES WE PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS

1. Our monthly newsletter, THE VOICE, is filled with important information every mobilehome owner needs. Articles from around the state of California. Tips and Suggestions. Important laws are explained so you can understand how you are protected. And the WHISPER, an informational flyer, is sent without charge to non-members. We also have informational fliers on a variety of subjects. We provide these FREE to our members.
 2. Our Website is **comocal.org**. All mobilehome owners have access to THE VOICE, attorneys who know the MRL, important links to government, advocacy groups, etc.
 3. We offer Small Claims Court Assistance: We will pay your fees up to \$30.00 (Some restrictions)
 4. Come to us for advice with Questions / Problems: Our staff is ready to take your call.
 5. We can recommend an attorney to help you with litigation or advice.
 6. Now every CoMO-CAL member automatically is a member of CARA California Alliance for Retired Americans – they represent 800,000 members in California . This is a \$10 value.
- We also have a message board and an e-mail ALERT network

JOIN CoMO-CAL Do It Today Do it for YOU

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 2. Our Website is **comocal.org**. All mobilehome owners have access to THE VOICE, attorneys who know the MRL, important links to government, advocacy groups, etc.
 3. We offer Small Claims Court Assistance: We will pay your fees up to \$30.00 (Some restrictions)
 4. Come to us for advice with Questions / Problems: Our staff is ready to take your call.
 5. We can recommend an attorney to help you with litigation or advice.
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JOIN CoMO-CAL Do It Today Do it for YOU

Wake Up Call

The goal of this issue is to wake up mobilehome owners around the state of California, not just you our membership. CoMO-CAL is not a given, i.e. it is possible we will shut down. But let's not let that happen.

Perhaps you are thinking about asking us for a refund. Of course that is not our goal. Our goal is to make you aware how IMPORTANT YOUR PARTICIPATION IS to accomplishing our goals. IT IS CRITICAL. Without you, we are NOTHING.

This is what we ask

- Join CoMO-CAL if you are not now a member

- Communicate with us— by phone or email
- Let us know what you need us to do for you - what issues you want us to write about, how we can help you in your park, etc.
- Donate your time - volunteer to help us
- Donate \$\$ - whatever you can afford to help us help you—\$5, \$10, \$100....
- Volunteer to be your park CoMO-CAL rep -
- Turn in our survey when we publish one
- Be active. Trust us. Be proud of CoMO-CAL—it is your organization!!



Where in California am I? What am I called?

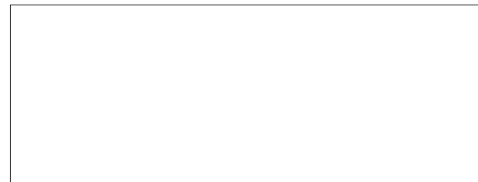
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CoMO-CAL is a non-profit California Corporation dedicated to serving mobilehome owners in California. Our purpose is to educate, communicate and unite. We are MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

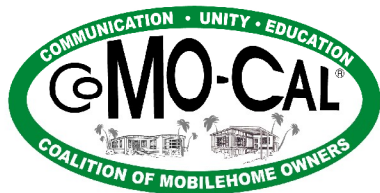


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1. 12 issues of THE VOICE. Usually 20 pages long, filled with important information no mobilehome owner should be without. Articles from around the state of California. Tips and Suggestions. Important laws explained so you can understand how you are protected.
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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.

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