

THE CALIFORNIAN

GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME
OWNERS LEAGUE

Volume 53 - Issue 2
July/August/September 2018

GOVERNOR BROWN SIGNS AB 3066



THANK YOU

Assemblymember MARK STONE

LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

Assemblymember Mark Stone, Author of AB 3066, is GSMOL's Legislator of the Year. GSMOL supports Mark Stone's re-election to the 29th Assembly District.

See Page 4 CAPITOL REPORT for details on AB 3066.

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Why El Nido
Was Successful

Don't Forget To

VOTE

VOTE YES on PROP 1 and PROP 10.

Voter Registration Deadline is October 22, and the Election is November 6.

What are those extra numbers on the address label?

(MEMBERSHIP #)

(EXPIRATION DATE M/Y)

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THE
Californian

GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME
OWNERS LEAGUE

(USPS 898-320)

*Official quarterly publication of the Golden State
Manufactured-Home Owners League, Inc.*

GSMOL enhances the quality of life for all manufactured-home owners and for residents of mobilehome park communities throughout California. We champion the property rights of homeowners and deliver value through advocacy, information and service. GSMOL lobbies for just and fair protection under the law for manufactured-home owners so they may experience the quiet, peaceful enjoyment of their community. GSMOL, Inc. reserves the right to exercise such discretion as it may deem appropriate in the selection of advertising material to be published in *THE CALIFORNIAN*. Advertising published in *THE CALIFORNIAN* does not constitute endorsement by GSMOL, Inc. of the products or services offered. *THE CALIFORNIAN* welcomes articles relating to mobilehome lifestyles, but they are subject to editing based on space availability, style, good taste and importance and at the discretion of the Editor. Content in this publication may not be reprinted or used in any way without the written consent of GSMOL, Inc.

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*See map on
page 15 for
Zone
boundaries.*

Greetings and Welcome from the GSMOL President, Michelle Smith



"GREAT NEWS! The **Members Only** section on www.gsmol.org is now up and running! All members with an email have had an account created for them. You can use either your email or your member number to log in. To create your unique password follow the steps on the Log-In page. If you have any issues logging in contact our Webmaster, Gabriel De Simone, at gdesimone@gsmol.org."

This week's other GOOD NEWS is that Governor Brown signed AB 3066 into law. For first time in California's history, a State Agency, Housing and Community Development (HCD), will be involved in enforcing the Mobile Residency Law (MRL). This is a 5-year pilot program and will cost each mobilehome owner \$10 a year to set up, run, and enforce the most egregious violations of the MRL though legal litigation at no cost to homeowners. The law goes into affect in January 2019 but HCD will not begin taking complaints from homeowners until 2020.

This is no "quick fix" but it's a good beginning. Fortunately, GSMOL will be involved at ground level in Sacramento as the program is developed. We will be instrumental in shaping the program, with the expert guidance from our Corporate Counsel, Bruce Stanton, myself, and other mobilehome owner coalitions in the Sacramento area who will be attending regular meetings at HCD headquarters.

GSMOL sincerely thanks our Legislative Advocate, Esperanza Ross, for her sound leadership in moving us through perfectly timed phone calls, visits to the Capitol to testify, and solid advice on how to move legislation forward. Her professional relationships with Legislators cannot be ignored!

And who else do we need to thank? **YOU**, our faithful GSMOL members who don't give up when hope is needed, who don't stop making daily phone calls to the Capitol when asked to, and who show up to the weekly telephone conferences with the Legislative Action Committee (LAT). Thanks also to Vice President, Anne Anderson, for conducting the phone conferences and making sure all voices were heard. THANK YOU ALL!

Finally, our sincere thanks goes to Assemblymember Mark Stone and Senator Hannah Beth Jackson for championing our issues and standing up for California Mobilehome Owners...all one million of us! GSMOL unanimously voted Assemblymember Mark Stone as LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR. The Santa Cruz Mobile and Manufactured Home Commission has also honored Assemblymember Stone with a Proclamation to recognize his relentless pursuit of fairness for mobilehome owners. I will present our Award Certificate to Assemblymember Stone on October 16th at the Santa Cruz Board of Supervisor's meeting.

And yes, Fall is here. It's much cooler today and I look forward to many more cool and refreshing days. Halloween is around the corner, then we'll be catapulted into the holidays. I send my best wishes to each of you as we continue to do the good work it takes to stand up for all of us. We do our BEST, and we let it be good enough...that's my motto.

PUBLIC RELATIONS PERSON WANTED

GSMOL is seeking an experienced, volunteer **Public Relations person** from among our talented and varied membership. With the support of our dedicated team, you will help us communicate effectively with our members, the media, the public and elected officials. You will help develop GSMOL messaging and educate GSMOL members and prospective members on GSMOL goals.

You will play a critical role in advocating for the protection of mobilehome residents statewide. This is a volunteer, part-time position.

GSMOL Ventura Regional Conference

The next GSMOL Regional Conference is scheduled for Saturday, November 10th
City Church, 6360 Telephone Road, Ventura, CA.
RSVP to Anne Anderson, 805-895-8319

Forty years ago, Governor Jerry Brown signed the **Mobilehome Residency Law** into law. Forty years later, **AB 3066, the Mobilehome Residency Law Protection Act**, authored and championed by **Assemblyman Mark Stone**, has been signed into law by Governor Brown!

This was the result of months of hard work on the part of GSMOL's Legislative Action Team (LAT) Committee and GSMOL Members from all over the state who participated in the advocacy process – making phone calls, writing support letters and meeting with their state legislators. This effort, along with GSMOL's work on AB 1269 last year, also authored by Assemblymember Mark Stone, has been **one of the most effective engagements of mobilehome park residents in legislative action at the state level since SB 510 in 2013!**

GSMOL has awarded Assemblymember Stone the **Legislator of the Year 2018 Award** for his work over two years on this landmark bill!

Given the significance of AB 3066 and the impact it may have on California's mobilehome owners, please **show your thanks for your State Senators and Assembly Members who voted YES on AB 3066** and who are running for election or re-election by supporting their candidacy this election season.

Here is how your State Senators and Assembly Members voted on AB 3066:

Senate Floor – 8.29.18

Ayes: Allen, Atkins, Beall, Bradford, De León, Delgado, Dodd, Hernandez, Hertzberg, Hill, Hueso, Jackson, Lara, Leyva, McGuire, Mitchell, Monning, Pan, Portantino, Roth, Skinner, Stern, Wieckowski, and Wiener.

Noes: Anderson, Bates, Cannella, Chang, Fuller, Gaines, Glazer, Moorlach, Morrell, Nguyen, Nielsen, Stone, Vidak, and Wilk.

No Votes Recorded: Berryhill and Galgiani.

Assembly Floor – 8.31.18

Ayes: Aguiar-Curry, Arambula, Berman, Bloom, Bonta, Burke, Caballero, Calderon, Carrillo, Cervantes, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Daly, Eggman, Flora, Friedman, Gabriel, Cristina Garcia, Gipson, Gloria, Gonzalez Fletcher, Grayson, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Kamlager-Dove, Levine, Limón, Low, Maienschein, McCarty, Medina, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, O'Donnell, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Reyes, Rivas, Rodriguez, Rubio, Santiago, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Thurmond, Ting, Voepel, Weber, Wood, and Rendon.

Noes: Acosta, Travis Allen, Baker, Bigelow, Brough, Chen, Choi, Cunningham, Dahle, Fong, Frazier, Gallagher, Harper, Irwin, Kiley, Lackey, Mathis, Mayes, Melendez, Obernolte, Patterson, Salas, and Waldron.

No Votes Recorded: Cooper, Eduardo Garcia, and Gray.

Now that the Governor has signed AB 3066, it will be more important than ever for mobilehome park residents to **join GSMOL so that everyone can learn how the new MRL enforcement process will work**. GSMOL will provide resources for park residents to get organized, learn what your rights are under the MRL, and find out how to submit a complaint under the new system. Stay in touch with your nearest Zone, Region, or Chapter leaders!

Every park needs a GSMOL Legislative Contact (LC) in order to tie the residents in with what the Legislative Action Team (LAT) Committee is doing in regard to new bills for 2019. Your GSMOL Chapter officers can appoint a LC, or if you don't have a Chapter, any GSMOL member willing to roll up their sleeves and work for our bills may volunteer (you must have email). Contact your local Zone or Region leader.

Another way to stay in the know is to sign up for our **Legislative E-Blast email list**. You may sign up on our website, www.gsmol.org. You will receive our weekly bulletin, "This Week at the Capitol," and also the GSMOEF (Education Fund) bulletin "Your Rights Bytes".

Finally, become more familiar with your rights under the MRL at the **Education Fund's website, which we call the "Ed Fund Academy": www.mobilehomeresidentadvocate.blogspot.com**

VOTE YES on PROP 10: Restores authority to establish rent control for rental housing in local communities, putting fair limits on the amount landlords can increase rent.

VOTE YES on PROP 1: Authorizes \$4 billion in state bonds to fund existing affordable housing programs for mobile home residents, seniors, low-income residents, and veterans.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TREE REMOVAL OR MAINTENANCE?

This is one of the most popular articles written by Bruce Stanton – from the March 2010 edition of *The Californian*.

As an attorney practicing mobilehome law, one of the most frequently asked questions which I receive has to do with trees located on the homeowners' space. The usual situation was where a homeowner received a 7-day Notice initiated by management which demands that a tree located all or partly on the homeowner's space be trimmed, maintained or removed. Was the homeowner responsible for the cost of doing so? Or sometimes the homeowner initiated the notice to the park owner or a complaint to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) requesting that management trim, maintain or remove a tree located on the homeowner's space which was alleged to be a problem. Could the park owner be made to pay the cost of doing so?

Prior to 2001, questions about tree issues were amongst my least favorite. No section of the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) dealt with the issue, and park owners had differing policies about how to treat trees. Most residents felt that responsibility for removing or maintaining trees should be based upon who planted the tree; i.e. if the tree existed before they purchased the space, it should be the park's responsibility, and if the resident planted the tree it should be their responsibility. The problem with this, other than the fact that park owners often disagreed with the premise, was that the park owned the land, and along with it all of the trees "fixed" to the land. Residents cannot sell trees or take them with them when the home is sold. Thus, who planted the tree was really not relevant. And the problem was often not insignificant. In some cases tall trees can cost hundreds or even thousands of dollars to maintain or remove. Palm trees or large cypress trees fall into this category. For a resident faced with this type of bill, the cost could prove impossible and thus subject them to eviction.

Thankfully, CA Civil Code section 798.37.5 was enacted in 2001. This has proven to be one of the most useful provisions in the MRL, and it prevails over any provisions in rental agreements, leases or rules and regulations. The law now divides responsibility for trees as follows:

If the tree in question is located on the homeowner's rented space and "poses a specific hazard or health and safety violation", then the park owner is solely responsible for all costs of maintenance, trimming, pruning or removal.

But if the tree is not determined to be a "specific hazard or health and safety violation", then the homeowner is responsible for the tree.

Establishing whether there is a hazard or health and safety violation is thus critical to determining responsibility for the tree. But how do we do this? Sometimes it's easy to determine that hazards or violations exist. Trees that are falling down, diseased, dropping debris on people or property, touching structures or spreading their roots over one or more spaces causing concrete to buckle or break up can be clearly identified as a hazard. But in cases which are not so obvious, a dispute often occurs between the homeowner and management as to who is responsible for the tree. In those cases, the HCD has created a procedure for resolving the issue. A resident who believes the park owner is responsible for maintaining or removing a tree should request an inspection by HCD. The inspector has discretion to determine if the tree is a hazard or health and safety violation. If either the homeowner or the park owner disagrees with the inspector's decision, they can hire a tree expert (arborist) to render an opinion. This should also be done where the inspector cannot make a determination, for HCD inspectors are not always "tree experts". With the arborist's report in hand, either party can then appeal the original inspector's decision and seek a new ruling from HCD.

Very large trees which will cost large amounts to remove or maintain, such as tall palm trees, will usually fall into the category of a hazard or health and safety violation merely due to the cost and effort involved in the task, as will almost any tree removal. A park owner cannot reasonably order expensive tree removal without a valid reason, which is almost always tied to health and safety. The bottom line is this: If a resident has any question about whether he or she is responsible for a tree, try to talk to management first. If that is unsuccessful, then an HCD inspection should be ordered or an arborist consulted. But the homeowner needs to be ready to accept the results of the inspection, even when it turns out in favor of the park owner, because once the inspection results are on record there is seldom any way to erase them.

HELP KEEP DOWN THE COSTS OF PRINTING AND MAILING *The Californian*

Sign up for **electronic versions** of *The Californian* each month. These arrive earlier than the printed and mailed copies, and can then be kept in your own separate Folder for reference to important past Articles. Just call the GSMOL Office Toll-Free Mainline **(800) 888-1727** and request that you be placed on the electronic distribution list for *The Californian*.

GSMOL STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES			
Revenue and Expenses 10/1/2017-8/26/2018			
		Actual	2018 Budget (approved)
Revenue	Membership	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 190,000.00
	Advertising	\$ 2,888.00	\$ 6,776.00
	Donations	\$ 12,743.00	\$ -
	Interest	\$ 1.36	\$ -
	TOTAL Revenue	\$ 190,632.36	\$ 196,776.00
Expenses	Legal	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 36,000.00
	Legislative	\$ 37,085.00	\$ 42,000.00
	Admin/Office	\$ 5,067.00	\$ 5,570.00
	Chapter Expenses	\$ 896.00	\$ 1,000.00
	Computer	\$ 7,850.00	\$ 12,000.00
	Convention	\$ 1,661.00	\$ -
	Dues	\$ 760.00	\$ 2,000.00
	Insurance	\$ 5,318.00	\$ 6,000.00
	Interest Expenses	\$ 948.00	\$ 1,000.00
	Conference Travel/Lodging	\$ 6,547.00	\$ 1,500.00
	Outside Services	\$ 1,620.00	\$ -
	Wages/Taxes/Processing	\$ 23,630.00	\$ 22,200.00
	Penalties / Late Fees	\$ 657.00	\$ -
	Postage	\$ 12,238.00	\$ 14,000.00
	Printing/Lease	\$ 3,295.00	\$ 6,500.00
	<i>Californian</i>	\$ 17,925.00	\$ 18,500.00
	Rent	\$ 16,745.00	\$ 18,120.00
	Telephone/Utilities	\$ 14,898.00	\$ 6,060.00
	Merchant Cr. Card Charges	\$ 2,521.00	\$ 3,000.00
	TOTAL Expenses	\$ 184,161.00	\$ 195,450.00

GSMOL DEBT UPDATE

Current	As of 5/1/2018	As of 8/16/2018
Corporate Attorney	\$ 3,616.33	\$ 2,101.00
Legislative Advocate	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 3,500.00
Technical Duplicators	\$ 210.00	\$ -
Neopost	\$ 4,660.04	\$ 2,900.00
Webmaster	\$ 575.00	\$ -
AT&T	\$ 961.00	\$ -
I.T. Consultant	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 7,500.00
Short Term over time		
B of A Account 1	\$ 14,260.99	\$ 13,500.00
B of A Account 2	\$ 2,354.18	\$ 1,900.00
B of A Account 3	\$ 1,010.46	\$ 700.00
Long Term Repay PAC	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Webmaster work not done	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL Debt	\$ 48,648.00	\$ 37,101.00

COST CUTTING

Here are some of the new practices your new 2018 board has adopted in order to live **within** our budget:

- No more requiring the Corporate Attorney to sit in on board meetings just in case he is needed. (Saves \$150/hour. Board meetings run 2-4 hours each week)
- No more costly conventions. Only local Regional Conferences at no cost to GSMOL.
- No more officer expense reimbursements for travel, lodging, meals...until the budget is in the black (exceptions made for President and Treasurer as they travel the state).
- *The Californian* printing costs cut by switching from hi-cost glossy magazine to simple, inexpensive newsprint.
- One employee 4 hours daily, supported by chapter volunteers.
- No spending on credit cards. Buying only what can be paid for immediately.

This new board of directors is committed to respecting our members by spending dues money wisely and looking for other revenue streams (donations, grants and advertising). We are paying off debt created by the previous administration as quickly as possible and creating NO new debt, all the while educating as well as working on cutting-edge protection legislation.


This is value for your \$25.00 annual dues.

No other organization can say that!

SUBSCRIBE TO THE E-BLAST!

Subscribers to our email list will receive two weekly bulletins: "This Week at the Capitol," our legislative bulletin and "Your Rights Bytes," a series featuring short articles on topics like mobilehome laws and rent control. Subscribe by clicking on the yellow "Sign up for our email list" button at www.gsmol.org!

Members Only page on the website is active...go see!

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PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)			

SACRAMENTO AREA – MONTHLY CONFERENCES

By John Bertaut, Zone A Vice President, Coordinator

GSMOL Zone A and the Sacramento Area Coalition jointly conduct Regions 11 and 14 monthly Conferences, at Denny's in Roseville on the first Friday of each month. We've had Bruce Stanton, Esperanza Ross, Mitchel Baker, our County Supervisor, and Eric Guerra of the Senate Select Committee on Manufactured Home Communities as guest speakers, and we have the GSMOL State President and Zone A VP attending and speaking each month.



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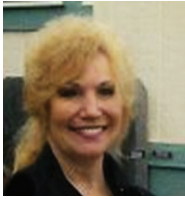
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until you register your card(s) to apply to organization
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ONTARIO – June 16, 2018

By Mary Jo Baretich, Zone C Vice President, Coordinator



I would like to thank everyone who made the Ontario Mobilehome Owners Conference a success, and especially our members who took the time out of their busy days to join us and learn valuable information. Anne Anderson, our Conference Committee Chair, and the Committee team members, Tom Lockhart and Ray Downing, were instrumental in helping me set up this low-cost conference at the Azure Hotel in Ontario. The Sign-in Table Team, Carl Laughman, Judy Dockrell, and Julie Bell, did a very efficient and organized job. And a special thanks goes to Don Hart for handling the set-up of the audio-visual equipment.

Besides our own excellent speakers, GSMOL President Michelle Smith and GSMOL Treasurer Shelly Parker, we had a spectacular lineup of prominent and dynamic speakers: State Senator Connie Leyva, Assemblyman Freddie Rodriguez, GSMOL Legislative Advocate Esperanza Ross, GSMOL Corporate Counsel Bruce Stanton, California Housing and Community Development (HCD) Representative Matthew Weise, and GSMOL Member Don Hart.

Every presentation was met with appreciative applause. Our members were impressed that these people took the time to be there and share their expertise, concerns, and support for our homeowners.

One highlight of the Conference was when Bruce Stanton handed out his infamous MRL 101 questionnaires during his speech. Bruce then quizzed the audience to see how many answers they knew. The answer sheet was provided following a discussion of each of the questions. This is an excellent way to teach people how to solve many of the issues that we frequently encounter when working with a GSMOL Chapter in a park. In the past, Bruce had conducted numerous "MRL Road Shows" throughout the state, and this teaching tool has proven itself extremely valuable.



Michelle Smith
GSMOL President



Shelly Parker
GSMOL Treasurer



Connie Leyva
State Senator



Freddie Rodriguez
State Assemblyman



Esperanza Ross
Legislative Advocate



Bruce Stanton
Corporate Counsel



Matthew Weise
HCD Representative



Don Hart
GSMOL Member and Presenter



Victor Roy, Diane Hanson, Bob Markley
GSMOL Members



Anne Anderson
Conference Chairperson



BRINGING GSMOL OUT TO THE PEOPLE!

GSMOL'S REGIONAL MOBILEHOME OWNERS CONFERENCES

By Anne Anderson
GSMOL Conference Chairperson

SAN JOSE – June 30, 2018

By Martha O'Connell, Region 1 Manager (Zone A-1), Coordinator



President Michelle Smith and Chair Martha O'Connell presenting recognition certificate to City Councilmember Sergio Jimenez,

San Jose hosted a **no frills, working class** Regional conference at a cost of only \$285.33 to the Golden State Manufactured Home Owners Educational Fund (GSMOEF). Everything else was donated. Collaborating with the City of San Jose, a free location was secured - a Senior Center. Staff from the City Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services spearheaded both the setup and clean-up of the facility. Hundreds of wonderful muffins were baked and distributed by the Sunnyvale Mobile Home Park Alliance. If folks wanted lunch, they either brought it in a paper sack or bought it across the street at various convenient locations. Councilperson Sergio Jimenez, the keynote speaker, was presented with a GSMOL Hero Award for his leadership in the successful "No on Opt In" campaign in San Jose, a proposal that would have gutted rent control. More donations and membership money was taken in at the Conference besides that donated by GSMOEF to help fund the **no frills conference**.



Martha O'Connell
Conference Chair and
Regional Manager



Dick Heine
Vice President
Zone A-1



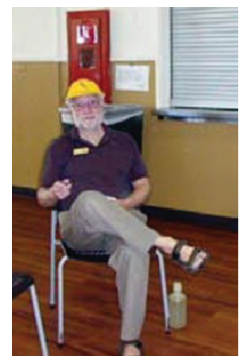
Bruce Stanton, Esq.
GSMOL
Corporate Counsel



Glenna Howcroft
President
Super Chapter



David Loop
Vice President
Resident Owned Communities



Henry Cleveland
GSMOL
PAC Committee



Henry Greene, Representative from HCD



GSMOL Zone A-1 VP Dick Heine, lower right corner



Shelly Parker, GSMOL
Treasurer



Henry Greene, Representative from Housing and
Community Development, HCD



Some Attendees at the GSMOL San Jose Region
Conference

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY – August 18, 2018

By Anne Anderson, Zone B-1 Vice President, Coordinator



Anne Anderson
Zone B-1 Vice President
and Conference Coordinator

On a bright day at a lovely church in the country outside Los Osos, about 90 homeowners gathered to hear GSMOL State President Michelle Smith and Treasurer Shelly Parker, Corporate Counsel Bruce Stanton, VP for Resident Owned Communities David Loop, and Mitchel Baker from Housing and Community Development (HCD). Volunteers, Irene McKenzie and Jane Tripp from Sea Oaks Chapter 1200, welcomed the visitors, and church members Jim Malone and Ron Thompson did all the setup and saw to it that everything ran smoothly. Region 8 Manager Jamie Rodriguez was also on hand, greeting attendees and aiding the presenters.

The first thing that the audience discovered was that Michelle and Shelly had brought GSMOL T-Shirts to sell! After a morning of informative presentations, the attendees picked up a picnic lunch, served out by Irene McKenzie, Helen Honeycutt, and Jane Tripp of Sea Oaks, and headed out to the large porch where benches awaited for them to sit, eat, and enjoy getting to know fellow homeowners from 23 different parks in 11 different cities. Folks also queued up for a chance to have a few words with our guest presenters.

In the afternoon we heard from Mitch Baker of HCD, and then Bruce, Dave and Mitch participated in a Question & Answer Panel which gave the audience a chance for further interaction with the experts.

Many thanks go to St. Benedict's Episcopal Church for the use of their facilities, and the co-sponsors who helped cover the conference expenses: Sea Oaks Chapter 1200, Blue Heron Terrace Chapter 1542, the GSMOL-allied local coalition SLOMAP, and private donors. Thanks to them, we were able to continue to pursue the goal that these conferences make the least possible financial impact on GSMOL.



Bruce Stanton
GSMOL
Corporate Counsel



David Loop
Vice President
Resident Owned Communities



Mitchel Baker
Housing and Community
Development



Question & Answer Panel:
Bruce Stanton, David Loop, Mitchel Baker



Zone Reports

ZONE C REPORT

By Mary Jo Baretich

Zone C Vice President

We are excited here in Zone C that the new Los Angeles County Mobilehome Rent Regulation Ordinance is getting closer. In October 2017, the LA County Board of Supervisors voted 4 to 1 to proceed with the establishment and writing of a new Ordinance for the unincorporated areas of LA County. The previous Ordinance expired in 1995. The room was packed with mobilehome homeowners. Many were from Rowland Heights and Monrovia.

On August 14, during a first Hearing, the LA County Board of Supervisors voted to initiate a moratorium on the rents that could be charged during a period of 180 days while the Ordinance was being designed. On September 4, on a second hearing, the county board made a final 3-1 vote to approve the moratorium. The measure becomes effective in 30 days.

On August 16, 2018, there was a meeting of the LA County Mobilehome Rent Regulation Ordinance Work Group. Both Bruce Stanton and I were invited to attend this meeting. I physically attended, and Bruce attended by phone. There were heads of all the departments at this meeting. Lots of questions were asked and Bruce and I believe we made a good impression.

Tenny Minassian, Public Information Assistant for the County of Los Angeles Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, wrote to me to spread the word to our members in the unincorporated areas of LA County about several Roundtable Discussions called the L.A. County's Community Meetings for Mobilehome Owners/Tenants to be held in LA County. She was one of the attendees of the Work Group meeting on August 16th.

On July 21, 2018, I met with the homeowners at the Driftwood Mobile Home Park in Westminster. They had received a notice of a \$300 per month rent increase. I have also met with the homeowners and their leaders several times, attended two City Council meetings with over 90 homeowners in attendance, and stood outside on Westminster Blvd. with the homeowners, holding up signs to save their homes.

Negotiations had been going on with the park owners, and the final offer is a five-year lease agreement starting on January 1, 2019 limiting the increases to 5.5%. The homeowners in this senior park are grateful that the increase will not be \$300 and will not include a threatened 10% for those homeowners not signing the five-year lease.

Meanwhile the homeowners in the city of Westminster are forming a Coalition to get a Space Rent Stabilization Ordinance (SRSO) Measure on the ballot in 2020.

ZONE D REPORT

By Tim Sheahan

Zone D Vice President

I want to thank our Zone D members who made calls or wrote letters to Legislators to help both AB 1269 (last year) and AB 3066 pass out of the Legislature. Some of our most active "member lobbyists" were those who likely won't need to use the "MRL enforcement" program, because they have law-abiding community owners and management. Yet, those members realize how many fellow MH (mobilehome) owners are being victimized and even terrorized by some operators and their employees who feel they are above the law.

Supporting others less fortunate than ourselves as a sign of solidarity is a vital part of GSMOL's mission to seek fair treatment for ALL homeowner MH communities. For those who complain about paying \$10/year thinking they won't need the program, remind them to count their blessings; no matter how good their situation is today, it can all change "overnight" with the sale of their community or change in management.

Since this is campaign season, please consider becoming involved in the political process. As they say, "*all politics is local*," and today's candidate for City Council might be tomorrow's State legislator or member of Congress. Seek opportunities to meet with candidates to educate them on our issues and try to get pledges of support. If they are incumbents, study their voting record and DON'T support them with a vote unless they supported their MH owner constituents. If they don't face consequences for their lack of support, they won't be motivated to change their unsupportive habits!

I want to thank our chapter and regional leaders in Zone D and ask that others also consider serving in some leadership capacity. Both Region Seven and Nine suffer from a lack of chapters and leaders, which creates a heavier workload for our current leaders. As many of you know, I am the care-giver for my 91-year-old mother and caring for her is taking increasing amounts of my time. I appreciate your understanding that my schedule is not as flexible as in the past and would welcome more volunteer leaders to assist in serving members throughout Zone D.



Four Times We Beat Our Predatory Park Owner and His Opportunistic Attorney! Here is Why!

First, he said my \$600.00 space rent would increase by \$7.80, which was the expected CPI increase in my rent-controlled park. Then he said, "Oops! I need to rescind that. My lawyer and I really meant your rent will increase by \$641.00 to \$1241.00 a month!" *Greedy park owner had met opportunistic attorney.* And so began three years of unrelenting stress, fear and uncertainty for the residents of El Nido in San Juan Capistrano. Three hearings and one city council vote later, the park owner lost his exorbitant rent demand. Undeterred by his defeat, he came back six months later, this time asking for a \$403.00 increase. He lost again! He appealed in Superior Court. And lost again. Angry, he punitively announced he was converting our park from senior park to all-age park. For the fourth time in three years our attorney, Bruce Stanton, faced the moneyed Goliath and for a fourth time, the residents of El Nido won.

There were reasons for our success:

First, we **contacted GSMOL** to seek their advice and resources. And **we picked the right attorney.** We engaged Bruce Stanton, GSMOL's corporate attorney, whose practice is devoted almost exclusively to protecting mobilehome residents from the abuse of park owners. We established a Legal Defense Fund and asked each resident to donate \$250. No resident was left out if they could not afford the suggested donation. We asked them to contribute whatever they could so everyone had "skin in the game". Financial contributions were kept confidential so no one was embarrassed by their lack or their largess. Because of our association with GSMOL, we obtained Bruce Stanton's services at a reduced rate. It was Bruce Stanton's experience and in-depth knowledge of rent control ordinances that were the reasons we won each of our four battles.

A significant reason for our success was we **quickly united and discovered strength in unity!** From fragmented individuals who hardly knew each other, we came together and selected a leader. He was not the loudest voice in the room, nor the most knowledgeable in legal strategies. Instead, he was the person most *respected* by us. He was a good listener, able to distill information from multiple viewpoints and act as our conduit between key players. We deliberately avoided those leaders whose anger colored their judgment and would affect their decisions! We met often even when there was no new news. Our meetings were vital in defusing fear-driven errant gossip, calming our anxieties and bonding us.

We created an infrastructure to respond to any shift in the dynamic in the fight. We established an email list of residents and a parallel list of those without a computer. We formed a foot brigade to distribute flyers. When our park owner offered a seemingly innocuous escape from his egregious rent increase if we would sign a lease - which would have automatically forfeited the protection of rent control - we mobilized and within hours delivered a flyer to every resident warning of the danger in signing their deceptive lease. To the utter surprise of management, not one person signed their lease!

We created publicity by contacting the media. The glaring light of publicity and the heat of public pressure were subtle deterrents to the predatory antics of park management and a powerful incentive for our City Council to stand strong to support their rent control ordinance and preserve affordable housing. With no experience in media relations, I evolved into being our "ombudsman" by initially sending desperate emails to anyone and everyone. I was surprised and motivated when several city council members responded and several newspapers published my letters. Emboldened, I contacted TV outlets resulting in coverage in the local news. I came to realize the media are looking for human-interest stories and were appreciative of my outreach.

We people-bombed our City Council Meetings. We encouraged residents to attend every council meeting that pertained to our park issues. A large presence visually demonstrated the number of people who would be affected by the Council's decision *and* the number of voters who would vote for their re-election if they saw evidence the Council represented their needs. Initially we made a mistake when we allowed too many residents to speak before the council, causing their eyes to politely glaze over from boredom. We learned our lesson and next time had residents fill out a speaker's form but then allocate their voice to our very few designated, well-prepared speaker/s. The speaker would dramatically wave 30 or 40 speaker forms in the air and announce that s/he would be their spokesperson. You could almost hear the Council's sigh of relief and our designated speaker/s earned their undivided attention.

Last but not least, we remembered to **be kind to one another** during the stress of our battles. Our fight against a common enemy unified our park in powerful ways. We met new neighbors and shared in ways we hadn't before. Unexpected leaders emerged, unexpected angers flared, unexpected muscles were flexed and unexpected generosity was tapped. Hidden in our drama were small miracles and many blessings! Perhaps that was our biggest win!

GSMOL "Who's Who"

ZONE A

REGION 4

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

REGION MANAGER VACANT

If you would like to volunteer, please contact your Zone VP.

REGION 11

COUNTIES: *Amador, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas and Sierra*

ASSOCIATE MANAGER

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REGION 14

COUNTIES: *Colusa, Sutter, Sacramento, Yolo and Yuba*

REGION MANAGER VACANT

If you would like to volunteer, please contact your Zone VP.

ZONE A-1

REGION 1

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

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ASSOCIATE MANAGER Gary C. Smith

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REGION 2

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

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ZONE B

REGION 12

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

REGION MANAGER VACANT

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REGION 13

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

REGION MANAGER VACANT

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ZONE B-1

REGION 8

COUNTIES: *San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura*

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REGION 5

Orange County

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REGION 7

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REGION 9

Riverside County

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**Leaders in Your Area—
Refer to Map on Page
15 for Zones and
Regions.**

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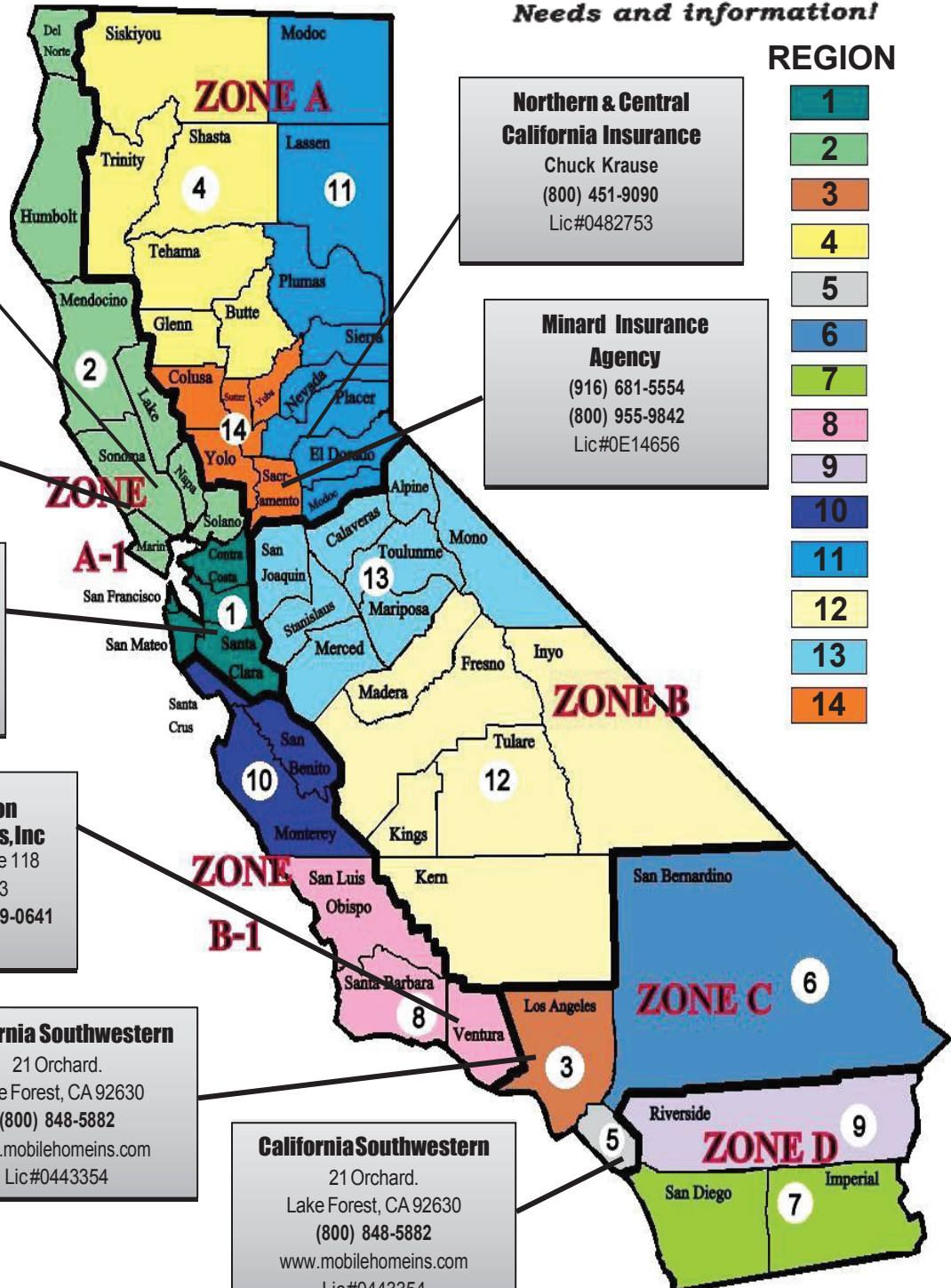
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To contact us call (619) 544-0123 or visit our website at www.asklawgroup.com.