



FOUNDED NOV 2004

# *THE VOICE*

COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS

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VOLUME 5

## Our Goals For 2009

The purpose of CoMO-CAL has always been to educate, communicate with and unite mobilehome owners. Fortunately you approve our direction and today we are the fastest growing advocacy group in the State of California.

Unfortunately, we lose our way sometimes, so 2009 is the year to really focus on our goals. What does this mean to you?

### Special Offer to Non-Members

We are offering a special promotion to mobilehome owners who are not already members of CoMO-CAL. They can subscribe to THE VOICE for one year for \$6. This is our way of saying hello, we are here to help you. See pages 14-16 for a flier and details of the program. Our goal is to reach as many in California as we can. So you, as a member, can promote and help us help you by making this offer to your friends and neighbors. They need information too. Right?

### What Can You Do?

Simply use the flyer found on pages 15 and 16 and make as many copies as you need for your park. Or you can call us and we will print enough for your park. We have already mailed out about 5,000 fliers for distribution in members parks. If you have friends in other parks, please tell them also.

### Phone and E-mail Assistance

We want to assist ALL residents with their individual issues, however this is unrealistic. Usually residents want free advice, i.e. without joining, perhaps thinking that we are funded by the

government or something. However, we survive by membership dues only (we thank you for being a member). We don't even accept advertising. Therefore, beginning March 1, 2009, we will provide phone and email advice only if you are a current member of CoMO-CAL.

### Help Us Help You - Form an HOA

No one can help you in your park unless you have an organization, whether it be a Home Owners Association or a CoMO-CAL Chapter. They are powerful vehicles for change.

### Why Form a Home Owners Association or a CoMO-CAL Chapter?

Many of us complain about the management, or other issues. We've complained also. But if you really, if YOU REALLY want to make a change, it is up to you to ACT! Remember, you are not alone. CoMO-CAL will help you every step of the way. So use us! We really answer our phone and emails.

### How to Form a CoMO-CAL Chapter

Please refer to the article on Pages 14-16 from "Community Organizing Manual" produced by All Parks Alliance for Change (the Minnesota State Group).

Call us for assistance. We will send you what you need to do, step by step.

Remember: SIN=Strength in Numbers

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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**

David Loop (Aptos):  
831-688-1293

Deane Sargent (Ashland Oregon):  
541-708-5131

DVD on purchasing your park—  
on request

George Turk (Millennium Housing): 949-515-5100

**Failure to Maintain Attorneys**

Endeman, Lincoln, Turek and  
Heater (ELTH) San Diego  
800-895-5053

**HCD - Riverside**  
909-951-4431 or 909-782-4420.

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### Endorsement by Butte County Mobilehome Owners Association

We are grateful to be working with the Butte County Mobilehome Owners Association (BCMOA) and Marty and Bill Struve. They have contributed many thousands of dollars of their own money to organize their county wide group, which is just over one year old. They have had considerable experience with CMRAA, GSMOL, and CoMO-CAL, so they are qualified to make a statement about each organization.

We appreciate their endorsement and look forward to teaming with them in the future. The following is printed, with their permission, from the BCMOA Informer Jan – Feb – Mar - 2009:

**CoMO-CAL** is the newest state organization but is rapidly growing in strength. They are represented in Sacramento and have begun to work with GSMOL on state and national issues. This organization offers some legal assistance (\$30 for small claims court, legal advice, etc.) for mobilehome residents.

Its membership dues are \$20/yr, which includes their bi-monthly newsletter, THE VOICE. This newsletter contains a wide variety of useful information for mobilehome residents and is itself worth the \$20/yr. Bob Hites, CoMO-CAL Vice President, is the only one we know of who goes into the parks, as Bill and Marty do, and works

with individual homeowners to help solve their problems. Bob lives in Yuba City and works in the parks in Northern CA and works closely with BCMOA. He's a strong and dedicated ally.

#### WE ENDORSE

1. CoMO-CAL – Best potential for helping mobilehome residents in parks. Has the best newsletter – THE VOICE. Becoming increasingly effective in Sacramento. certainly deserves the support of mobilehome residents.
2. GSMOL – Strong suit is their work in Sacramento in effectively introducing and supporting legislation for many years. Shows promise for developing some mobilehome park programs in addition to their park chapters. Newsletter – The CALIFORNIAN- Not bad but could be greatly improved. Can recommend membership in addition to CoMO-CAL. Deserves support for their work in Sacramento if nothing else.
3. CMRAA – Can't say very much about this organization. I seems to have some problems which need to be solved before it can be very effective in help-ing mobilehome residents. Its newsletter is very limited. They would probably argue that they need more membership money in order to improve. Signed: Bill and Marty Struve

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### Resident Associations: Powerful Vehicles for Change\*

\*Reproduced from All Parks Alliance for Change (APAC) Community Organizing Manual available free online at <http://www.allparksallianceforchange.org/?q=organizing/manual#attachments>

Residents of manufactured home parks have a lot of power. Manufactured Homeowners can:

- Take legal action
- Reveal the truth about park lords
- Withhold rent via legal processes (rent escrow, tenant remedies actions, etc)
- Vote
- Negotiate with the park-lord
- Demand that the police department respond to issues in the park
- Propose legislation on the local or state level to protect homeowners

Almost everyone has the power to do any of these things, but often times people choose not to take action. Why?

With a resident association neighbors can share the risks and benefits of acting on their power. Resident associations also create more power. Here are some examples of how:

Resident association leaders gain credibility (e.g. when they present themselves as the “President of the resident association” for example)

Resident associations can build a reputation as a

powerful group of people. The benefits of being known as “a group to be reckoned with” often stay even when new leaders take the reigns.

Resident associations can organize resources, including funds, allies, and property to promote the goals of the association.

Resident associations promote new ideas about who lives in manufactured home parks. The current perceptions and stereotypes of park residents work to take away homeowners’ power. Ending these stereotypes and creating a new public meaning of parks will, in the long-term, make park residents more powerful.

Resident Associations are Most Powerful When:

- There is a large base of active members who believe in the mission
- There is frequent communication between leaders and members
- Residents know their rights
- Leaders are strategic and fair in negotiations
- Leaders get support from others in the broader community
- Leaders and members consistently follow through with what they commit to do
- New leaders are continually developed to keep the association going

Residents of any manufactured home park can join together with their neighbors to form a resident association (also known as a homeowner association or HOA). The concept is simple: there is great

strength in numbers. Resident associations give structure and legitimacy to any group of neighbors who want to organize to protect and improve their community.

What is a Resident Association?

A resident association is a formal group of neighbors who come together and form an organization to act on their shared values and vision for the community. Three things are needed to make change in any community: a vision, a base of people who believe in that vision, and a vehicle to organize the base. Resident associations are a vehicle manufactured homeowners can use to organize a base and promote their vision.

Characteristics of Resident Associations:

**Participatory:** everyone in the community is encouraged to get involved

**Represents a majority:** at least 51% of the households in the community are members of the association

**Democratic:** every member has a vote and a voice in decision making

**Community-Led:** the leaders of the association are from the community and elected by the members

**Mission Driven:** the association has a written mission statement that describes its purpose

**Structured:** there is a formal structure created by the membership, called bylaws, mapping out instructions for how decisions get made and how leadership roles are filled

Examples of What Resident Associations Can Do:

- Negotiate with a park-lord or manager to resolve

community issues

- Pass legislation on the local or state level to protect homeowners
- Develop a neighborhood watch
- Host a park-wide cleanup day
- Purchase the park as a co-op, land trust, or non-profit
- Have a regular newsletter to communicate to homeowners
- Establish a welcome committee for new residents
- Participate in broader coalitions (affordable housing, racial justice, etc.)
- Organize voter turnout for elections
- Hold accountability sessions with public officials
- Host community celebrations and social events
- Organize against park closings
- Organize for relocation compensation

Benefits of a resident association:

- Important decision makers such as politicians, police, park management are more likely to listen to an organized group of residents than individuals
- It makes your community visible
- A resident association can be a place where neighbors

- exchange information and ideas about how to
- Continued on page 6 “Associations”

**“Associations” continued from Page 5**

- respond to issues in the park
- If residents in the park want to take legal action the resident association can be the plaintiff instead of individual residents
- A resident association gives people a place to voice their concerns where they can be heard without fear of retaliation

A resident association can build a sense of community in the park as people get to know each other

**Steps to Forming a Resident Association****Step 1: Identify Issues a Resident Association Can Address**

What are park-wide concerns the association can work to resolve? Invite everyone to a park to a meeting where they can speak their minds about what they want to see changed in their community. Vote to find out what issues unite the most people.

**Step 2: Get Support From a Majority of the Households in Each Park**

Get a team of volunteers together to go door-to-door and invite people to join the association by signing a membership petition. In the state of Minnesota, an association is official when at least 51% of the households join. Check you state laws to see if there is a definition of a legal resident association. Regardless, to avoid splinter groups and to be certain of park unity, 51% or more of households is a recommended percentage.

Step 3: Define the Mission/Purpose of the Association

Work together to write a 2-3 sentence mission statement to let people know what the resident association is about.

Step 4: Decide on the Structure of the Association

Decide how many people you want on the association board, who is eligible to be a board member, and what board members will do.

Step 5: Hold Board Elections

Decide who will be the leaders and representatives of the resident association. Accept nominations and elect someone for each board position

Step 6: Approve By-laws

The board's first job is to write the rules, or by-laws of the association. Bylaws map out the structure of the association and set a process for decision-making. After a draft of the by-laws is written, hold another meeting to have them approved by the membership.

Step 7: Celebrate!

Keep the energy high by celebrating. Some ideas: have a party, put up “we did it!” signs around the park, make t-shirts or stickers for association members, and recognize individual contributions.

Step 8: Win Real Victories for Your Community!

Do a community power analysis for each of the 3 priority issues. Do a community power analysis. Set a goal, meet with potential allies, negotiate, and win real changes for your community.

Hold a Park wide meeting to do steps 3-5

**The Threats Are REAL by Frank Wodley, CoMO-CAL President**

You've seen articles like this before. Did you believe us?

Take my park for instance. Driving in, you'd think it is heaven for residents. It is well maintained and management claims it is one of the best parks in the San Fernando Valley. But looks can be deceiving.

Here is a list of threats, just in my park:

- Clubhouse closed for 10 years, really only available to the manager and gardeners
- Management puts out new rules and regulations without a meeting
- For a whole year, the park booted cars, asking for as much as \$75 from residents. I figure it cost park residents about \$10,000!
- The park took me to court, trying to get a restraining order against me - the first step to evicting me because I was an advocate. Eight residents, including the manager, assistance manager, and security patrol were willing to lie. They claimed I was stalking the manager, had held her and a friend hostage, peeked in her windows, drove by her mobilehome slowly, hid in the bushes to scare her, etc. The only truth, yes I drove slowly, that's a rule of the park. And when it was settled, there was a gag order preventing me from telling residents what really had happened. This was very stressful and cost me \$4000.
- The park interferes with sales. This cost my friend \$30,000. And what about all the others?
- The park newsletter published that if and when you want to sell your single wide home, you must remove it from the park. (of course we know the MRL says you can sell it in place, depending on health and safety issues).
- In 2008, the park increased our rents 4%,

although we have rent control and the legal increase was 3%. (It was corrected by management when CoMO-CAL advised them of their mistake)

- The park manager works to convert new residents into pro-management residents - then uses them against other residents in the park
- The management harasses and intimidates residents. Until recently, this was done with 7-day notices.
- Management, in 2004, told residents of disabled children that the buses coming into the park to pick them up for school could no longer come directly to their homes. Parents were advised to have these children wait at the front entrance of the park. The reason: the buses were too large, too heavy, would damage the streets, they drove too fast, etc. These moms united and got Fair Housing involved. Result: the buses go directly to childrens' homes.
- The park owner belongs to the WMA.
- Owners of parks in rent control areas have stated Proposition 98 was just the beginning - they are out to eliminate rent control and they have the money—but we have the power if we use it.
- Remember 1309 - vacancy decontrol. It may be back this year. It could cost me my home! And it could cost you YOUR HOME too!
- The list goes on and on....

So what lessons are to be learned? Simply that we can not sit back and assume our park owner has our best interest at heart. Usually this is not the case. He is interested in making as much money as possible. He is not afraid to step over the line of the law, after all there is really no "fine" if he does.

**The Senate Select Committee on Manufactured Homes and Communities**  
**Mobilehome Park Wildfire Safety and Emergency Preparedness**  
**Hearings December 2, 2008 and February 6, 2009**

2008 saw many wildfires across the state - from Butte County, to Los Angeles and San Diego. Tragically, about 600 mobilehomes were lost in two fires here in the San Fernando Valley. Senator Correa chaired two hearings, one in Sacramento, the other in Sylmar, to discuss what steps should be taken to prepare for wildfires in the future.

On December 2, 2008 Catherine Borg of the park owners organization, Western Manufactured Communities Association (WMA), has made the following statement:

*“We have supported, we’ve sponsored legislation in the past that would have required, first of all, to have pre-’76 homes that were manufactured prior to HUD standards, to be removed upon resale. And we’re not proposing to take away housing, but it seems unethical at times to allow somebody to sell a home to the next person coming in who may be very unaware that a home built prior to 1976, that it would be more unsafe than a home that was manufactured in 1980.”*

So what does this mean? Well we knew this would be the stance of the WMA. They have, for years, wanted to require a pre-’76 home be moved out of the park upon sale, i.e. if you own a pre ‘76 home, they suggest you not be allowed to sell it! That’s right, they want you to simply walk away from your home, rather than sell it in place. Those living in pre’76 homes could lose BILLIONS OF DOLLARS!

It is our opinion, that this is no solution to what happened in the San Fernando Valley. In fact, none of those homes were built before 1980. The WMA wants Sacramento ignore the facts. This is all about money. Park owners stand to make millions, even billions, if all pre’76 homes were

forced out of parks. Remember, when a space comes available, park owners make out three ways. They can make \$100,000 when they put a new home on the space and sell it. And once a space is vacant, rent control no longer applies and they can raise rents to “market” rent or higher. This in turn means higher profits, ultimately increasing the value of their park.

A transcript of the December 2nd hearing is available from:

Senate Publications & Flags  
 1020 N Street, B-53  
 Sacramento, Ca. 95814  
 916-651-1538

Make checks or money orders payable to SENATE RULES COMMITTEE. Include Stock Number 1436-S when ordering.

Editor’s Note: I just received a call from an Oakridge who is a CoMO-CAL member. Her home was not destroyed and her family has received insurance money for emergency living expenses. Many families had no insurance! An evacuation the month before might have helped residents prepare this time. Everyone evacuated safely!

FEMA told us that the cleanup in Oakridge might start in March 2009 and be completed by July 2009. Just the cleanup is a very complicated matter (who pays for it, etc.).

If you are a resident of Oakridge, please get in touch with us. Perhaps we can be of some assistance.

Milt Burdick and Frank Wodley attended the February 6th Hearing. After the hearing they were allowed to tour Oakridge. Our hearts go out to all those involved.

### The Legislative Front

On January 16, 2009 our president met with the Carson's Mobilehome Park Legislative Workgroup to discuss their proposed legislation to give local governments and park residents some control when park owners try to condoize their park. We have been working with Jim Dantona, Carson's lobbyist, in his efforts to convince legislators to support this bill.

GSMOL will be resubmitting their "owner/manager training" bill that the Governor vetoed in 2006. GSMOL feels this will be an incentive for owners and managers to follow the Mobilehome Residency Law. CoMO-CAL is waiting on the sidelines to learn more. We know managers often do not adhere to the MRL because they know they can get away with it - no one will challenge them. But that is changing. Today CoMO-CAL is challenging managers when they do not follow the MRL. Let us know - we can help!

A few bills will be submitted as a consequence of the wildfires. SB23, Senator Padilla's bill, will require park owners and managers to develop emergency and fire safety plans for their parks and provide emergency services training to their staff. We support this concept and are waiting to see the final bill's language.

We understand the WMA will submit a bill, as discussed on the previous page, to prevent the sale

of pre-'76 mobilehomes. That would mean, if and when you tried to sell your pre-'76 home, the park would require it be removed from the park, i.e. they wouldn't let you sell it in place. This would mean you would lose ALL EQUITY in your home. This would be catastrophic! If we estimate the number of pre-'76 homes at 250,000 (about 35%), and an average value of \$30,000, the total loss would be approximately \$7.5 BILLION DOLLARS! We can not afford to let a bill like this come into law!!!! This affects every owner of a pre-'76 mobilehome. You can not afford to sit back and not be heard. CoMO-CAL will keep you apprised of developments.

Park owners don't like to pay to maintain trees and driveways. Consequently they may be introducing a bill that makes maintenance the responsibility of park residents. Park owners often today violate the MRL when they require residents to trim trees. Refer to the article by Jon Heim in this newsletter. Of course we feel maintenance of trees and driveways should continue to be the responsibility of park owners. We will oppose such legislation.

Please know that CoMO-CAL now has a voice in Sacramento. We teamed with others around the state in 2008 to stop SB900, which actually would have hurt mobilehome owners. We intend to be more active in 2009.

### Failure to Maintain Lawsuits

If you have maintenance issues in your park, you need to read this short article. There is help, but you have to take the first step. If nothing else, call us at 800-929-6061 and we can get you started. No one should have to tolerate parks that are not maintained.

By law, your park owner must provide and maintain the park's common areas, facilities, services

and physical improvements in good working order and condition. And when services are reduced, residents have grounds for a lawsuits. The "go to" attorneys for these types of lawsuit are Endeman, Lincoln, Turek and Heater (ELTH) in San Diego. Their phone number is 800-895-5053. They are quite busy around the state and take only about 10% of the cases submitted to them.

### CoMO-CAL This and That

#### 1. When is your renewal date?

##### CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

This month we are sending hard copies to all members. Why? So every member may know the status of their membership and when it expires. Your membership expires on the date just above your last name on the mailing label. Please make a note. Also note AN=Annual. 2 YR = 2 year. and 3 YR = 3 year.

<u>Renewal Date</u>
Your Name
Your Address

2. Renewal Notice: Usually we will extend your

membership three months before we take you off as a member. It does save us time and money when you renew early.

3. We are considering membership certificates or membership cards. Unfortunately it takes a lot of time, and we don't have the resources to do it today.

4. We will come to your park. Just give us a call to schedule a date and time. Don't make us come to you.

5. If there is an interest in meetings here in the San Fernando Valley, we are willing.

6. If you are an Oakridge resident, please call us—we have your back newsletters and need a new address for you.

### Results of Survey– January 2009

We received about 20 responses, that's about 1%, to our January 2009 survey. It is very disappointing that you don't participate. Perhaps you don't feel it is important to network with us.

We can draw some conclusions, even with the very low response. The majority who responded were from parks in Southern California (please remember we are state-wide, not just Southern California). About 95% of the parks had space numbers and 55% were 55+. 70% had a pro-resident association, 45% published a newsletter and less than 20% were affiliated with any state-wide group.

75% reported they had management issues, 40% interference of sales, 25% said their rents were too high, and 15% were concerned about condo conversions.

80% receive the MRL. About 45% belong to another state-wide group besides CoMO-CAL. 60% said they wanted information on parks in their area. Most wanted CoMO-CAL to write about all the issues mentioned: management problems, interference of sales, rent control, condo conversions, and the laws.

75% wanted us to write about other advocacy groups, while 95% wanted advocates to follow a code of ethics.

Regarding the kind of help, 80% wanted a newsletter, and opposition to new laws by the park owners. 75% wanted new laws, free attorney services, and mobilehome owners to be united.

About two-thirds wanted us to come to their park and talk about CoMO-CAL. Just call us.

**Thanks to Those Who Help Out - Our “Unsung” Heros**

We must thank all those members who have helped make CoMO-CAL what it is today. Here is a partial listing in no particular order.

Plus the countless members who have sent a donation and helped in other ways. We thank you all!

Connie Profett	Sandy Cissell	Rose Wodley	Milt Burdick
Sue Ann Miller	Sally Studer	Tony Sansone	Ralph Weber
Mary Lou Murphy	Will Juncosa	Donna Helwig	Dora & Lou Willard
Alice Berg	Dave Loop	David Grabill	Len Berman
Laurel Fielding	Milt Burdick	Jon Heim	Stewart Neill
Dorothy Brosnan	Charles Huff	Andree Denninger	Emily Christopher
Mahala Jory	Jason Wodley	Steve Molski	

February 5, 2009

Dear Mr. Wodley,

I joined CoMoCal a few months ago and read the news letter every month. I never thought that I would need your help until yesterday.

I was having a problem with my park manager. I had asked him to have the maintenance crew clean up a mess the park had created in my yard last summer (2008). No response, for weeks.

I called Bob Hites yesterday and explained the situation to him, he in turn called my manager and today the problem was fixed, just like that.

It doesn't sound like a big deal, but it really was to me. Having some one cover your back is fantastic. I'm a 60 year old lady with serious arthritis and would have done the clean up myself if I could have simply to avoid having to deal with the manager here. Bob eliminated the stress and anxiety the entire process would have caused me.

I wanted you to know that he deserves an “Atta

Boy” from your organization and he is getting a huge Thank You from me.

I will certainly pass this information on to other residents of my park, Bayview Mobile Home Park, 2003 Bayview Heights Drive, San Diego, Ca. 92105, and I will keep my membership with you in good standing.

Thank you for being there!!!

Sincerely,

Roberta Banks  
Bayview MHP  
San Diego

Editors Note: Bob Hites works hard traveling around northern California on his own dime . He takes many phone calls a day from members asking for help and is not afraid to speak to managers and owners. Mobilehome owners are fortunate that Bob is in their corner. He really is CoMO-CAL’s trouble shooter. Thanks Bob! And thanks Roberta for the kind words, we appreciate your thoughts.

## WHO TAKES CARE OF TREES?

Article Written by JON STANLEY HEIM exclusively for CoMO-CAL

Many of the legal rights of mobilehome residents are established in the Mobilehome Residency Law (“MRL”), California Civil Code sections 798 through 799.11. These statutes must be attached to residents’ rental agreements. (Cal. Civ. Code, sec. 798.15, subd. (c).) The MRL recognizes the unique investment which mobilehome residents make in their dwellings, an investment that distinguishes mobilehome residency from ordinary tenancies such as apartment rentals. The MRL protects mobilehome residents against certain abuses, sharp practices and add-on fees by owners and managers of mobilehome parks.

Every mobilehome resident should have a copy of the MRL and at least a general understanding of mobilehome owners’ rights under it. In this article and future ones, I shall endeavor to explain key provisions of and rights under the MRL and other laws affecting mobilehome residents. Of necessity my explanations and opinions in this space can only be general. Mobilehome residents who are aggrieved by actions of park management or who find themselves in significant disputes with management should seek advice on their particular situations from counsel familiar with the MRL and other relevant laws.

One common legal issue in mobilehome residency concerns trees. Who is supposed to take care of trees, and when? The MRL addresses this issue directly. California Civil Code section 798.37.5, subdivision (a), which is part of the MRL, provides that, “[w]ith respect to trees on rental spaces in a mobilehome park, park management shall be solely responsible for the trimming, pruning, or removal of any tree, and the costs thereof, upon written notice by a homeowner or a determination by park management that the tree poses a specific hazard or health and safety violation.” If the homeowner and management disagree whether a tree poses such a hazard or violation, either party

may request an inspection of the site and a resolution of the issue by Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD”) or a local agency that enforces mobilehome laws. Under California Civil Code section 798.37.5, subdivision (b), also part of the MRL, park management is responsible too for “the trimming, pruning, or removal of any tree [in a common area of the park], and the costs thereof[,]” whether or not the common area tree poses a hazard or health and safety violation. Management must also repair “root damage to driveways and foundation systems....” (Cal. Civ. Code, sec. 798.37.5, subd. (c).) Mobilehome residents are forbidden from planting trees in the park “without first obtaining written permission from the management.” (Cal. Code Civ. Proc., sec. 798.37.5, subd. (d). All current rules and regulations of mobilehome parks must comply with the foregoing statutes (Cal. Code Civ. Proc., sec. 798.37.5, subd. (g)), so they cannot be waived or diluted by any rental agreement or park rule.

Thus under the MRL any mobilehome resident who believes that a tree on his or her rental space is hazardous or presents a health and safety violation must give notice of the hazard or violation to park management, *in writing*. If management disagrees or does not respond, the mobilehome resident should request an inspection and determination by either DHCD or a responsible local agency. Very few tree maintenance disputes will not be resolved by these processes. However if the state or local

agency agrees that the tree is hazardous and management still refuses to trim, prune or remove the tree, the mobilehome resident can file suit under the MRL for injunction, compensatory and punitive damages, attorney fees, and an additional \$2,000 for each willful violation of the MRL by management. (Cal. Civ. Code, secs. 798.84-

### Not All Advocacy Groups Are Created Equal

Not all advocacy groups are created equal. We stand apart from the others because:

We guarantee a full refund of membership dues if not satisfied within 90 days of joining.

We will accept less than \$20 if that's all you can afford. We want you to be informed and part of our family.

We promptly answer our phones and emails., i.e. we are there when you need us.

We have a very comprehensive website, second to none., at comocal.org. If you need information on an issue—go there and use the search feature

We reach out to other groups, not only in California and the U.S. , but internationally.

We inform non-members through THE WHISPER

We think outside the box.

Our new program offers THE VOICE to non-members for just \$6 per year. Our goal is to educate, communicate with and unite as many mobilehome owners across California as possible.

We believe now is the time to concentrate on the enforcement of laws, not on getting ever more useless laws.

We are endorsed by BCMOA (Butte County), PHRAA (England), the Modesto Advocacy, Sham Conversions (Clay Butler), and others.

We are the only advocacy group that follows a code of ethics:

- We focus on serving our membership and promoting their general welfare
- We provide prospective members a list of our services and the benefits of joining
- We are honest with our members
- We are transparent, i.e. freely share information about our organization: assets and finances
- We are open to member's suggestions, comments, and criticism
- We respond to members, either verbally or in writing, usually "on the spot."
- We run our organization according to our by-laws and purpose
- When asked a question, we agree to give members all information available to us, i.e. what we can do to help them as well as other advocacy groups (if we know) by a member.

798.87.)

So now you know: trees in mobilehome parks are the responsibility of park management, and government agencies and courts will make sure that management fulfills its responsibilities for trees. Under this law no mobilehome resident should suffer a hazardous tree or any expense for making it safe.

**JON STANLEY HEIM**

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Editors Note: I would like to sincerely thank Mr. Heim for this informative article, written without charge, for CoMO-CAL.

If you would like Mr. Heim to write an article, just let us know what issue is of interest to you and we will pass it along.

## With Your Help CoMO-CAL is Stepping Up and Helping Others

CoMO-CAL is introducing a new program (See flier on the next two pages), which is only **available to mobilehome owners who are not now CoMO-CAL members.** Now your friends and neighbors can subscribe to THE VOICE for just \$6/year. This is our way of introducing our organization. We are excited and hope they take advantage.

### Why Are We Offering This Promotion?

The answer is simple. We feel every resident can benefit from information in THE VOICE and this is our way of introducing others to CoMO-CAL. After all, today we reach less than .2% of all residents around the state. The challenges are great and we want to make a difference. We need others on board. We can't help them if they don't know about us.

### Informing the Masses

One goal of CoMO-CAL is unity. Another is to inform mobilehome owners. It is critical that they know what's happening around the state and know CoMO-CAL is helping and making a difference.

### No Better Newsletter

THE VOICE is endorsed as the best newsletter in the State of California and now every mobilehome owner can get it for just \$6/year. How can others unite with us if they know nothing about us.

### Why Pay for a Full Membership?

Some of you may say "Why spend \$20. when I can get the same thing for \$6. Please understand this promotion is a way for non-members to be informed, about the threats to their lifestyle, and to be informed about CoMO-CAL. The \$6 is just for THE VOICE, and does not include other benefits that only members receive. Beginning this month we will limit phone assistance to members only.

### Pat Yourself on the Back

We know this offer is a real bargain. **You** should "pat yourself on the back" because **your membership makes it possible.** Really! Your membership allows us to reach more residents and inform them. And although it might seem you are getting short changed, please look at the cup as half full rather than half empty. Someone, that's you, has to step up and pay a full membership, just like those of us who run CoMO-CAL have stepped up to help you and others, without compensation. Otherwise there would be no CoMO-CAL.

### Bottom Line

Bottom line: We appreciate your membership and hope you renew. The last thing we want is to lose you as a member. And our policy has always been, if you can not afford the membership fee, we will accept what you can. If you feel you are being short changed in any way, please call us and we will work out something.

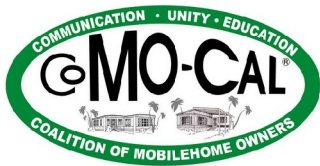
We feel you should take pride knowing you are helping others and that you are part of the solution, not part of the problem.

As of this printing we have mailed out about 10,000 fliers (see the next two pages). We would hope you would help promote this new program to inform others about CoMO-CAL.

What can you do to help?

Give us a call (800-929-6061) or send us an email (comocal@yahoo.com) and volunteer to distribute these fliers in your park.

Donate: It will cost us \$2000. just to print and mail fliers. But we can not afford to do any less.



# THE WHISPER

COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS

## A Voice for Every Mobilehome Owner

- Do you know what a “condo conversion” is?
- Do you know about Proposition 98?
- Do you have rent control?
- Do you have management problems, interference of sales, failure to maintain issues, etc?
- Is your park violating your rights, those rights guaranteed by the Mobilehome Residency Law?

If your answer to any of the above is YES, then you need to subscribe to our bi-monthly newsletter (20 pages—no advertising) “THE VOICE.”

### Just What is CoMO-CAL?

We are ADVOCATES FOR YOU. Now four years old, we are a non-profit 501(c)3, run by volunteers who are mobilehome owners. We face the same problems you have in your park. In fact, these problems are similar throughout the State of California, and even internationally.

Our belief is we DO NOT need new laws. Our goal is the enforcement of the laws we already have. Let’s use these laws to protect our rights and our investments. We have lots of resources.

We want to unite mobilehome owners. The old adage “there is strength in numbers” really applies to us. **Alone we have no voice.** But together we DO HAVE A VOICE. There are over 650,000 mobile home spaces in California. Just think what we could do if everyone joined!

Our primary goal is **Protection of your rights**, through communication, unity and education. We

have members in over 500 parks throughout the state of California. They are our “eyes and ears.” We already are making a difference.

CoMO-CAL members receive THE VOICE as part of their \$20 annual membership, plus other benefits. If you need other services, such as phone assistance or access to our “members4, you must become a full member.

### Special Offer - THE VOICE for \$6.00 per Year

We want every mobilehome owner to be informed, so we are now offering a one year, 6 issue subscription to our newsletter, THE VOICE, for \$6.00. This offer is available only to residents who are not now CoMO-CAL members.

**SIX DOLLARS—that’s all - DELIVERED (or emailed) TO YOUR DOOR. Don’t miss out on important information!**

Each issue is usually 20 pages full of important information, including lists of attorneys familiar with mobilehome law and other important links. **Six dollars today could save you THOUSANDS TOMORROW.**

### **Subscribe Today**

To subscribe to THE VOICE, simply fill out the application on the back and send us a check for \$6.00 for one year (6 issues). Or if you would rather support us and become a member of CoMO-CAL (THE VOICE included), send a check for \$20. In any case, we want you to be informed. Do it today!! It’s your money!! Let us help.

**What Do Others Say About CoMO-CAL**

- Clay Butler (shamconversions.com) writes: *“Hands down the absolute best mobile home newsletter out there. Worth the price of membership just for that alone. Started by Frank Wodley and run by people who actually live in a mobile home park like yourselves. I urge you to become a CoMO-CAL member.”*
- The Butte County Mobilehome Owners Association (BCMOA) writes:

***CoMO-CAL** is the newest state organization but is rapidly growing in strength. They are represented in Sacramento and have begun to work with GSMOL on state and national issues. This organization offers some legal assistance (\$30 for small claims court, legal advice, etc.) for mobilehome residents.*

*Its membership dues are \$20/yr, which includes their bi-monthly newsletter, **THE VOICE**. This newsletter contains a wide variety of useful information for mobilehome residents and is itself worth the \$20/yr. Bob Hites, CoMO-CAL vice president, is the only one we know of who goes into the parks, as Bill and Marty do, and works with individual homeowners to help solve their problems. Bob lives in Yuba City and works in the parks in Northern CA and works closely with BCMOA. He’s a strong and dedicated ally.*

**WE ENDORSE:** *CoMO-CAL – Best potential for helping mobilehome residents in parks. Has the best newsletter – THE VOICE. Becoming increasingly effective in Sacramento. Certainly deserves the support of mobilehome residents.*

**CoMO-CAL**

**(COALITION OF MOBILEHOME OWNERS-CALIFORNIA)**

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

MEMBERSHIP or Subscription APPLICATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PARK NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS (print): \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANTS PHONE # (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ check( ) M.O. ( )

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP (Includes THE VOICE) 20.00/12 MONTHS 90 day guarantee

SUBSCRIPTION TO “THE VOICE” (NON-MEMBERS ONLY) (\$6.00/6 ISSUES)

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**

**LISTEN UP – PLEASE DON'T READ THIS**

Well, I said PLEASE. But since you started, I might as well inform you that I am receiving complaints and information, from the Salton Sea to Mount Shasta, about how mobile home residents are maintaining their homes and the land on which it sits. Now I know times are tough. I know that this does not apply to all residents, but for those that it does apply to PLEASE PAY ATTENTION. If the shoe, sandal or boot fits, then wear it. The complaints are coming from residents from within the park and park managers and owners. They are saying that some residents are just plain disobedient and they are not placing their trash in the trash receptacles. They have too many pets and some have pets that roam the streets and dig, chew and jump on residents as they walk for exercise within their parks. Some of the residents have removed siding, some have clothes lines and numerous junk cars parked in the driveways or in the streets. Further, weeds, grass and unsightly home furnishing are laying about in the yards. WHY??

We are going to be responsible. The park managers have given seven, and fourteen day notices to no avail. The people in question continue to disregard the notices and continue their messy and sloppy lifestyles as though that is the way it is done. I am saying to those violators GET IT CLEANED UP BECAUSE HARDER TIMES ARE COMING TO YOUR PARK. Be part of the solution and not part of the problem. Hear this, I am looking for a few good men and women to act as members of CoMO-CAL'S POSSE PATROL. You don't have to contact anyone but me. Send me the names, addresses, space number and if you know their

telephone number or if they have e-mail, which I doubt. Send that along as well. Send it to me and I will take care of the problem. If I know the problem and where it is happening, there is a chance I can correct this discrepancy with a little frontier justice. I was taught that everything had a place and a name and everything should be put in it's proper place. Further, there is no sin in being poor but there is a sin in being dirty. So send me your violators. You do not have to say anything, other than to me, and I will address the problem.

Don't be afraid as I am not going to say where I received my information but they will receive a letter and I have a way to get their attention. Just for the record you do not want to tread on an old military sergeant (E-7) that cut his teeth on a barb wire fence. So bring it on and we will see what happens. If you want to be a part of the POSSE PATROL I can be reached at 530-743-2965 and my e-mail is [anvil95993@yahoo.com](mailto:anvil95993@yahoo.com). Try me, you may not like me but I can assure you they whoever and whomever they may be will definitely know that

I was there and I won't be riding no white horse or wearing a black hat. But I can do the job. Not a tough guy but I have friends in high places. Until then I remain, Thanks for caring and thanks for sharing

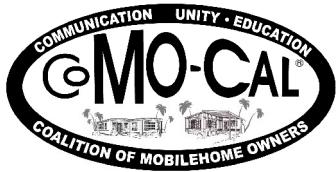
ROBERT C. HITES

Vice President, CoMO-CAL

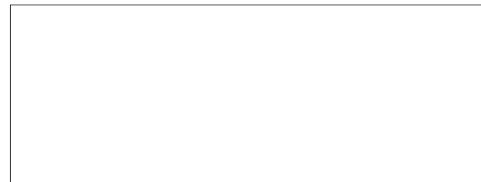
CoMO-CAL's Mr. Troubleshooter

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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!

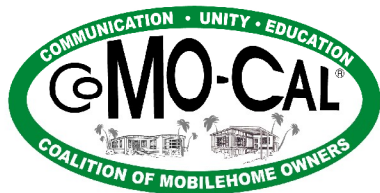


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CoMO-CAL is a non-profit California corporation dedicated to serve mobilehome owners in California.

**Our purpose is education,  
communication and to unite  
mobilehome owners.**

#### SERVICES WE PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS

1. 6 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. Your dime of course. But their charges are reasonable.
6. Above all, a way to UNITE and have a VOICE.

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