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JANUARY 2019
VOLUME 7 NUMBER 1



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MH Life Magazine

Serving California's Mobile & Manufactured Housing Communities

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The MobilehomeMagazine is not responsible for content contained in advertising

Conrad Sloan - Our New Sales & Marketing Director for Mobilehome Magazine

Mobilehome magazine is excited to welcome Conrad K. Sloan as our new Sales/Marketing Director. Conrad was a licensed General Contractor and Real Estate Broker for over 30 years. He assisted a prominent custom home builder and a kitchen & bath remodeler for 10 years, in sales and marketing promotion.

In addition, he was a sales representative for a home improvement magazine. For several years Conrad has taught Construction Management for Adult Education at five Community Colleges in Northern California.

Conrad and I have chatted many times over the last year and finally Conrad felt the time was right to jump in the fray and help get advertising for the magazine.

One of Conrad's first projects will be to attend the Home and Landscape Expo on January 25-27 in Sacramento. He plans to chat with some of the 1,000 exhibitors and offer them a way to reach the mobilehome owner community in Sacramento via the Magazine.

Good Luck, Conrad. And Welcome!

Conrad may be reached at (916) 745-4068 /
csloan.10@comcast.net

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October 18, 2018

INFORMATION BULLETIN 2018-03 (MP, SOP, MH, RT)

**TO: Mobilehome and Special Occupancy Parks
Interested Parties (MP, SOP, MH, RT)
Local Enforcement Agencies
Division Staff**

FROM:  Richard Weinert, Deputy Director
Division of Codes and Standards

**SUBJECT: Mobilehome Residency Law Protection Act
Assembly Bill (AB) 3066 (Chapter 774, Statutes of 2018)**

This Information Bulletin provides detail regarding the Mobilehome Residency Law Protection Act (Act) established by [AB 3066 \(Chapter 774, Statutes of 2018\)](#). The Act creates the Mobilehome Residency Law Protection Program (MRLPP), which establishes a link between mobilehome/manufactured home (MH) owners and legal representation that may assist with Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) disputes. Copies of the California MRL can be located on the Senate Select Committee on Manufactured Home Communities website at <https://mobilehomes.senate.ca.gov>.

Beginning July 1, 2020, any homeowner who has a tenancy in a Mobilehome Park (MP) under a rental agreement may submit a complaint for an alleged violation of the MRL to the Department of Housing and Community Development (Department)¹. The Department will provide assistance to help resolve and coordinate resolution of such complaints.

Upon receiving a complaint from a homeowner, the Department will send a letter confirming receipt and provide reference to the MRL sections that may pertain to the complaint. The letter will also communicate whether the complaint will be referred to another, more appropriate, enforcement agency should the Department not have jurisdiction.

¹ The Department is prohibited from arbitrating, mediating, negotiating, or providing legal advice in connection with MP rent disputes, lease or rental agreements, or disputes arising from rental or lease agreements.

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During the course of the complaint investigation, the Department may request a copy of the homeowner's lease, park rules, or any other relevant written documents applicable to the complaint from MP management. MP management is required to provide the requested information within 15 business days of the postmarked date or electronic transmission, or be subjected to a citation of \$250 for each failure to comply. The Department, using good faith efforts, determines which complaint(s) it receives are the most severe, deleterious, economically or materially impactful allegations for referral to either an appropriate enforcement agency or a contract legal services provider.

Once a complaint has been selected for evaluation by a contract legal service provider, the Department shall notice both the complaining party and the MP owner and management. The notice will advise each party to negotiate in good faith to resolve the matter within 25 days. After the 25-day period, the Department will inquire if the dispute has been resolved. If either party responds to the Department that the matter is not resolved, the Department will conduct further evaluation and may refer the complaint to a nonprofit legal services provider (provider).

The provider will evaluate complaints, disputes, or matters arising from the provisions of the MRL. The provider will have the sole authority to determine which referred complaints will be addressed or pursued. It will not charge any fees to a homeowner for services performed in connection with the complaint referred by the Department.

Beginning January 1, 2019, and each subsequent year thereafter, each MP will be assessed a fee of ten dollars (\$10) per permitted lot (MRLPP fee) by the Department. Local Enforcement Agencies must collect the MRLPP fees from their respective Mobilehome Park owners/operators and forward them to the Department. This fee is due at the same time as the MP annual permit to operate fee.

The MP owner or management company, within 90 days from payment of the permit to operate, may pass on all or a portion of the MRLPP fee to individual homeowners within the MP. The fee may be collected in part or in whole at the time rent is due; however, management is not allowed to pass on the fee in the form of a rent increase. Additionally, the MRLPP fee must appear as a separate line item on the bill and include a clear written description of the purpose of the charge and the Department's contact information. Providing a copy of or link² to this information bulletin with each resident billing notices will meet the written description and contact information requirements³.

The MRLPP is a limited-term program beginning July 1, 2020, and ending January 1, 2024, unless extended by the Legislature.

Questions or comments regarding the MRLPP should be directed to Division staff at (800) 952-8356 or MRLcomplaint@hcd.ca.gov.

² www.hcd.ca.gov/information-bulletins.shtml

³ See Health and Safety Code Section 18804(c)



Licensing of Park Managers

By Lloyd Rochambeau

While enforcement is the number one priority for providing some balance in the affairs of mobile home park dwellers, this issue would be an important step forward.

It is absurd that individuals and companies can be given the responsibility to manage park residents lives and to inflict upon them life crushing consequences without one hour of training.

I, personally have undergone training and testing and licensing for several positions during my working life. Briefly recapping: one of the first was being licensed as a Nursing Home Administrator in the 1970's. Had to study and pass a test of 150 questions on Federal and State Laws, with a minimum score of 70. Later I sought and earned the CPM (Certified Property Manager) designation from the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM). This required traveling to 3 cities for 4 days at a time for training, I have also held a Real Estate persons license and later went into selling mobile homes as an agent. The agent license from HCD involved 12 hours of class instruction followed by a written test. These licenses are required to be openly posted in the dealership, and renewed every two years. I also went through the California Residential

Care Facility Administrator licensing program.

I pass all this on to you so I can show you I have no qualms about making realistic projections for a training and a licensure program for Mobile Home Park Managers.

- There could be enough money in this program to also finance an enforcement program.
- There should be a minimum educational requirement of High school or even an associate degree.
- Licensure should be mandatory. No park should operate more than 30 days without a licensed manager. There could be exceptions for parks with 50 or less spaces.
- The cost of Licensure should be \$500.00, with renewal every two years costing \$250.00. With nearly 4,000 park managers to be licensed, the States costs would be covered.
- Training should entail no less than eight hours, preferably twelve. Renewal training with at least six hours. Training could be done at Community Colleges.
- Testing should be a minimum of 50 questions, preferably 60 or more. Passing rate of 70 %

correct required.

- Proof of Licensure (the License) required to be publicly posted in the office for public viewing.

These are bare bones recommendations and need to be flushed out into a full training and licensure program. There also should be a minimum manager coverage of office hours, with no less than 4 days a week and 24 hours minimum per week.

Licensure is nothing new in the State government, there are many professions and disciplines already under licensure.

An essential component of any licensing program is the ability to enforce the law. While the Park Manager should be subject to penalties for violations, it is also important that the Park Owner be liable for violations by the Manager.

There are a variety of ways to impose penalties and fines for violations of the MRL and the Mobile Home Act (Title 25).

a) Require a deposit of \$25,000.00 by the Park Owner, from which penalties could be assessed for willful violations by the Manger or the Park Owner. The Licensing Board would adjudicate claims of

violations and rebuttals submitted by both parties.

b) The Licensing Board could employ agents to visit the Park and hold a hearing on written complaints, and after hearing the Resident complaint and Owners rebuttal, make a determination and submit recommendation to the Licensing Board. The Board would make the final decision and assess any applicable penalty.

c) Penalties and fines would be established and forfeiture of the Manager's License, and even revocation of the Park's permit to operate under the offending Park Owner.

These are but a few suggestions of how enforcement could be made a part of the program. There are also a variety of ways to finance a Training and Licensure Program to ensure that the State has no additional budgetary requirements.

There are some who will always oppose anything that will makes living in a mobile home park fair, safe and under protections necessary to ensure the same freedoms enjoyed by other citizens, even those here illegally.

My Experience

by Frank Wodley, Publisher The Digest

I moved into a mobile home in 1998, and immediately was confronted with an abusive manager. In fact, that's the reason why I became an advocate.

In 2004, my park owner tried to evict me because I led a homeowners group in my park and was very active. Fortunately, I survived and today my park has had a good manager the last eight years.

I've always been against training as the solution to abusive management. Not to knock training, but training alone won't solve the problem. Senator Connie Leyva held a Senate Select Committee Hearing on Manager Training and Certification in 2016. Everyone was on board with her idea to train and certify managers, everyone except COMO-CAL (The Coalition of Mobilehome Owners - California - a state wide group I started in 2005). Our argument was holding managers

accountable only bypasses the real issue.

I agree with Lloyd that Park Owners should be liable. But I believe they are solely responsible for abusive managers. My friend and mentor, Donna Matthews testified in a Senate Hearing: *The California Supreme Court ruled that property owners are responsible for the activities in their park. But another law (on training) that we can't enforce will not help.*

Anything short of holding park owners feet to the fire on the issue of abusive managers is misdirected. And advocates that tell you otherwise are only protecting park owners. It is time to do the right thing to protect homeowners from such conduct. Chime in. How would you solve the problem of abusive managers?

Proposition 10: California's proposal to strengthen rent control defeated at the polls

It's a blow to tenant activists in Los Angeles, and a win for landlords

Proposition 10 has failed at the ballot box, leaving the state's limits on rent control intact.

Supporters conceded Tuesday night. With almost 96 percent of state precincts reporting, the measure is trailing by a wide margin of 38 to 62 percent.

Even in Los Angeles County, where LA and other cities have rent control laws on the books, only 47 percent of voters supported the measure.

Proposition 10 would have repealed a California law that limits how cities enact rent control. Its defeat is a blow to tenant activists in Los Angeles, and a win for landlords.

"The stunning margin of victory shows California voters clearly understood the negative impacts Prop. 10 would have on the availability of affordable and middle-class housing in our state," said Tom Bannon, CEO of the California Apartment Association.

Had the law, the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act, been repealed, cities with rent control, including Los Angeles and San Francisco, could have opted to expand rent control. One of the provisions of Costa Hawkins? A rule that ensures LA can't apply rent control to single-family homes and to buildings constructed after 1978.

Supporters of the measure argued that loosening these restrictions would protect more tenants from steep rent increases and unfair evictions.

They're now calling on governor-elect Gavin Newsom and local leaders to "take immediate action to address sky-high rents by enacting a moratorium on rent increases until state legislation is passed to repeal Costa Hawkins," according to a statement from supporters.

Amy Schur, campaign director for the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, which advocated for the measure's passage, says the repeal of Costa Hawkins still "has to happen."

Tenant advocates will work now to try to enact rent control policies in more cities. Once enough cities enact laws, the state government will have to act, she says.

"There is no policy other than rent control that can stem the tide of displacement," says Schur. "If elected officials care about displacement, they will get on board."

But opponents claimed that strengthening rent control would actually worsen the housing crisis by discouraging the construction of new housing that California and Los Angeles sorely needs.

The opposition campaign was largely funded by some of the nation's largest real estate investors.

Blackstone, a real estate giant and private equity firm, funneled \$6.2 million into the \$75.9 million campaign to defeat Proposition 10. But mom-and-pop landlords also warned that their livelihoods were at stake if the measure passed.

At an election party in Los Angeles, supporters of Proposition 10 took the measure's defeat in stride, eating tacos and dancing to live music in between discussions about LA's woeful shortage of affordable housing.

This story will be updated. Source:

<https://la.curbed.com/2018/11/6/18070782/proposition-10-california-results-defeat>



Los Angeles Jury Hits Mobile Home Park Owners with \$34 Million Punitive Damages Verdict

LOS ANGELES Nov. 27, 2018– A Los Angeles jury awarded \$34 million today in punitive damages to 30 residents of a Long Beach mobile home park that was once a trash dump site for the city of Long Beach. Today's verdict is in addition to a \$5.5 million judgment the jury leveled last week against the owners of Friendly Village. The jurors found the defendants liable for negligence, unfair business practices, retaliatory eviction and financial elder abuse.

“After five and a half years, our clients are finally receiving some justice for living in a mobile home park that these owners didn't fix or repair. They didn't do anything for these people even though they were under order of the state to do the right thing and they wouldn't do it,” said lead trial attorney Brian Kabateck with Kabateck LLP.

The park is built on land that is constantly shifting, causing sewage backups, electrical problems and structural damage to the mobile homes on the property. The residents sued the property owners for failing to fix their dilapidated community and want to be relocated to safer and better-maintained housing.

68-year-old resident Mildred Bejarano says she plans to use the money to move out. “Whatever I'm awarded

I would like to buy a condo if I can afford one and live a decent life in a healthy place. I'm going to get sick if I keep staying there,” said Bejarano. “There are sewer backups which are terrible, no repair of the roads. It's dangerous. It's a health hazard, it's squalor.”

The trial, which began in mid-September, involved a mobile home park managed and operated by companies owned by Michael Scott and Lee Kort. Over the past two months, plaintiffs have testified about how instead of fixing the ongoing problems, the park owners ignored their complaints and continued to hike up the rent. The plaintiffs contended the park owners raked in \$7.5 million dollars from the residents of Friendly Village over the past four years, but spent nothing to make necessary repairs and maintenance. This, while the mobile home park owners claimed it was going to try to repair the park eventually, yet declared bankruptcy during trial.

120 more cases are scheduled for trial next year. “Today we believe justice was done,” Kabateck said.

The plaintiffs' legal team included Brian S. Kabateck, Shant Karnikian and Natalie Pang with the Los Angeles law firm Kabateck LLP and Gary Fields with the Long Beach firm, FieldsLaw



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The Society for the Blind, located at 1238 S St, Sacramento, provides services for Sacramento, El Dorado, and Placer counties. This organization offers programs for both youth and adults and their staff will work in coordination with your optometrist and ophthalmologist.

Services and Programs

Retail Store: All types of assistive devices – talking/low vision calculators; talking/low vision clocks, large print paperback books, vehicle products, canes and accessories, security items, tools, watches, etc. Items are also available on-line from North State

Assistive Technology – www.northstate.com or info@northstate.com
by phone 877-682-0452.

Low Vision Clinic: assists “people with low vision conditions that cannot be restored by conventional glasses, contacts, medical treatment or surgery.” Exams/evaluations, demonstrations, and recommendations are offered along with specialized lenses, frames and assistive devices. Medicare is accepted and appointments are made by calling (916) 889-7505..

On-Site Classes: Orientation and Mobility; Independent Living Skills; Computers and Assistive Technology; Braille Literacy; Support Groups.

Personal Reader: volunteers can help with personal and/or business matters. Call (916) 652-8271.

Senior Impact Project (age 55+): A special program which offers an 8 day retreat that includes work shops and support groups. Emphasis is on alternative. non-visual skills for daily tasks and activities which help in maintaining independence. If someone is unable to attend the on-site program, an instructor can visit the home to teach skills and provide resources.

Implantable Macular Telescope: cutting edge technology approved by the FDA for End State AMD (Age Related Macular Degeneration). A pea- sized telescope is placed in one eye which provides central vision; the other eye provides peripheral vision. For more information, call 877-997-4448 or CentraSight.com..

Top Energy Savings Tips Used by our Customers



- **Set your air conditioner thermostat** to pre-cool your home before 5 p.m.

Set your thermostat to no lower than 78°F for cooling.



- **Use standing and ceiling fans** to help cool your home and program your thermostat a few degrees higher from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. You can save 3 to 5% on your cooling costs for each degree you increase the temperature on your thermostat during the summer.



- **Close your curtains and blinds** during the summer. Sunlight passing through windows heats your home and makes your air conditioner work harder.

Windows that face south or west let in the most heat during the summer months, so concentrate your shading efforts in these areas.



- **Wash full loads of laundry** whenever possible and switch your temperature setting from hot to warm to cut energy use in half for a single load. Using the cold cycle can reduce energy use even more.

About 90% of the energy consumed for washing clothes is used to heat the water.



- **Prepare cool dishes or use your grill** or small appliances to cook food.

Small appliances like microwaves, toaster ovens and pressure cookers, use about two-thirds less energy than a conventional oven.



- **Run full loads in the dishwasher** and instead of using the "heat dry" function, air dry your dishes or towel them off. Air drying can save 15 to 50% on energy use.

ENERGY STAR® certified dishwashers use less water than hand washing and can save you hundreds of hours per year.



- **Use computer power-saving modes** and turn off computer at night. Use a laptop instead of a desktop computer.

A sleeping computer uses less than half the energy of an active computer. Laptops need less electricity to run and spend more time in low power modes than desktops, making them up to 90% more efficient.



- **Unplug electronics that are not used often.** Anything with a light or that is warm or hot when plugged in uses standby power. Plug loads account for 15 to 30% of residential electricity use.



- **Turn off lights** when you leave a room.

If you have incandescent bulbs, you can save even more by replacing them with LEDs or CFLs.



- Your refrigerator is in use every day, cycling on and off all day. **Measure the temperature in your refrigerator and freezer** to make sure it's not running too cold and help minimize annual costs.

According to the Department of Energy, your refrigerator should be between 36°F and 40°F. Your freezer should be between 0°F and 5°F.

Sign in to smud.org/MyAccount and select **Ways to Save** for more energy saving tips.





Fire Prevention and Safety for Mobile Homes

As a homeowner, you want to make sure your home and family is safe, especially from fires. You can take several precautions to prevent fires in your home.

Constructed with Fire Safety in Mind

Since 1976, manufactured homes have been required to follow certain construction and safety codes from HUD, including items that help prevent fires in prefabricated homes. These standards include:

- Factory installed hard wired or 10-year battery source for smoke alarms,
- Smoke alarms that are interconnected with battery back-up (including alarms inside or immediately adjacent to all rooms designated as sleeping areas, top of the stairs and on the basement ceiling near the stairs if the home has a basement)

In 2016, according to the National Fire Protection Association, there were more than 365,000 home fires in the United States? But by taking the proper fire prevention precautions, both your family and your home will be more protected.

For example, the National Fire Protection Association states that making sure your home has a properly functioning smoke alarm could help prevent up to 51 percent of the manufactured home fires that occurred from 2007 to 2011.

There are many ways to protect your home and loved ones from a house fire in addition to obtaining smoke alarms. Check out these home fire safety tips to stay safe and informed:

Home Fire Prevention and Safety Tips

There are several precautions to keep in mind to help prevent a house fire, as well as tips to remember in case of a house fire. Use these tips below to keep both your family and home safe.

Prepare a plan to help children and the elderly out of your home in case of a fire.

- Practice your fire escape plan so that your family is aware of what to do in case of a house fire.

- Find two ways to get out of each room in the event the primary exit way is blocked by fire or smoke.

- Keep multiple first aid and/or survival kits around your home.

- Discuss a designated area to meet outside your home in case of a fire.

- Make sure your designated meeting spot is far enough away from the home such as the mailbox at the end of the driveway or going across the entire street to your neighbor's front yard.

- Install multiple smoke detectors throughout your home.

- Test your smoke detectors monthly.

- Make sure to blow out candles before going to sleep or leaving your home.

- Unplug heaters while you sleep so they do not accidentally tip over or have something flammable fall on them while you sleep.

- Have a fire extinguisher easily accessible.

- Good places for a fire extinguisher include your kitchen, near fireplaces and near any grills you may have on your porch or deck.

- Have smoke-alarm activated nightlights throughout your home.

- Don't leave anything flammable near a fireplace or heater, such as a blanket or curtains.

- If you have children or animals, make sure to block off access to your fireplace so that only adults can access it.

- Keep sentimental items and important documents in a fireproof safe.

- Make digital copies of important documents and photos.

Always turn the stove/oven off when you walk away from it or out of the kitchen.



A ship in harbor is safe, but that's not why ships are built

Complacency vs Apathy

The other night I had a dream in which I was in a ladies room somewhere when an acquaintance walked in and asked if session started at nine or nine-thirty, and it was a few minutes to nine already. I was suddenly reminded that I was supposed to go to my college class but didn't know where I was supposed to go. I started digging through my bag for my schedule. Not only did I not have a binder or schedule of any kind, but my bag was ripped and everything was falling out. I tried to put all of the smaller items into side pockets of the bag, then frantically went on my phone to see if I could go online to find info about where my class was. That's when I woke up.

I've often had dreams in which I'm back in school and I don't know where I'm supposed to go. I think this is a different form of stress dream than the ones in which I'm driving and suddenly am in complete darkness. In the latter, I am completely out of control and just have to take it on faith and intuition that I won't crash and die, even though that seems inevitable and I always wake up just before that happens. The school dreams, I think, reveal a theme of not being prepared.

Last week I forgot to write a blog post. It's not that I didn't feel like it or that I was too busy. I just completely forgot. I've lately been taking it kind of easy as far as not making myself feel guilty for not writing or drawing or painting as much as I "should." I say "should" because I really do feel the need to hone a skill and uncover what type of thing I'd like to be doing on the side. I don't want to work my day job forever, and it's time I started overlapping into something. I've been saying this for too long, and that's where the guilt over not producing my own work comes in.

But I gave myself the excuse that it's December and there's a lot of holiday business to be done, as well as simply relaxing and enjoying the season. I took up a crochet project, which I worked on while watching Christmas movies on my day off. I didn't let myself feel guilty about this.

However, I fear that I've settled into complacency. I gave

myself a little too much permission to slack off. It's not that I don't care; the symptom isn't apathy. It's that I've let myself get comfortable with less. Complacency is a silent symptom that creeps in when things are good. You're happy and comfortable. A little discomfort is sometimes needed to keep you driven.

I think the difference between apathy and complacency is this: apathy is not caring whether the sun is rising or setting because a general malaise of dissatisfaction has made you give up on being driven. Complacency is being equally delighted with the sunrise and sunset to the point that you're just floating through a sea of "isn't that nice?" and forgetting that you have an itch to scratch. You're too busy smelling the flowers to remember that there are things you ought to do to keep you moving forward.

"When it is rose leaves all the way, we soon become drowsy; thorns are necessary to wake us." John A. Shedd

I'm grateful to be in a place in my life in which I'm content. I'm very blessed, and I think this is a fine place for anyone to be in life if they are so fortunate—especially if it is with an attitude of gratefulness. However, it can be tempting to be content with mediocrity. I was brought up believing that it is a virtue to strive for excellence. While worry and guilt are poor motivators, you are responsible for your own success. Don't expect success if you don't prepare for it.

A little while back I got a fortune cookie with what I believe is a quote from John Shedd: "A ship in harbor is safe, but that's not why ships are built." I want another thing he said to be true of me: "Fate whispers to the warrior 'You cannot withstand the storm,' and the warrior whispers back, 'I am the storm.'"

I don't want to be content to be a ship in port. I want to be the freaking storm. <http://veroniceebishop.com/2015/12/16/632/>

Modern Day “Robber Barrons” Part I

By Lloyd L. Rochambeau

“Robber Baron” was a term applied to businessman in the 19th century who engaged in unethical and monopolistic practices, wielded political influence and amassed enormous wealth. Google the term for more in-depth explanations.

It is seldom used today, although it certainly exists. One perfect example is the mobile home park ownership which currently exists in California. The State government has established laws (Mobile Home Residency Law) supposed to provide protection for mobile and Manufactured home owners, however provide no enforcement. The result is that citizens who are often impoverished, unsophisticated, and intimidated can only gain these rights by retaining an attorney and taking their landlords (owners of the tiny piece of dirt upon which their home is situated) to court.

Mobile home dwellers are a captive group subjected to unfair and unscrupulous actions by investors who are the modern day version of ROBBER BARONS.

Not all Park Owners are guilty of unethical, abusive and immoral management practices, but far too many are openly and flagrantly fulfilling the modern role of the detestable and heartless unethical money hungry owners contributing to the financial ruin of elderly, unsophisticated, helpless and often impoverished homeowners under their domination.

The general public, faced with so many injustices in today’s society, are virtually blind to the mistreatment of those who mistakenly bought into the idea of being part of the American dream of owning their home. They cannot afford the ridiculously exorbitant \$400,000 to a million dollars or more homes and condos that only the wealthy can afford.

City Councils, even those who have a version of rent control intended to protect the lowly homeowners who are the victims of unbelievable abuses, are being duped and threatened with costly law suits, to side with investors rather than with their own citizens.

They often fear these Robber Barons, because they have billions of dollars at their disposal to sue and harass City governments. Not to mention the hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions to campaign funds

and undoubtedly some going directly into the pockets of officials elected to serve the people.

There is minimal power in the ranks of homeowners, so maybe it is time to start playing rough. Picketing and protesting at City Hall probably has little effect.

What might be next, is to start picketing the businesses and homes of the Council members, and doing the same at the homes and businesses of the Park Owners, their Managers and their attorneys (who by the way, are often guilty of devising contemptible strategies to enable and perpetuate the monopolistic actions of their clients)? They are like modern day gun slingers for hire.

Maybe homeowners should try to shame these Robber Barons by exposing them publicly for what they are doing and for what despicable human beings they are. Even some judges are taken in by these evil people, some through ignorance of the intricacies of mobile home law, and some who are also on the receiving end of their financial support.

It is acknowledged that not all Park Owners are guilty of these offenses, some are fair and reasonable in their dealings with homeowners.

So, maybe Homeowners should start making the protest signs and plotting where to take them. What do they have to lose? Not much else has been working in their favor. If they wait for the State legislature to take action, hell may have already frozen over.

Lest you think they are just a bunch of whiners, a recent example of this greed gone wild, is up in San Juan Capistrano where a small mobile home park sits just off the Ortega Highway, on the eastern side of the 5 freeway, a few miles from the beach. The park was purchased a few years ago for about 13 million dollars when space rents were ranging from \$500 to \$700 a month, and under the protection of a rent control ordinance.

Mr. Rochambeau is the President of the San Marcos Mobilehome Residents Association. Lloyd has written several articles for the Magazine over the years and we appreciate him sharing them with us.

Modern Day “Robber Barrons” Part II By Lloyd L. Rochambeau

The new owner, Mr. Worley notified the residents that the 2015 rent increase was to be \$ 1.3 %, but then in May rescinded that increase and advised them it was now to be a \$641 monthly increase. A determination by the SJC City Council reduced that to \$37.00 a month. Which in itself is about six times the CPI increase for 2015.

With 156 spaces in the park, the \$641 would have been \$ 99,996 more income for Mr. Robber Baron each MONTH. That pencils out to \$1, 199,952 a year, add that to the estimated income of over \$1,300,000 for a total take of over two and a half million dollars a year. The cost of operating the park is probably less than \$400,000 per year. No one, not even a Robber Baron with a limousine full of Attorney gunslingers could justify such a rip-off. Adding insult to injury, after winning the 2015 reduction in their requested rent increase, the law required the Homeowners to pay \$35,000 for the losing Park Owner’s attorney.

So the debacle in 2015 is now being followed up with a 2016 rent increase of over \$403.00 per month. The alternative offered was to sign a long term lease with only a \$57.00 increase in the monthly rent. Signing any long term lease removes the space from the protection intended with the City’s Rent Control Ordinance. On October 17th, the Council Rent Review rejected the \$403.00 increase requested and decreed the increase to be less than 0.9% (ranging from \$5.09 to \$10.14 per month).

Lest you think this is the only such case in California, think again. It is happening far too often, although this is most egregious case I have heard about.

What is needed is state-wide rent control for all mobile home parks. Please don’t throw New York’s rent control fiasco in my face, it can be done fairly with a little intelligence. It is bad enough for apartment dwellers with rents climbing far above the CPI increase guidelines, but mobile and manufactured homes are in a unique position. They are not effectively mobile, since the cost of moving them and the nearly non-existent relocation options make them pretty much stationary, thus they stay put (trapped) for many years, whereas apartment dwellers can move with much more ease.

Ten of 49 plaintiffs were recently awarded a judgment of over 58 million dollars in compensatory and punitive damages against another Robber Baron in the Terrace View Mobile Estates case in San Diego, after a wait of four years. The case focused on Breach of contract/Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing, Failure to Maintain, Negligence, and Elder Abuse. In true Robber Baron fashion, one of the Park Owners has a 100 million dollar mansion in Los Angeles, which no doubt was paid for by his tenants.

Just think, this comes from a lifelong conservative

Republican, and that’s over 60 years of voting straight Republican for Presidential elections.. But it also comes from thirty plus years of living in mobile home parks (or Estates as they are often called today). For a State desperate for affordable housing, allowing Robber Barons to drive out folks who cannot afford exorbitant rent for a small piece of dirt is merciless and despicable, and city and state governments need to put a stop to it. But unfortunately, these folks being taken advantage of, are too often thought of as trailer trash living in trailers, not in factory built homes with investments of \$50,000 to \$250,000 for their not-so-mobile homes. Park Owners and investors see them as cash cows. There are other cases that bear witness to my claims throughout the State. Other parks are also being attacked by City governments adopting the long term space lease approach to relieve themselves of rent control responsibility, which failed here in San Marcos earlier this year.

Rent control is one answer, enforcement is another. Of course, the Robber Barons will fight anything that brings a level playing field and cuts into their power and their profits.

Rancho Huntington Mobile Home Park – Space Rent: \$1,908 Per Month Fri, Aug 26, 2016 – Huntington Beach, California: Kort & Scott Financial Group (KSFG) purchased Rancho Huntington Mobile Home Park in 2012 for \$25,400,000 (Fannie Mae ARM).

In January 2006, space rents were advertised at \$500 per month. In January 2013, space rents were advertised at \$1,000 per month. As of August 2016, mobile home space rents are now advertised at \$1,908 per month, that’s a 91% increase in three (3) years and a 280% increase in ten (10) years.

Rancho Huntington Mobile Home Park was a senior park at the time of the KSFG purchase. Prospective mobile home buyers are expected to prove income of 3x the current space rent which equals \$5,724.

Fountain Valley Estates – Space Rent: \$1,947 Per Month Tue, Oct 18, 2016 – Fountain Valley, California: Kort & Scott Financial Group (KSFG) purchased Fountain Valley Estates in June 2011 for \$33,375,000.

In May 2011, space rents were advertised at \$1,100 per month. Since then, advertised space rents have been: \$1,200, \$1,350, \$1,475, \$1,600, \$1,650 or \$1,750. As of October 2016, mobile home space rents are now advertised at \$1,947 per month, that’s a 77% increase in five (5) years.

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