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THE OSTA REVIEW

Volume 30 No. 2

Salem, Oregon

Winter 2009

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FEB 1!

Meet Sue Foster
MH/OSTA's New Executive Director

Your MH/OSTA board is pleased to introduce our new executive director, Sue Foster. You will be meeting her in person as she visits parks throughout the state, but until she starts attending district and chapter meetings, you can become acquainted with her right here in our newsletter.



Sue and her husband, Roger, live at Midway Manor, a manufactured home park in the Glenwood area of Eugene. She has had a varied career, most recently as a CNA aiding patients in the Surgical Care Unit at McKenzie-Willamette Hospital in Springfield. She has long had an interest in helping seniors, so aiding them when they underwent surgery was rewarding for her, and she looks forward to helping residents of manufactured home parks, both seniors and younger families.

She has been a marketing director, a community relations coordinator, and a graphic design coordinator. Her responsibilities in these positions ranged from designing and producing trade shows, web sites, and catalogs, to writing press releases and trade magazine features, to super-

vising budgets, small staffs, and volunteers. As Community Relations Coordinator for the Springfield Utility Board, she conducted community trainings, implemented grant-funded programs, and wrote, edited, designed and pub-

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THE OSTA REVIEW

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MISSION

Our overall mission is to enhance the livability of manufactured / mobile home park living. We are a statewide grass roots organization which endeavors to make changes which will benefit those of us who own our homes and rent or lease the ground on which they are sited. There are several ways in which to accomplish our mission.

Help those who are living in parks where there are problems with park management by showing them how to form a home owners' association.

Encourage residents to join our association and form a chapter. Explain to residents how this allows them to speak with one voice when dealing with park management as well as State Government.

Educate people who live in manufactured / mobile home communities as to the rights afforded them under Oregon Revised Statutes. Teach park residents how to effectively stand up for their rights.

Offer guidance to member chapters when legal issues arise between the residents and park management.

Work year round with individual legislators as well as other organizations which have similar interests to ours to get legislation passed which will benefit all who have chosen the manufactured / mobile home park life-style.

Keep our members aware of the status of our legislation so they can contact their State Senators and Representatives and make their voices heard in Salem.

Support your local chapter!

ADVERTISING RATES

EACH ISSUE

COPY SIZE

FULL PAGE	7.5w X 9.8h	\$200.00
1/2 PAGE	7.5 w X 4.8h	\$125.00
1/2 PAGE	3.6w X 4.8h	\$125.00
1/4 PAGE	3.6w X 3.8h	\$75.00
1/8 PAGE	3.6w X 2.3h	\$50.00

Advertisers to supply camera ready art-work to sizes listed, Otherwise there will be a one time charge for type setting.

lished materials for the media and the public.

She has also owned a contemporary ceramics studio and showed customers how to decorate, glaze and kiln-fire ceramics. "Although it was fun, the business proved to take more time and make less money than I had hoped," she says. Her current studio consists of a single-wide mobile home next to their manufactured house at Midway Manor. She calls her studio "The Nanex" because it's like an annex to the main house and she is "Nana" to two adored grandsons. In the Nanex she quilts, paints, kiln-fires ceramics, beads, felts, and redoes treasures she finds in thrift shops.

Roger, who has been a hardwood floor installer for over 20 years, and Sue have two grown daughters. The oldest, Marcey, lives in Bend and has a mobile dog grooming business, writes computer software, and is studying accounting. The younger daughter, Janna, lives in Lane County and is a hair dresser and mother of two boys, Clayton, 2-years old, and Corbin, just a year old. "Entertaining my grandsons is one of my favorite things to do," Sue says, "and I will go to any lengths to make them giggle."

"My mobile home history goes back over a half century when my family lived in a trailer park in Illinois while my father was in school. Mobile/manufactured homes were called trailers then, but she points out that like in parks today, the neighbors were nice and it was an affordable place for a new family starting out. When her father finished school, the family moved to Iowa, where Sue graduated from high school. In 1967 the family went to San Diego, where Sue studied liberal arts at San Diego State College and then started working in publishing. "I worked for a book publisher and a commercial printer and learned much more on the job than I ever did in school," she says. She moved to Oregon in the mid-Seventies and went to work for a commercial printer until she started her own typesetting and graphics business. She used to travel all over the country and even to

Europe producing trade shows for work. Now she and Roger take weekend escapes around Oregon in their diesel coach.

Sue and Roger used to rescue senior dogs but now only have Lou, "a rescued Rat Terrier who thinks he's a senior because he was raised with all older dogs. It has made him nice and low-key to be around, but every once in a while he tears around like a youngster and then acts embarrassed for his wild behavior."

Sue has taken classes in grant writing and implementation, desktop publishing, writing HTML, human development, and been trained in various management and business techniques. She will be training for her new MH/OSTA executive director position with Pat Schwoch, lobbyist and past executive director, Pegge McGuire from Housing and Community Services, and Peter Hainley from CASA.

Sue says, "I am excited to part of MH-OSTA. This grass roots organization has already accomplished so much to establish the rights of homeowners living in parks and is in a position to protect and expand those rights in the future. I am anxious to meet the many OSTA members throughout the state who have helped make this happen and to bring new members into our group."

—Jane Capron

Letters to the Editor

Dear Dick Johnson,
I live in SongBrook in Eugene. I told Jane Capron how much I enjoyed the "pun" page in the last OSTA Review, and she told me to tell you. So I am! I've saved it to share with my family. The Review is well-organized and I appreciate receiving it.

Happy New Year,
Dorothy Bradshaw

Thank you, Dorothy — Ed.

People Who Make A Difference

Rita Loberger is the newest OSTA district director and the contact person for those of you who live in Washington, Clackamas, and Multnomah County Manufactured Home Parks. When you call questions into the 800 number in Salem, they will be routed to Rita, and she will try to help you or refer you to someone who can.

For the past 11 years she and her husband, Frank, have lived in El Dorado Manufactured Home Park in Tigard where she is also the secretary of an extended neighborhood organization that deals with problems, particularly street issues. This Citizens Participation Organization (CPO) has proposed a right-hand turn lane off Hwy. 99 in Tigard for safety. The project is expected to cost about a million dollars. The CPO has gotten traffic lights re-timed for the benefit of seniors. The group has adopted a road in Tigard and will pick up litter for two years.

Last year Rita called Pat Schwoch for advice when the park was undergoing changes in rules, rental agreements, and water and sewer billing. That led her to study our Chapter 90 laws and encourage her neighbors to become OSTA members so they could learn their rights. El Dorado has 45 or more members now and continues to grow. Rita looks forward to helping other parks form chapters and other chapters increase their membership.

As a member of the international sorority Beta Sigma Phi for 50 years, Rita has traveled all over the world. Her chapter supports the SMART reading program for children and non-English speaking families. Last year the members supplied food and clothing to a women's shelter and had seasonal parties for the children there.

Rita and Frank are the parents of three successful, married children. One son and his wife foster babies and have adopted one of them; another son is a Marine major and three-time vet of the Gulf War. Their daughter is a computer

technician. Of course all the grandchildren are perfect.

Rita looks forward to visiting with people in her district. When you talk with her, know you'll have a knowledgeable, understanding person to find answers to your questions.

Jane Capron

Eldorado Villa In Tigard

On January 17th, residents of Eldorado Villa in Tigard OR will be welcoming in new on-site managers. They are Julie and Dean Doe moving up from Springbrook in Newberg. They will be guests of honor at our monthly dinner which appears to be full house judging from the sign up book for attendees.

Rita Loberger

State Laws that Govern Our Lives In Manufactured Home Parks-#13

Eviction

Does the word evoke terror for you, too? I see myself, my feet wrapped in rags, my body bent, my thin sweater with holes in the elbows, a gunny sack over my shoulder as I scrounge for rotten potatoes to take home to my cardboard box under the bridge.

Life is tough and getting tougher. For some of us, an eviction from our mobile home would mean we couldn't afford any other housing and would have to rely on the kindness of strangers or a daughter-in-law.

Too many times we directors have people tell us they fear to join OSTA because the manager of their park would evict them if they did.

Listen up. You cannot be evicted without a reason. One reason is not paying your rent. The old melodrama line, "But you must pay the rent" still holds true. You also must pay your utility bill. Another reason is doing something the police would arrest you for. Joining OSTA or any other tenant association is **not** a reason for eviction. Not only that, if the landlord does try to evict you for joining OSTA – even just threatens it – that would violate the statute prohibiting retaliation (ORS 90.765), defeat any eviction, and entitle you to a penalty against the landlord of at least two times the rent.

But suppose you keep an old couch and an icebox on the front lawn when the rules specifically say, "no outdoor furniture"? Here comes the manager, writing you up for breaking the rules and giving you an eviction notice. Wait a minute, here! You have 30 days to get rid of the junk in your yard. It's called "curing." Think of it as "correcting." Give the couch and the icebox to your son and the problem is solved (and the junk becomes your daughter-in-law's problem).

It's different for people who rent a house or apartment. They can be evicted without cause, and smart landlords don't ever give them a

cause. With cause, tenants can take the landlord to court. Without cause, the landlord just says, "Sorry, I need that house or apartment. Good-bye." **You must be given cause because you own your mobile home.**

There's safety and power in numbers, remember, so you need to **be organized**. A group of people is no match even for a really nasty manager. There you are, standing shoulder to shoulder, your feet firmly planted, reminding the manager that this sweet little lady can't be evicted for 30 days. That gives your group time to fix things, to "cure." Paint her house, take her junk to the dump, rake her leaves, get her car running so it's off the front lawn. After all, what are neighbors for if not to help each other? Your district directors are listed on page 2. Call them for help organizing an OSTA chapter.

Jane Capron

DIRECTORS NEEDED!

MHOO/OSTA WANTS YOU!

MHOO/OSTA is in need of Directors:

- Rewarding job
- Many benefits
- Meet nice people
- Set your own hours
- Paid expenses
- Work from your home

Contact Sue Foster: 541-228-1116

Contact Terry Smith: 541-664-7531

Want to help others living in mobile/manufactured home parks? Directors are needed in Southern, Central and Northern Oregon. Directors' responsibilities are to help find new membership, help form new chapters and to remain in contact with their chapters once formed. It is a very rewarding thing to do.

Please call Sue Foster or Terry Smith!

Falcon Wood Village's Café OSTA Worth a Try

by Wilma Minette

About twenty or so years ago, OSTA Chapter #901 was organized at Falcon Wood Village in Eugene. The chapter had a record of sporadic growth and stagnation. Fund raising was usually a problem. One of our active and innovative members, Dorothy Moyer, had an idea for not only fund raising for the chapter, but also enhancing the social life of the community. Dorothy started Café OSTA!

At first, the café was set up with individual tables, set for four. Dorothy's experience and expertise enabled her to serve appetizing meals at a minimal price. The community responded enthusiastically and the chapter's treasury benefited accordingly.

At the same time the chapter was blessed to have members who were willing and able to work hard to enroll new members and spread the good news about OSTA and what it was accomplishing for residents all over the state.

As the years went on, Dorothy decided to move out of state, the membership in the chapter changed, workers became tired or discouraged. The character of Café OSTA necessarily changed, also. Meals were still served, the cost was controlled, the ambience shifted to general tables. Despite these changes, Café OSTA continued to provide fund raising for the chapter. Menus were varied, but one meal always seemed to bring out a crowd – the annual Maggie and Jiggs corned beef and cabbage celebration of St. Patrick's Day continued to be a success.

Since Falcon Wood Village is a 55 and older community the population can change rapidly. As older residents leave and new ones move in, the characters of the organizations have also changed. The community meals are still important and well attended, but the emphasis is more on potlucks. It is to be hoped that interest in Café OSTA will remain strong and the program will continue to provide companionship, good food and funding for the State organization.

Woodland Park Residents Think of Others

Barbara Cook recently organized a group of ladies in the park to crochet caps for those in need. Some of the ladies had no experience with crocheting or knitting but they were anxious to help and quickly learned. Others who wanted to contribute to the project donated yarn etc. Thirty of the caps were sent to the Marine troops overseas, 30 were given to Women Space for mothers and their children, 30 went to the Eugene Mission and six pink hats were given to the Neo-natal Unit at Sacred Heart-Riverbend for the girl babies.

Barbara is Queen of Woodland Park Red Birds, a Red Hat Society Chapter.

In 2008 the residents decided to produce our own Woodland Park News Letter. Several residents have been donating their time & use of their computers etc. Kelly Carlson became our editor and publisher with back up by Orval Tubbs who purchased a new computer printer capable of printing the newsletter better. Dan Walden assisted contacting businesses to purchase ads. The newsletter is an important way to communicate with neighbors in almost 400 spaces.

Assisting residents in the park and others through their church, Wally Schirmer & Dan Walden keep busy helping people in need. They tell me they experience a real blessing being able to assist folks, who for various reasons cannot do for themselves.

—Ralph Cook
Chapter Chair

News from Lane County

John VanLandingham will present an informative program on renters' rights (including the rights of manufactured home owners in parks) at 3 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 19 at Campbell Community Center in Eugene. No one knows Title 10 Chapter 90 more thoroughly than John. If you have friends who aren't MH/OSTA members, this would be an excellent introduction to how the statutes help them. We will have some MH/OSTA brochures available.

Bob and Meredith Loudon from Gainsborough in Eugene have been doing a "Golden Radio Days" show for years. They play music and excerpts from programs like Fred Allen, Jack Benny and the like. The show is so popular that they've been doing them on cruises. In November, **Don Jones** from Gainsborough substituted for Meredith on a 10-day cruise from San Francisco to Acapulco and back, doing a great job, Bob said. Bob and Meredith have been entertaining on Princess, Royal Caribbean, and Norwegian liners in recent years. If you get a chance to see one of their shows (they also perform in Lane County), don't miss it!

Senior Law Service offers free legal advice to Lane County residents at the community centers. Peterson Barn in the Bethel area of Eugene now has joined Campbell, Kaufman, and Willamalane centers as places where those over 60 can go for information. Call the centers for an appointment. Peterson Barn can also provide information about Energy Assistance and schedule appointments

Troy and Cheryl Brost, the owners/managers at SongBrook, provided a catered complimentary Christmas dinner for close to 120 residents again this year. It was a festive event that included everything from hors d'oeuvres to deserts. Residents feel lucky to have such good landlords.

As in other years, residents at SongBrook provided a gift-wrapped storybook for every fourth grader at a nearby elementary school. This project is coordinated by Ginny Iverson, who is a

retired teacher from the school and says in too many cases this book is the only present the children get. Residents also donated groceries to help feed the children who wouldn't get school breakfasts and lunches during the vacation break.

Jim and Vangy Provins at FalconWood and two other couples had a Christmas party for 75 underprivileged, homeless children and their parents, serving soup and sandwiches, and giving them handmade puppets and \$5 McDonald's coupons. The Provins extend their Christmas spirit in many other ways throughout the year.

—Jane Capron
Lane District Director

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

WELCOME SUE FOSTER

Hello everyone. I would like to introduce you to our new Executive Director, Sue Foster. Sue lives in Midway Manor Manufactured Home Park in Eugene Oregon. Sue was voted on and approved as our new Executive Director by the MH/OSTA board of directors at their January 26th board meeting.

Sue has attended Lane Community College, Eugene, University of Oregon, Eugene, San Diego State College, San Diego, and Grossmont Jr. College, La Mesa, Ca. plus various management and business trainings through the city of Eugene, SUB, and MWMC.

Sue once owned her own Graphic Communication business. Sue has worked as a Marketing Communications Director, Community Relations Director, Marketing Director, and at the time of her hiring working as a Certified Nurse Assistant.

The MH/OSTA board has been looking for

MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues have always been and always will be very important to the MH/OSTA Organization, this is our only source of income. All of the services given to the membership by MH/OSTA come from the membership dues. Membership dues are more important than ever at this time as we (MH/OSTA) travel through the transition process that is so necessary for MH/OSTA to better serve the membership. The transition process is costly and time consuming, but as I said it is very necessary. We are probably still 8 or 9 months away from being certified as a Charitable Non-Profit Organization.

I have made mention of State Grants. This is at least a year away from becoming a reality and then will only supplement our income. As a Charitable Non-Profit Organization we

someone living in a mobile/manufactured home park or someone who is familiar with mobile/manufactured home park living. We found this with Sue. Sue, is living in a manufactured home park and she is familiar with the living conditions found in mobile/manufactured home parks. Sue is committed to using her skills and abilities to improve the life for seniors. As president of MH/OSTA I believe we made a very good decision in hiring Sue.

Sue, will start her new position as an executive director for MH/OSTA sometime around the middle of February. You will be hearing more about Sue, and eventually meeting her. I feel certain you will like Sue.

As always, MH/OSTA is here to serve the membership the best that we can.

MH/OSTA President
Terry Smith



are required by the State to receive income through membership dues. As we grow and are able to increase our income through dues and grants, membership will receive the benefits.

The transition period is going as planned and it will be a benefit to the membership when completed. MH/OSTA thinks only of the membership when decisions are made. We (MH/OSTA) are doing this for you.

MH/OSTA President
Terry Smith

See Suggestions...on page 13...

The following two articles, Wanderings and Thank You, by Pat Schwoch, are reprinted in respect to Pat. During the file conversion process from one format to another certain words received some extra odd characters that were not edited out. The reprints should clear up any confusion, if there is any. Apologies from the editor...

WANDERINGS

Legislative Information and Comments

As I sit here getting ready for a new legislative session I have been treated to an email from one Peter Ferris, which he has circulated to almost anyone he can think of including one of the Representatives who has witnessed the fruits of the labors of the coalition. He is trying to convince this legislator that OSTA and I have a cozy relationship with the Park Owners and he is urging you, the members, to jump ship and join his group. Had Peter been in the trenches as long as most of the coalition members and many of our OSTA members, he would understand what has happened in the last 5 or 6 sessions. He would know we have worked to learn to trust each other and that we keep our word when we say we will do something. He was invited to work with the coalition in the last session and he chose not to continue that effort. He is also convinced that the park owners have more people at the negotiation table than the residents and he is right, but each group only gets one vote, no matter if they bring the whole organization. So the number of people on a side does not matter. He has been told this repeatedly, as have many of his friends, but there seems to be a problem with them understanding. Maybe it is just that they don't want to understand?

The thing that annoys me is that he makes the statement that we have accomplished nothing in these 5 or 6 sessions. Any one who wishes to look at the 1995 Title 10 Chapter 90 and then compare it to the 2007 statutes will find that we have ground out a lot of benefits for the residents.

- Ask those folks who were threatened with

having to remove their home from the park because it was old, even though it was in good condition

- Ask the older single man or woman who had a pet that was the one thing that kept them going and getting up in the morning, who were being charged pet rent sometimes as much as \$25.00 a month.
- Ask the folks who were being told they could not use the clubhouse without paying a hefty deposit and providing the owner with insurance.
- OR those who wanted to enjoy the clubhouse, swimming pool, or any other facilities in the park but could never find those amenities open because the manager opened them up when they felt like it since there was no stipulation on the hours they were to be open.
- We all enjoy the fact that the owner must notify us when he decides to change the rules and give us the option to reject them in 30 days.
- It is nice to know the owner must give us 24 hours written notice to enter our property unless it is an emergency.
- If we want to sell our home the landlord has seven days to accept or reject our buyer.
- Those of us who have month to month rental agreements cannot be forced to sign a new one.
- Talk with the committee of seven who meet with the owner or manager at least once but not more than twice a year to work out issues that arise in the park. We traded that for the rent raise meetings we used to be subjected to. Those were a real treasure. The landlord arrived with clenched teeth because he knew the residents were going to be mad. It usually ended up in a shouting



Cont'd on page 10

THANK YOU

match and lasted a very short period of time, certainly not very productive.

- These are just some of the good things that we negotiated with the park owners. These are just a few of the issues. If you are curious you can read more about these efforts in the membership brochure

Peter should sit in on some of the hearings when the legislators have told us how great it is that we can agree and come before them with our legislative request all tied up and ready for passage. We have worked with several parks and residents regarding problems they were having and we managed to resolve them to everyone's satisfaction. Frankly, as someone who has lived in parks for some 30 years I must tell you that it is a lot better to have peace and harmony because none of us have any desire to live in an armed camp mentality. Also it is our experience that working with the park owners has gotten legislative support in years when we could not otherwise have succeeded. Many legislators do not care about mobile home park issues. And remember, too, that party politics in the legislature are cyclical, the party in power now is likely to not be in power several sessions from now. This divide and conquer that Peter is trying reminds me all too well of another group, headed by Bud Norte who spent years trying to get legislation passed and fought OSTA at every turn. His intentions, like Peter's, were well meant, but he didn't have a clue about working together to achieve benefits for the residents and nothing was ever changed.

The bottom line to all OSTA members is please think long and hard before you jump ship and abandon OSTA. I don't mean to be flip about it but there will be far more day to day issues that will affect many hundred more residents than whether they close a park.

Pat

A Thank You to all those who contributed to our retirement with your presence, the wonderful cards, the money and gift certificates which you generously gave us. We are still deciding what we are going to do with the money. One day it is a trip to Hawaii and the next it is a car trip around the state and visit many places we haven't been to for some time. Right now it is a case of get our act together since we are not up to our eyebrows in OSTA's day to day operation.

We have met so many great people over the years in the OSTA family. As I looked out at the group at the convention I saw many members Fred and I had recruited and it was great to see these folks again.

I feel we are leaving the association in good hands with Terry Smith at the controls. Myrna will be running all phases of the office, Jane and Susan will be working their districts and Dick Johnson will handle the Web Site and the OSTA Review, John Van Landingham whom most of you know or have heard about, is also an OSTA board member and I will be around to answer questions that may arise until such time as a new Executive Director is appointed.

Again, our thanks to you, the members, for your support and determination to make life better for those of us who live in Mobile/Manufactured homes.

Fred and Pat Schwoch

Editorial

What is a Lobbyist?

Robert Samuelson, an economic news columnist, recently wrote about lobbying, what it is and what it does. MH/OSTA lobbyist, Pat Schwoch, and board member John VanLandingham work within a coalition that prepares bills and lobbies state legislators to pass laws important to those of us who live in manufactured home parks.

Samuelson’s remarks are worth summarizing to remind us of how much our lobbyists do for us. Lobbying, he says, is “an expression of democracy.” People need to “organize to influence government,” to “sharpen debate,” to give government information.

He says that many times people think lobbyists cater to the wealthy, the people who have the money. But the truth, he says, is that the rich pay 28 % of the federal taxes and the poor and middle class get about 60% of the federal benefits. This is at least in part because we have “powerful advocates” like AARP, AFL-CIO, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities for the poor, and at the state level, organizations like MH/OSTA.

How do lobbyists work? Not usually by buying access to lawmakers through campaign contributions, as many people may think. MH/OSTA barely has enough funds to maintain an office and would never buy favors even if we could afford to. Veteran lobbying reporters point out that lobbyists influence lawmakers with facts. “If lawmakers see merit in a position and there is a public outcry in its favor, that’s the way they tend to vote. Lobbying is marketing: trying to transform a group’s narrow interest into something perceived as the ‘public interest.’”

Lobbyists encourage debate on issues, and the Manufactured Housing Coalition meets often to debate the issues before presenting their agreed on compromises as bills to the Legislature. This, as Samuelson points out, is “democracy in action.”

The only way MH/OSTA can be effective and maintain a viable lobbying effort is through grassroots memberships. We hope that eventually, with our change in status to a non-profit organization, we will receive some charitable donations, but we desperately need each and every one of you to join together, recruit new members, and retain current ones. We are the public that needs to cry out and seek change for our best interests. Your lobbyists are leading the way. Please support them.

Sub-Metering Woes

As of January 1, the residents of FalconWood Village in Eugene, Quail Hollow in Fairview, and ShadowBrook in Clackamas are having their water sub-metered. There is confusion concerning illegal sub-metering set-up charges, which the landlord added to the bill.

These three parks are owned by Equity LifeStyle Systems out of Chicago, and the water charges are being billed through a company in Florida. Residents wonder if the owners and the water-billing company are familiar with the new Oregon statute which forbids administrative and set-up charges.

The parks’ **Committee of Seven** should be requesting a meeting with the owners or their representatives to make clarifications and corrections as needed. Meanwhile, many residents are deducting the illegal charges from their bills. We remind them that they must pay the water bill, however, and deduct only the administrative and set-up charges.

—Jane Capron, Ken & Lynne Keith,
FalconWood MH/OSTA Board

Riverstone In Cottage Grove Negotiates To Prevent Flooding

When heavy rains fall or when the level of Cottage Grove Lake is lowered, the excess water forms a “lake” in the field next to Riverstone MH Park in Cottage Grove. Some of the water drops into a narrow drainage ditch that gets clogged with blackberry bushes and weeds. Then the water finds the lowest spot in the bowl-shaped park and floods streets and homes. Flooding has occurred at least twice since 1996, one time so bad that water stood inches deep in homes and The Eugene Register-Guard wrote a front-page article with photos.

To prevent another disaster, the residents’ committee has been meeting with Commonwealth representative Brian Hogue, who had the narrow, shallow ditch cleared of weeds and bushes last summer at a cost of nearly \$3,000. But when residents Ike Shepherd and Larry Weeks walked the ditch in the fall, they found the culverts at the ends of the ditch plugged with debris. One culvert belongs to ODOT, one to the county, and the ditch itself to a farmer on the other side of the park’s perimeter fence, so it is difficult to do anything constructive.

At a meeting in October residents, the committee members, Hogue, and Lane County Commissioner Faye Stewart discussed the problem and walked the ditch to check high spots, inadequate culverts, and blackberry vines that still reached out to snag jackets.

Curing the flooding problem may be next to impossible considering how low the park is, but to at least alleviate it, Stewart has since talked with ODOT and the regional maintenance manager, and the farmer has allowed access to his land. Commonwealth cleaned the ditch, ODOT cleaned its culvert by the freeway and Lane County maintenance workers cleaned the culvert on the county side of the ditch. Everyone promises to continue clearing brush and debris so that water can flow freely. Hogue has said that the cost of serious remodeling, deepening, and

berm-building would be prohibitive even if he could get permission from the farmer to dig on his land.

Negotiations are on-going with Shepherd, Weeks, the Committee of Seven, and park residents receiving updates. During recent rains, the ditch and the culverts handled the run-off from the flooded field (“the lake”), and residents are keeping their fingers crossed and their hopes up that ODOT and the county will keep on maintaining the drainage ditch.

Committees of Seven do succeed!

—Jane Capron

DON'T TELL ME OSTA HAS DONE NOTHING

There are, on other pages in this issue, pages headed I'M HOME *Protecting Fundamental Freedoms in Communities*. Read all of it carefully, particularly the section headed WHAT STATE HAVE DONE. You will see that here in Oregon our association, mainly through the lobbying efforts of Pat Schwoch, has obtained every one of the suggested rights that residents of a manufactured home community should have, save one. That one is state enforcement of the statutes. We need that for without enforcement deep pockets win. Be that as it may, still it has taken a lot of hard work and lots of shoe leather worn in the capitol to get what we have today. If you doubt what is written here, get a 2007 copy of Oregon revised statutes Title 10 Chapter 90. These are the statutes that cover the manufactured home park living issues we all face. Then compare that statute to what is required by the enclosed article noted above. Further, compare the 2007 issue of the above mentioned statutes to the 1993 issue which had 31 pages while the 2007 issue has 80 pages. Those new pages added are new protections we didn't have in 1993 and before. The 1995 legislative session was the first session Pat was actively involved in lobbying for our issues. So don't tell me OSTA has done nothing.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GAINING NEW MEMBERSHIP

REQUIREMENTS

Dedication

You have to enjoy what you are doing

Time

It can take a lot of your time

Knowledge

You have to be familiar with your park and MH/OSTA

People Person

You have to like people and they have to like you

Good Help

Having good help is important.

SUPPLIES

Welcome Letter

A letter explaining the importance of having an MH/OSTA Chapter

Also explaining it is a volunteer organization and not mandatory.

OSTA Review

A copy of the OSTA Review.

Membership Application

Membership Application Needed.

Park Phone Directory

Updated Park Phone Directory with the new homeowner's phone number and address

MH/OSTA Chapter Monthly Update

A monthly publication from the park chapter informing the membership what is going on within their chapter. It is very important to keep the membership fully informed

In our park, each new resident and each new prospective member receives a copy of all of the above supplies (information).

Terry Smith
President, MH/OSTA

When in charge, ponder. When in trouble, delegate. When in doubt, mumble.



Protecting Fundamental Freedoms in Communities

OVERVIEW

Manufactured homes represent a pathway to affordable homeownership for millions of Americans, but their ability to be an investment or wealth-building vehicle remains tenuous in many states. Whether a manufactured home is a real asset for a family depends in large part on land tenure security. In some states, if the home is located on rented ground – in a manufactured home community (or “mobile home park”), for example – the homeowner can be evicted from the community at the community owner’s whim.

The precarious status of a manufactured home on rented land can turn it into a financial disaster instead of an asset. Manufactured home community sites are scarce in many areas, so a homeowner who is evicted from the community may not be able to find a new site for the home. Even if sites are available, the home may be too old to meet minimum requirements of a new community or may be damaged in transit, which could force the homeowner to abandon it altogether.

Resident ownership of communities is one of the most effective strategies for helping low-income homeowners build assets. Land tenure security is essential if residents of manufactured home communities are to have the opportunity to buy their communities. In order to pursue resident ownership, residents must be free to meet, to go door-to-door within the community, to form homeowner associations and to advocate for policies that promote resident ownership, without fearing eviction or other retaliation for these activities.

WHAT STATES CAN DO

The rules governing manufactured housing communities – leases, the rights of community owners and homeowners, eviction law, remedies – are the prerogative of the states. States can protect the residents’ freedom of association and freedom of speech, prohibit retaliation, require good cause for eviction and prohibit arbitrary restrictions on the homeowner’s sale of the home.

ELEMENTS OF A STRONG POLICY

Four key policies are needed to give residents stable land tenure and ensure that they can form resident associations and advocate for resident purchase opportunities, including:

- Freedom of Association and Freedom of Speech
- Freedom from Retaliation
- Freedom from Eviction without Good Cause
- Protection of the Right to Sell the Home in Place

It is a common saying that a right without a remedy is no right at all. To be effective, any law protecting these rights should carry meaningful penalties and be enforceable by affected residents.

Freedom of Association and Freedom of Speech. States seeking to promote resident ownership should guarantee residents the right to form, operate and participate in resident associations. Strong policies prohibit harassment, interference and other unfair tactics toward resident associations and require the community owner to make community facilities available for resident meetings on the same basis as other events. Strong policies also allow residents and others to distribute leaflet or canvass peacefully in the community, subject to reasonable rules as to time, place and manner.

Freedom from Retaliation. States seeking to promote resident ownership should prohibit retaliation – whether by way of eviction, rent increases, reduction of services or selective enforcement of rules – against residents for exercising the right to join a resident association, making complaints about conditions in the community, engaging in political activity or exercising other similar rights. Because a community owner's intent is always hard to prove, a strong law should create a presumption that, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, an eviction filed within a certain period of time, such as six months, after the resident exercised one of the protected rights is in retaliation for the exercise of that right.

Freedom from Eviction without Good Cause. States seeking to promote resident ownership should prohibit termination or nonrenewal of the lease except for good cause such as nonpayment of rent, rule violations, disorderly conduct, or criminal activity. A strong policy should require the community owner to give the resident fair notice of the problem and, where appropriate, an opportunity to correct it. There should be a special, longer notice period if the community is being closed because of a change in use of the land.

A strong policy should state that eviction is allowed only by a court procedure. It is also helpful if the law requires the community owner to offer a lease of at least a certain length, such as two years, and to renew the lease unless there is good cause.

Protection of the Right to Sell the Home in Place. An asset that cannot be sold is not an asset. If the community owner can arbitrarily deny a potential buyer of a resident's home the right to keep the home in the community, it will be very difficult for the resident to sell the home. States seeking to promote asset building for low-income homeowners should prohibit community owners from interfering with residents who are trying to sell their homes and should prohibit arbitrary denial of a potential buyer's right to keep the home in the community.

WHAT STATES HAVE DONE

Eighteen states have laws or regulations that specifically protect the right of manufactured home community residents to form resident associations. Many of these laws also specifically protect the right to canvass and pass out leaflets within the community, invite public officials or other speakers to address the group and use community facilities for meetings.

Twenty-eight states have laws that prohibit retaliation against manufactured housing community residents because of involvement with a resident association. In addition, 10 states have provisions in their general landlord-tenant laws, probably applicable to manufactured housing community residents, that prohibit retaliation because of involvement with a resident association. Four additional states have general landlord-tenant statutes that prohibit retaliation, but only for complaining about conditions. In the remaining states there appear to be no statutory protections against retaliation that apply either to manufactured home community residents or to tenants in general. Even in the states that have antiretaliation laws, the laws vary in their strength and comprehensiveness.

Thirty-three states have some statutory provision regarding grounds for eviction of a resident from a manufactured housing community. Some are full-fledged good cause statutes, prohibiting the community owner from terminating the lease or refusing to renew it except for good cause such as failure to pay rent or violation of community rules. Many, however, have significant loopholes. For example, some good cause statutes cover termination of a lease, but do not address nonrenewal.

Thirty states have some statutory provision prohibiting community owners from arbitrarily denying a resident the right to sell the home on-site.

ABOUT I'M HOME

I'M HOME, or Innovations in Manufactured Homes, is an initiative of CFED, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding economic opportunities for all Americans. The I'M HOME network includes nonprofit and for-profit, national and local partners who together work toward ensuring that all homeowners, regardless of whether their home is manufactured or site-built, enjoy the same rights and privileges of homeownership, including asset-building opportunities. For more information about I'M HOME, please visit www.cfed.org/go/imhome.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CONSUMER LAW CENTER

The National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) is the nation's consumer law expert, helping consumers, their advocates and public policymakers use powerful and complex consumer laws on behalf of low-income and vulnerable Americans seeking economic justice. NCLC is the leading consumer legal advocate promoting legal protections for owners of manufactured homes. For more information about NCLC please visit www.consumerlaw.org.

WHAT IS AN OSTA MEMBER?

An OSTA member is an individual who is aware of the rights afforded manufactured home park residents under Oregon Revised Statutes Title 10 Chapter 90 Landlord / Tenant law.

A member of an OSTA chapter converts individual power as a park resident into a group effort to manage concerns unique to their particular community.

An OSTA member belongs to the only statewide association of individuals and chapter groups that share the commonality manufactured home ownership and residency in a community.

The statewide OSTA community of members and chapters is focused to affect state legislation in ways individuals cannot do alone.

For over 30 years, OSTA has been the architect of the statutes and protections afforded the over one hundred thousand Oregon manufactured home park residents, members or not.

SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER TODAY!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PERSONS INTERESTED IN ENHANCING
MANUFACTURED HOME PARK LIVING
\$30.00 PER HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR,

Membership includes a subscription to *The OSTA Review*, our quarterly magazine.

Print Name (Last, First): _____

Second Resident: _____

Manufactures Home Park: _____

Address: _____ Space No: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone:(_____) _____ Cell:(_____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

MAIL TO:

MANUFACTURED HOME OWNERS OF OREGON, INC.
3000 Market St. NE. Suite 426
Salem, OR. 97301

**DON'T FORGET! BE CERTAIN TO INCLUDE YOUR CHECK AND YOUR
REGISTRATION FORM (ABOVE) WHEN JOINING OR RENEWING!**

