

MHOAA Across America

www.mhoaa.us

September 2012 Edition

603/520-0955

Letter from the MHOAA President Lois Parris - Well here we are - - summer soon over and fall on the way. I would like to take a trip down memory lane. I can remember a time when our organization/Board of Directors only met once a year at an annual meeting. There have been many changes over the years. One change was the demise of the first "National Association" and the birth of a new organization currently known as MHOAA. Believe it or not, we still have on our board two members who have been around for what seems like forever. They were involved in the first association and still today share their time and experience. They are Tim Sheehan of California and Terry Nelson of Illinois. It is this kind of dedication that our National Board is overflowing with. Most of us are all volunteers not only on the National Board but in our member states as well.

We have been able to partner with organizations that have the same belief that we do. That those of us living in our communities live in "homes" not tin cans. That we should have the same rights and protections that any other home owner has. And I am sure you have all heard this before, but if not, here it is; **OUR COMMUNITIES/HOMES REPRESENT THE ONLY AFFORDABLE, UNSUBSIDIZED HOUSING IN THE NATION. This is reality!**

The UNIFORM LAW COMMISSION TITLING ACT PASSED BY A VOTE OF 48 TO 0. I had the great pleasure of being the MHOAA representative/observer in the hearings and participated on behalf of all of us for the past two years. We had representatives/observers from our other partners and I know that without their help and dedication we would not have been so successful. The Commissioners and Ann Burkhart were, without a doubt, at all times inclusive in their deliberation process. Our belief is that the titling of our homes as real property will help in the financing of our homes in the mortgage market and in many other ways as well.

MHOAA's Convention will be held on November 8-10, 2012 in Crystal City, Virginia and you are all invited to attend. (The Annual Meeting for members will be held Saturday). Please go to our Web site for more information.

Have a great fall season, Lois

From Where I Sit -- MHOAA Executive Director Ishbel Dickens - Can it really be September already? I don't know about you, but I feel as if 2012 is rushing by without allowing me time to breathe! In order to remedy that, I have decided to take some time right now to breathe and reflect on the myriad of accomplishments that MHOAA has achieved this year.

Where to start? Perhaps MHOAA's biggest success this year has been the approval of the Uniform Manufactured Housing Act by the Uniform Law Commission. MHOAA President, Lois Parris and MHOAA staff have been working with our national partners, CFED, ROC USA, and the National Consumer Law Center, as well as many other key players, to ensure that manufactured homes can be titled as real property rather than personal property. Titling manufactured homes as real property allows home purchasers access to traditional mortgages and the accompanying low interest rates available through them. It also provides stronger consumer protections. It will now be up to each of us at the state level to ensure passage of this Uniform Act through our legislatures. More information about how to do this will be available shortly.

MHOAA has also been partnering with the Center for Community Change and together we brought manufactured home owners from as far afield as California and Florida to Chicago in May to attend the annual shareholder meeting of Equity lifestyle Properties, Inc. (ELS). ELS owns approximately 400 manufactured housing communities throughout the U.S. and we have been hearing more and more complaints about how they treat their senior residents – forcing them to abandon their homes through economic eviction; ignoring repair and maintenance problems thus allowing the communities to fall into disrepair; and renting out units that they have acquired through abandonment. We presented ELS with a petition signed by more than 1,000 supporters that asked ELS to improve its business practices and meet with MHOAA leadership to discuss ways to improve things in their communities. This is an on-going

campaign and we hope to have even more influence at the 2013 shareholder meeting. MHOAA board members, Tim Sheahan (CA) and Terry Nelson (IL), are part of this campaign.

MHOAA staff continues to research and write grant proposals not only for MHOASA but also for some of our statewide association members. To date, MHOAA staff has written successful proposals for the Mobile Home Owners Association of Illinois (MHOAI), and the Association of Manufactured Home Owners (AMHO) in Washington. Staff is now working with the Golden State Manufactured Home Owners League (GSMOL) of California.

Additional fee for service work includes a partnership with Clarion Associates in Fort Collins, CO, to work on mitigation strategies to help address the potential loss of manufactured housing communities. It also includes working with AMHO on local zoning ordinances in several jurisdictions in Washington as a way to preserve manufactured housing communities for the long-term.

Finally, MHOAA staff coordinated a one day symposium in July. The event was held at Washington State University. It was co-sponsored by AMHO and was a highly successful opportunity for home owners, a community manager, city staff, and social service providers to discuss what elements would be necessary to make a manufactured housing community a senior-friendly living environment for the long term. Given that the senior population in this country will double by 2050, there is no time like the present to start ensuring that manufactured housing communities will continue to provide space and accessibility for affordable housing that is built to universal design and is has long-term security of tenure at affordable rents built in to the plan.

Wow! It has been quite a year and it is still only September! I did not highlight these achievements simply to brag about this great organization but more to inspire you to become involved too – think what more we could accomplish if we all contributed an hour a week or a dollar a day to MHOAA. Please email me at: ishbel@mhoaa.us and let me know how you want to donate your time, your treasure, or your talent to MHOAA.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at MHOAA's Annual Convention in November – see separate article about the Convention.

MHOAA Annual Convention SAVE THE DATE! The MHOAA Annual Convention is only a few months away. This year we will be meeting at the Holiday Inn, Crystal City, VA.

<http://www.holidayinn.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=hi&localeCode=en®ionCode=1&hotelCode=WASDC&PMID=99801505&GPC=MHO>

The Convention will start with a reception on Thursday evening, November 8 and end after the Annual Meeting on Saturday November 10. The meeting format will be somewhat similar to last year's in that we will spend Friday on the Capitol Campus. This year we hope to reserve a room there for the entire day and have agency staff and elected officials meet with us there so that we do not need to wander all over the Hill to reach them in their offices.

Saturday's presentations on such diverse topics as "titling manufactured homes as real property" "taking on ELS", and "senior-friendly housing" will be held at the Holiday Inn as will the annual meeting where new board members will be elected.

We appreciate that not every home owner or every home owners' association representative can afford to attend the Convention so we are pleased to announce that we can offer partial stipends to the first 40 people who register for the conference. The stipend covers the cost of Thursday and Friday nights' accommodation as well as hot buffet breakfasts on Friday and Saturday. This offer is available to the first 40 MHOAA members who register, PROVIDED they are willing to share a room with another attendee. For more details about the Convention and to register, please click on "2012 Convention" on the MHOAA Web site: www.mhoaa.us Please email me at: ishbel@mhoaa.us if you would like me to introduce you to a possible roommate.



More information about the Convention will be posted on the website on a regular basis and sent out via MHOAA Eblasts.. I look forward to seeing you in Crystal City in November. *Ishbel Executive Director*

Where Do They Get Their Mail Now? Last week there were 21 Manufactured Homes on this site south of Spokane, Washington. Today, it

is a field, not of dreams for many, but sitting vacant the future site of a freeway overpass.

Where did they go, these dreamers and residents of The Finish Line Manufactured Housing Community? Were they fortunate enough to find a place to move their home to, or are they living with family now? Let's hope and pray that they are not homeless and living on the streets of Spokane.

There is much work to do to make sure that your community and mine do not go the way of the wrecking ball. AMHO is working diligently with city leaders around the state to change zoning ordinances and in many cases create zoning for manufactured housing. AMHO has already been successful in getting zoning ordinances passed on the west side of the state and is now working in Eastern Washington for that same end.

Does the community that you live in have a Home Owners Association (HOA)? Creating HOA's is an AMHO specialty and we will help you by providing you with the tools to make it happen. HOA's help to create a network of neighbors that help each other with issues and concerns that may create stressful situations arising out of conflicts with owners and managers. HOA's, when registered with the Secretary of States office, become non-profit entities which provide benefits for your community that you would otherwise not have. An HOA is like buying an insurance policy, it's there when you need it. Are you ready to get your HOA started today? Call or email any AMHO board member for assistance and do it today.

Written by Randy Chapman AMHO Vice President

Ohio Passes HB 487 AMHRO worked together with legislators and OMHA. HB 487 now is a reality.

Legislative Service Commission -273- Am. Sub. H.B. 487 As Passed by the Senate Licensing and inspection of manufactured home parks.

Transfer of regulatory authority over manufactured home parks.

The changes are:

- The bill transfers the authority to do all of the following from the Department of Health and the Public Health Council to the Manufactured Homes Commission:
- Adopt rules governing the review of plans, issuance of flood plain management permits, and issuance of licenses for manufactured home parks, as well as the location, layout, density, construction, drainage, sanitation, safety, and operation of those parks, and notices of flood events concerning, and flood protection at, those parks;
- Inspect the installation, blocking, tie down, foundation, and base support systems of manufactured housing in a park;
- License persons who operate a park;
- Inspect each park for compliance with the Manufactured Home Park Law;
- Approve any development in a park;
- Approve any park development in a 100-year flood plain;
- Receive notification of a flood event and notify the Director of Health (under the bill, the board of health will be responsible for causing a post-flood inspection to occur);
- Provide permits for the repair/alteration of homes damaged in a flood event;
- Compel a county prosecuting attorney, city director of law, or the Attorney General to prosecute to termination, or bring an action for injunction against a person, that has violated Manufactured Home Park Law. *(From www.Ohio.gov)*

Thank you! – In June's Eblast we invited you all to take action and contact your state members of the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) to encourage them to support the Uniform Manufactured Housing Act (Act) – a model act that would title manufactured homes as real property rather than as chattel. Many thanks to all of you who responded and congratulations – the ULC approved the Act by a vote of 48-0. Oklahoma abstained and Mississippi, Wyoming, Georgia and New Hampshire did not participate in the vote. It is now up to all of us to work for passage of this Act within our individual states so that purchasers of manufactured homes have access to the financing tools and consumer protections that accompany mortgages on real property. Copy and paste this link to read more about the Act:

[http://www.uniformlaws.org/NewsDetail.aspx?title=Uniform Manufactured Housing Act Approved](http://www.uniformlaws.org/NewsDetail.aspx?title=Uniform+Manufactured+Housing+Act+Approved)

Power in Numbers! MHOAA has always stated that there is power in numbers. We quote: "*NEW YORK (AP) — After a customer backlash, Verizon Wireless on Friday dropped a plan to start charging \$2 for every payment subscribers make over the phone or online with their credit or debit cards. In a statement on its website Friday, the company said "customer feedback" prompted the decision to drop the "convenience fee" it wanted to introduce on Jan. 15. Verizon wanted to steer people to electronic check payments, which are cheaper, and automatic credit card payments, which are more reliable. A petition on Change.org against the fees had gathered more than 95,000 names by Friday afternoon, a day after Verizon, the country's largest cell phone company, announced the fees.*"

What if the persons using Verizon did not speak up? Where would they be? They spoke up and were heard which caused Verizon to change their mind. MHOAA and your home owner associations need your membership, voice and energy to make the changes that are needed in your local, state and federal laws.

Now is the time for you to take action. Submit your MHOAA Membership and join your local home owners association. Then let us know what a difference you made, **because you CAN make a difference!**

Victory in Oceanside - - Proof We Can Win If We Stand Together - A David-and-Goliath battle has resulted in a resounding victory for David – residents of Manufactured/Mobile Home Parks in Oceanside, and all California cities with rent-control laws. Proposition E was defeated on June 5th of 2012 by a majority of Oceanside voters.

Why is this such good news? Because Proposition E would have allowed a new city ordinance to take effect that would phase out rent control in all 18 of Oceanside's MHPs. The June vote was the result of a successful petition drive by MHP residents determined to keep rent control, preserving affordable housing and the equity in their homes.

It all started when a very business-friendly City Council was elected in November 2010. They adopted an ordinance to phase out rent control for MHPs a space at a time, as residents moved or sold their homes. Oceanside has had rent control for MHPs since 1984, but now it had come under attack. Also reported: certain members of the Council had received significant financial backing from out-of-town corporate MHP investor-landowners, a group who vigorously opposes rent control. But the strategy backfired; before it even took effect, the new vacancy decontrol ordinance became a point of heated public controversy, drawing strong resistance from the city's MHP residents, many of whom are low-income senior citizens but are well-informed and organized.

These MHP residents began a grass-roots effort to educate the city's voters, and started the referendum process of gathering signatures on a petition. Armed with twice the number of signatures needed to qualify for the referendum, in August 2011 they forced the Council to choose: either repeal the decontrol ordinance or put it up for a public vote in the June 2012 election. The Council chose to put their ordinance on the ballot, in the form of Proposition E. The June election came, and Proposition E was defeated by a landslide – 65% voted no. The voters of Oceanside had spoken – they wanted to preserve rent control in MHPs.

Any group of dedicated, determined individuals can stand together, and win. Democracy works and each vote counts, no matter how powerful our opponents may seem. Fairness and truth can still win out over greed and lies. It's an inspiration for all of us.

By Suzanne Angeo, Vice-President of Santa Rosa Manufactured-home Owners Association

Mobilehome Magazine - According to MHOAA member Frank Wodley, California mobilehome owners are not unlike those around the country. The great majority pays space rent to a landlord and as a consequence, they are vulnerable. Fortunately in California we have the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) legislated over 40-50 years to protect mobilehome owners. Unfortunately we have NO enforcement!

Frank invites you to subscribe to Mobilehome Magazine. You can subscribe for only \$6.00/year using PayPal and get a copy mailed directly to you. Alternatively, you can purchase sufficient copies, at a very low cost (\$.25/issue/wholesale), to send to all the members of your statewide association. Our circulation is 6,500 copies every other month (20,000 copies by 1/1/2013). All issues (full color, 24 pages) are available at our website (www.mobilehomemagazine.org).

Can your organization use a low cost way to reach residents? We can show you how. Call Frank at 818-886-6479 or send him an email at fawodley@yahoo.com. Soon you will be reaching thousands, increasing your membership and providing much needed help! We can do it together. Residents deserve no less.

We Will Not Become the Forgotten Neighborhoods - When was the last time a landlord or manager knocked on your door and provided you with information that explained that a new law was passed which would positively impact and protect manufactured homeowners and your family? Then the landlord added, "However I want you to know that I am not going to proceed with efforts towards abiding by the new law unless I am caught." The concept that a manager or landlord is going to announce to home owners that the land your home sits on (and built up assets) is on the market for another usage, or that the landlord is in the process of filing bankruptcy leading to foreclosure of the community, is not going to happen. MHOAI is extremely grateful to report that we have many wonderful partner allies. However, our organization is the only Illinois state-wide organization that has a true focus geared towards manufactured home owners and manufactured communities. When was the last time a county official knocked on your door explaining that they were moving forward with plans to raise a tax or impose a new tax that would directly impact a manufactured home owner's wallet? Taxes that come with the name of a Privilege Tax and money goes to the county general fund. MHOAI received many calls from home owners who did not know about the furnace recall reported in our last publication. *From the MHOAI Newsletter*

News Items? Please pass on items for this newsletter that may be of interest to other readers to Russ at r.pherson@sbcglobal.net All items will be considered.

In Our Communities - You and 4 or 5 of your friends meet once or twice a month for morning coffee. This informal get-together allows you to catch up and discuss what is happening in each other's lives. A friendly cup of coffee that can also bring with it discussion regarding community issues. Those at the table explain how they have gone to the community manager 3 or more times. If you and 4 of your friends each talked to your manager 3 times, that would be 15 separate complaints regarding the same issue. Most likely if you are complaining about an issue, so are your neighbors. For the purpose of this article we will use public health issues, such as water pressure, boil orders or lack of boil orders, roads or sewer. Home owners can receive different responses from the manager and examples include: "I will take care of it" or "I will get back to you", and not uncommonly "If you do not like it Move." With your hand on your head you remember you have a double-wide. That means while you hook up one section to your car, you will have to ask a friend to hook up the other section to their car allowing the home to be moved - - No Problem. At the next morning of coffee with your friends you share that you need help with moving your home. Your friends are more than willing to help. It is at this time that you are reminded, there is no place to move the home.

There are several points to this very short story. (1) Many outside our housing market believe you can just hook up your home to a car along with many other outdated stigmas that are not true. Landlord representatives will tell anyone who listens that moving is an option. (2) You need to do more than complain with friends during coffee at a table. If your manager or landlord does not take care of an issue via a conversation, you need to start a paper trail by writing a letter and taking pictures. If needed, you can use this paper trail to send to the agency in your area that addresses violations in our communities. (3) Walking into a community office as an individual with complaints, makes it easier for those responsible to put your complaint aside. You and your neighbors need to be organized. There are times that home owners need to remind landlords that they have responsibilities other than just collecting the rent. *From the MHOAI Newsletter*

If you have found value and items of interest in this newsletter, please pass it on to your neighbors and friends. Spread the word about MHOAA. Thank you!

Why Does MHOAA Need My Email Address? Every now and then we need to contact you to ask your support on issues that affect manufactured home owners. Doing it through the newsletter or EBlasts just does not get the information to you quickly.

MHOAA

Manufactured Home Owners Association of America
United We stand Strength In Numbers

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4395 S. Vagabond Drive, Murray, Utah 84107-2738
Phone 801/203-8362 treasurer@mhoaa.us www.mhoaa.us

MHOAA Membership Form

New Membership

Renewal

Company/Organization _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

Web site <http://> _____

Membership (check one):

_____ \$150 for State Membership

_____ \$75 for first-time State Membership

Annual Subscription (check one):

_____ \$15 for Individual/Family Membership

_____ \$100 for an Associate Membership

_____ \$35 for Local Home Owners Association

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Check Number _____

Make Checks Payable to MHOAA. Mail to Above Address.
PLEASE NOTE: MHOAA is a 501(c) 3 organization
Your membership and donations are tax deductible.

Involvement:

I/We want to become involved with MHOAA by:

___ Putting a link to MHOAA on our web site.

___ Becoming involved in a MHOAA Committee.

___ Promoting MHOAA in my state.

___ Receiving alerts on issues that affect home owners.

___ Making an additional contribution.

Application Approved /Accepted Date: _____ Initials: _____

Revised 7/20/12

