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GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**



11021 MAGNOLIA AVE., GARDEN GROVE, CA 92842 714-826-4071 800-888-1727

- ☐ ONE-YEAR GSMOL MEMBERSHIP FOR \$20
- ☐ THREE-YEAR GSMOL MEMBERSHIP FOR \$55
- ☐ ONE-YEAR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP FOR \$40

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SECOND OCCUPANT		
PARK NAME		
ADDRESS		SPACE NUMBER
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER ( ) -		
APPLICANT SIGNATURE		E-MAIL ADDRESS:

☐ NEW MEMBER

REGION NUMBER

CHAPTER NUMBER

CHECK NUMBER



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GIFT MEMBERSHIP SPONSORED BY:

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- ☐ PAC Fund \$
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☐ ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP



GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE, INC.  
P.O. BOX 876, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92842, 714-826-4071, 800-888-1727

AMOUNT PAID \$  
DATE  
CHECK NUMBER

# THE CALIFORNIAN

GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE

VOL. 43, NO 3 GSMOL –Advocating for Homeowner Rights Since 1962 FALL 2008

## President's Report:

### Long-time GSMOL Advocate, Maury Priest, Announces His Departure

As many of you know, Maury Priest has provided services to GSMOL as our Corporate Counsel and/or Legislative Advocate for most of the past 28 years. Maury has now notified us that, effective November 23, 2008, he is ending his services to GSMOL and will be pursuing other interests. We appreciate Maury's contribution to the organization and his efforts on our behalf. We wish Maury all the best in each of his future endeavors. Maury's farewell and thank you letter is on Page 4.

#### Moving Forward With Enthusiasm

We will be providing more information regarding our move forward into this new era for GSMOL and are currently considering several possibilities for Legislative Advocate and Corporate Counsel. We have already had two extra legislative advisors on retainer throughout this year and have worked closely with attorneys who could perform our corporate and legal work. While we anticipate some short-term challenges, we expect to start 2009 in a very healthy, exciting and proactive way.

This is an important time for GSMOL and you can play a huge part in helping to re-energize the League. We encourage all GSMOL leaders and members to place a special emphasis on membership recruitment and retention to help build the League and enable us to serve our members more effectively. We have already had to reduce the frequency of the *Californian* due to budget constraints and don't want to have to make further cuts in member services due to limited funds.

Our Membership Action Team, under the leadership of Chairman Bob Markley has recently invested considerable time and effort in revamping our membership recruitment materials. Those materials are now available through the home office. We encourage you to order the materials and then schedule informational meetings in homes and clubhouses and designate GSMOL "ambassadors" to go door-to-door with recruitment materials. Those are very effective ways to attract new members. For every block of five new members, a recruiter or chapter can request \$5 back from the League, as an added incentive.

We know these are difficult economic times for many of our constituents but membership in GSMOL needs to be promoted as inexpensive but valuable insurance to help homeowners protect their quality of life and peace of mind. It's sort of like AAA membership, but for homeowners. Homeowners need look no further than the defeat of Proposition 98 and the defeat of several bad Legislative bills earlier this year to know what GSMOL has done for homeowners lately. We are also assisting members in the field when our volunteer leaders are available to help. The more members and leaders we have, the more we can do. Please do what you can to help us, and yourselves, in this important mission.

(Continued on Page 8)

#### Inside...

- **Legislative Report**
- **Legislative Votes**
- **Evolution of Lobbying**
- **Enforcement Legal Fund**
- **ELF Success**
- **New Directors Appointed**

THE CALIFORNIAN  
GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE

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## Capitol Report

By Maurice A. Priest, GSMOL  
Legislative Advocate

### GSMOL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

#### GSMOL AND MEMBERS WIN AGAIN: 6 GSMOL BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW

With a GSMOL team effort, mobilehome owners throughout the state will benefit from 6 new GSMOL supported laws that will take effect on January 1, 2009. This accomplishment would not have been possible without your cards, letters, and phone calls of support to your Legislators during the session. Our thanks for a job well done. The new laws are summarized below.

#### AB 2857 (LIEBER) SIGNED INTO LAW BY THE GOVERNOR

GSMOL-sponsored AB 2857 by Assemblymember Sally Lieber has been signed into law by the Governor, and will take effect on January 1, 2009. Starting in the new year, the Public Utilities Commission cannot deny eligibility for the CARE utility discount program to any qualified low income resident of a mobilehome park who has applied for the discount, on the basis that not all homeowners in their park receive service on a mastermeter/submeter system. This loophole in existing law had prevented some qualified low income park residents from receiving the discounted utility service because some spaces in their park were on direct-bill service from the serving utility company.

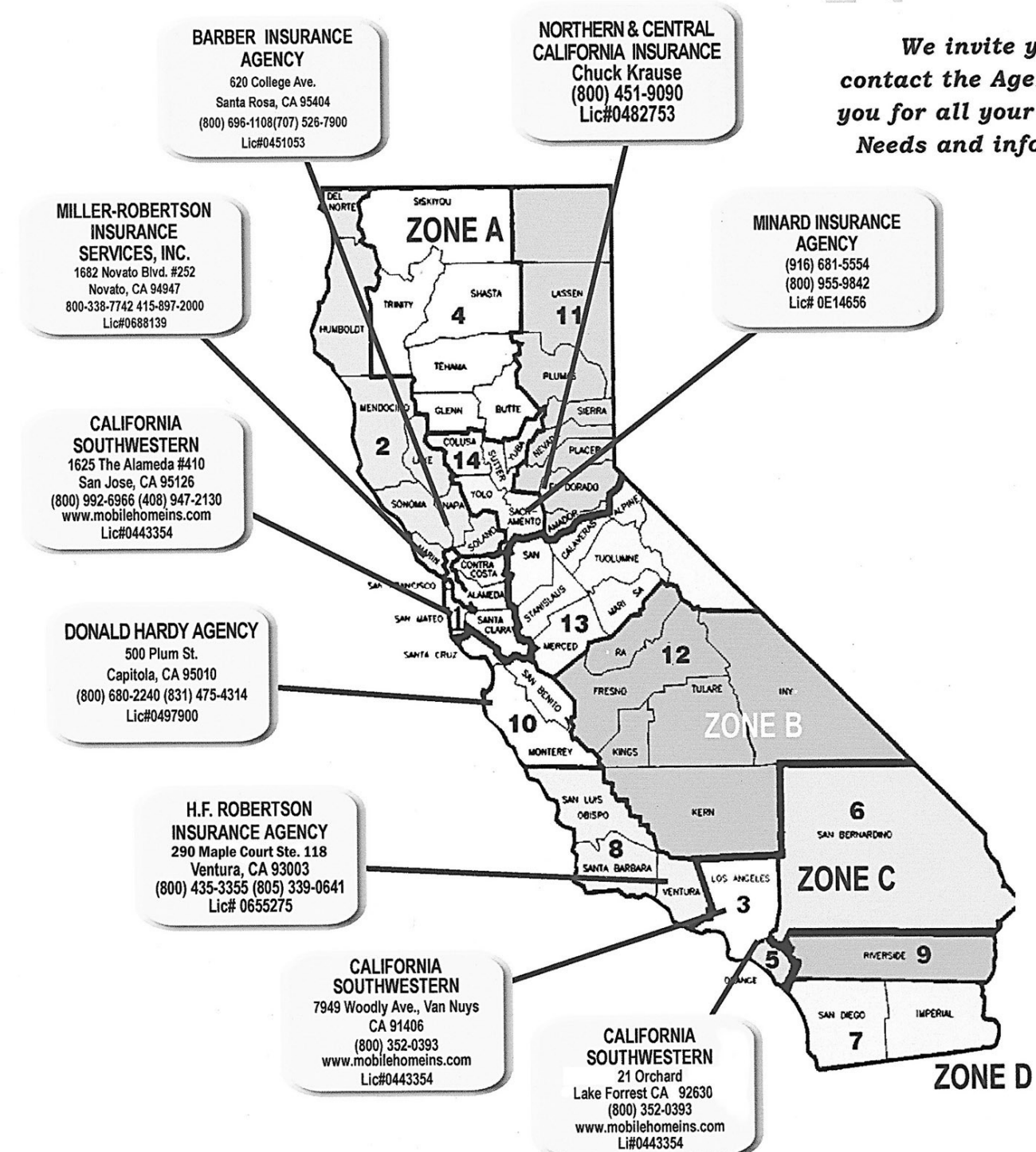
On behalf of GSMOL I want to extend our sincere appreciation to Assemblymember Sally Lieber and her staff for their hard work on AB 2857. We also want to thank all of our members and coalition supporters who sent cards and letters of support for the bill. Our efforts have once again paid off, and low-income mobilehome owners will benefit from this new state law.

#### SB 1234 (Correa) SIGNED INTO LAW BY THE GOVERNOR

With DECADES of experience as MOBILE HOME  
INSURANCE SPECIALISTS, we are here to ADVISE  
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you for all your Insurance  
Needs and information!





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If application and payment is handled by second party,  
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representative sign for your application and payment.

CHECK NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

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DATE                      ☐ PAYMENT REC. BY                     

CHECK NUMBER                     

If application and payment is handled by second party, please check PAYMENT REC. BY and have GSMOL representative sign for your application and payment.

The regular legislative session ended on August 31, 2008. On August 29, 2008 GSMOL-sponsored AB 1111 by Assemblyman Mark DeSaulnier failed passage on the Senate Floor by gaining only 15 votes in support, 6 short of the required 21 votes. The bill would have protected 55+ parks by authorizing local governments to pass ordinances to prohibit park owners from converting 55+ and over parks to all age. Even though failure of this bill is disappointing, your city and county can still pass an ordinance preventing your park owner from changing your 55+ park to an all age park.

When requesting your cities and counties to pass such an ordinance, be sure to advise them Attorney General Opinion 04-704 requested in 2004 by State Senator Bill Morrow specifically states that a city may adopt a zoning ordinance or issue a Conditional Use Permit that limits a specific parcel of land to use as a mobilehome park for senior citizens. The attorney general’s opinion stated that such local authority was lawful pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 18300. Health and Safety Code § 18300 states that nothing prevents a city from exercising its police powers from establishing certain zones for senior mobilehome parks. [A copy of the Attorney General Opinion 04-704 is attached in Adobe format]

Our thanks to Assemblymember DeSaulnier and his staff for their efforts on the bill, and our thanks to Senator Sheila Kuehl and her staff for their efforts in presenting the bill on the Senate Floor. We also extend our sincere thanks to the many GSMOL members and coalition supporters who have sent cards and letters, and made telephone calls during the past two years in support of AB 1111.

GSMOL SUPPORTED AB 952 (MULLIN) VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR

GSMOL-supported AB 952 by Assemblymember Gene Mullin, has been vetoed by the Governor. The bill provided that in a common interest development, including some resident-owned mobilehome parks, that low income residents should have the right to request a payment plan to pay special assessments that are levied by the homeowner association board on homeowners. The purpose of the bill was to provide low income residents more time to pay special assessments that are needed within the development. It is unfortunate that low income residents in common interest developments will now not be able to seek additional time to pay special assessments levied on them by their associations operating their communities.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of Assemblymember Mullin and his staff for their efforts to protect low income homeowners. Our thanks to all members who supported AB 952 during the session.

GSMOL SUPPORTED SB 127 (KUEHL) VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR

GSMOL-supported SB 127 by Senator Sheila Kuehl, has been vetoed by the Governor. This important consumer-protection legislation would have advanced the time for providing disclosure forms to buyers of mobilehomes and conventional homes. Instead of providing a disclosure form just before close of escrow, SB 127 would have required that the disclosure form be provided as soon as possible but no later than 10 days following a fully signed purchase contract. The earlier exchange would have been helpful to sellers, buyers, and their agents in such transactions. If the disclosure of a defect or other problem with the home causes the buyer to back out of the purchase, the sooner that the seller and his agent know this information, the better. It is unfortunate that consumers will not receive the benefits of this new law. Our sincere thanks to Senator Sheila Kuehl and her staff for their efforts to protect consumers, and our thanks to all GSMOL members who sent cards and letters of support on this bill.

The next Regular Session of the California Legislature will commence in the first week of January 2009. Our sincere appreciation to all GSMOL members for their strong support of GSMOL legislation this year. For the latest information on the status of bills sent to the Governor, after normal business hours call the GSMOL Legislative Hotline at toll-free 1-800-888-1727.

THANK YOU FROM MAURICE PRIEST

*For the past 28 years it has been my honor and privilege to serve GSMOL and its statewide membership as your Legislative Advocate at the State Capitol. In 1980, as a 28 year old attorney in Sacramento, the League entrusted me with the responsibility of guiding its legislative strategy in Sacramento, and influencing legislation for one purpose: to protect the interests of mobilehome owners.*

*It is a responsibility that I have taken seriously, and a job that I have thoroughly enjoyed. Many of you have become personal friends whose advice and opinion I have sought on many occasions. I have had the privilege of speaking at hundreds of mobilehome parks around the state, and attending chapter, region, and zone meetings on a regular basis. Since 1980 I have attended every GSMOL Convention, participating in legal panels, seminars on legislation, and advising homeowners on gaining ownership of their parks.*

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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).			
PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)			

*Editor's note: Over the course of the past few years, several cities in California have initiated a process to create some form of rent protection for homeowners. If successful, they will be added to the list of over 100 cities and/or counties with some form of rent protection ordinance. The oppressive escalation of rents even during this period of real estate depreciation and economic turmoil strengthens our argument for the need of protection, even in areas once thought impossible to break through. The defeat of Proposition 98 also bolstered our chances in that it was a demonstration of voter support of rent protections. Cities including Modesto, Rancho Cordova, Galt, Riverbank, Visalia and others have either adopted protections or in the process. For information on Rent Stabilization, contact the GSMOL home office for our 66-page advisory guide for achieving an ordinance in your area. Below is an Op-Ed article written by GSMOL volunteer Jim Burr, who heads the Visalia Mobile Home Task Force.*

## Three-hundred mobile home owners can't be wrong

On Sept. 2, David Evans, representing a mobile home park owners association (WMA), came to our town for the first time in more than three years and brought a few of his out-of-town park owners with him. They came to town to attempt to defend the park owner's actions before the City Council's work study session relating to the Visalia Master Long-Term Lease program for mobile home parks.

The master lease was portrayed as "WMA's Answer to Rent Control" and promised to "provide reasonable and predictable rents for the foreseeable future."

Now, it's OK for David to make up his mind to return to Visalia, but it's not OK for him to make up his facts. Most of the estimated 300 homeowners in the audience can take issue through personal experience with the "facts" David and his park owners attempted to explain. The homeowners are to be complimented for the restraint they showed because they are aware of the disingenuous manner in which the Master Lease was offered in 1997, and administered by park owners over the past 12 years.

The fact is the park owners used the master lease concept to remove a rent stabilization ordinance from consideration, and then caused homeowners to jump

through hoops to get the lease. On Tuesday, David stated their only obligation under the master lease agreement was to offer the lease, along with their own leases. This is a half-truth — the fact is that their leases are typical one-sided "landlord's leases," and nearly all park owners engaged in tactics, too numerous to mention here, that discouraged homeowners from choosing the Master Lease. This is where the 300 homeowners showed substantial restraint, because the residents have no enforceable rent protection and, for the most part, homeowners were not able to access the lease. A true win-win for the park owners.

The fact is that, for the most part, fewer than 50 percent of the homeowners could access the lease due to the park owner's tactics, and at the first opportunity, over half of the park dropped out of the program. And for those who have the lease; well, they should be careful what they wish for.

The economic provisions have changed drastically over the past twelve years. In the five-year term of the current lease, the average annual rent increase will be 7 percent to 8 percent, when compounded.

And it doesn't end there; rent increases upon sale of the home make it impossible to find a suitable buyer without substantial reductions in the selling price. In one example, the space rent increased from \$425 to \$600 upon sale of a home and the park owner threatened that others could double.

The fact is a 7 percent to 8 percent annual an increase is well beyond the Social Security COLA or any CPI index we can find. And it gets worse; this is occurring in the second-poorest county in the state, (second only to Imperial County), with low-income levels and a commensurate low cost of living.

Visalia's estimated 2,700 mobile home park residents are confident our City Council and city staff will address the matter in a timely manner and seek solutions that are fair, reasonable and balanced. The home owners appreciate the fact the council is willing to review the blighted conditions in some parks, while their parks owners continue to enjoy annual rent increases well beyond reason. This is NOT a "no-win situation" and there are solutions. Perhaps this is the reason the crowd showed restraint last Tuesday afternoon, and they did very well. **No, 300 mobile home owners are not wrong this time.**

*What has made my job unique and rewarding, is the active participation of GSMOL members throughout the state who never got tired of sending cards and letters to their Legislators, and who were always ready to make the extra effort when our legislative success demanded it. That is a level of involvement and assistance that few lobbyists ever receive from the groups or organizations for which they lobby at the State Capitol.*

*GSMOL has been, and continues to be the envy of other consumer interest groups throughout California and the nation. Most interest groups at the Capitol may work on a single bill all year in hopes of getting it passed into law. It has been a common practice for GSMOL to be actively involved on a dozen or more bills each year.*

*During the past 28 years, GSMOL has succeeded in gaining passage of 160 new laws, which benefit and protect mobilehome owners. As GSMOL's Legislative Advocate I have been honored to work on every one of them. What made this success possible was the teamwork I encouraged with rank and file GSMOL members; explaining the often confusing legislative process and working with them to gain passage of important legislation that was going to make a difference in the lives of people who depend on affordable housing, and who enjoy the friendship and support which they have found in their mobilehome community.*

*It is not often that a person can spend an entire career doing work they enjoy, and doing good for people they care about. I have been blessed. Thank you for the opportunity and my best wishes for the continued success of GSMOL and its members.*



**Re-activation of Sun City M.H.E., Chapter #1450**  
***Left to right:* Louise Wood-VP, Mary Ann Zavitica-Sec./Treas., Janet Thompson-President, Gail Mertz-Region 9 Associate Manager**

## The Evolution of GSMOL's Grassroots Lobbying Effort

### By Jim Burr, GSMOL Legislative Chair

### Part II

In the last issue of The Californian, we began a conversation with all of you about our growing presence in the State Capitol, our collaboration with other affordable housing advocates, and the growth and maturity of our members who are participating regularly in our legislative campaign. (See Summer 2008 Californian, page 4.)

This article picks up where we left off last time, talking about (1) the importance of building bridges with your legislators, (2) that our greatest strength in our legislative battles is a united front, and (3) the recognition that we win by incremental victories. The Legislative Action Team (LAT) and our statewide network of Corresponding Members have traveled to the Capitol many times and made thousands of lobbying contacts by fax, phone, e-mail and cards in the last 30 months, and have learned these invaluable lessons.

Early in our lobbying efforts, we discovered that many legislators and their staffs had little knowledge of our issues, although it was extremely apparent that GSMOL members had worked closely with the legislators in their district. As we educated legislators, it became easier to count on their votes, persuade them to carry our bills, and help us with strategy and other members' votes. We learned, with difficulty, to bite our lips when legislators did not side with us, voted against us (and you who live in their districts). We learned to circle back when the smoke cleared, to start a dialog with that legislator about why they voted against us, and thus, how to argue our points more effectively. It would have been far more satisfying to renounce that member soundly, but in the end, we knew that we must keep our eye on the prize—passing legislation to protect, enhance and strengthen our rights.

But "bridge building" is easy compared to the lessons we had to learn this year: THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY of the united public front and ACHIEVING INCREMENTAL VICTORIES. Our 2008 bill package was particularly challenging in the face of the budget standoff that pushed nearly all bills to the back burner. While we did have some wins, overall we were disappointed that bills we sponsored



or supported were watered down, stalled in committees, or fell several votes short on the floor.

Lessons learned? First, we recognized that we fulfilled our first and most important obligation: we killed all the dangerous bills. We must recognize this as a victory. What if AB 1309 (Calderon) HAD passed and rent control in mobile home parks was phased out? Our first responsibility must always be "prevent all harm".

Second, and most importantly, we learned the harder lesson - that we are weakened and subject to defeat when we do not present a united front in the legislature.

While we agreed on the subject of our bills, we disagreed when compromise amendments had to be negotiated. We differed on strategy. Different messages. Bad outcomes. Several questioned the wisdom of our professionals and allies in the Capitol. We thought we knew better. We focused on what we gave up. We did not keep our eye on the prize - that an incremental step in a fractious year is better than no progress at all. Some people call that “half of a loaf.” Our professional team in Sacramento call that a victory! They point out the 6 years or the 14 years it took to change a law where there were powerful interests and great financial stakes on both sides.

So...wiser and more wary, we prepare for the 2009 legislative year which, given the state, national and international economic issues, promises to be as tough as 2008. But we are also encouraged by our lessons learned, and therefore our better preparation for the year ahead.....

### Activate a “Super” Chapter

With the passage of GSMOL By-law amendment #08-2008, we hope many MH Parks with inactive chapters will join with other nearby MH Parks to activate a multi-park “super” chapter of GSMOL. This is a great opportunity to get educated, get involved and support the League!

#### Contact GSMOL

**Hotline:** 1 800 888-1727  
**Website:** [www.gsmol.org](http://www.gsmol.org)

### ANOTHER ELTH SUCCESS

#### RESEDA MOBILEHOME PARK RESIDENTS SETTLE LAWSUIT

Residents at Reseda Mobilehome Park located in Reseda, California, recently received \$1,850,000 in settlement of their lawsuit against the Park’s current and former owners. The Residents’ lawsuit alleged that the Parkowners had failed to maintain the Park’s physical improvements and common facilities in good working order and condition. The problems included numerous gas leaks; low water pressure; sewer backups; electrical problems; poor drainage; and poor maintenance of the common areas, including the pool, laundry rooms and clubhouse. The Residents were represented by Henry Heater and James Allen of Endeman, Lincoln, Turek & Heater LLP.

#### Oceanside Community Threatened With Huge Rent Increase

The owner of 346-space Cavalier Mobile Estates in Oceanside has asked the city for permission to levy a \$252 “special” rent increase upon homeowners. To take effect, the increase would need approval from the city’s Manufactured Home Fair Practices Commission. If granted by the rent review board, the increase would nearly double rent for the park’s residents, many of whom are on fixed incomes.

The city’s rent control ordinance gives park owners an automatic increase in rent every year. But that increase is limited to 75 percent of the Consumer Price Index as calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Oceanside ordinance also allows park owners to ask for a larger increase if they can prove they are not getting a fair return on their investment.

In 2005 the owners of Terrace Gardens in Oceanside requested a rent increase of over \$200 per space but were granted a \$10 increase.

#### Perris City Council Extends Rent Moratorium

The Perris City Council has voted to extend a rent moratorium to block rent increases at two of its manufactured home communities until 2009. Local homeowner and advocate, John Fatone, was instrumental in achieving this supportive action by City Hall after large rent increases had occurred.

### AB 1111, How Did YOUR Legislator Vote?

#### Assembly Floor Vote

DATE: 01/24/2008  
AYES 44 NOES 28 (PASS)

#### AYES

Arambula	Bass	Beall	Berg
Brownley	Caballero	C. Calderon	Carter
Cook	Coto	Davis	De La Torre
De Leon	DeSaulnier	Dymally	Eng
Evans	Feuer	Fuentes	Garcia
Hancock	Hernandez	Huffman	Jones
Karnette	Krekorian	Laird	Leno
Levine	Lieber	Lieu	Ma
Mendoza	Mullin	Nava	Parra
Portantino	Ruskin	Saldana	Solorio
Swanson	Torrico	Wolk	Nunez

#### NOES

Adams	Aghazarian	Anderson	Berryhill
Blakeslee	DeVore	Duvall	Emmerson
Fuller	Gaines	Garrick	Houston
Huff	Jeffries	Keene	La Malfa
Maze	Nakanishi	Niello	Plescia
S. Runner	Silva	Smyth	Spitzer
Strickland	Tran	Villines	Walters

#### ABSENT, ABSTAINING, OR NOT VOTING

Benoit	Galgiani	Hayashi	Horton
Price	Salas	Soto	[Vacancy]

#### Senate Floor Vote

DATE: 8/29/2008  
(AYES 15. NOES 21.) (FAIL)

#### AYES

Alquist	Calderon	Cedillo	Corbett
Kehoe	Kuehl	Migden	Oropeza
Padilla	Romero	Simitian	Steinberg
Torlakson	Vincent	Wiggins	

#### NOES

Aanestad	Ackerman	Ashburn	Battin
Cogdill	Cox	Denham	Ducheny
Dutton	Florez	Harman	Hollingsworth
Lowenthal	Maldonado	Margett	McClintock
Neg. McLeod	Perata	Runner	Wyland
Yee			

#### ABSENT, ABSTAINING, OR NOT VOTING

Correa	Machado	Rid.-Thomas	Scott
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### ATTENTION GSMOL MEMBERS IN PARKS WHERE THERE IS NO GSMOL CHAPTER

by Bob Markley, Membership Chairman

Your GSMOL Membership Action Team has prepared several new pieces of literature intended to help convince people who are not members, to join GSMOL. We are also working on additional pieces of literature to help get our story out.

The available new literature was first sent out to everyone who signed up for our membership e-mail list. (Members can still join this list by sending an e-mail message to: [gsmol.membership@yahoo.com](mailto:gsmol.membership@yahoo.com) giving their name, member number, and park name.) The new literature has also been mailed to current GSMOL chapter presidents all over the state.

However, if you are a current member in a park having no GSMOL chapter, you can also receive copies of the new literature by phoning GSMOL headquarters and requesting it. Call our toll-free number (800) 888-1727 after 9am and before 4pm to place your request.

We hope that current GSMOL members will find time to pass this literature around in their parks and sign up enough new members to eventually establish a GSMOL chapter. All we need is one or two energetic members in a park to get the ball rolling. If you are not one of those energetic members, you can still help by identifying a park resident who is, and is willing to help.

### GSMOL President Elected to National Position

GSMOL President Tim Sheahan has been elected as First Vice President of the Manufactured Home Owners Association of America. MHOAA is a national advocacy group that serves homeowners living in manufactured home communities across the country by monitoring Federal legislation and serving as a vehicle for networking state homeowner advocacy groups. President Sheahan and GSMOL Legislative Action Team leader, Jim Burr, received scholarships to attend the convention recently held in Minneapolis, MN. GSMOL is a charter member and longtime supporter of MHOAA. Individual memberships are also encouraged. For more information on MHOAA, visit its website: [www.mhoaa.us](http://www.mhoaa.us).

## GSMOL State Secretary

**Larry Rhinehart**

GSMOL welcomes Larry Rhinehart as its newly appointed State Secretary. Larry is former President of his chapter at Upland Eldorado and has been serving on the GSMOL Business Improvement and Finance Action Team (BIFAT). You might recall that Larry was featured in television commercials against Prop. 90 two years ago, as reported in the *Californian*.



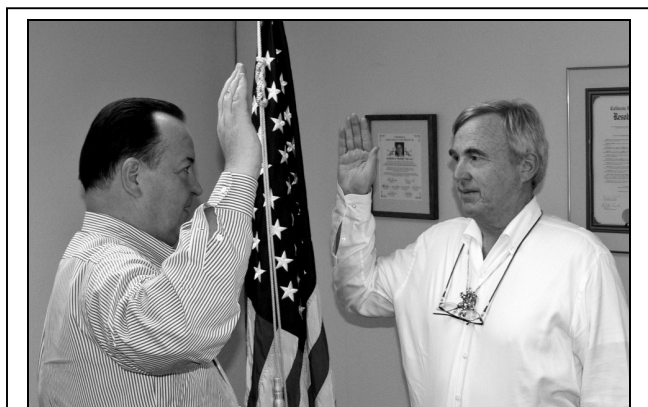
From 1992 until his retirement in January 2003, Larry was the Director of Government Relations at the AQMD, where he was

responsible for overseeing all government relations activities in the Inland Empire and Orange County. Prior to joining AQMD, he worked in private industry. From 1984 to 1991 Larry was Manager of Engineering Support Systems on the B-2 "Stealth Bomber" Program at Northrop Corporation. Prior to joining the Northrop team, he was a Computer Systems Specialist/Deputy Site Manager at General Dynamics Data Systems Division in Pomona.

Following retirement from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) in 2003, Larry started a consulting practice as a Government Relations Consultant. He has performed various governmental relations consulting and liaison roles during the past five years primarily for Waste Management, Inc. He is also active in the local community and with non-profit organizations such as Pomona Habitat for Humanity where he is currently serving as Chairman of the Board.

Larry's experience in local government is substantial: He served as the elected Mayor of The City of Montclair, California for twelve years, and as a member of both the League of California Cities Board of Directors and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council, where he chaired the Transportation and Communications Committee. Larry served both, as a Board Member and President of San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) as well as a Board Member and Chairman of the Omnitrans Transit System Board of Directors.

Larry received an Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree in Engineering/Quality Assurance from Mount San Antonio College (Mt SAC) and a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Management Science/Operations Research from California State University, Los Angeles.



**Lanier Harper (right) taking the Oath of Office**

## GSMOL Zone D Vice President

**Lanier Harper**

Newly appointed Zone D Vice President Lanier Harper lives in Hidden Springs Country Club in Desert Hot Springs. He has been very active in his GSMOL chapter and chairs the GSMOL Business Improvement and Finance Action Team (BIFAT).

Lanier is a graduate of the University of Mississippi with a B.B.A. Degree, Bachelor of Business Administration. His work experience included serving as a college Assistant Director of Admissions and Financial Aid Director. He also served as Field Representative for the Mississippi Board of Economic Development and worked in Cotton Marketing with a large multinational company Allenberg Cotton Co and self employed in association with Swayze Cotton Co.

Lanier has a heart of service to help others and has been involved as a volunteer with several non-profit organizations, including; March of Dimes, American Heart Association, The Boy Scouts of America, Kiwanis Club, Special Olympics, Easter Seals and American Cancer Society. He is an expert marksman and was on the college rifle team.

Lanier served a term as Mayor of Greenwood, Mississippi, making him the chief financial officer and administrator for that city of approx 22,000 folks. He later worked in the stock brokerage business and insurance and financial services until his retirement (*from paid positions, that is*).

**ELF--- THE LEGAL APPROACH**

We are all familiar with the Mobilehome Residency Law, one of the greatest compilations of Legislative protections for the mobile/manufactured home owner in this great state. The MRL is part of the California Civil Code, Chapter 2.5 and is our "Bible" for mobilehome residency in the state of California. Because it is a Civil Code, any violation of that code must be addressed in a court of law. This was, of course, a joke to many park owners because they knew that the majority of their park residents did not have the financial resources to retain legal assistance to proceed with any court action. Many, too many, took advantage of this financial situation, and unmercifully crucified residents with illegal acts that would make a best seller in horror.

Then came the Enforcement Legal Fund and the tides turned. Our members now were entitled to the financial assistance they needed to take these violators to court and answer for their wrongful acts. We have actually seen a drop in reported violations since ELF was founded, but we still have some hard-nosed park owners who seem to want to challenge us. Currently, we have just recently received notice that our Huntington Shorecliffs Chapter 571, in Huntington Beach, has settled their lawsuit and has re-imbursed ELF to the tune of \$10,000. Congratulations good members, glad we could help. More information on the case is included in the next article. I understand there is still some other legal assistance coming up which we may be of some help.

We have advanced a check to members of Rancho Grande MHP in Rohnert Park to help them in their suit against the park owner for refusing to allow GSMOL meetings in their clubhouse. We have also just recently sent a check to one of our members to fight a wrongful eviction and advanced funds to residents of Santa Rosa Village in the hope of successfully mediating disputes with the owner of their community. So you see folks, the ELF fund is not just sitting there drawing interest; it is being used for that which it was intended, enforcing the Mobilehome Residency Law.

These are just a few of the cases in which our members are making the ELF Fund a legal tool to fight wrong. We have many faithful and loyal members who may never personally use the Fund, but do benefit greatly from decisions handed down by the courts through the

assistance from ELF. How can you be a part of this great team? Easy!! First, you must be a member of GSMOL. This qualifies you to join ELF. On the back pages of this newsletter you will find applications for GSMOL and ELF memberships. Cut out the ELF, or both if you are not yet a GSMOL member, fill them out and send in to the GSMOL office with the membership fee. You will become a GSMOL member immediately upon receipt, and an ELF member with a ninety day hold on filing a claim and have one year of protection for the \$10 legal fund membership. After ninety days you can file at any time. This Fund is an exclusive membership fund. Only ELF members can file for assistance and only GSMOL members can qualify for direct membership in ELF. Remember, ELF stands for **Enforcement Legal Fund**. This Fund is there to assist in enforcing the Mobilehome Residency Laws and to punish those who violate those laws. Won't you join us now? You'll be glad you did. If you are already a member, why don't you take this article over to some of your neighbors and recruit them. We'll be glad you did. It's great insurance to help protect all homeowner rights.

Steve Gullage,  
**Chairman, GSMOL ELF Committee**

**ELF SUCCESS!**

GSMOL Chapter #571 and its members took on the challenging task of calling the bluff of the owners of Huntington Shorecliffs by proving in Court that the owners' violated the MRL by adding certain pass through items to the rent bills, canceling our long term leases and Failure to Maintain the property in a livable condition. Chapter #571 and its members entered into a lawsuit known as the "Lease Case".

Then, under Management's direction, Chapter #571 was locked out of any facility in Huntington Shorecliff's property that was to be for the purpose of meeting to discuss GSMOL business. This forced Chapter #571 to enter into another lawsuit known as the "Access Case".

Since all the attention was focused on the Access Case, the members put the Lease Case on the back burners to concentrate on this case. The chapter had already accumulated a legal bill of more than \$100,000 for the Lease Case and generated an additional legal fee in



excess of \$100,000 for the Access case, not including the amount we had already paid into the total sum.

We eventually had four mediations that resulted in the repayment of all our attorney fees for the Access Case and we applied the balance of more than \$100,000 toward the Lease Case and were able to re-pay the GSMOL-ELF Fund, \$10,000.00 that had been forwarded to the chapter to keep the lawsuit alive.

Chapter #571 officers asked for a vote to “Roll over” any settlement funds from one case to another until all cases were settled. At that time; if we did prevail in the suits; all funds would be divided by set rules determined by our Chapter’s compensation committee. We all voted and agreed to the above terms.

Bob Lupo, President, GSMOL Chapter 571

*Delaware Manufactured Home Owners achieve “Right of First Offer”*

Following a two-year legislative struggle, Delaware Manufactured Home Owners Association (DMHOA) achieved a landmark victory with the passage of HB 504, termed the “Right of First Offer” Bill. This is similar to what GSMOL has attempted in its “Right of First Refusal” legislation through the years, which many of you have been involved with.

Highlights of their new law include:

- An authorized homeowner association (HOA) must be registered with the State Relocation Trust Authority and adopt model by-laws.
- The HOA must be notified when the community becomes available for sale.
- The HOA has 30 days to respond by:
  - Indicating acceptance of the price offered
  - Making a counter-offer, or
  - Declining to purchase the community
- If the purchase price is agreed to, HOA has 30 days to formalize a contract and 90 days to settle unless an extension is agreed upon.
- Community owners are also given the right to purchase homes in the communities.

**Congratulations and good luck DMHOA!**

*President’s Report (continued from Page 1)*

A Disruptive Legislative session

While several GSMOL supported bills were successfully signed into Law this year, in many respects, this Legislative session was frustrating. Even before the Legislature convened in January, we realized there would be many distractions creating challenges. The first distraction was Prop. 93 dealing with term limits and how passage or failure would affect the political dynamics at the Capitol. With the failure of Prop. 93, there was jockeying for leadership positions in both houses of the Legislature. Ultimately, Assemblymember Karen Bass was chosen Speaker of the Assembly and Senator Darrel Steinberg was elected President Pro Tem of the Senate. Both Legislators have been supportive of our legislation in the past and we look forward to their leadership. Any members who live in their districts should make a special effort to try to get to know them and their staff members.

Another distraction for us as advocates was Proposition 98, that could have wiped-out many homeowner protections at State and Local levels. Many GSMOL members spent hundreds of hours and hundreds of dollars to fight Prop. 98. Considering GSMOL’s role in helping to defeat Prop. 98, every homeowner in a manufactured home community in California should feel obliged to belong to the League. Many homeowners will save thousands of dollars in annual rent costs and their homes will be worth tens of thousands more because the devastating impacts of Prop. 98 were thwarted.

The budget fiasco was also a huge distraction for the Legislature. With the Governor’s threat of vetoing all bills if the budget had not passed, most Legislators and advocates were very anxious about the outcome of pending legislation.

GSMOL was successful in blocking several bad Legislative bills sponsored by community owners within the past year. AB 285, AB 460, AB 1309 and SB 1433 would have had negative impacts on homeowners and might have passed if GSMOL had not been active at the Capitol to block such legislative schemes. Having a professional legislative advocate consumes a sizable portion of our budget but we feel such an expense is absolutely necessary to protect homeowner rights. We are often judged by how successful we are in getting good bills passed, but just as important are

our successes in stopping bad legislation that would weaken the M.R.L. and other homeowner protections.

By the end of this year, GSMOL will have spent roughly \$100,000 for legislative advocacy and to fight prop 98. That money comes from only membership dues and contributions. We have one registered lobbyist whereas MH Park owners often have six or more... Without OUR professional presence at the Capitol, Park owners would have their way...influencing Legislators and staff members to take away our rights!

Condo-conversion fight will continue

Despite the fact that SB 900 did not prevail to protect homeowners from non-bonified and sham condominium conversions, there continues to be some local protection in those cities/counties that have adopted moratoriums or ordinances to block such conversions if attempted against the will of the residents. Some ordinances are currently being challenged in the Courts and depending upon the outcome, we will report and advise what approach might be best for homeowners and local government to use in the future. The slowdown in the economy seems to have led to a corresponding slowdown in attempts of condo conversion, for the time being.

How Did Your Legislator Vote?

Please take time to study the voting record for AB 1111 on Page 11. It exemplifies some of the current challenges we face at the Capitol. Virtually no Republicans supported the bill but perhaps even more disappointing was that several Democratic Legislators also failed to support this bill authored by a fellow Democrat and which would have protected the health and well being of seniors owning homes in 55+ communities. Even Senator Correa, Chairman of the *Senate Select Committee on Manufactured Homes and Communities* failed to cast an aye vote to support the bill! To remind you, any vote not cast counts the same as a “no” vote. If your Legislator didn’t vote in favor of AB 1111, or other GSMOL supported bills, please express your disappointment to them. We must remind them we are monitoring their actions and when they fail to represent our interests, we will protest their lack of support. If they feel no accountability, they will continue to ignore our interests. By the same token, if your Legislator did support us, take a moment to call or write them to thank them for their support. Also, use the opportunity of the Election to contact your

Legislators to congratulate them on their election and ask for their support.

Track Legislative votes on the GSMOL website

To see a listing of how your Legislator voted on manufactured housing related bills, visit our website and click on the *Mobilizer* button.

Homeowner and Renter Assistance Removed From Budget

No claims for Homeowner and Renter Assistance Program filed this year will be processed unless the money is released, which is not likely for 2008. We have written the Governor urging him to reconsider his “line item veto” of the budget allocation for these important rebates but doubt he will change his mind. We hope the funds make a rapid return to the budget and become available next year. Call 800 868-4171 for the latest information on the program.

New Board Members Appointed

I want to welcome two new members recently appointed to the GSMOL Board of Directors. Interestingly, both are former mayors who thereby will bring a wealth of experience, wisdom and administrative skills to the League. Lanier Harper of Desert Hot Springs is the former Mayor of Greenwood, MS and was appointed to fill the vacant position of Vice President for Zone D. Larry Rhinehart of Upland, served as Mayor of Montclair and was appointed to fill the position of State Secretary for GSMOL. Welcome aboard our leader-“ship” Lanier and Larry!

**Please Don’t Use That “T” Word!**

It seems we are constantly challenged by a public perception of our way of life that is often fueled by negative stereotypes and the “Trailer Trash” stigma. Remarkably, many of our own members, use the term “trailer” in referring to their own manufactured home. **DON’T DO IT!** We **STRONGLY** encourage you to promote the term “manufactured home” when referring to a home and to seek opportunities to educate the media and general public why our way of life is unique, special and deserves to be preserved. We are all potential ambassadors and should avoid the “T” word!