



THE Osta

Quarterly Review

VOLUME 34 NO. 4

FALL 2013

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Gary McCoy



A member of the Gift of Giving Team at Myra Lynne MHP in Medford, Gary has been working with

Gary Walters on Helping Hands remodeling projects in Southern Oregon MH parks. He enjoys white water rafting, fishing and all outdoor water activities, and during his time in the Navy he served on a submarine. He retired from General Electric as a heating and air-conditioning specialist.

His volunteer work has included several trips to Honduras where he helped keep the missionary dental clinic running. He also helped build new schools, hospitals, and houses

He and his wife, Sharon, have been married for 50 years, and since 1989, when their son, Ryan, was killed in a tragic accident, they have been enjoying raising their grandson, Chris.

You All Come to the Annual Meeting!

This year OSTA President Gary Walters, with a little help from his wife, Ginger, is planning the annual meeting scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 21, at Seven Feathers Resort in Canyonville. This will be the first time we've met in Southern Oregon, and Gary expects a huge turnout from his district, including the coast. We also expect to see many of you attending from farther north. There will be good food and the silent auction again this year.

During the business meeting, members will vote on retaining Board Directors Gary Walters, Rita Loberger, Chelsea Catto, Judy Morton and Charlie Ricker through 2015.

Gary has lined up an interesting program. Karen Reeves from Neighborworks Umpqua will tell us about a fascinating program in Curry County to renovate manufactured homes. Tom Hewes, president of Northwest Energy Works, will talk about money-saving possibilities in our homes. Board member and Landlord/Tenant Coalition moderator John VanLandingham will update us on legislation passed this year that affects us, including maintenance of hazardous trees. Ken Pryor from OHCS, will discuss how the Manufactured Communities Resource Center can help us. Board member and attorney Matthew Johnson will have a question and answer session.

Proceeds from the Silent Auction this year will go to our Helping Hands program, so be sure to bring your donations!

Unlike landlords, who like to raise our rents, OSTA hasn't raised the price of the convention, which is still \$20 per person, including lunch, if you register by Sept. 13. After that the price goes up to \$25. If you plan to spend a night, contact Seven Feathers (541-839-111) no later than Sept. 6 to get our discounted room rate. There is an RV park and the pet-friendly Riverside Lodge.

Seven Feathers Resort is located right off Exit 98 or 99 on Interstate 5, midway between Eugene and Medford. **You'll find the reservation form on Page 9.**

Lee Eyre at Lee's MHP in Eugene received an OSTA Helping Hand to replace a broken window in his home. OSTA helped him pay for the window and Lee did the work. He said, "Thanks so much. I really appreciate OSTA's help." The OSTA board urges park residents with handyman skills to form Gift of Giving teams to help reduce the cost of projects and allow us to continue offering a Helping Hand to our members. The application date has been extended through September 30.

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From the Editor...

St. Vincent de Paul, Lane County's largest non-profit human services organization, is buying a park in Oakridge, 40 miles east of Eugene.

That will make two parks in Oakridge, one in Eugene, and one in Junction City, all four renovated for lower-income people to rent or rent-to-own by St. Vinnie's.

Parks retain their original names. All the "trailers" at Garfield Trailer Park are currently occupied by renters, who pay a minimum amount for their homes. The Junction City park, Harwood Mobile Manor, is close to Shadow Hills Country Club, where we had our annual meeting last year. One home there was donated by ODOT when it had to be moved to make way for a freeway, and another was donated by the executors of an estate that included a manufactured home.

It would be wonderful if our members would consider directing trustees of their estates to call St. Vinnie's if a home is to be abandoned or cannot be sold, offering it or some of the appliances in it to use to help low-income citizens. It is MH/OSTA's hope to work with St. Vincent de Paul in the near future in helping our members with home renovations.

MH-OSTA has extended the Helping Hands Project through the end of September.

Funds are limited, but we hope to continue next year. If parks would form teams of handy men and women, and applicants would enlist friends and relatives, labor costs could be cut enough to spread the help further.

Besides ramps, decks, new steps, and floors, consider a few less expensive aids to help you age in place. Maybe a footstool with a handrail, door handles to replace knobs, toggle switches on light fixtures, bed rails, a wheeled garden caddy with a seat, a hip-high chair, a long-handled dust pan and brush, a table to fit over your bed or favorite chair, long-handled utensils and a reacher, a hand-held shower, a bath or shower seat, a raised toilet seat, a talking watch or alarm clock, magnifiers, a zipper gripper. Don't forget to call your nearby Habit for Humanity ReStore for good prices on items or check places like St. Vincent de Paul and Good Will. **OSTA chapters could take on projects to help their neighbors because one of the major goals of our OSTA organization is to be good neighbors.**

From The President...*Gary Walters*

Hi, Everyone,

As I write this column it is 100 degrees and the weatherman says it will 100+ for the next five to seven days. I sure hope he is wrong. In June I had two good district meetings, one in the Rogue Valley and the second at the coast. I thank Jan Henault, my Deputy Director, for getting everything ready and Oceanview MHP for letting us use their clubhouse.

My park had a Neighborhood Watch program, but nothing ever happened so it disbanded. This summer we had a little crime spree in our community with RVs and several homes being broken into and robbed. So we have started a new Neighborhood Watch, which Cary and Kathie Arnold will head up. Sometimes you need a wake-up call to remind you that everything is not rosy in this world. If your chapter does not have this program, I strongly suggest you get one going. Volunteers from the police department will help you get organized.

Our coalition bill, HB 3284, will become law on January 1, 2014. It includes the conditions for responsibility of hazardous trees in manufactured home communities. John Van Landingham will be telling us about the bill at the upcoming annual meeting. I hope to see a lot of you there on Sept. 21 at Seven Feathers Casino in Canyonville, and I would like to have you members from Southern Oregon show up by the BUSLOADS.

Now, meet two more of our board members.

Chelsea Catto Chelsea has served on the MH-OSTA board since 2010, and has been with CASA of Oregon since December 2007. At CASA she is the Director of the Manufactured Housing Cooperative Development Program, which provides technical assistance to manufactured homeowners so that they may purchase and operate their parks as resident-owned communities. Prior to joining CASA, she worked for Mercy Corps for over five years, focusing on international humanitarian aid and development under the agency's Food Security and Middle East programs. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies from the University of Oregon, and in 2002, she received her Master's of International Affairs from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, with a concentration in Human Rights and International Conflict Resolution. Her graduate work focused on conflict transformation training for Burma's minority ethnic nationalities. Chelsea has lived in both France and Italy and has traveled extensively throughout Europe, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. She currently lives in Portland with her husband, her one-year old son, two cats, two house rabbits, and three chickens.



Chelsea and Jack

Matthew Johnson

Matthew Johnson is an attorney who has been practicing for about 18 years in Eugene. Much of his practice involves representing tenants in parks. He attended the U of O Law School where he met his current wife, an appellate attorney. They have a beautiful five-year-old daughter. Matthew went to law school a little later than most, having spent many years as a cabinet maker, mill worker, and union organizer prior to law school. He has also been involved in social justice issues since the late 60s. Matthew first got involved with MH/OSTA in the late 90s. A few years ago, shortly after returning from a two year adventure living on a tropical island in the Pacific, he became a board member. An amateur mycologist, Matthew and his family are avid mushroom hunters, hikers, cross-country skiers, and scuba divers. He is also on the board of the Cascade Mycological Society, the local mushroom society. When he's not playing with his daughter, he's playing his banjo and singing to her.



Matthew and Sylvia

Gary



OSTA Visits a 50-Year Old Park

Lee's Mobile Home Park in Eugene is one of the nicer, older parks we've seen, with attentive managers and residents who take pride in their homes and look out for one another.

Built by the Lees in the 1960s, it was opened as an adult park and remains a 55+ park today. The Lees also built a stick house on the property for themselves. It is now the home and office of Bob and Kate Billings, the current managers.

Originally there were 35 manufactured homes in the park, but by the mid-90s the number had grown to 70 spaces. Mr. Lee died in his workroom on the property. The new owners remember Mrs. Lee as an interesting person bursting with energy. They invited her to stay on in her house, which she

did until she was almost 90 years old and her family had to move her into an assisted living home.

Betty Kerns, a 43-year-resident of the park, remembers Mr. Lee as enforcing the rules and tending the park. "He was good to us," Betty says. "He provided mulch for our yards and brought in a pile higher than a house for everybody to help themselves to. One year he thatched everybody's grass, and the year he celebrated 25 years of owning the park, he gave the residents a present by not raising anybody's rent." She likes

that the park is clean, people have fun and

keep an eye on their neighbors, everybody observes quiet time, and she can feel secure. "Also I've met a lot of real characters." Some people might think Betty is one of the characters herself. Despite neuropathy in her feet and the need of a scooter, she climbs a ladder to paint and wash her house, including the roof.



Bob Billings, Manager



Betty Kerns, (L). resident for over 40 yrs, and Joan Stern, OSTA President



Charlie Ricker
with Mal Marlborough-92 yrs old



Dave Bidwell, OSTA vice-president at
Edna Craig-Coons' house



Country Classic Band

The OSTA officers at Lee's are Joan Stern, president, Dave Bidwell, vice president, Nancy Burns, secretary, and Marita Ruiz, treasurer. Marita has been treasurer for a number of years and was once featured in an *OSTA Review* Volunteer Spotlight. Joan is aiding District Director Charlie Ricker as an area representative, helping residents in other parks in the Eugene/Springfield area establish OSTA chapters.

Continued on Page 5

OSTA Visits a 50-Year Old Park continued from Page 4



Roger Conlon



Sara Wimer



Lee Eyre, Helping Hands recipient



The park furnished hamburgers and hotdogs at a recent barbeque with live country music to welcome summer, where the photos accompanying this story were taken. Besides the yearly barbeque, other activities include monthly potlucks, a monthly lunch out for the ladies of the community, group games, and two patio sales a year. OSTA sponsors a bake sale at the patio sale in May. Of course there are regular OSTA meetings. The next one is August 16.

Residents keep their homes picture perfect with small plots of grass and flowers. The OSTA chapter bought a new lawn mower for people in the park to use to mow their lawns. Management provides Weed & Feed and mulch to aid everybody in keeping their plots weed-free and their plants healthy. Residents are currently collecting cans and bottles to raise funds for other projects. The chapter still gives out welcome baskets to new residents.

If you're driving on the Beltline in Eugene, take the Division Avenue off ramp for a tour of Lee's. Turn into any of the three entrances and drive very slowly through the park. You're sure to be waved at by some of the friendly people there.



Dorothy Grover, resident for over 30 years



Kate Billings, Mgr.



Dorothy Bottomly, center, and friends dig in



Joan Stern , OSTA president, with garden and new window



Michael Stohlberg with baked beans



Sara visits at potluck



In Memoriam

We're sorry to report that Frank Loberger from El Dorado Villas in Tigard passed away on July 12. His wife, Rita, is our MH-OSTA state Vice President and Northern District Director. Frank and Rita joined OSTA in 2007.

Marilyn Davis Resigns as Salem Area Director

Ed.'s Note: Marilyn's resignation letter to the board follows. Charlie Ricker, Lane District Director, is currently answering calls from the area. He could use some Area Representatives to help him out. If interested in donating a few hours now and again, please contact any board member or send a letter to our P.O. box.

To Gary Walters and the Board,



I anticipated a long relationship with OSTA and the dedicated membership living in the Capitol region, but I did not anticipate a series of unfortunate health issues. Please accept my resignation as District Director, based only on my physical inability to remain active. My heart is still with you.

Marilyn Davis

HELP WANTED: OSTA members willing to serve as Area Representatives for the Salem Area (Linn, Marion, Polk Counties), working with the guidance of Charlie Ricker, Lane District Director. This volunteer position will involve some of the following: making phone calls, visiting parks, distributing brochures, and encouraging people to become members. For more information contact any board member or send a letter to our P.O. box.



Now that school is starting, remember to support your adopted school. If you haven't adopted a school, it's never too late for your park to help the children. They will thank you. In the next issue, we want to print news about how parks are serving their adopted schools. Send your stories by Nov. 1.

Chapter News

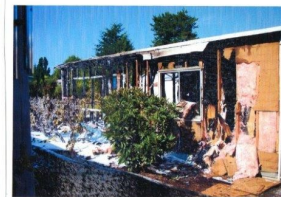
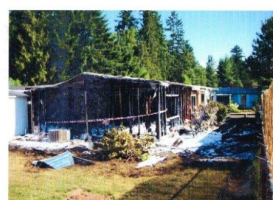
A FIRE ALERT FOR ALL READERS!

Eldorado Villa, Tigard experienced a bit of pre July 4th fireworks you NEVER want to see—an electrical fire that destroyed a house in our community. Thank goodness the home was empty and the new residents had not begun to move in. The manager is now looking for another home that might be suitable for the buyers.

Once the flames were extinguished, the firemen dismantled the siding that remained to make sure the sparks were all foamed out of existence. They had to use their masks during this procedure as the asbestos in the insulation added to the toxic fumes. Neighbors had to evacuate their homes as the winds continually changed directions. Siding on a neighboring home was scorched and will require replacement.

What we learned and I pass on to you: 1) Keep up on house insurance payments, 2) Trim shrubs three feet away from hydrants, and 3) Pay for a pre-purchase inspection to catch problems like faulty wiring.

—Rita Loberger, Northern District Director



ORS 100.306



From Mike Whitty, Manager Training Instructor

Why are some parks able to discriminate against people with children by allowing only homeowners age 55 and over?

First, the law that prevents landlords from discriminating in general is the Federal Fair Housing Act lists “categories” of people that the federal law protects. Those “protected categories” are: race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status and national origin. Missing from federal law are age and sexual orientation. However, in Oregon there are additional protected categories: marital status, source of income (such as government or SSD), sexual orientation including gender identity, honorably discharged veterans/military status, and domestic violence victims. What the law prohibits is discriminating, that is, treating people differently because they are a member of one of the above named categories.

So, if family status is protected from discrimination under federal law, how can there be 55 and over parks?

Parks for people age 55 and over were instituted by the Housing and Urban Development Department before “familial status” was part of the Federal Fair Housing Act. The “familial status” protected class was added to the Fair Housing Act in 1988, and created confusion for managers of age 55 and over parks. Congress passed the Housing for Older Persons Act (HOPA) in 1995 to clarify the status of 55+ parks.

Before the passage of HOPA, under the former HUD regulations, the 55+ parks had to have a menu of facilities or services from five out of a possible ten categories. The park owner had to provide “significant facilities,” and examples are a) social and recreational programs; b) continuing education; c) information and counseling; d) recreational, homemaker, outside maintenance and referral services; e) accessible physical environment; f) emergency and preventive health care programs; g) congregate dining facilities; h) transportation to facilitate access to social service; and i) services designed to encourage and assist residents to use the services and facilities available to them.

Are 55 and over parks still supposed to be providing those facilities or services?

These facilities and services requirements were eliminated by HOPA, which requires only that the community adhere to policies and procedures that demonstrate the intent to be a 55 or older facility. The facility must be “intended and operated” for persons 55 years of age or older, and the facility must “publish and adhere to policies and procedures that demonstrate its intent.”

How do park owners “demonstrate” that the park is a 55 and over facility?

Section 100.306(a) of HOPA provides a nonexclusive list of relevant factors to be considered in determining a park’s demonstration of intent:

- a) The manner in which the housing facility is described to prospective residents;
- b) Any advertising designed to attract prospective residents;
- c) Lease provisions;
- d) Written rules and regulations;
- e) The maintenance and consistent application of relevant procedures;
- f) Actual practices
- g) Public posting in common areas of statements describing the facility as housing for persons 55 years of age or older.

When the facility meets those rather simple requirements, it qualifies to be exempt from the “familial status” class. This exemption includes the right to refuse applications by persons age 55 and over that have children under age 18. The park may set a higher minimum age for children if it wishes. So, a park can be exclusively for people age 55 and over, with no adult children or others allowed.

Does HOPA require that every home be owned by a person age 55 or over?

The 55+ classification requires that 80% of the spaces be occupied by residents with at least one person age 55 or older. Managers must be careful to make certain that this “fudge factor” is not utilized to the limit, because the status in a home that has only one resident over age 55 can change if that person dies or moves out. Also, a manager cannot use this factor to allow an “adults only” policy in the remaining 20%. If that 20% is open to any families with no resident over age 55, it must be open to all applicants with children who would otherwise be approved. Consequently, many parks follow a policy making the park exclusively 55 and over, and do not try to use the 20% factor.

RIGHT2KNOW Continued

If a park does utilize the 80% rule in a 55+ community, as of October 1999, the landlord must verify that at least one person in 80% of the units is 55 or older. The Housing for Older Persons Act of 1995 (HOPA) requires that the verification take place every two years. HOPA regulations went into effect in October 1999.

The documentation showing a resident was over age 55 and obtained at the time of application is sufficient, but the landlord needs to verify that person is still living in the residence every two years.

How are people with disabilities able to have special privileges in parks?

The Federal Fair Housing Law protects people with disabilities from discrimination. Those disabled people are not given "special privileges," but they do have rights that tenants without disabilities cannot have, such as caregivers and service animals. Those rights are given to disabled people to allow them to enjoy their homes the same way they could if they did not have a disability.

What is a "disability" under the law?

A disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity such as walking, seeing, hearing, thinking, caring for self, or having a chronic condition (such as mental illness, AIDS, blindness, hearing impairment, mental retardation, mobility impairment, etc.). In addition, those who have a record of an impairment or have been regarded as having such an impairment, are also covered. Recovering alcoholics and drug addicts are also considered to have a disability and are, therefore, protected by the law.

What do landlords have to do to allow disabled people to enjoy the park?

Besides not discriminating, housing providers may be required to make exceptions to rules, policies, and practices for people with disabilities in order for them to be able to gain full use and enjoyment of their housing. This comes in the form of a "reasonable accommodation" or a "reasonable modification" request.

Examples of reasonable accommodation for handicapped individuals include a handicapped parking space for facilities in the park that are used in common, such as laundry rooms and any community building. The landlord is not responsible to make the home handicapped accessible, but if there is a storage room as part of the space, it would need to be accessible to a wheelchair if a handicapped person purchases the home on that space.

Other examples of reasonable accommodation are allowing service animals where there is a "no pets" rule, a service animal larger than the park rules allow, or allowing a caregiver below age limitations to live full-time in an age 55 and over park.

What happens if the landlord does not make accommodations?

Housing discrimination based on disability is one of the most common fair housing complaints to the Oregon Fair Housing Council. Many of the allegations involve discrimination against people with mental illnesses, especially in admissions to housing and requests for reasonable accommodation. Addressing discrimination based on mental illness is crucial. Considering the multitude of barriers that prevent people with mental illness from obtaining and maintaining stable housing, the occurrence of housing discrimination can be a devastating blow. Without stable housing, dealing with the challenges of mental illness becomes more complicated.

What about people who claim to have a disability just so they can have a dog in a no-pet facility, or a bigger dog than the park rules allow?

Landlords have the right to verification of a reasonable accommodation/modification. This will come from a third-party person who has specialized knowledge of the person making the request. Typically these statements come from a professional such as a doctor, therapist, social worker, clergy, etc. However, there are instances when a family member or close personal friend may be the appropriate person to make such a verification statement. Note that neither the person making the request nor the person providing the verification needs to disclose the details of the disability or provide a detailed medical history to the housing provider. A landlord is entitled to obtain information that is necessary to evaluate if a requested reasonable accommodation may be necessary because of a disability. If a person's disability is obvious, or otherwise known to the provider, and if the need for the requested accommodation is also readily apparent or known, then the provider may not request any additional information about the requester's disability or the disability-related need for the accommodation. If the requester's disability is known or readily apparent to the provider, but the need for the accommodation is not readily apparent or known, the provider may request only information that is necessary to evaluate the disability-related need for the accommodation. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform for himself or herself. "Seeing eye dogs" are one type of service animal, used by some individuals who are blind. This is the type of service animal with which most people are familiar. But there are service animals that assist persons with other kinds of disabilities in their day-to-day activities. Some examples include:

Alerting persons with hearing impairments to sounds,

RIGHT2KNOW Continued

Pulling wheelchairs or carrying and picking up things for persons with mobility impairments,

Assisting persons with mobility impairments with balance.

A "reasonable accommodation" for a service animal is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common use spaces. Since rules, policies, practices, and services may have a different effect on persons with disabilities than on other persons, treating persons with disabilities exactly the same as others will sometimes deny them an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. *The Act makes it unlawful to refuse to make reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services when such may be necessary to afford persons with disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their dwelling.*

A service animal is not a "pet." The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. An animal may be considered a service animal, even in the absence of formal training and certification. For Fair Housing Law purposes, *the terms "assistance animal," "therapy animal," "companion animal" are interchangeable and should never be considered a "pet" with applicable pet fees, etc.*

PLEASE NOTE

Right2Know Factsheets are provided by MH/OSTA to help manufactured homeowners who rent space in Oregon's manufactured home parks better understand their rights as homeowner/park tenants. While these factsheets are about Oregon law, they **SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED LEGAL ADVICE**. The factsheets are for educational purposes to help build better relationships between homeowners and park management. Factsheet information is directed only to homeowner/park tenants and may not apply to renter/park tenants relationships, or other landlord-tenant relationships. Oregon Revised Statutes are shown from the most recent ORS at the time of the printing of the factsheet and do not include cross-referenced statutes. For complete and most current ORS go to: www.ohcs.oregon.gov/OHCS/CRD/OMDPCR/docs/chapter90.shtml.

MH/OSTA / PO BOX 701, SPRINGFIELD, OR 97477 / 800-423-9371 / www.mh-osta.org

Annual Meeting Registration Form

Complete and Mail Form
and \$20 check
by September 13 to:

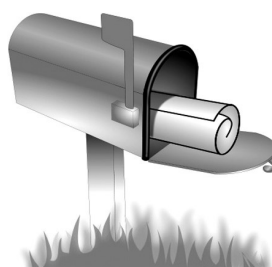
MH/OSTA
P.O. Box 701
Springfield, OR 97477

Name(s) _____

Park Name _____

Telephone or Email Address _____

(Reservations received after September 13 will be \$25.)



NOTES

in Our Mail Box

[[Ed.'s Note: After the Gift of Giving Team in Medford, led by Gary Walters, painted her house, Karal Sperry sent this note and a very generous donation.]]

I paid some and the Helping Hands paid the largest portion. My place was in bad shape....I was ill and wasn't able to get out in my power chair to look around. Thank goodness for Helping Hands and the Lord above for looking out for me. Thank you so much! I sleep better at night not worrying about the exterior of my place and work on other things that need to be done....Gary and Ginger Walters are two of the hardest working people I have ever met and extra nice, too!

*What's Your Opinion?***Is Manager Training, Licensing, Registration a Good Idea?****by Charlie Ricker, Lane District Director**

Too often managers are turned loose in a park with a distant landlord unavailable or unable to guide them. On-the-job training might be satisfactory, but only if a new manager works under the guidance of a mentor, who is available for extended periods to teach, observe, and evaluate. After a period of training, the new manager should then be tested, licensed and registered with the state, and that license come up periodically for renewal.

A manager is required to oversee a park and supervise others. He needs maintenance skills and administrative knowledge as well as an understanding of landlord/tenant laws, and he needs to demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively. I have visited numerous manufactured home parks in Oregon and seen too many managers who don't have the skills to oversee a park or the ability to get along with residents.

The idea of manager licensing has been well-received by the managers and state officials I've spoken with as well as with residents. There is agreement that managers can determine the welfare and well-being of a community, creating either harmony or distress because of the control they wield. The manager is vital for the peaceful environment in a park.

As home owners, we all have an investment in our individual communities, and therefore we have the right to demand that the park owners and property management companies provide us with qualified managers capable of providing professional services for both ourselves and the park owners. How else will we know if they are capable unless they are trained, licensed, and registered? Don't we read that licenses on the wall of our doctors' offices? Aren't we glad our doctors have been educated and tested before deciding what's best for us? I'd like to hear your opinion.

**Kids' Space****by Jacqueline Capron-Allcott**

I spent this past summer in the easternmost town in the United States, Eastport, Maine. The population is about 1,500; downtown smells like seaweed.

We traveled for about four days by car to get there. It was a dreadful car ride. For the first week my mom and I had to share a bedroom and the same for my brother and my dad (who had to share a bed) until my mom and dad's room was livable.

We spent a lot of time working on the house, which was one of those fixer-uppers (and still kind of is).

We also went for picnics, frequent shopping trips to the Wal-Mart in Calais, Maine, which is 45 minutes away, and a few trips down to the beach near our house.

My brother and I even swam in the ocean once. The water was freezing cold, but it was a really hot day, so we didn't mind. The beaches in Eastport are covered in seaweed and rocks, so you kind of have to hop around (or wear flip flops). But there are lots of really cool treasures at the beach. Washed onto the shore we found sea glass, sea shells, cool rocks, sand dollars, pieces of pottery, and little crabs. I even found a sea sponge on the beach once.

There are many cool places to go downtown, too. There is a pet store (where our dog, Sandy, got a bath), lots of seafood restaurants (which I can't eat at due to my allergies), antique stores, a coffee shop, a café, a bakery, lots of art galleries, and a local Greek restaurant called the Liberty Café, where my family and I ate frequently.

We had a good time. I have to say though; it feels good to be home.

Chapter News Continued**SCANDIA VILLAGE**

Charlie Ricker, B.J. Olafson, and Patti Ovalle gathered enough new members this summer at Scandia Village in Junction City to form our most recent chapter. The group will be electing officers this fall.

SALEM/SHADY ACRES MHP

One of our newest chapters, Salem/Shady Acres recently elected ValJean Pease as their first OSTA president with Stan Hoisington as vice president, Pat Norman as secretary, and Sharron Hoisington as treasurer. Charlie Ricker from Eugene traveled to the park several times to help them organize and we all welcome them into our state-wide neighborhood. Stan and Sharron are representatives of LegalShield, a membership legal service. Barbara Mitchell from Lakeridge in Eugene will advise them on writing bylaws.

MEADOW PARK, CORVALLIS

Maggie Polizzo is the new president of their chapter, serving with Joan Shaw, vice-president, Judy McDaniel, secretary, and Nelda Kingsbury, treasurer.

LAKERIDGE, EUGENE

By mid-July membership increased by nearly 50 percent in the new Lakeridge Chapter of MH/OSTA. Individual members increased to 47 from 32, with household memberships growing to 30 from 21. The Board will continue to seek more members. MH/OSTA brochures are available in the clubhouse reception area. An MH/OSTA Membership Meeting is planned for 1 p.m. Saturday, November 1, in the Lakeridge clubhouse. We explain legal rights of residents; provide a pro-residents voice to park owners; and keep residents current on legislative issues.

—Barbara Mitchell, President, Lakeridge Chapter

SONGBROOK, EUGENE

Lane District Director Charlie Ricker whirled SongBrook resident Marie Nichols around the dance floor at the July potluck while Woodland Park members Warren Pritchard on guitar and Christy Weatherly with vocals entertained with old favorites. It was a great party!

MILLER ESTATES, CENTRAL POINT

The Neighborhood Home Owners Association (NHOA) welcomed two new board members, Mike Bureau as vice president replacing Howard Garthwait, who had the job for many years, and Dewell Byrd as a board member. Howard, a board member since we first organized, will stay on as a board member. Chambers continues as Miller Estates chapter treasurer. She also records the state-wide call log information for MH/OSTA and distributes the OSTA Review via email to Oregon state representatives and the state homeowners' associations around the country. Now she has taken on the job of editor for the new Miller Estates newspaper. Our 39 OSTA members believe in what we do as a chapter and what MH/OSTA does as a state organization. Louise Lafoya, NHOA board member, is in charge of the Miller Estates Adopt-a-School program again this year. She is accepting donations now. Our program has been very successful bringing in over \$800 in 2011-2012 and \$772 last year. Many thanks go to the Miller Estate Homeowners for their support of the Adopt a School program.

—Terry Smith, NHOA President

SUNSET VIEW, BROOKINGS

Carl Dunbar, chapter secretary, Lonna Lipparell, treasurer, and Welcome Lipparelli, attended the South Coast District meeting at Oceanview Estates with me in June to hear Gary Walters, MH/OSTA president, tell us about the upcoming state meeting and guest speaker Darryn Balance from Cal-Ore Life Flights explain recent changes due to the merger. We had a successful park-wide yard sale in June, our chapter meeting in July, our summer picnic just recently, and are now looking forward to the state meeting at Canyonville. On August 18 the Humane Society Mutt Strutt on the Boardwalk at the Port will be fun, and the Sunset View Resident's meeting is scheduled for October 7 at the Fire Hall.

—Jan Henault, Chapter President and South Coast Deputy Director

SUMMER OAKS, EUGENE

We are planning a series of work sessions this Fall to review the park rules and suggest changes that give more specificity to what is expected and required of tenants. We also plan to review the emergency/disaster plan compiled by Gainesborough MHP, as presented at the last District OSTA meeting. We will consider purchasing a defibrillator, providing training in the 'new' CPR practice, and obtaining some type of generator capability in the event of a prolonged power outage. Management has installed surveillance cameras as a result of a series of burglaries during Thanksgiving last year and we now have telephone and email "trees" to alert residents about important issues. We hope to have close contact with District OSTA members to support Rep. Nathanson's Opportunity to Purchase bill when it is re-introduced in the 2014 Legislative session.

—John Rutledge, Chapter President

SILVERTON ESTATES

The July 4th ice cream social was a great success. The last weekend in July was the annual park-wide garage sale. The final summer event will be a picnic on Labor Day. Management will furnish the chicken and everyone is to bring a salad or dessert.

—Kay Strobel, chapter president



Homeowners Deserve Chance to Buy Our Land

by Jerry Dennehy

[Ed.'s Note: The following article was printed in The Eugene Register-Guard as a guest viewpoint on July 16. Jerry lives at Vida Lea Community Cooperative in Leaburg, OR. See article about this new Resident-Owned Co-op on p. 15. See also p. 13 for information about the Legislative work group preparing another attempt to pass an opportunity to purchase bill.]

A bill was put to sleep in the 77th Oregon Legislative Assembly in Salem. Its death went unnoticed by the general public. Its mourners were a small portion of the state's population, people who were saddened by its demise but not surprised.

The bill was House Bill 3007. It concerned affordable housing. The essential feature of the bill was that it would have required the owner of a residential facility to offer tenants an opportunity to purchase the facility before the owner offered to sell it to a third party....

After notification by the owner, the tenants would have 30 days to give written notice to the owner of their intention to purchase the facility, establish an entity for the purchase, and demonstrate to the owner their commitment to making the purchase by ordering an appraisal, beginning a capital needs assessment or otherwise incurring costs to evaluate the opportunity to purchase the facility.

The bill was of particular concern to more than 64,000 people living in 1,158 manufactured home or mobile home parks in Oregon. More than 80% of the manufactured homes in the state are owner owned, but the homeowners do not own the land on which their homes sit.

They pay what is called "space rent." With limited protection under current law, these homeowners risk displacement should the park owners close the park, convert it to some other use or sell it to developer.

The Register Guard has reported that 60 parks have been closed in Oregon in the last decade.

Park closures are devastating to the residents. Manufactured homes are moveable, but some homes, although well taken care of and perfectly livable, are too old to move without causing permanent damage. Even if a home can be moved, the cost of moving it may be as much as the price of the home itself. And, of course, the question arises – where can these homes be moved? The number of parks is dwindling.

Manufactured homes provide one of the most affordable options for people to own their own homes. Often it is the only option for low-income people or the elderly on fixed incomes. It is the "American Dream," a home of one's own, scissored to a smaller size.

In principle, the state of Oregon encourages affordable housing options for all Oregonians, yet not enough representatives could be found to support HB3007. Not enough representatives believed that tenants should be given notice when the ground on which their homes sit was being put on the market. Not enough believed that tenants should be given 30 days to see if they could buy the park themselves.

One of the arguments the owners and their lobbyist used to defeat HB3007 was that if tenants bought a park they would not be capable of managing it and would run it into the ground. This is demonstrably untrue. When the park I live in was put up for sale for the second time, the owners could not find a buyer. They had apparently misread the market or were unaware of the recession. After three futile years of trying to find a buyer, they offered to sell it to the tenants.

We, the tenants, with the invaluable help of The Community and Shelter Assistance Corporation of Oregon, bought it. The park was in such a state of neglect that we had to completely refurbish the septic system, pave the deteriorating roads, and cut down or limb trees that were endangering the lives of residents. And the work continues.

Not everyone who lives in a mobile home park will want to buy the park they live in. It is a long process and involves a lot of time and energy. Not all parks will be affordable to tenants, even with the assistance of a nonprofit organization or a housing authority. But it can be done. We did it. Our park is now called Vida-Lea Community Co-op, a nonprofit cooperative. The improvements we have made are manifest. Anyone familiar with the history of this park should take a look at it now. We would particularly like the state representatives who refused to support HB3007 to stop by for a chat and take a look around. They might learn something.

Should MH Park Residents Be Allowed to Purchase Their Parks?

[Ed.'s Note: For years, The Park Owners Alliance (POA), made up in large part of California landlords with holdings in Oregon, has opposed bills supported by OSTA and also bills approved by landlords in the Manufactured Home Communities of Oregon (MHCO). The following article, from a 2011 newsletter shows that The POA opposed an Opportunity to Purchase bill when it came up for discussion in the Oregon Landlord-Tenant coalition. Since over 100 MH parks in California have rent control, The POA landlords have argued that an Opportunity to Purchase bill will lead to rent control in Oregon.

As our members know, the bill sponsored in 2013 by Representative Nathanson, stalled in committee, but may not know is that a revised bill is being discussed in a work group of landlords and tenants for consideration in the 2014 session. No doubt the POA will continue to oppose our opportunity to bid on our parks. We present excerpts from this newsletter article written for their members to give our members an idea of how the opposition thinks. The Legal Aid attorney referred to in the article is our own John VanLandingham].

“Despite any real threat of rent control legislation being moved—let alone passed—this year, MHCO enthusiastically embraced legislation written by the Lane County Legal Aid attorney [John VanLandingham] to take away various property rights from park owners if they chose to sell their property. In brief, the proposed amendments would have given a ‘first right to purchase’ not only to park residents (who wouldn't have to have financial ability nor put up any money) but to third parties as well. While the proposal was touted as being for tenants, it was a thinly-veiled piece of special interest legislation.

“While MHCO's approach was to ‘hold their noses’ and support the Legal Aid attorney in the taking of park owners' property rights, Oregon Park Owners Alliance stood squarely in opposition. We quickly embarked on an urgent alert of owners of many Oregon parks about the likely consequences of this proposal if it became law. The largely indignant response from park owners who joined OPOA in opposition, caused MHCO to flip-flop within a week. Park owners recognized that Oregon Park Owners Alliance is the only organization committed to protecting the property rights of park owners.

“Increased membership and generous additional contributions enabled OPOA to retain a lobbyist to add clout to our efforts and to guard against any other attempts to sneak anti-property rights legislation out of the Legislature this year.

“The Lane County Legal Aid attorney has served notice that he will be back next year with another attempt to get his proposal enacted [see note at beginning of this article].

“The MHCO approach of doing deals with the Legal Aid attorney and rationalizing the hold-our-noses approach isn't the way to go. Oregon Park Owners Alliance blew the whistle on this non-solution. OPOA debunked the myth that park owners have to give up one property right after another to appease the Legal Aid attorney.

“....A policy of appeasing the Legal Aid attorney and the tenants is not the way to demonstrate the strength of park owners and our opposition to rent control. Yielding on property rights issues like ‘first right to purchase,’ only shows weakness and encourages opponents to press for rent control. We aren't a ‘club’ with cocktail parties, dinners, or out-of-town conventions. We're single-minded in our defense of your property rights.”

From the NMHO Newsletter

After a 13-year legal battle, a June 26 decision of the Federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals hopefully will put an end to Equity Lifestyle Properties' (ELS) current legal challenges to the Manufactured Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance in San Rafael, CA. The only remaining hope for ELS would be for the United States Supreme Court to agree to hear the case, which is doubtful. The decision fully restored Ordinance protections for homeowners in Contempo Marin manufactured home community, who had been facing nearly a tripling of rents when attempting to sell homes. In California, over 100 cities and/or counties have some form of rent regulation to protect roughly one third of homeowners in manufactured home communities in the state.

Manufactured Homes a Good Source of Affordable Housing

Pismo Dunes Senior Park in Pismo Beach, California, is called “Pismodise” by the residents. Most of the homes are single-wides and under 800 square feet. Lisa Margonelli, writing for the Pacific Standard News, had her story on “Pismodise” recently reprinted in the national magazine *The Week*. Among her references was Andree Tremoulet, one of our OSTA board members and a researcher at Portland State University. Andree found that manufactured home communities are a good choice for seniors because they allow people to own and modify their homes, have dogs, and enjoy such hobbies as gardening that wouldn’t be available to them in apartments. And people feel safe, because parks have boundaries and are often gated. It’s easy to make friends and socialize.

Research shows that three million seniors currently live in manufactured home parks and that in fewer than 20 years people over 65 will make up almost 20% of the population in this country. Half of the current baby boomers have less than \$10,000 in savings. Where will they live? If they can live independently, they won’t cost the country much and they will continue to contribute to the economy. Aging in place in manufactured home communities is a smart way to provide a lifestyle that is healthy, affordable, and fun.

Manufactured homes are considered chattel or personal property. Owners don’t get the same rights or financial benefits as do other homeowners.” Too often people look down their noses at those of us who live in manufactured homes, calling us “trailer trash.” Whether called manufactured housing, mobile homes, or trailers, they are the largest source of unsubsidized affordable housing in the country. Margonelli’s research shows there are seven million manufactured homes in the U.S., housing 18 million people. In some counties they make up 60 percent of dwellings. Units built since 1976, when HUD started regulating their construction, can last as long as site-built homes. Yet they cost \$41 per square foot versus \$85 per square foot and up, she points out.

A long-running study on aging found that not smoking, drinking moderately, having five or more friends, avoiding depression, and walking for exercise are strong indicators of senior health, adding as much as six years to independent living. A University of California study found that lonely seniors are 45 percent more likely to die and 59 percent more likely to decline over a six-year period than those that socialize. As one senior commented, “When I moved into my park, I didn’t know anybody, but within a week I had 100 new friends”!

Unfortunately, most manufactured homes, because they’re considered personal property or “chattel,” don’t qualify for real estate loans, and the interest rates are therefore higher. Even though they last as long as conventional site-built houses, they start losing value as soon as the buyer moves in. It is difficult to insure some mobile homes, and those rates can be exorbitant.

Paul Bradley, who runs the non-profit ROC USA, calls manufactured housing finance and regulation “sick.” Conventional real-estate markets—with their systematized regulation and finance—build wealth, he says, but excluding this permanent form of housing from that conventional system depletes capital from people who live in manufactured homes. ROC USA has leveraged money from banks and foundations to help more than 100 groups of mobile-home owners organize to buy their parks. ROC USA essentially provides the guarantee on the capital, while residents make payments on the loan, just as they would pay rent on their spaces. A 2012 report underwritten by HUD found that mobile homes use, on average, far less energy and water than conventional homes or condos. Newer models, made to Energy-Star efficiency standards, can reduce the combined costs of electricity, gas, and water to well below \$1,000 a year, even in the hottest and coldest parts of the country. And manufacturing the homes in factories cuts construction waste by 30 percent. The efficient layout of a mobile-home park helps conserve water and reduces storm runoff.

Tremoulet hopes foundations will begin to support manufactured home communities as a good source of affordable housing. Low-cost housing provides health care, recreation, and sense of well being and security for a growing and aging population

Meet the Oregon Resident-Owned Cooperative Presidents

(Ed.'s Note: In the Spring 2013 issue, we featured the presidents of Victor Manor in McMinnville, Green Pastures in Redmond, and Saunders Creek in Gold Beach. This issue we continue with three other former manufactured home parks that have been purchased by their residents with the help of CASA of Oregon. The information on the presidents of these cooperatives comes from OSTA member Julie Massa, who works on Manufactured Housing Preservation for CASA.)



Dan Fountain, President of Vida Lea Community Cooperative in Leaburg

Dan was born and raised in Springfield and the McKenzie Valley, so he has strong ties to the area. As a fifth-generation valley boy, Dan has enjoyed hunting and fishing all his life. After graduating high school, he worked several jobs including tow truck driver and dump truck and back hoe operator. He soon found himself fabricating steel. Except for a three year stint building homes as a self-employed contractor (where he installed septic systems from time to time), Dan spent thirty years in the steel industry and time went by fast. Most of Dan's fabrication experience was as lead man or shop foreman, overseeing up to twenty five people. These skills all served him well as he oversaw and executed all of the construction projects at Vida Lea. Once the community was purchased, Dan's strong vision for a better future was immediately put into action. Dan has lived at Vida Lea for nine years and has been called upon several times to be a spokesperson for resident-owned manufactured home communities.

An Oregon native, K was born in Corvallis, grew up in east Multnomah County and attended Pacific University in Forest Grove. From there she entered the banking world where she worked in several departments dealing with real estate and the law for over 20 years. Following that, she joined the corporate headquarters of a major retail organization in their Corporate Law Department. K recently celebrated 12 years with the company and now works in their Environmental Compliance section. Prior to moving to Clackamas, K served on her condo association's Board of Directors where they earned the Condo Association of the Year Award for most improved. She has been a resident of Clackamas River Community Cooperative for about 4 years and served on the Interim Board of Directors. K enjoyed the success of seeing the project through to closing and she now serves on the Board of Directors as their President. She acknowledges that serving on the cooperative's Board is a lot of hard work, but also adds that it's worth it when you can lend an ear to your neighbors and have the means to take action. When K is relaxing, you can find her with one of her sons and a good book at the beach.



K Harrison, President of Clackamas River Community Cooperative in Clackamas



Richard Day, President of West-Side Pines Cooperative in Bend

Richard Day's expertise as a General Journeyman Electrician is an asset in his position as President of West-Side Pines Cooperative. However, it's his experience as the Assistant Fire Chief of the La Pine and Crescent Districts that becomes evident when he chairs and manages each interim board meeting. Richard and the West-Side Pines Vice President, Chris Reid, are well-versed in Robert's Rules of Order and they use that format skillfully in their meetings. Their community is currently known as Century Drive Mobile Home Park, but Richard is leading West-Side Pines Cooperative toward the end-goal of a resident purchase with ease. His extensive experience in the administration of programs that rely on volunteer committees has also been a great benefit. He has served as chief officer of organizations that have completed projects very similar to his yet-to-be purchased community, including his work to form a homeowners association at Century Drive a few years ago. Richard and his family have lived the community for 8 years, and he currently works as an electrician on affordable housing projects in downtown Portland. He travels between Portland and Bend on the weekends.



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MH/OSTA Vision

Be the place that the owner of a home in any Oregon manufactured home park:

- Calls for help and directly, or by knowledgeable referral, receives the help they need.
- Trusts to protect and enhance the security, affordability, and quality of their housing choice.

MH/OSTA Mission

Continue to grow a membership network of park homeowners who are increasingly better organized and able to provide and promote:

- Ready access to park homeowner education and information;
- Awareness, protection, and development of park homeowner rights;
- Connection to park homeowner support services provided by others;
- Preservation of manufactured home ownership as affordable housing.

*We are stronger together
than we are alone.*



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