

Mobile Home Owners Magazine

Santa Ana Area
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November 2020



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Eighteen Years In a Nutshell

I've been at this a long time, actually beginning my effort to help mobile/manufactured home owners when I was 59. I'm now 77!

I came up through GSMOL, learning from my friends Milt Burdick, Margie Felstad and Ralph Weber. I joined in 2002 and became an Associate Manager in 2003. And I learned through experience, talking with folks, touring the state a couple times, and joining the national group.

In 2004, I started the Coalition of Mobilehome Owners - Los Angeles, from nothing. We were a non-profit patterned after a local group in Sonoma. The next year, we went state-wide as COMO-CAL (Coalition of Mobilehome Owners - California).

I shut down COMO-CAL (it had 1,500 paid members) in 2016 because I concluded "regional groups" with local leaders provided the best support for homeowners. State-wide issues such as a lobbyist and legal help would be addressed with all "regional groups" contributing to a state-wide fund.

In September 2011, I decided there was a better way to reach more mobilehome owners at a lower cost. Thus began Mobilehome Magazine. Since that time, I've published and distributed over 2,000,000 copies at no cost to the community.

Three years ago, I decided to write a book about my 15 years of experiences with GSMOL. I had no idea where the book would lead me; however, by the time I had gathered all the facts, I came to the conclusion my beloved GSMOL had been taken over by park owners many years previously. In fact, I strongly

believe GSMOL was taken over around 1990! That revelation helped explain a lot that happened since I joined in 2002. And it explained why GSMOL was of little help to the community. Actually during that time, from 1990 until 2017, GSMOL had lost over 100,000 members and millions of dollars in revenue that could have helped protect us.

HCD IS NOT YOUR FRIEND

The last issue of Mobilehome Owners Magazine presented information on the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and its administration of the Mobilehome Residency Law Protection Program. I question whether or not HCD will actually help us because I believe, as in the case of GSMOL, HCD is in the pocket of the park owners. Prove me wrong. If you've sent in a complaint to HCD, please let me know (email me at fawodley@yahoo.com) whether or not they actually helped you.

IT'S TOTALLY UP TO YOU

Trust me when I write, no one is protecting you. However, there is hope. Start a "regional group" for the Santa Ana area. This magazine reaches 9,000 homes, surely someone will step up. Come to me and I'll advise you. It isn't that difficult.

I'm making the same plea to owners in Anaheim, and LaVerne/Ontario. My other magazine in Vallejo/Napa already has a terrific group representing mobilehome owners - the Vallejo Mobilehome Coalition run by Miss Terri Pohrman.

GDRM (GSMOL doesn't represent me)

Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League (GSMOL) does not represent me and from my best estimate represent much less than less than 4% of all mobile home owners in California. They claim they represent a million mobile home owners. There are only about 365,000 mobile homes in the entire state. This number gives them clout with the state assembly and state senate.

Last year AB1482, the anti-rent Gouging bill, originally included mobile home space rentals. That bill stated the rent increases would be limited to 5% plus CPI (consumer price index). (last year about a 7% annual rent increase). The maximum allowable increase would not exceed 10% each year for 10 years.

GSMOL went to Sacramento and spoke for all the mobile home owners in California and said we did not want to be included. I was a member of GSMOL last year. I was never polled or made aware they did this and neither were my neighbors. No one we knew that GSMOL was doing this except the few officers of GSMOL. GSMOL leaders make these decisions without even speaking to members. I have never belonged to a dues paying organization that does not check with the membership in deciding what is best for the organization.

I worked hard at getting one hundred plus members of our HOA to join GSMOL. I have since apologized to them for recommending they join GSMOL. Our Park, Rancho La Paz, was bought by a predatory buyer, investor, associated with buying parks then raising rents till most residents can no longer afford to stay in the park. GSMOL was recommended by a resident who said GSMOL would help us.

Our first rent increases were \$300.00 & \$400.00 a month, over 60%. President Mary Jo Baretich and Bobbie Magnusson showed up and told us they could help. The extent of GSMOL's help was repeating over and over again when speaking of the new park owner, "Yeah that's what he does, that's what he did at Huntington Shorecliffs." They are and were no help. There was an offer to write a rent protection ordinance, but the city of Anaheim showed no interest of any sort.

With support of many organizations, we got a rent protection bill written, AB2895. It would apply to all California mobile home owners. GSMOL worked against us to again stop a bill that could keep all of us in our homes, and give us the same protections that all California renters now have.

I have apologized to our HOA members repeatedly for pushing over 100 to join GSMOL. Our HOA is no longer a GSMOL chapter and most residents did not renew their memberships. At the last meeting Mary Jo Baretich & Bobbie Magnusson attended at Rancho La Paz we already knew that they had been to Assembly Woman, Ling Ling Chang's office to tell her that we did not want a state wide mobile home rent protection law. Just the opposite of the support we had asked for a week previously from Assembly Woman Chang.

Those two came to our meetings three times uninvited to subvert and spy on our efforts to help all mobile home owners. The members here asked Mary Jo why GSMOL was working against rent protection for mobile home owners. She said they could not accept the 10% maximum amounts in the bill because, in her case, it could be as much as \$180.00 a month. We said we are facing \$300.00 and \$400.00. She said and I quote "well your park rent was so low ours was so high we have to protect those parks that already have higher rents." She was asked by members in the meeting, since there is no protection for those parks now, what if those parks get a \$300.00 a month increase? She had no answer and was booed out of the clubhouse.

We organized without GSMOL's assistance and held rallies and did newspaper and TV interviews to bring our exorbitant rent hikes to the attention of the public. We were able to get the backing of many Housing advocates, Religious, Social Service and Union Worker Associations. These organizations all realized that there had to be some rent relief for many of their clients on fixed incomes living in mobile homes, and facing huge rent increases. All these groups thought AB2895 was a bill that would save mobile home owners.

With the hard work of our Rancho La Paz HOA and all the statewide helpful organizations, Assemblywoman Sharon-Quirk Silva of Fullerton proposed AB 2895, a bill to protect mobile home owners in the same way AB1482 protects California apartment renters.

Again, GSMOL and their Ross Esperanza lobbyist group, paid for with GSMOL membership dues, stopped this bill from protecting you and me.

Again we have found many GSMOL members weren't even aware this was happening. The little group of GSMOL officers just decide what their members want, then say they speak for all mobile home owners. We must stop these lies by GSMOL!

We at Rancho La Paz will not give up, we will continue to fight fairly for rent protection for all mobile home owners, from the expensive parks to the trailer courts. This is the last affordable housing for Seniors, Disabled, and low-income people. GSMOL seems to have lost sight of that.

Residents of the "expensive "park should not get preferential treatment on a state bill that would protect all renters in California. They don't have a million members. At \$25.00 dollars a year they should have had 25 million dollars just from members' dues. They certainly don't show that large membership or funds in the financial reporting in their magazine, *The Californian*.

Something is rotten here. If you don't want GSMOL to continue to prevent us from having mobile home rent control, mail me a note stating "GSMOL does not represent me" include your address and name of your park., and sign it. When we try again to get a rent protection bill, and we will. We cannot let GSMOL lie about their numbers and speak for all of us. We realize that if we get a rent protection bill there will be no need for GSMOL. GSMOL is protecting GSMOL. They are hurting, not helping us. We have a Facebook page Rancho La Paz HOA. I will post the actual documents of the bill process there.

This is the many Organizations that support a state-wide mobile home law. Note that Park owners and GSMOL are the only opposition.

Lupe Ramirez, HOA President, Rancho La Paz MHP, P.O. Box 6503 Fullerton Ca 92834.

Publisher's Note: The opposition to AB1482 were the usual suspects (California Association of Realtors, the California Mobile Home Park Owners Alliance, the Southern California Rental Housing Association, and the Western Manufactured Housing Communities Association). The one glaring addition was GSMOL! This really demonstrates that GSMOL isn't working for mobile homeowners, they are working for park owners.

Lupe Ramirez hadn't read my book "*The Great Deception*" when she wrote this article. But she has now. GSMOL has been the "go-to" state-wide organization for owners of mobile/manufactured homes since 1962. It was trusted and grew into a wonderful organization. In fact, in 1990 they had just under 100,000 members. That's huge! And their annual revenue was \$1,500,000! GSMOL was an organization with clout.

In "*The Great Deception*" I explain how the park owners infiltrated GSMOL. It happened in and around 1990. The "take-over" was kept top-secret, no one in the organization had any clue what had happened. I was very active in GSMOL from 2002. My friends and I had a hard time understanding why leadership wasn't doing more to increase membership. By that time, membership had decreased to about 22,000 members. Today, membership is about 7,000! And GSMOL is still paying on a \$50,000 debt. Their Garden Grove building was sold for about \$750,000, so that is gone. Today, they have no assets to speak of and few members.

So what's the answer? I've written about Regional Groups for years. A regional group would represent individual areas around California, like Sacramento, Los Angeles, or Orange County. Money collected would stay with the regional group. So what about a lobbyist and attorney. All regional groups could pay into a state fund to hire a lobbyist and attorney.

Today, mobile home owners have NO RIGHTS and few are organized. It is sad. Someone has to stand up and volunteer, in each area around California, and make an effort to organize. That's our only hope in my opinion. The last thing anyone should do is trust GSMOL. Do not join them! They are corrupt.

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mobilehome magazine and your neighbors a favor, step up now. Email me at fawodley@yahoo.com I'll answer all your questions.

THE GREAT DECEPTION

The Great Deception is a 324 page paperback book that exposes what happened to our beloved state-wide advocate Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League. Started in 1962, GSMOL became a real voice by 1990 with 100,000 members and an annual revenue of \$1,500,000! Today it is a skelton of itself. Learn the who, what, where, when and why. It will shock you. Purchase below at \$19.95 (savings of \$10).

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