



# THE Osta

## Quarterly Review

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### VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

#### Pat Negus



Pat has been an OSTA member since 2007, and until the election this past summer served a two-year term as president of the 75-member SongBrook chapter. She remains on the current board. As president, she oversaw two garage sales, a white elephant sale, and a Pennies from Heaven drive. She also was in charge of the silent auction at the state OSTA meeting for two years.

Retired as director of nursing at Mammoth Hospital in Mammoth, CA, she now enjoys the people and activities of the SongBrook community. She also plays Mah-jong and participates in a Zumba Gold group. She and her husband, Roy, had three children and eight grandchildren. Some years after his death, in 2012, she and Mike Guldager, who some may remember as “the Voice of the Ducks,” joined together in a commitment ceremony and are now enjoying life together.

### Manufactured Home Park Opportunity to Purchase

**A Summary of HB4038-1, created for the 2014 Legislative session, follows:**

**Ten-Day Notice to Tenants.** A park owner shall send a written notice to the tenants and to the state housing agency if the owner intends to market the park for sale, or when the owner receives an offer of purchase that the owner intends to consider, informing tenants that they have an *opportunity to compete* to buy the park.

The tenants have 10 calendar days to notify the owner in writing that they are interested in competing to buy the park; they must designate a representative to communicate with the owner, and they may request certain financial information from the owner about the park.

The notice must be sent to ALL tenants unless there is in place an active park purchase committee (or an existing committee such as a Committee of Seven whose responsibilities include considering park purchase) and the owner had met with them during the prior 12 months. Throughout this process, the park owner may seek and/or negotiate with other buyers.

**Financial Information.** Within the 10 day notice period, the tenants' designated contact person may make a written request for financial information including the asking price, if there is one; total income from the park; annual park-covered utility expenses; annual insurance expense, and the number of park-owned homes and current vacancies.

**Confidentiality.** The park owner may designate the financial information “confidential” (definitions and details included in the bill).

**Purchase Offer.** Within 15 calendar days following receipt of the owner's financial information, if the tenants wish to compete to purchase the park, they must form a corporate entity capable of purchasing the park, or associate with a nonprofit corporation or housing authority capable of purchasing the park or of providing park purchase assistance and advice and submit a written offer to purchase the park in the form of a purchase and sale agreement (“PSA”) together with a copy of the filed corporate articles or other verification of legal capacity to purchase and hold title.

**Owner's Options.** The owner may accept the tenants' offer, submit a counter-offer with different terms, or reject the offer. If the parties reach agreement on the purchase, the terms of the deal must be spelled out in the PSA

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## *From the Editor*

### **Manufactured Home Park Opportunity to Purchase—HB4038-1**

At press time, a couple of infamous California landlords were still fighting to weaken if not destroy HB4038-1, summarized on page 1. Updates will be available on *blogging with mh-osta*. If you need help accessing the blog, call your chapter president or one of the directors listed in the directory at the left on this page. The blog is where we keep you informed between issues of the Review.

### **Facing the Future**

Four people from the park I live in and my 98-year old uncle have died this winter. I miss them all. Furthermore, I hate to look in the mirror at the old lady who stares back at me! If you have feelings anything like mine, be sure to read Gus Daum's "Thoughts on Aging" in this issue. Also enjoy all the great things our member chapters are doing for elementary school children, some of who wouldn't have warm clothes or shoes or would go to bed hungry during school breaks if we didn't help out. If your park hasn't adopted a school, please consider it. For our Hispanic readers, Ron Prentice, my neighbor and tai chi buddy, provides a translated version of why we should belong to OSTA. Share it with your neighbors. We hope you enjoy our new mediation columnist Andy Wiselogle's advice. If you have a question, send it to our post office box and we'll forward it to her. Mediation is available in all counties and is free. I also hope you enjoy the story, "Too Many Dim Bulbs." The moral of the story is to keep your OSTA chapter active and working for the good of everyone in the park.

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## From The President...*Gary Walters*

Well folks here it is another year. It seems like the older I get the faster the year flies by. The board took the month of December off and started back to work in January. In February we started work revising the MH/OSTA strategic plan. The old one was drafted in July 2009, so it is pretty much outdated. It will probably take a few meetings to draft a new one. But rest assured it will get done.

John VanLandingham and his co-workers are hard at work drafting a bill they can present to the Legislature on the opportunity for residents to purchase their parks should they come up for sale.



I asked Lori Groves, our financial chair, and Ron Meyers, who is a new deputy district director, to write a bit about themselves so you can get to meet them. Lori has been our financial chair since summer, 2011, and Ron has just recently been recruited to help us in Lane County. Until next issue take care and be safe.

**Lori Groves, MH/OSTA Financial Chair** My husband, three children and I are living in Florence. I love living on the coast and being back in a small town where everyone knows everyone. I am working as the controller for the Lower Umpqua Hospital District in Reedsport. We are a public hospital that focuses on the community medical needs in a rural setting. My husband and I are both active with the Boys & Girls Club in Florence and with the Siuslaw schools. Our boys are 16 and eight, and our daughter is five. Any free time we have (or even when we don't!), we are outside playing sports with the kids.



Lori and Kevin Groves



Ron Meyers

**Ron Meyers, Lane County Deputy District Director** I graduated from South Eugene High School and entered into the U.S. Army where I flew helicopters and studied medicine. I attended Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, the University of Alabama, then after my discharge I attended Eugene Bible College, Lane Community College, Chemeketa Community College and Oregon State University.

I have worked in medicine, aviation as a commercial pilot and mechanic, and spent decades in computer consulting with networking, cartography and CAD. I have taught many classes in trade schools and have spent 40 years as a pastor, where I also have enjoyed teaching. I am passionate about helping people, and engage easily in most any career interest.

My wife and I have four children between us and 10 grandchildren. My wife retired last year and we are enjoying our time together. I enjoyed creating the Patrician MH-OSTA chapter here last fall and found the mentoring I received from Charlie Ricker most fascinating. I have Muscular Dystrophy and suffer its effects on my heart, but I look forward to assisting manufactured home park communities in every way that I can.



*A Special Feature on Adopt-a-School*

# Oregon MHP Residents Help School Children

**SongBrook, Eugene** For several years SongBrook MHP in Eugene has provided food, clothing, and household needs like toilet tissue, toothbrushes/ toothpaste, shampoo, laundry detergent to the children at their adopted school, Malabon Elementary. OSTA member Virginia Iverson, who taught fourth grade at Malabon before her retirement, spearheads efforts by SongBrook residents to make sure the children have food during December and Spring breaks. A shoe fairy fund is available all year for children and school supplies are purchased and delivered every fall. Fourth graders are very special to Ginny, so every year every fourth grader receives his or her own book, which in some cases, is the only gift that child gets. SongBrook residents buy and gift wrap the books which Ginny delivers along with the needed supplies. Here is a sample from the thank you letters she received:



*Virginia Iverson loads school supplies into the trunk of her car for delivery to Malabon School.*

- \* *Thank you for giving me the best book in the world! I started reading it right when I got home from school. When it was dinner time I was like, "mom can I read well Im eating?" But she said no. But right after dinner I started to read it again. I am 10 years old. I go to the best school ever, and I love reading.*
- \* *Thank you for the book. It was hilarias. I'm on chapter 1.*
- \* *To Virginia—Thank you for the gifts, I like my book it looks Interestic. I'm thinking about being a teacher or doctor. What do you think? Doctor or teacher. You choose.*
- \* *Thank you for giving me a book. I love to read because when I was little my gratgrandma loved to read.*
- \* *Thank you for the spontaneous book "Hank the Cowdog." I enjo it because it is just right for me.*

## Briarwood, Eugene

Residents made caps and scarves and bought socks for the children at their adopted elementary school, Danebo in Eugene. Shown on a snowy December day just before delivery of the warm items are (l-r) Sally Baker, Manager Donna Bilyeu, Georgeann Edwards, Katherine Barnes, Vi Brown, and Gwen Garey. Gwen spearheads efforts by her church to help the children at near-by Fairfield Elementary School.



## Adopt a School Continued

### Miller Estates, Central Point from Paula Chambers



*Louise LaFoya, left, chair of the Adopt-a-School committee, poses with the Central Point School kindergarten class and their thank you poster to the folks at Miller Estates.*

Miller Estates residents donated \$840 this year for the adopt-a-School program. Louise LaFoya, chair of the project, waited until after the school year began to be certain she was buying what was necessary to fulfill the children's needs. Louise says it is such a joy to be able to help the teachers and children, and the children love to see her come with all the goodies for their classroom. Residents also brought stuffed bears to the annual Christmas Party to donate to the Central Point police department to give to children under stress.



*Some of the items distributed at their adopted school include herbal seeds for the children to plant in the spring.*



### Lakeridge, Eugene from Barbara Mitchell

Members of the Happy Hookers, a stitching group at Lakeridge, have knitted and crocheted 174 scarves and 64 hats for needy students to three elementary schools near the park during the past three years. The schools are Gilham, Willagillespie, and Spring Creek. Favorites are the green and yellow "Go Ducks" scarves. MH/OSTA member Ken Rodakowsk has spearheaded collection of supplies and funds for Gilham School for several years. The School Supply Drive this year raised \$657, which was delivered to Gilham in September. Also, a Lakeridge couple made an anonymous gift of \$500 to Gilham School in November.

**Myra Lynne, Medford** Myra Lynne HOA adopted Oak Grove Elementary School grades 1-5 in 2011, and donated \$500-worth of school supplies, underwear, sweat pants, socks, belts, and backpacks. In 2012, they started saving Box Tops for Education and several times that school year gave big Ziploc bags full of box tops. The chapter also bought 12 coats for the kids in the community with 90 percent going to the school. In 2013, the chapter gave the school \$100 plus box tops and are continuing to save them and support the school because, as Gary Walters says, "Every little bit helps." In this photo Gary shows some of the items purchased for the children.



**Gainsborough, Eugene** Earl Koenig reports at least four or five deliveries of supplies to nearby Howard Elementary since September. The school administration tells him that Gainsborough residents are the only ones giving them supplies on a regular basis. Earl has been spearheading the park's donations since OSTA began the Adopt-a-School program in 2011.



## Good Ideas for Chapter Projects

### **Shadowbrook, Clackamas County - Letter-Writing Works!**

**Rita Loberger, Northern District Director**, stresses the importance of communication between residents and management and keeping a written record of that communication. She reports on the results of a letter writing campaign by Shadowbrook. Several of the residents had been denied use of one of the few handicapped parking spaces because the manager allowed a non-handicapped person to permanently park a vehicle in one of them rather than in his own driveway. According to the law, only people holding a handicapped tag can park in these designated spaces. The Committee of Seven organized a letter writing campaign and residents sent letters to management, the regional director and several other interested parties. The illegally parked vehicle is now stationed in the owner's driveway, returning a much-needed parking space to handicapped drivers. The next issue the letter writers will address is encouraging management to take follow-up action after sending notices to residents who are breaking the rules and letting their dogs run loose in the park.

### **Briarwood, Eugene - City Funds Available for Home Repairs**

**Sally Baker from Briarwood, one of our Helping Hands recipients**, shares information that might be useful to others in Eugene needing some minor home repairs. She called Bob Briscoe at the City of Eugene's department of Emergency Minor Home Repairs (541-682-5446), to get her front steps redone. He okayed the job and the city had funds available to help out paying the man she hired. Sally also recommends Larry, a handyman who she says is "a very nice older man who does excellent work" for \$10 an hour. His number is 541-731-0758. And don't forget, you can still apply to MH/OSTA for a Helping Hand. We pay 75% of the cost of approved projects.

### **Gainsborough, Eugene - This Park Prepares for Emergencies**

**Dave Patrick, HOA and OSTA president**, reports that at the annual meeting in January discussion centered on the Neighborhood Watch program and the expanded roles of the block captains during a manmade or natural disaster. In an emergency the clubhouse will be the information center, command post, and medical first aid center. Written guidelines and checklists have been developed. A donation of \$200 was given to the medical first aid center to purchase medical supplies for emergency purposes.

### **Western Carriage Estates, Medford - Fixing Frozen Water Pipes**

**Bruce McLaren, OSTA President**, writes us about water pipe breaks in the park. He says, "During the cold snap that we had in December, we had a few challenges with frozen and broken pipes, challenges that included finding shut-off valves. As the frozen pipes started to thaw, many of them leaked or broke, and it was sad seeing all that well water going down the drain, especially since this was a low water year for Southern Oregon. Now that the emergency repairs are made, we are preparing ourselves to deal with any future problems with water pipes.

I've made an information handout for our residents that reminds them that they are responsible for their pipes past the main shut-off valves and for some main switches. The handout also includes a generic diagram for a double wide mobile, including front, back, left and right sides, with room for residents to draw in their front, side and back porches as well as decks and where the access is located for getting under their house and where valves are located. Besides the main shut-off valve, there may be a shut-off valve for a line to the refrigerator, water heater, water softener etc. that should be on each individual plan. The location of valves that are under the house need to be shown on each plan.

Things like electric shut-off, and gas shut-off can usually be handled at the meters. We have given our folks the name of and phone number of someone who can help them with this big task, if they don't know or can't get all the information themselves. As we all are getting older we may well become less likely to be able to cope with these types of problems, so it's best to be *prepared before* disaster strikes.

**RIGHT<sup>2</sup>KNOW Statute Study Guide****ORS 90.510 Continued  
and ORS 90.740**

*(Save and Study at your next MH/OSTA Chapter Meeting)*

**Ch. 90.510****Rental Agreements, Statements of Policy, Rules & Regulations**

*(In the last issue we discussed Ch. 90.510 about Rental Agreements and Statements of Policy. In this issue we continue with 90.510 about Rules and Regulations and 90.740 about Tenant Obligations)*

**All Residents of Manufactured Home Parks should have a Statement of Policy, a Rental Agreement, and the Park's Rules and Regulations.**

Month-to-month rental agreements and rules, once signed by the resident and the landlord, can't be changed unless both parties agree or there are changes in the state laws that govern manufactured home parks. To repeat, there won't be changes in the rules unless both resident and landlord agree or unless the state laws are changed.

Some parks' residents talk about having **leases** instead of month-to-month rental agreements. The term "lease" is not used in the Oregon Residential Landlord/Tenant Act (ORS Chapter 90). Instead what many of us think of as leases are "**fixed term rental agreements.**" These are set for at least two years. Upon reaching the end of the fixed term, these agreements can be renewed for another fixed term. To renew a fixed-term agreement, the landlord "shall submit the proposed new rental agreement to the tenant at least 60 days prior to the ending date of the term. The landlord shall include with the proposed agreement a written statement that summarizes any **new or revised terms, conditions, rules or regulations**" (Chapter 90.545(2)). The tenant must accept or reject the renewal in writing at least 30 days before the lease expires. If the landlord fails to offer a new lease, "the tenancy renews as a month-to-month tenancy." OSTA has felt that the 30-day rental agreement is preferable because the rules can't be changed—unless state laws change—if 51% of the park residents object. With fixed-term agreements, you can be handed new rules at every renewal, as long as they're the same as new tenants have been offered for the preceding six months. Will 51% of your neighbors object to any new rules your landlord hands you?

**In Your Chapter Meetings Consider Studying the following on Rules and Regs from ORS 90.510:**

**Section 90.510 states:**

(6) Every landlord who rents a space for a manufactured dwelling or floating home shall provide rules and regulations concerning the tenant's use and occupancy of the premises. A violation of the rules and regulations may be cause for termination of a rental agreement. However, this subsection does not create a presumption that all rules and regulations are identical for all tenants at all times. A rule or regulation shall be enforceable against the tenant only if:

(1) The rule or regulation:

- (a) Promotes the convenience, safety or welfare of the tenants;
- (b) Preserves the landlord's property from abusive use; or
- (c) Makes a fair distribution of services and facilities held out for the general use of the tenants.

## RIGHT<sup>2</sup>KNOW Continued

(2) The rule or regulation:

- (a) Is reasonably related to the purpose for which it is adopted and is reasonably applied;
- (b) Is sufficiently explicit in its prohibition, direction or limitation of the tenant's conduct to fairly inform the tenant of what the tenant shall do or may not do to comply; and
- (c) Is not for the purpose of evading the obligations of the landlord.

(3) The landlord may propose changes in rules or regulations, including changes that make a substantial modification of the landlord's bargain with a tenant, by giving written notice of the proposed rule or regulation change, and unless tenants of at least 51 percent of the eligible spaces in the facility object in writing within 30 days of the date the notice was served, the change shall become effective for all tenants of those spaces on a date not less than 60 days after the date that the notice was served by the landlord.

(4) One tenant of record per eligible space may object to the rule or regulation change through either:

- (a) A signed and dated written communication to the landlord; or
- (b) A petition format that is signed and dated by tenants of eligible spaces and that includes a copy of the proposed rule or regulation and a copy of the notice.

(5) If a tenant of an eligible space signs both a written communication to the landlord and a petition under subsection (4) of this section, or signs more than one written communication or petition, only the latest signature of the tenant may be counted.

(6) Notwithstanding subsection (4) of this section, a proxy may be used only if a tenant has a disability that prevents the tenant from objecting to the rule or regulation change in writing.

(7) The landlord's notice of a proposed change in rules or regulations required by subsection (3) of this section must be given or served as provided in ORS 90.155 and must include:

- (a) Language of the existing rule or regulation and the language that would be added or deleted by the proposed rule or regulation change; and
- (b) A statement substantially in the following form, with all blank spaces in the notice to be filled in by the landlord:

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### NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE OR REGULATION CHANGE

The landlord intends to change a rule or regulation in this facility.

The change will go into effect unless tenants of at least 51 percent of the eligible spaces object in writing within 30 days. Any objection must be signed and dated by a tenant of an eligible space.

The number of eligible spaces as of the date of this notice is: \_\_\_\_\_. Those eligible spaces are (space or street identification): \_\_\_\_\_.

The last day for a tenant of an eligible space to deliver a written objection to the landlord is \_\_\_\_\_ (landlord fill in date).

Unless tenants in at least 51 percent of the eligible spaces object, the proposed rule or regulation will go into effect on \_\_\_\_\_.

The parties may attempt to resolve disagreements regarding the proposed rule or regulation change by using the facility's informal dispute resolution process.

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## RIGHT<sup>2</sup>KNOW Continued

(8) A good faith mistake by the landlord in completing those portions of the notice relating to the number of eligible spaces that have tenants entitled to vote or relating to space or street identification numbers does not invalidate the notice or the proposed rule or regulation change.

(9) After the effective date of the rule or regulation change, when a tenant continues to engage in an activity affected by the new rule or regulation to which the landlord objects, the landlord may give the tenant a notice of termination of the tenancy pursuant to ORS 90.630. The notice shall include a statement that the tenant may request a resolution through the facility's informal dispute resolution process by giving the landlord a written request within seven days from the date the notice was served. If the tenant requests an informal dispute resolution, the landlord may not file an action for possession pursuant to ORS 105.105 to 105.168 until 30 days after the date of the tenant's request for informal dispute resolution or the date the informal dispute resolution is complete, whichever occurs first.

(10) An agreement under this section may not require informal dispute resolution of disputes relating to:

- (a) Facility closure;
- (b) Facility sale; or
- (c) Rent, including but not limited to amount, increase and nonpayment.

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### Florida MHP Resident Asks Us to Help

#### **Fight Ruthless Landlords and Strengthen Social Security**

*(Ed.'s Note: Cheryl Condo sent the following letter to Rita Loberger, who reports that rents are as high as \$900 a month in some of the parks owned by this corporation, which owns parks in 30 states including Oregon.)*

I'm currently a manufactured homeowner living in Countryside at Vero Beach, Florida, which is owned by Equity LifeStyle Properties, Inc. (ELS). After retiring from TJ Maxx in 2004, I was excited to find a housing situation where I could live out my retirement years comfortably. Unfortunately, like many of the homeowners living in ELS properties across the country, I find myself struggling to make ends meet due to exorbitant and aggressive rent increases.

It seems that every year ELS enacts rent increases by upwards of 4% per year, but without any needed infrastructure investment in our community. Our clubhouse has remained unrepaired since a storm damaged it in 2004 while lampposts are rusting to their core. Homeowners are now required to pay for their own water and sewer service, something that used to be included in monthly rent.

Many of us homeowners are beginning to push back against ELS. This past November, a number of my neighbors and I held a picket to draw attention to our plight. Only through banding together in one common voice will we be able to ensure that ELS treats us with dignity and respect. ELS has already begun to respond by painting the lampposts and replacing some of the furniture at our community clubhouse which had been damaged. However, we have much farther to go.

**Another way we're fighting for economic and retirement security is by calling upon Congress and the President to strengthen Social Security.** We need to drown out those promoting cuts to the program by putting pressure on our Members of Congress to push for improvements, such as 'Scrapping the Cap', developing a better Cost of Living Formula (CPI – E) and establishing a Caregiver Credit. Such improvements would strengthen Social Security for those currently receiving it and for generations to come. Please join me in sending a message to your Member of Congress calling upon them to fight for improvements in our Social Security program.

## Why You Should Belong to OSTA

We live in manufactured home communities. We may own our homes, but we rent the land from landlords. Landlords are more interested in the money they can make from us than they are in our well-being. So we need to be good neighbors and look out for each other.

How do we help each other? One of the most important ways is by joining together as chapters of Manufactured Housing/OSTA.

How does OSTA help us? For nearly 20 years, OSTA has been active in making state laws that protect us. Some of the laws are listed here. They tell you that you and your neighbors have the right to:

1. Form a residents' association
2. Object to changes in park rules
3. Complain to your managers without fear of them trying to evict or fine you
4. Have written copies of your rental agreement, the park rules, and a statement of policy
5. Be given a 90 days' notice of a rent increase
6. Be notified in writing of any rules you disobey
7. Have a safe and healthful park
8. To keep your month-to-month (30-day) rental agreement and not have to sign a new one
9. Be protected from eviction except for not paying rent or utilities, for illegal activities, or for violating park rules
10. Receive a 24-hour notice before the manager enters your space, unless there is an emergency
11. Legislators work with MH/OSTA because they know we are a strong organization. Our votes are important to them, and the stronger we are, the better they listen to us and work for us.

Making laws to protect us is OSTA's main job. But we also encourage you to know your neighbors, to be friendly, to have get-togethers, and to make your community a pleasant and safe place to live.

Please help us stay strong. There is strength in numbers and power in organization. With your \$30 a year membership, you will be keeping us strong and powerful. Thank you!

## Por Qué Usted Debe ser Socio de OSTA

Los que somos socios de MH/OSTA vivimos en colonias de casas prefabricadas. Las casas son de nosotros, pero el terreno no nos pertenece a nosotros, sino a los dueños de los parques donde vivimos. A los dueños les interesa más el dinero que les pagamos que nuestro bienestar. Por eso, nos hemos unido a la asociación de MH/OSTA para ser buenos vecinos y trabajar juntos para las comunidades en que vivimos.

Por casi 20 años MH/OSTA ha participado activamente en la elaboración de las leyes estatales que nos protegen, algunas de las cuales se mencionan aquí a continuación. Estas leyes dicen que usted y sus vecinos tienen derecho a:

1. formar una asociación de inquilinos
2. oponerse a cualquier cambio en las reglas del parque
3. quejarse a los dueños sin arriesgar que le desalojen o pongan una multa
4. tener una copia escrita de su contrato de alquiler y de las reglas del parque
5. ser notificado con 90 días de anticipación de cualquier aumento del alquiler
6. ser notificado por escrito de cualquier infracción de las reglas del parque que pueda haber cometido
7. vivir en un parque seguro y saludable
8. mantener su contrato de alquiler de a 30 días (o sea, de mes en mes) sin tener que firmar otro nuevo
9. estar protegido contra el desalojo, excepto por no pagar el alquiler o los servicios públicos, por cometer actividades ilegales, o por haber violado las reglas del parque
10. recibir un aviso con 24 horas de anticipación antes que el dueño del parque entre en su casa, excepto en caso de emergencia.
11. Los legisladores nos escuchan porque saben que MH/OSTA es una organización fuerte. Nuestros votos son importantes para ellos, y cuanto más fuertes seamos, más importancia les dan a nuestras quejas y a nuestros consejos.

Lo que nos interesa sobre todo es conseguir leyes que nos protejan como inquilinos. También queremos formar verdaderas comunidades donde nos conocemos, nos reunimos de vez en cuando, y donde vivimos contentos y seguros en nuestros parques.

Le pedimos que nos ayude a mantener nuestras fuerzas como asociación. Más numerosos somos, más fuerza y más poder tenemos. Si quiere unirse con nosotros, les pedimos una cuota de a \$30 por año. Con esto, seguiremos fuertes y poderosos. —translation into Spanish by Ron Prentice



## Where's Rita?

*(Ed.'s Note: Inspired by the "Where's Waldo?" books, we challenge you to find Rita Loberger in this photo taken at the 2013 Manufactured Home Owners of America convention in Denver. Hint: See photo of Rita on p. 14.)*

## A Security Alarm You Already Have



We tried a suggestion from the Myra Lynne MHOA newsletter and found it really works! Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone tries to get into your house, just press the panic button on the key ring. The alarm will be set off and the horn will continue to sound until you turn it off. Also, in an emergency, such as a fall or a heart attack where you can't reach a phone but have your keys close by, you could use your car alarm to summon help from a neighbor or passerby.

## Things We Learn from Those Forwarded E-Mails

from Judy Morton

The Canadian police warn that you should never use the cruise control when it's raining and the pavement is wet or icy. The reason? If your car begins to hydro-plane and the tires lose contact with the pavement, you lose control and your car will accelerate to a higher rate of speed.



## Thoughts on Aging - Fixing Things



A couple of thoughts, really. The first, in a class I was leading years ago, a young fellow joked, "I want to be shot at age ninety, shot by a jealous husband as I'm crawling out a bedroom window," and I just remembered a quote from some author, "Nobody wants to live to be ninety--until they're eighty-nine."

By the time this appears, I will have become ninety and will feel better physically than I did a year ago. Some one or two of you may remember that I banged up a hip last year from a bike fall. I hobbled around, complained, walked with a cane, went to a massage therapist several times, and was a general nuisance to others. Finally, my doctor scheduled me with a physical therapist. The PT guy checked my range-of-motion in all directions. He demonstrated and assigned a set of daily exercises for me to perform. It took several months, and about fifteen minutes each day, but it worked. I'm not running up and down stadium stairs as I did when I was twenty, but am walking freely and climbing stairs in comfort.

It reminded me again of what I should have learned at twenty. For many problems, there is someone out there that can help. IF we want it fixed, IF we are willing to listen, IF we are willing to do what they say, and IF we do what they suggest, many of our problems will go away---even at ninety, or eighty-nine, or forty.

This is not to make light of those serious problems that can affect our lives, but as I reflect, I often wasted more time and energy fussing over small nuisances than in fixing them. Probably no one else does that, or do they?

**Correction:** In the December Review, the article about MCRC was written by Carene Davis-Stitt and the one about ReHome by Mike Berg. We appreciate their write-ups and apologize for the mix-up on the bylines.



## Chapter News

### To All Members: Member Donation Drive

We continue to seek corporate donors to contribute to our Aging-in-Place programs. One question corporations ask is, "How many of your members have donated to these programs?" The question isn't how much money we've given but rather how many of us have given. We're starting our count with a recent **donation from Marvin Baker at Salem Greene Mobile Estates**. We thank him as our first donor in this new drive. Our goal is for 1,000 members to give a little bit, which can be sent with renewal checks or collected at chapter meetings (in that case, please keep a list of names!) We'll print a running count of the number of donors in The OSTA Review and on the blog.

### Myra Lynne, Medford

Gary Walters reports that the Myra Lynne HOA members provided a family with three children in the park Christmas dinner, toys, and gift cards. Homeowners were generous in their donations. Lois Urton gave a warm blanket to a neighbor whose house caught on fire in the early hours of a December morning and made coffee for the firemen. Residents continue to save Box Tops for Education and Campbell's labels to help out at Oak Grove Elementary School.

### Falcon Wood Village, Eugene

Lynne Keith, president of the Falcon Wood OSTA chapter, reports that they had a short meeting in early February. There were 10 in attendance, including three who were not members. It was a small but enthusiastic turn out and she hopes to have three new members.

### Sunset View, Brookings

Chapter president Jan Henault reports: Because we don't have a clubhouse and the rental fee for the fire hall where we have our meetings has doubled, we decided to reduce the number of meetings to two per year with interesting speakers and encourage more homeowners to attend. The board and our callers will be meeting more often.

### Lakeridge, Eugene

The Lakeridge chapter recently elected three new board members for two-year terms effective February 1. They include Tom Mitchell, president; Dennis Gardner, vice president, and Russ McDaniel, board member. Anne Reynolds, board member, continues in the second year of her term. Outgoing board members included Barbara Mitchell, president, and Dick Clark, vice president, who both completed two-year terms of the first official Lakeridge chapter.

### Meadow Park Mobile Estate, Corvallis

The annual yard and bake sale, always a success, was so again this year. It's the only fundraiser. The park also has monthly breakfasts. The association, under president Maggie Polizzo, adopted bylaws at their fall meeting. Newsletter editor Judy McDaniel, shared the following verse from the park newsletter:

*Are you an active resident, the kind who would be missed?  
 Or are you just contented that your name is on the list?  
 Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the crowd?  
 Or do you stay at home and fret both long and loud?  
 Do you take an active part to help your community along?  
 Or are you satisfied to be the kind who'll just belong?  
 Do you help plan the programs, get new members, quick,  
 Or leave the work for just a few, then talk about the "clique"?  
 There's quite a list of work involved that means success, if done,  
 But it can be accomplished with the help of everyone.  
 So attend the meetings regularly and help with hand and heart.  
 Don't just be a resident, but take an active part!*

### SongBrook, Eugene

At the semi-annual meeting scheduled for 11 a.m. March 12, an OSTA chapter president will be elected to lead the board voted in last fall. Guest speaker will be John Van Landingham, Lane Co. legal aid attorney and OSTA state board member.

### Eugene Tri-Park Merger

Judy Morton recently helped OSTA members and potential members plan a merger of the Woodland Park, Briarwood, and Daneland parks. **Watch for Notice of a Lane District Meeting in late March, coming via emails, posters, and the blog.**

# Ask Anndy

Dear Anndy,

Our OSTA director says we should always take someone along when we go to make a complaint to the manager. I don't really complain, just ask some questions about the rules. The manager doesn't like us asking questions or bothering her, so I think taking a bunch of people with me will make her mad. Wouldn't it be better to go alone? Or should I just not ever complain?

--Mary (not my real name)

First of all I want to say "Bravo to you" for considering how it would be from the manager's position, to have a bunch of people complain. One of the keys to managing conflict is to consider the other person's point of view. Your consideration is that the manager might get mad if a bunch of people came to complain.

And here's another consideration: Nobody likes to hear complaints. Sure that's the manager's job, to fix matters at the park for the residents. But there's a way to name the problem that isn't a demand or a nasty complaint.

Think through and talk about WHY it's a problem to you, and what you need or want that is blocked by the problem. For example: You're aware that your complaint is the parking rules aren't enforced. When you think about why it's a problem to you, you think: It's that truck that Harry always leaves in the same spot. I can't see around it, and I'm afraid I'll hit something. That scares me! I need to be able to see safely on the drive.

So when you talk to the manager, you talk about what you need. "Say, Mr. Manager, I can't see safely when there's a truck parked on this spot, and I'd like the parking rules enforced so that area is clear." If you were the manager, wouldn't that be easier to hear than a demanding complaint?

Or maybe you had the same complaint (parking rules aren't enforced), but when you thought it through, it was because Harry (same truck, same spot) didn't invite you on his last fishing trip, and you're mad at him. In this case, what you want is a better friendship with Harry, or at least a chance to go fishing. Complaining to the manager would not get you what you really want. So you'd need to think of other possible solutions to getting down to the river with your pole.

The third aspect I want to mention is that it's easier to address problems with someone with whom you have a friendly relationship. I'm not suggesting best buds, but if you can say "howdy" to the manager in passing, or bring him some of that fresh fish that you just caught, without any complaint, that builds a little friendship. A colleague of mine once had a job with some tension between the various personalities in the office. They decided to just say "good morning" to each other when they came in, and that was the beginning of everyone getting along.

So I've suggested some positive ways to address a concern you have with the manager. It's good to build a working relationship with the manager. It's helpful to tell the manager how the problem affects you and what you need. It would be useful to bring someone with you to talk to the manager when you think your associate will help you be clear or will help you remember the discussion. And probably bring one person, not a bunch.

As the famous advice columnist Abigail Van Buren said: "People who fight fire with fire usually end up with ashes."



Anndy Wiselogle

*(Ed.'s Note: Questions for Anndy's next column need to be sent to MH/OSTA, P.O. Box 701, Springfield, OR 97477, no later than May 1, to be considered for the June issue.)*



## Help Make MH Ownership Affordable from Rita Loberger

Ishbel Dickens, executive director of National Manufactured Housing of America (NMHOA), has said, “Manufactured housing is not one of the options Congressmen generally consider when affordable housing issues arise.” So perhaps when a Congressman wants to promote affordable housing, we could encourage a letter-writing campaign to suggest that people who buy manufactured houses should be helped in their efforts by having access to 30-year fixed rate mortgages and reasonably-priced house insurance. Other ideas are welcome and worth considering at your

chapter meetings.

Washington State Congressman Denny Heck has indicated interest in promoting growth in the housing market. He has said, “The situation we find ourselves in today requires new, creative thinking. Industry leaders and policymakers should consider what changes need to be made to restore the housing market to health.” At a recent conference in Tacoma, he and HUD secretary Shaun Donovan discussed Representative Heck’s housing reform principals, including access to 30-year fixed rate mortgages. “These are the keystones of being able to achieve the dream of homeownership and are an under-appreciated part of saving for retirement,” the Congressman said. These mortgages must also be available in good times and bad so that the system functions well. And he affirmed that we need to commit to affordable housing, because “shelter is...a basic human needs.” In response, we say, “Congressman Heck, Manufactured housing should be high on your list of “Affordable Housing” options.”

*(Ed.’s Note: See Rita’s information on Shadowbrook’s letter-writing campaign under “Good Ideas for Chapter Projects”).*

## **A Mystery Story**

### **The Case of Too Many Dim Bulbs**

by Jane Capron

It was 10 p.m. and Mary Nell Callender, the president of Archwood Manufactured Home Park’s newly formed OSTA chapter, was just settling into sleep when the phone rang.

“Mary Nell?” came a frantic voice. “Sophie’s disappeared! You’ve got to do something!”

Mary Nell recognized the voice of her neighbor, Sarah Jones. Sarah and Sophie shared a double-wide so they could afford the yearly park rent increases and utility bills.

“Disappeared? What do you mean *disappeared*?”

“I mean she should have been home an hour ago. She just went for a little walk. She’s never gone longer than half an hour.”

“Well, maybe she stopped to visit with someone,” Mary Nell said, yawning. Why in the world couldn’t Sophie take her walks during the daytime?

“You’re the OSTA president,” Sarah said. “I think you should do something.”

“Okay, Sarah. Try to relax. I’ll call Denise and we’ll see if we can find Sophie.” Denise was the manager.

Suddenly there was a sharp report, like a fire cracker or maybe a gunshot. “What was that?” Mary Nell said. “Did you hear that, Sarah?”

“Oh dear,” Sarah whispered. “I hope nothing’s happened to Arnie. He’s out looking for Sophie and he’s got a gun.”

Mary Nell put on her robe and grabbed a flashlight, which didn’t prevent her from stumbling over something in the street, maybe a bag of trash, just as Denise, the manager approached. “We’ve got to get more light,” Mary Nell said and felt Denise stiffen at the implied criticism. Mary Nell shone her light onto whatever had tripped her and both she and Denise gasped to see it was Arnie.

“Arnie!” Denise said. “Can you hear me? Are you okay?” What happened?”

“I’m shot!” Arnie said. “Save me.”





"What's going on around here?" Mary Nell said. "Why can't we get some lights? Sophie's missing, Arnie's shot, and we can't even see well enough to figure out what's happening. If you'd replace burnt-out bulbs, maybe we wouldn't have so many problems," Mary Nell said testily as she dialed 9-1-1 on her cell phone. "We've got a man shot and a woman missing out here at Archwood," she reported. "Huh? Well, I'll ask him." She bent over Arnie and shone her flashlight on his face. "Where are you hurt?" she asked.

"Ooh," he moaned. "It's my leg."

Denise held her light on Arnie's leg as Mary Nell pushed up his pant leg to reveal a gash on his shin. "That doesn't look like a bullet wound," Denise said. "I think you tripped over the pothole and got gouged by that chunk of asphalt."

"Why don't you patch that hole?" Arnie whined. "I could sue."

"You've just got a little scrape," Denise said. "Hardly any blood. Besides, I wrote the owners about the road two months ago. It's not my fault they haven't gotten things fixed."

She and Mary Nell hoisted Arnie to his feet and made sure he could flex and walk a little.

"Arnie, did you fire a gun?" Denise asked.

"It was an accident. It just went off by itself when I fell. I was out looking for Sophie."

"Sophie's missing?" Denise said. "Since when?"

"Sarah said she was supposed to be home a couple hours ago."

"She doesn't do anything all day. Why doesn't she walk when she can see?" Denise said, irritated. "This is a stupid time to walk. You can't see anything out here."

"Light bulbs, Denise, would help. There are at least ten lights out last time I counted. We need more light."

At this point they got it, flashing, rotating blue and red lights from an approaching police car, an ambulance, and two fire engines. "Well, this certainly brightens up the night," Mary Nell said.

People started coming out of their homes, some waving flashlights so they wouldn't trip over shrubs or potholes, most wearing bathrobes and slippers. "What's happening?" more than one person asked. Any excitement any time of day or night was welcome. "Is it Sophie?" Sarah asked, her eyes wet behind her bifocals and her lip trembling.

"It's just Arnie," Denise said. "He tripped and fell a little bit."

"We heard a gun!" someone said.

"It was an accident. Nobody's hurt," Denise told the police.

"But where's Sophie?" Sarah said, her voice choking as she looked around, trying to see in the dark. "Oh, Mr. Policeman, you've got to find my friend Sophie."

The two policemen looked at each other. "You people go in and turn on your porch lights and some house lights. You ought to burn lights every night, it's so dark here."

"Lights cost money," someone said.

"You call your power company. Burning lights all night costs pennies. Pennies! Light is the best crime deterrent there is. We need to check the area. Arnie's gunshot may have found a mark."

"Sophie?" Sarah gasped.

"She's missing, isn't she?" the policeman said. "You all go turn on lights and lock your doors and stay inside. Let us do our job." He turned to Denise and Mary Nell. "Who's the manager here?"

"I am," Denise said.

"You better get some working bulbs in these lights."

As Mary Nell started towards her house, a figure rose up before her in the darkness, and she screamed.

"Oh! I'm sorry, dear. I didn't mean to frighten you."

"Sophie!" Mary Nell reached out and hugged her neighbor. "We were so worried. Sarah's beside herself. Where have you been?"

"Oh, dear, I didn't mean to upset anybody. You see, I wasn't sleepy, so I went for a walk and stoped off for a chat and a cup of decaf with that nice Mrs. Unger out on the highway. What a lovely lady. We had such a good visit I'm afraid time just got away from me. Surely all these big fire engines and police aren't here because of me?"

"Well, sort of," Mary Nell said. "Go tell Sarah you're okay. I'll tell everybody else."

The next day at the OSTA meeting, everybody promised to leave their porch and carport lights on all night, no matter what the cost. And Denise, who was an invited guest, announced that she'd bought light bulbs with her own money and changed those she could reach. The maintenance man would change the high bulbs later that afternoon after he finished patching the potholes. Arnie was recognized as a hero and told that he should turn in his gun and never be heroic again. Sophie offered Snickerdoodles to go with the coffee.



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- Ready access to park homeowner education and information;
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FIRST NAME

NAME OF SECOND PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD

ADDRESS

SPACE NUMBER

CITY/STATE/ZIP

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CELL PHONE WITH AREA CODE

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