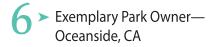
CALIFORNIAN

GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE

Volume 49 • Issue 4 September/October 2014



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Organize for a Better Life

GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE (USPS 898-320)

Official bi-monthly publication of the Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League, Inc.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jean Crowder, GSMOL State President

Thoughts, Prayers for Napa

Our thoughts and our prayers go out to the mobile home park residents in Napa Valley as they deal with the results of the August 24th earthquake. GSMOL will be working with local assistance programs through our Disaster Relief Fund to help in their efforts to aid in restoration of the many damaged homes in multiple parks throughout the area. If you wish to make a contribution to these efforts, please send your donation to GSMOL and designate it to "Earthquake Relief".

It is hard to believe that it has been less than six months since the Convention. The GSMOL Board of Directors has taken on a new life, living up to our Motto "Rebuild, Renew and Restore". We are constantly working on ideas to improve our service to our members. Many of these ideas have come into being; the changes to this publication are a good example. Our hope as we strive to improve with each issue is to give you a more interesting and informative magazine that you will proudly share with your neighbors.

The Membership Drive has sparked a lot of activity throughout the state. New super chapters, new and reactivated chapters and chapters increasing their membership are a result of your Zone and Region leaders attending a special training in July. If you have not yet been contacted on how you can become a part of this campaign, contact the leaders in your Zone and learn how you or your chapter can become a possible winner of several prizes being awarded at the end of the drive.

I wish to extend a personal "thank you" to Roger McConnell and the residents of The Country in Santa Rosa for hosting the first live meeting of this new Board of Directors on July 23rd. Terri Pohrman, Zone A-1 Vice-President and Diane McPherson, State Treasurer and Regional Manager from Santa Rosa provided a breakfast and lunch buffet for the event. There was a large turn-out of Zone A-1 members who went away from the meeting, not only well fed, but well informed. The next live meeting will be held in San Luis Obispo on October 23rd. Please put this date on your calendar; details of this and other worthwhile events will be posted on our web-site as they are scheduled.

One feature of this issue of The Californian is the upcoming election. You'll see an article from the

GSMOL PAC committee chairman, Ron Faas, as well as endorsements in select local and state races. The PAC Committee—with input from our legislative advocate Brian Augusta and our community organizer Darrow Sprague—considers very carefully who they recommend for our endorsement. The recommendations are based on past performances regarding manufactured home owner issues and on questionnaires sent to candidates for the Assembly and Senatorial races.

This is the first election that I have had the opportunity to sit in on the PAC Committee meetings and I can report that this is a process that is taken very seriously. GSMOL has no intention of telling its members how to vote, but we do feel we have a responsibility to inform you of who our experts feel will be supportive of our future efforts to enhance the Mobile Home Residency Law. The work that Brian Augusta does is supported by your contributions to the PAC (Political Action Committee) Fund. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated and wisely used.

Congratulations to Rancho San Luis Rey Mobile Home Community for being the first park profiled in what will become a regular feature. Rancho San Luis Rey was one of four winners of the Exemplary Park Owner Award in April 2014 and we hope you enjoy reading how a successful management team along with an active GSMOL Chapter and HOA can lead to ideal living. This story proves a couple of things: (1) GSMOL has a purpose even in parks where there are very few or no problems and (2) managers and residents both benefit from education.

We would hope that every experience of manufactured home living could be as pleasant as it is in our featured park, but we know that it isn't always. But, through education of your rights as a home owner and the guidance of GSMOL in standing up for those rights, you can make your park a better place to live. GET INVOLVED, BECOME A GSMOL MEMBER if you aren't already AND VOLUNTEER. Help where you can so GSMOL can better help YOU.

"Rebuild, Renew and Restore" is our Motto; honesty and transparency is our promise.

Rebuild, Renew and Restore is our Motto; honesty and transparency is our promise.

Rancho San Luis Rey Manufactured Home Park | Oceanside California

Jim Sullivan GSMOL VP at Large



Senior living at the 433 space Rancho San Luis Rey Manufactured Home Park (RSLR) in Oceanside is special. This park is nestled along the banks of a quiet river, and near the historic Mission of the same name. GSMOL leaders in RSLR give credit to the beauty and peace of living in this community to the management and owners of the park. In 2014, the park owners received GSMOL's Exemplary Park Owner Award. Working for the common good of all are park management, GSMOL chapter leadership, and the leaders and members of the local HOA. All work together to make RSLR a unique community. Chuck and Fran Thomason are the Park Managers who pride themselves on being knowledgeable and working closely with the residents in RSLR. They work with GSMOL leaders to understand the needs of the homeowners. They have taken advantage of training programs and are certified under WMA's Manufactured Housing Community Manager (MCM) program. Residents attribute much of the stability found at RSLR to Chuck and Fran. By keeping lines of communication open between management and homeowners, there are rarely issues that are not quickly resolved.

Bob Markley, President of GSMOL Chapter 708, explained that 9 years ago there were about 45 members and \$54 in the treasury. Today, membership exceeds 225, one of the largest chapters, and it has more than \$4400 available to use for Chapter events, projects, and prorent control city council candidates. What happened? Leadership and teamwork. Under Bob's guidance, the members have put together

programs of both social and practical value. Fundraising ideas such as "Chore Gangs", where the board members volunteer to do chores for park homeowner donors. Another great fundraiser is Informational Fairs, the brainchild of Bob Warner, which bring residents needed updates about goods and services four times a year, through local as well as federal & state programs.

Residents of RSLR have long been a contributing source of leadership and guidance for manufactured home communities in Oceanside, and Zone D in GSMOL. In 2011, local politicians attempted to eliminate vacancy control measures from the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance. This would have resulted in unlimited rent increases occurring upon resale as well as making it more difficult for manufactured home residents to sell their homes. Most jurisdictions with RCO's have a maximum of 10-15% allowable increase upon the sale of a home. The residents of all of the Oceanside parks banded together to fight for their homes. GSMOL leaders provided the use of the facilities at RSLR to hold meetings and rallies. Victor Roy and other leaders helped organize voter information drives and coordinated volunteers from 14 parks and 18 neighborhood groups in the city. The results were spectacular! The final vote defeated the RCO measure to eliminate vacancy control by a 2/3's majority. Residents in Oceanside are now able to protect their homes from unfair rent increases. Their massive community outreach convinced the voters of Oceanside that vacancy control was essential to enable thousands of residents to keep their affordable housing. Tim Sheahan, V.P of Zone D, has stated that this win helped stop more oppressive measures in other cities like Chula Vista. RSLR sets an excellent example of how much residents are able to accomplish through leadership, cooperation and perseverance.

Most jurisdictions with RCO's have a maximum of 10-15% allowable increase upon the sale of a home.

Zone Reports

ZONE A-1

Karilee Shames

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors recently passed several important ordinances proposed by mobilehome attorney Will Constantine to protect manufactured-homeowners. The main focus for the Housing Authoring when they presented the ordinances to the Board was low income housing for Sonoma County.

The main ordinance says that once a mobile home was zoned as a mobile home park, the park had to remain as mobile home park. Some park owners in this area are trying to buy up the homes and then selling the park to developers. Our next step is to get the cities in Sonoma County to pass similar ordinances.

We are pushing ahead with our Membership Drive, having local candidates for office as speakers at several super chapter meetings to encourage turnout. Diane McPherson created a phone tree to call members in our region.

We have inducted 3 new Super Chapters, with a 4th coming in Santa Rosa. We have also held several social events to gain members, with some inactive chapters being re-activated.

Our Zone is also providing bi-lingual events to support Spanish mobile home owners. If you live in a mobile home park in Northern CA, contact our northern office for help with mobile home related issues & concerns (www.gsmolnorth.com).

Northern CA GSMOL is on the rise - join in to protect our MH owner rights.

ZONE A

John Bertaut, VP

John Bertaut, new Zone A Vice President, has been actively getting acquainted with other Board Members, local chapter officers and members throughout the zone, and by phone and email.

Norma Bohannan, immediate past VP, has become Zone A Consultant and applies her knowledge of GSMOL to resolving problems in the Zone and to helping spread the word throughout the 19-county area. She does this via visits, phone calls and emails, including a newsletter to all, announcing appointment of the new VP.

Members with email addresses will be sent a current events and training memo once or twice a month, to keep them in the loop and updated with useful info from Title 25 and the MRL and experience dealing with issues in various parks.

Visits by Zone Officers, to each region as far up as Siskiyou, are planned and the first will be scheduled, soon. Additionally, a monthly meeting of park representatives will begin in September or October, starting in the Sacramento area and moving around to other counties in future months.

As you might have guessed, Zone A has a plan to educate and communicate with as many members as possible in person and by email and telephone. We plan to build membership, strengthen and build chapters and, when necessary, super-chapters.

Zone A members are encouraged to phone or email John or Norma with questions, suggestions and complaints. The Zone officers work with HCD leaders and are establishing communications with park owners and management companies for our mutual benefit.

Zone A looks forward to achieving positive results in the form of more members, more chapters and more resolved issues for homeowners in the months ahead.

Zone B

Ron Hulsey, VP

Our park, Golden Hills Mobile Estates in Porterville, has had many problems since the new owner took over in 2007. One of our main concerns was the lack of action on the part of management whenever there was a major maintenance or utility issue at the park. We had a leaking fire hydrant for months which when the manager finally decided to address the problem, became

See Zone Reports on page 6 ➤

in our efforts, we have been able to correct many of the problems in the park.

...having a more understanding

park manager

and most

importantly,

being persistent

broken in the process and leaked thousands of gallons of water. The city Fire Department claimed they could not take action because a park is private property. In addition, the park owner had defaulted on so many maintenance bills with local businessmen that none of them would come to do work for the park without being paid upfront. Finally, we were told to contact HCD. The HCD inspector came out and after much effort on our part and the help of our park maintenance man, the fire hydrant was replaced.

Another major issue was a power outage caused by a downed transformer in 2011. I found the GSMOL website and invited them to come to a residents' meeting. On October 21, 2011, Jean Crowder and Jim Burr attended our meeting in a clubhouse lit by two temporary lights. By November 1, 2011 we had enough GSMOL members to form a chapter. In 2012, the original managers left and we pushed for and were successful in getting the maintenance man to take over that role. Repairs began to occur on time. In July 2013, we had a re-occurring power outage at 34 homes for 6 days! I went before the city council, talked to the city attorney and called the HCD. A patch job took place which we were not comfortable with. At the GSMOL Convention in 2014, I spoke at the Legal Panel (HCD was present) about the dangers of not fixing the electrical problems in the park. The Monday after the convention, the HCD inspector was at my door and soon after that, the park owner was told to fix the problem or HCD would pull the permit to operate the park. GSMOL Disaster funds provided replacement money for spoiled food to GSMOL members. With organized residents and help from GSMOLwe have been able to correct many of the problems in the park.

Zone B-1

Mardi Brick, former GSMOL Associate Mgr.

Since GSMOL Chapter 501 had not been meeting for several years except as an adjunct to the bimonthly Home Owners Association meeting, our HOA's GSMOL representative, Candi Walker, and I decided to schedule an event to determine if there was an interest in re-activating a non "active" Chapter.

The meeting in our DeAnza Clubhouse took place July 16, 2014. I created hand-written invitations to the existing 34 GSMOL members which Candi personally delivered. I also phoned 40 non-members that we hoped might be interested. Of the 198 units in the DeAnza Manufactured Home Community, 23 are rented so those folks were not contacted.

Invitations were also sent to the heads of the various associations in Santa Cruz County: the Chair of the County Mobile Manufactured Home Commission (SCCMMC), the President of the County Manufactured Mobile Home Owners Association (SCCMMHA), and the Regional Manager and Associate Managers of GSMOL.

We set up and served a tasty spread of snacks with both drinks of champagne and mimosas. The hour long event included get-acquainted time and brief remarks. Carole Harris, GSMOL Associate Manager, spoke about the need to have local Chapters organized to respond quickly to pending (favorable &/or unfavorable) local and state legislation. Henry Cleveland, Chair, SCCMMC, explained the functions of the other organized groups, i.e. the County Commission, the County Association, and Home Owner Associations.

In assessing the success of our efforts, we were disappointed in the turnout. Twenty or so residents came, each of whom indicated that it had been a worthwhile experience. We are aware of four new members and hope that more will follow.

It may be that given the human nature "crisis response syndrome", many people just don't consider it important to be prepared in advance of a legislative crisis. A recent example: losing Assemblyman Mark Stone's "home sale" bill AB 2026 this past spring.

Investment-wise--the \$25.00 annual membership fee breaks down to \$.07 a day: pretty small change for paying our lobbyist and community organizer in Sacramento.

Zone D

Tim Sheahan, VP

Many GSMOL members in Zone D, especially from the inland and desert areas, have been

See Zone Reports on page 10 ➤

Carole Harris,
GSMOL Associate
Manager, spoke
about the
need to have
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local and state
legislation.

Ed Souza Region 3 Regional Manager

Covina Hills Mobile Country Club Wins Denial of Subdivision at Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors



On March 6, the LA County Planning Commission requested that the park owner resubmit a new survey of their own, but they did not do so.

On April 22, 2014, in a 5-0 vote, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to deny the proposed subdivision of the Covina Hill Mobile Country Club, a 500-space park located in La Puente, CA. The Board based their decision upon recently enacted legislation (SB 510), the latest resident survey, the court case histories, and resident demographics.

It's a great example of what can happen when homeowners get organized. The original survey, written by the park owner, was ambiguous and confusing to the residents. In that one, the majority of respondents supported the subdivision.

With the threat of conversion hanging over their heads, GSMOL members Ed Souza and Martha Vazquez sprang into action. In a short time, they and other homeowners formed a GSMOL chapter and increased GSMOL membership in the park from just 2 homeowners to more than 170.

Ed Souza, as the Chapter President of Covina Hills MCC, GSMOL helped conduct a new survey of residents, which was submitted on January 23, 2014. The Covina Hills homeowners are low income seniors, disabled veterans and families struggling to pay the \$1000 to \$1100 per month space rents now, and there is no way that 51% of the park could ever purchase the lots at \$150,000 each. This resident survey showed 86% of the respondents opposed to the subdivision.

On March 6, the LA County Planning Commission requested that the park owner resubmit a new survey of their own, but they did not do so.

The Covina Hills homeowners could not afford an attorney, so the homeowners, joined by GSMOL leaders, took on the task of confronting the park attorney, Richard Pech, making their case against the conversion. Ed Souza and Martha Vazquez, the Chapter Vice President, arranged for a bus to help get homeowners to the planning commission and board hearings. Thirty people rode the bus with an additional 10 people carpooling to the hearings. It was a great turn out.

On March 12, 2014, the LA County Planning Commission denied the proposed subdivision based upon receipt of Ed Souza's survey, and letters explaining the importance of SB 510 on Government Code 66427.5, among other items. The issue was then referred to the Board of Supervisors. After lengthy debate, the Board denied the conversion with a 5-0 vote.

The Supervisors demonstrated they are sympathetic to the plight of low income people in Los Angeles County and understand the ramifications of proposals such as this questionable subdivision. What a great win for homeowners and the members of the Covina Hills Chapter.

Members Q&A

One of the new features in The Californian will be a Question and Answer section, based upon actual questions received by the editor. Here are two questions of general interest received this month:

QUESTION: Our park is raising rents for residents who are "snowbirds", or who own a second home elsewhere. Their mobilehome is not their principal residence. The park owner is increasing rents for these spaces to an amount equal to that charged to new residents, based upon the exemption from rent control contained in Civil Code 798.21 for "non-principal" homeowners. We question the fairness of these rent increases. Shouldn't a change in the law for equal rights be considered, so that non-principal and principal residence owners can be treated alike? In some cases these residents are facing a \$200.00 per month rent increase with no future rent control protection.

ANSWER: Civil Code section 798.21 contains an exemption from rent control where the home is not the non-principal residence of the homeowner. This section became effective January 1, 2004, and applies whether the primary home is in California, or out of state. It only affects homeowners who own more than one home, such as "snowbirds" that travel between homes seasonally.

This law resulted from the park owners' argument that wealthy mobilehome owners owning more than one home should not receive rent control benefits for all of their homes, but only for their primary residence. Secondary homes were described by park owners as "vacation homes" when the Bill was argued before the Legislature. Due to conditions and exceptions that GSMOL was able to add, the impact of the exemption is limited. The law presumes that a mobilehome is a primary residence and is covered by rent control. A park owner can only claim that a mobilehome is not protected by local rent control if the park owner establishes from county tax records in California, or out of state, that the homeowner is currently receiving a homeowner's exemption for another property or mobilehome. If they find such evidence, then 90 days advance written

notice of intent to raise the space rent above what the rent ordinance would allow must be given. The homeowner has that same 90-day period to provide information refuting what the park owner alleges; for example, that the homeowner is not receiving an exemption for other property. Residents are not obligated to disclose



information concerning personal finances, or any confidential or privileged information such as tax returns.

There are important "exceptions" to the exemption which can be claimed during this 90-day period. The exemption does not apply if the homeowner is unable to rent or sublet the secondary home because park rules prohibit same. It also does not apply if the homeowner is actively trying to sell the secondary home, and is marketing and advertising it for sale in good faith to bona fide purchasers. And if the homeowner places his or her "homeowner's exemption" from local property tax on a given mobilehome, that home is deemed to be the principal residence of the homeowner.

While this law does treat primary and secondary homes differently, there may be good reason in concept for doing so. Local rent control ordinances (RSOs) are designed to prevent mobilehome owners from losing their primary home investments and their ability to own a home. They are designed to protect residences, but are not designed to protect business investment. That is why RSOs do not protect dealers or foreclosing lenders from rent increases. These are commercial and not residential owners. The findings and purposes contained in most RSOs contain language which speaks in these terms, and which forms the basis for the laws to be enacted. Certainly those

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residents who travel between homes are not engaged in commercial activity, and not all of these homes are used as "vacation homes". But the question has to be asked: Is it fair to give rent control protection to every home owned by a homeowner, no matter how many homes they own? Shouldn't only the primary residence of the homeowner be protected? In 2004, the California Legislature asked these questions and determined that an exemption from rent control for secondary homes was proper. Indeed providing this exemption takes away the "vacation home" argument that park owners would otherwise make to force local jurisdictions to abandon an RSO, or to block passage of a new RSO.

This author believes that it would be very difficult to remove this exemption from the Mobilehome Residency Law. The better course is to ensure (1) that the park owners do not pass amendments which erode the exceptions stated above; there have been several attempts to do so over the past few years; and (2) to educate homeowners about the law and assist them to claim a proper homeowner's exemption, or to activate one of the exceptions to the exemption during the 90-day notice period. Whether a rent increase is "fair" must be viewed not only from the "fairness" to the homeowners, but also the "fairness" to the park owner.

QUESTION: There has been recent controversy in our park about lot lines, and some of our homeowners are concerned that their homes may be encroaching into neighboring spaces. Should we obtain a lot survey? Our park manager says it will open a "can of worms". What should we do?

ANSWER: Lot lines can be a complex and controversial issue. California Health and Safety Code 18610.5 provides lot lines cannot be moved without a permit and written consent of both the park owner and the homeowner affected by the change. In older parks, lot lines or markers may not be properly marked or defined. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has authority to establish the location of lot markers, but not to actually set the lines. Lot markers which define the

corners or limits of a lot can be pins, concrete rebar or notches in a curb. If markers are not well defined or cannot be located, then lot lines also cannot be confirmed. Where park owners are removing single-wide homes and replacing them with double or triple-wides, there can be motivation to improperly move lot lines in order to accommodate the larger structures.

Homeowners with questions about lot lines should first contact HCD to request assistance in locating lot markers. Plot maps may exist at either the City, County or at HCD that show how lots were marked when the park was built. Individual Permits to install homes may also contain specific lot dimensions. If neither HCD or the homeowner can locate this information, and there is thus no documented evidence of the original lot lines, then the issue of lot line location or alleged improper movement becomes a legal matter between management and the affected homeowners. Then a survey would need to be obtained to establish where the markers should be located. If a homeowner wishes to challenge the park's placement or movement of a marker, the burden is on the homeowner to establish, via a survey, that the park owner is wrong. A survey costs money. And it could open a "can of worms", by revealing a variety of problems. But those "worms" may be just as damaging to the park owner if management has not properly recognized the true markers and lines. There is no way in such a case to find out the truth without a risk that other issues may come to light. The homeowner needs to decide if the cost and potential findings are worth the risk.

Homeowners should never choose not to obtain a survey out of fear that if their homes are determined to be encroaching onto a neighboring space, they will be obligated to move the home. If such a finding were to occur, and the homeowner's home was originally sited according to a permit signed off by park management, then the park owner should be responsible for the cost to move the home to its correct location, since the homeowner was justified in relying upon the signed permit.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mr. Stanton has been a practicing attorney since 1982, and has been representing mobilehome residents and homeowners associations as a specialty for over 20 years. His practice is located in San Jose, and he is the corporate counsel for GSMOL.

enjoying some time away from home to escape the summer heat. Despite the typical summer lull, there have been areas of activity. Region 9 Associate Manager Ron Wunsch has been busy in the Palm Springs area assisting recently activated Chapter 0762 at Date Palm Country Club in Cathedral City and activating Chapters 0706 at Palm Springs View Estates and 1082 at Tramview MHP in Palm Springs, with more on the way—thanks, Ron!

In Region 7, I want to welcome newly reactivated Chapter 1128 at Ramona Terrace Estates in Ramona and look forward to reactivation of chapters in Oceanside, Carlsbad and El Cajon in the near future. I recently met with leaders of Region 7, plus GSMOL at-large Board member Jim Sullivan, to discuss concerns and opportunities in the region.

With the fall election nearing, activity to register voters and support candidates who will support us has certainly stepped-up. Do you have a plan for your area? Oceanside is definitely the busiest at this point, where MH owners have the opportunity to oust two incumbent members

of the City Council who voted to abolish the local Rent Ordinance protecting owners of manufactured homes. MH owners stopped that action through the referendum process but now have the opportunity to restore majority support on the City Council, which is so important in preserving the affordability and viability of the MH lifestyle. They have already held fundraisers, meetings for candidates, identified which candidates deserve the support of MH owners and volunteered their time to work on campaigns.

Give thought NOW to how you and your neighbors can become more involved in the political process. Considering vote-by-mail starts in early October, it's important to get active in election campaigns ASAP to make your voice heard and your vote count. Politicians are much more likely to listen to you during a campaign, so attend campaign events, forums, fund raisers, etc.! For those candidates you do support, consider volunteering to work on their campaigns; you never know, today's City Council candidate might be tomorrow's State Legislator, who would have even more influence on our issues.

Give thought
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neighbors can
become more
involved in the
political process.



FOR STATE LEGISLATURE

Zone A:

Region 14: **Roger Dickinson-D**, Senate District 6 - www.rogerdickinson.com Region 14: **Jim Cooper-D**, Assembly District 9 - www.cooperforassembly.com

Zone B-1:

Region 8: **Jacqui Irwin-D**, Assembly *District 44 - www.jacquiirwin.com* Region 8: **Das Williams-D**, Assembly *District 37 - www.daswilliams.org*

Zone C:

Region 3: **Ben Allen-D***, Senate District 26 - www.benallenforsenate.com Region 3: **Sandra Fluke-D***, Senate District 26 - www.standwithsandra.org

Endorsements for the Nov. 4th General Election

*Dual endorsement for SD-26; PAC Board judges each to be well-qualified Region 3: Janet Nguyen-R, Senate District 34 - www.janet2014.com

Region 3: **Mike Gipson-D**, Assembly District 64 - www.mikegipson.net

Region 6: **Keith Curry-R**, Assembly

District 74 - www.curryforassembly.com

Region 6: **Katy Henry-D**, Assembly District 40 - *www.katyhenry2014.com*

FOR LOCAL OFFICE

Zone A1:

Region 2: Doug Cook, Calistoga City Council

Zone B-1:

Region 8: **Caren Ray**, San Luis Obispo Co. Supervisor District 4 - *www.carenray.com*

Zone C:

Region 5: Mark Bixby, Huntington Beach City Council - www.bixbyforcouncil.com Region 5: Connie Boardman, Huntington Beach City Council www.connieboardman.com Region 5: Joe Shaw, Huntington Beach City Council - www.joeshawforhb.com Region 6: Lou Alfonso, Chino Hills City Council - www.loualfonsopublicservant.org

Zone D:

Region 7: **Dana Corso**, Oceanside City Council Region 7: **Chuck Lowery**, Oceanside City Council www.lowery4council.com

There Ought to Be A Law

As Session Wraps Up, Looking To Next Year's Legislative Agenda

AB 225 would make some of the program rules conform better to the realities of resident or non-profit acquisition of a park.

Compared with recent years, the end of this year's legislative session was a quiet one. Only one mobilehome-related bill—AB 225 (Chau & Nestande)—was still active at the end of session. That bill, sponsored by GSMOL, would refine some of the rules governing the state's Mobilehome Park Resident-Ownership Program (MPROP) to make the program easier to use. MPROP provides funding for resident purchase and conversion of mobilehome parks to resident ownership. It also provides funding to allow non-profits or local governments to acquire and manage a park. The program has developed a surplus of more than \$20 million in recent years, because few applications have been submitted. AB 225 would make some of the program rules conform better to the realities of resident or non-profit acquisition of a park. It would also, for the first time, allow funding to support small loans or grants for home repairs to homeowners living in a park acquired with MPROP funds.

At the time of this writing, the bill was pending on the Senate floor. Having received bi-partisan support, the bill has a good chance of making it to the Governor's office. We will report how the



Governor acts on the bill in the next edition of The Californian.

Unfortunately, earlier in the year, parkowner

lobbyists succeeded in defeating GSMOL's AB 2026 (Stone), relating to interference with home sales. Despite strong grass roots support, the bill garnered very weak support on the Assembly floor. Election year politics and heavy opposition from parkowners contributed to the bill's demise. GSMOL is considering new strategies for addressing the very real problem of unfair interference with homeowners seeking to sell their homes.

The relative quiet of this year's session stands in stark contrast to recent years. Last year, the tenacity of GSMOL members and other homeowners fighting to reform the rules around forced condo conversions of parks paid off. SB 510 (Jackson) was signed into law, a culmination of nearly 5 years of efforts in the courts and the capitol around the right of homeowners to have a say in whether their park is converted. The year before, homeowners and GSMOL sent three bills to the Governor's desk, all of which were signed.

GSMOL's presence in the Capitol is critical to protecting homeowners' rights. But our lobbying presence is not just about supporting good bills; GSMOL and its members also play a critical role in defeating bad bills that would scale back homeowner rights. In recent years, GSMOL's presence has helped defeat or neutralize a number of parkowner sponsored measures. Among them were proposals to establish statewide vacancy decontrol and to change the rules governing when a homeowner's space can be declared exempt from rent control. GSMOL members are key to this success, because your dues help support our presence in the Capitol the only group in the Legislature dedicated exclusively to fighting for your rights.

As the session wraps up, we are looking to next year. As we do each year, we want to solicit input from you about your ideas for new legislation. Do you have ideas for where GSMOL should focus its lobbying efforts in the 2015-2016 legislative session? Send us your input at newideas@ housingadvocates.org. Also, if you want to get more involved in our grassroots lobbying efforts and help keep your neighbors informed about what is happening in Sacramento, consider joining our Legislative Action Team. The LAT is a network of leaders throughout the state who play a critical link between our work in Sacramento and homeowners in parks throughout the state. If you'd like to find out more, contact Marie Pounders, LAT co-chair at cafemlp@gmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you. ■

Insight from Member Survey

We asked the questions and the feedback has been impressive! More than 2,000 homeowners responded to the recent GSMOL member survey. That is a response rate of twice as many as can usually be expected with these types of surveys.

In question #7, we asked what we could do to get more people to join GSMOL, by asking you to complete the sentence "More people would join GSMOL If..." Here is a sampling of some of your responses:

- "If community leaders explain the importance of it."
- "They were made more aware of it. When I bought my mobile home from another lady 20 years ago, no one told me about this organization."
- "They knew their mission to help with park owners/management."
- "There was a greater personal outreach."
- "They knew what GSMOL does."
- "GSMOL were more proactive."
- "They understood the power park owners have over their homes. And what GSMOL can do to help them."
- "GSMOL would distribute flyers to each homeowner in each park."

Most members who responded believe that as we increase awareness of who we are and what our purpose is, we will gain more members. But how do we do that?

With nearly 1 million people living in manufactured homes in California in nearly 3,500 manufactured home parks, being able to directly mail something to each household is cost prohibitive. We simply don't have the resources to do that. Direct mail and other forms of advertising can be quite expensive. We are a grassroots organization, which means that our strength does not lie in our financial capacity, but in our human capacity. Our organization is run by volunteer leaders, who are manufactured home owners and members, just like you. If we can't afford to mail to every homeowner, how can we reach more people?

In question #11, we asked "What prompted you to first join GSMOL?" Here is a sampling of some of your responses:

- "The realization that many voices need to be blended together to be taken seriously so that unfair practices will be rectified."
- "Losing rent control when Goleta became a new city."
- "Recommended by park homeowners association."
- "Thought it would help with problems in the park."
- "I first looked at GSMOL as insurance against land owners."
- "To be part of an organization that protects manufactured homeowners."
- "At a chapter meeting, I won a raffle which gave a prize of a one year membership. When the year ended, I renewed."
- "My parents lived in a park and it sold, at which time the buyer started raising rents. So, having knowledge of GSMOL, I spoke to the residents and convinced them to organize and join GSMOL to fight them at Rialto's Rent Control Board."

Most conveyed that you either joined because you felt that GSMOL was relevant to your interests and/or were asked by a friend, family member or neighbor to join. When manufactured home owners hear about GSMOL and are asked to join, many will. Imagine what would happen if each GSMOL member took it upon themselves to talk to at least one neighbor over the course of the next two months and ask them to join. Some would argue that recruiting new members is not their job; that it is someone else's responsibility, like one of the volunteer leaders. The task of educating nearly 1 million potential members about the benefits of joining together is huge; but if every member takes responsibility for reaching out to those around them, we can accomplish much more.

In the survey responses, some of you expressed a desire for someone from GSMOL to come out

If you've received a survey and haven't had a chance to complete it, we want to hear from you, so please complete it and send it in



We also have excellent resources available from the Home Office you could use to help spread the word in your own park if there isn't already a chapter and you want to help us grow!

and do a presentation at your park. We have members in a little over 740 of the approximately 3,500 manufactured home parks in California, so we've a long way to go before we can hope to systematically reach every park in the state, but our GSMOL volunteer leaders rarely pass up an invitation to come out and talk about the benefits of joining. You could contact one of the

local leaders listed for your respective area in this publication or phone our Home Office and we would be happy to put you in touch with someone in your area. We also have excellent resources available from the Home Office that you could use to help spread the word in your own park if there isn't already a chapter and you want to help us grow!

STAY UP-TO-DATE ON GSMOL'S WORK IN THE CAPITOL

Join the GSMOL Email Alerts. Get timely updates on legislation and how you can help GSMOL build support for legislation.

To sign up, go to GSMOL.org, under News and Updates and follow the link.





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Questions or need a hand with instructions?

Contact the Home Office at:

800.888.1727

Organize for a Better Life

What would you do if a developer proposed to wipe out your manufactured home park to build luxury apartments on the land?

That was the dilemma that residents of Buena Vista Mobile Home Park in Palo Alto faced in 2012. After a fight that lasted months, the development proposal was finally withdrawn.

At some time, every manufactured home park in California will face a crisis. Will the residents of your park be prepared? Can park residents head off the crisis?

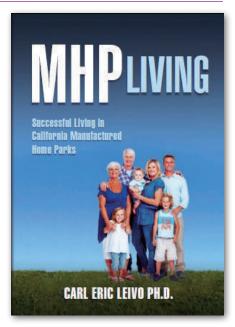
The realities of mobile home park living can be grim. Low income mobile home residents face the worst kind of economic injustice. Since mobile homes are not moveable, residents are at the economic mercy of wealthy park owners, corporations, investors and developers. Operators raise rents and cut costs to maximize profits. Lack of maintenance results in contaminated water, sewage spills, trash buildup, vermin, exposed electrical wires and gas leaks. Park owners seek to gentrify and convert parks to upscale developments as in Palo Alto. They economically evict residents. Park operators employ tactics to exhaust, intimidate, stigmatize, retaliate, divide, marginalize and impede the resident's hard work for a better life.

Over 52 years, GSMOL (a David compared to the park owners' Goliath) succeeded in getting adoption of the California Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL). This law helps level the playing field between mobile home residents and park owners. Yet, the MRL must be enforced by residents through the civil courts. Certain local governments have adopted ordinances that protect mobile home owners. On the other hand, park operators use space rent funds to bottle up residents and local governments in the courts.

It takes inspired and supported local resident leaders to stand up to park operators. Resident leaders must make a life-or-death stand for economic justice. Leaders need an ultra-strong commitment to the struggle to sustain their long term sacrifices, the losses and eventual successes. They commit to lead

autonomous grass-roots campaigns for change.

Believe it or not, your leaders and neighbors need you. Park residents can achieve outstanding success when they join together in home owner organizations. When leaders need help, mobile home residents must volunteer their time, talents and resources. Apathetic residents become allies of park operators in effect. The struggle will be long and residents cannot fade in their support. Don't be a victimized mobile home resident but stand up for your rights as a member of your community's mobile home resident organization.



Why form a mobile home owner organization now--because it takes time and sustained effort to counteract the money and power of park owners. Smart manufactured home owners form associations before a crisis. Over time, resident associations build coalitions and marshal support for mobile home residents and their initiatives among those with power including elected officials, community leaders and the media. They identify their friends. Mobile home residents fill their good will bank accounts in communities. When it comes times to counter the moves of park owners, resident associations will be powerful and ready for the fight.

Resident associations must train new leaders. Volunteer leaders eventually must step back because of illness, family problems, or burn out. Associations might set up a time frame for their volunteer leaders so that they do not impose too much upon one individual. The Vice President, after serving an apprentice period, might take over for the President after two to four years. The past president might continue to serve on the Board to advise new association leaders.

Mobile home residents have achieved many successes in recent years, including the examples below. None of these successes were easy to

Why form a mobile home owner organization now--because it takes time and sustained effort to counteract the money and power of park owners.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carl Eric Leivo. Ph.D. is the author of MHP Living: Successful Living in California Manufactured Home Parks. Every manufactured home owner should own this book. For the first time, here's an inexpensive guide that covers all the most important issues.

- achieve. In every such case park residents created home owner organizations. Except for these organizations, no one would have effectively stood up for mobile home residents.
- Mobile home park residents in Oceanside defeated a measure to phase out space rent control. Residents convinced 65 percent of voters to say no to the measure and keep space rent control. To achieve this success, mobile home residents allied with neighborhood associations, made public appearances, told their story to reporters and knocked on the doors of voters.
- Residents of Rancho San Miguel defeated a proposal by Rutherford Investments to stick mobile home owners with the cost of electrical system and fence improvements. Rutherford proposed a \$100 per month fee but a mediator approved only a \$10 pass through. Building a rapport with Santa Rosa City officials and a supportive network over the long term helped assure this success.
- In 2014, a judge ruled that the City of San Diego should pay \$128,000 to each manufactured home owner in De Anza Cove Mobile Home Park. The City wants to close the park located on public land near Mission Bay. This dispute between park residents and the City has simmered for 30 years. The resident's attorney, Vince Bartolotta Jr. states: "That's the entire reason (for the legal battle) so cities and or park owners cannot take advantage of these people they can't just throw them out."
- Manufactured home owners in Californian Hawaiian Mobile Estates, San Jose have coped with sewage backups, electrical blackouts, potholes, and a swimming pool contaminated with goose poo. The park is owned by Equity Lifestyle Properties, a public company chaired by billionaire Sam Zell. A group of residents filed a "failure to maintain" suit five years ago. In 2014, a San Jose jury awarded \$111 million to the residents. Each of the 61 plaintiffs could receive \$100,000 in compensatory damages and \$1.57 million in punitive damages.



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INSURANCE AGENCY
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Board Of Directors Quarterly Meeting

Thursday, October 23, 2014 • 9:30 AM- 1:30 PM

Laguna Lake Mobile Estates • 1801 Prefumo Canyon Road; San Luis Obispo, CA (800) 888-1727 • gsmol@sbcglobal.net

GUESTS WELCOME!

SCHEDULE

- Review of Minutes from 7-23-14
- Treasurer's Report
- Zone Vice Presidents Reports
- Membership Drive Results
- Membership Survey Results

- Corp. Counsel Report: **Bruce Stanton**
- Legislative Update: Brian Augusta
- New Business Items
- Standing and Special Committee Reports

- Legislative
- Membership
- Editorial
- Education Fund 501 (c)3
- Task Force: voting issues
- Website



State Board SERVING HOMEOWNERS SINCE 1962 Meeting Highlights

July 23, 2014 • Santa Rosa, CA

- 1. Zone Reports on Membership Drive Plans
- 2. Swearing in of new Board Members:

Diane McPherson, Treasurer

Marie Pounders, Secretary

John Bertaut, Zone A Vice President

3. Task Force on Statewide Voting Procedure:

Initial Report-work to be continued

- **4.** Revised Chapter Handbook to be sent out soon
- 5. New Rent Stabilization Manual available now
- 6. GSMOL & WMA to meet to determine if there is any common ground
- 7. Will Constantine: Housing Elements need to include local mobile/manufacture home data



Donations for Napa Victims





Our thoughts and our prayers will be with mobile home park residents in Napa Valley during the months to come as they rebuild after the devastating earthquake on August 24, 2014. A donation to the **GSMOL Disaster Relief Fund** will insure your contribution will be used to help a manufactured-home owner/resident whose home suffered damage during this disaster.

FEEDBACK WANTED!

Give us your feedback on *The Californian*. Comments on stories we've published, or stories you'd like to see are always welcome. Tell us what you like and what you don't like so we can help tailor *The Californian* to you—our member!

Send your feedback to editor@gsmol.org





GSMOL "Who's Who" • Leaders in Your Area - Refer to Map on Page 19 for Zones and Regions

ZONE A

REGION 4

COUNTIES: Butte, Glenn, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity

REGION MANAGER

Anne Rucker

1901 Dayton Rd. #132 Chico, CA 95928 Phone: (530) 343-3904 karucker@sbcglobal.net

ASSISTANT MANAGER Pat Dallara

400 Hiram Page Rd. Yreka, CA 96097 Phone: (530) 842-1327 happy2bat52@yahoo.com

REGION 11

COUNTIES: Amador, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas and Sierra (Vacant)

REGION 14

COUNTIES: Colusa, Sutter, Sacramento, Yolo and Yuba

ASSOCIATE MANAGER Norma Bohannan

P.O. Box 279292 Sacramento, CA 95826 Phone: (916) 388-2427 gsmolnorma@yahoo.com

ZONE A-1

REGION 1

COUNTIES: Alameda, San Mateo, Contra Costa, Santa Clara and San Francisco

ASSOCIATE MANAGER

Gary C. Smith 390 Mill Pond Dr. San Jose, CA 95125 Phone: (408) 975-0950 garyslighthouse@sbcglobal.net

REGION 2

COUNTIES: Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Solano and Sonoma

REGION MANAGER Diane McPherson

83 Seguoia Circle Santa Rosa, CA 95401 Phone: (707) 573-0410 deemcph42@hotmail.com

ASSISTANT MANAGER Bill Donahue

28 Oakwood Dr. Petaluma, CA 94954 Phone: (707) 765-2556 williamdonahue28@hotmail.com

ASSOCIATE MANAGERS Richard Heine

143 Bryce Canyon Rd San Rafael, CA 94903 Phone: (415) 479-6343 rah111@comcast.net

Ernest Ponce De Leon

300 Stony Point Rd. #515 Petaluma, CA 94952 Phone: (707) 981-7605 Cell: (650) 892-3176 ernest.deleon@comcast.net

ZONE B

REGION 12

COUNTIES: Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera and Tulare

REGION MANAGER

Jean Crowder 1500 Villa Ave. #133

Clovis, CA 93612 Phone: (559) 213-8002 Fax: (559) 298-7013 jeankc@sbcglobal.net

ASSOCIATE MANAGER Debra Hulsey

720 E. Worth Ave #221 Porterville, CA 93257 Phone: (559) 784-4986

REGION 13

COUNTIES: Alpine, Merced, Calaveras, Mariposa, Mono, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and **Tuolumne**

REGION MANAGER Linda Larsen

6706 Tam O'Shanter Dr. #114 Stockton, CA 95210 Phone: (209) 473-3226 linda4947@att.net

ZONE B-1

REGION 8

COUNTIES: San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura

REGION MANAGER Marie Pounders

1675 Los Osos Valley Rd. #105 Los Osos, CA 93402

Phone: (805) 528-0825 cafemlp@gmail.com

ASSISTANT MANAGERS Barbara Tolerton

109 Blackburn Pl. Ventura, CA 93004 Phone: (805) 647-1935 oldvalleygirl@aol.com

Joan Harper

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ASSOCIATE MANAGER

Ventura County

Jill Martinez

213 Iris Wav Ventura, CA 93004 Phone: (805) 323-5859 Home

Phone: (805) 982-0013 Cell jillmartinezqsmol@qmail.com

ASSOCIATE MANAGER

South Santa Barbara County

Anne B. Anderson 333 Old Mill Rd. #161 Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Phone: (805) 895-8319 a.bushnellanderson@gmail.com

REGION 10

COUNTIES: Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz

REGION MANAGER Richard Halterman

1099 38th Ave. #16 Santa Cruz, CA 95062 Phone: (831) 476-0337

ASSOCIATE MANAGERS Patricia Cramer

3128 Crescent Ave., #11 Marina, CA 93933 Phone: (831) 384-6058

otterpc@aol.com

Bob Lamonica

2395 Delaware Ave. #131 Santa Cruz, CA 95066 Phone: (831) 469-9248 bob@cruzexpo.com

Carole Harris

444 Whispering Pines Dr. #124 Scotts Valley, CA 95066 Phone: (831) 438-4404 carolemae_harris@yahoo.com

ZONE C

REGION 3

Los Angeles County

REGION MANAGER

Edward Souza

17350 E. Temple Ave. #466 La Puente, CA 91744 Phone: (626) 506-4303 covinahillsasmol@vahoo.com

ASSOCIATE MANAGER

Chuck Loring

8250 Lankershim Blvd., Olive 7 North Hollywood, CA 91605 Phone: (818) 768-6257 chuckloring@dslextreme.com

Martha Vazquez

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REGION 5

Orange County

REGION MANAGERS Mary Jo Baretich

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Ray Deniston

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Janet Offhaus

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Ginger Roberts

1973 Newport Blvd. #55 Costa Mesa, CA 92627 Phone: (949) 533-1075 angroberts@amail.com

REGION 6

San Bernardino County

REGION MANAGER

Carl Laughman

9800 Baseline Rd #7 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 Phone: (909) 980-3484 Kallkarl43@netzero.net

ASSOCIATE MANAGER Joseph Diaz

4400 Philadelphia St. #123 Chino, CA 91710

Phone: (909) 591-9973 Joseph68diaz@yahoo.com

ZONE D

REGION 7

COUNTIES: San Diego and Imperial

REGION MANAGER Frankie Bruce

10771 Black Mtn. Rd. # 100 San Diego, CA 92126 Phone: (858) 335-8885 francesbruce@att.net

ASSOCIATE MANAGERS Victor Roy

200 N. Camino Real #422 Oceanside, CA 92058 Phone: (760) 439-0069 victoryawaitsyou2@hotmail.com

Don Greene

2280-62 E. Valley Pkwy Escondido, CA 92027 Phone: (619) 665-6426 don.greene@cox.net

Karen Bisignano

PO Box 712022 Santee, CA 92072 Phone: (619) 448-9404 smoac@juno.com

REGION 9

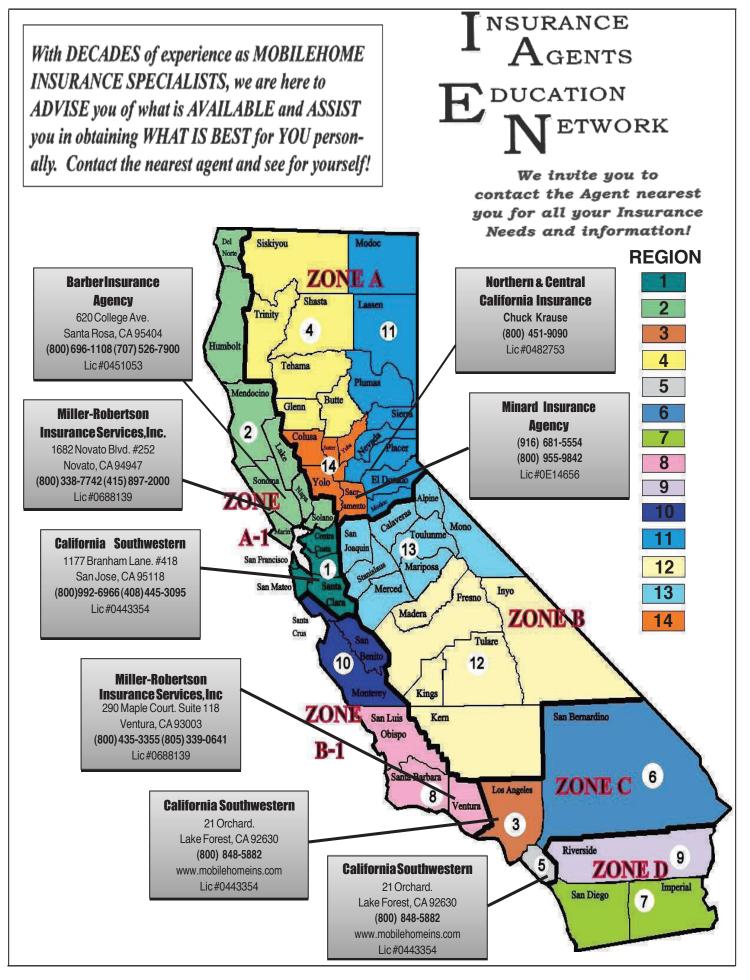
Riverside County

ASSOCIATE MANAGERS Barbara Rish

3701 Fillmore St. #137 Riverside, CA 92505 barbaraqsmol@yahoo.com

Ron Wunsch 1044 Via Grande

Cathedral City, CA 92234 Phone: (760)328-0688 rwunsch@dc.rr.com





FIVE FOR FIVE REWARDS PROGRAM APPLICATION FOR REWARD

(New members only – no renewals) • Mail or fax completed form to the home office, Fax No. (714) 826-2401

Please fill in new members' names, park, space number, and when they joined below and mail or fax to the home office. After verifying by the home office, a \$5 reward check will be mailed to the individual or chapter named at the bottom of this form. Please send in all new membership applications as soon as you receive them. Do not hold them for this program. This program only requires that you keep track of who they are and list them on this form. (More than one person living in the same home and paying one membership dues count as one member for this program.)

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY PARK NAME PARK NAME SPACE NO. MONTH AND YEAR JOINED Please send \$5 reward check to: Name (Note: If the reward is going to a chapter's treasury and the chapter does not have a bank account, the check should be made out to and mailed to a chapter officer. The officer can then cash the check and put the money into the chapter treasury.)

USE THE APPLICATION BELOW TO GIVE A "GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP" TO A NON-MEMBER!

MEN	MBERSHIP AP			UFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE, INC. 26-4071 FAX : 714-826-2401	Thank voir
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		(DUES ARE NON-REFU	NDABLE)		Keen
	First Name	Initial Last Name		☐ New Member	And K
	Spouse/Second Occupant			☐ Renewing Member	Petach A
	Park Name			GSMOL Chapter #	
Comments (For O.ce Use)	Street Address		Space #	Check # / CASH You can also contribute to any of the following	
	City	State	_ Zip	GSMOL dedicated fund	Ì
	Day Phone	Alternate #		Legal Defense Fund \$	
	Email Address			Disaster Relief Fund \$	
Comr		Membership Recruiter (if Applicable)		Politial Acton Committe (PAC) \$	
FILL O	UT AND RETURN THIS FORM AL	ONG WITH YOUR CHECK TO GSI	MOL, 6101 BALL R	OAD, SUITE 202, CYPRESS, CA 90630	İ