

Communities & Parks Communiqué:

A MANUFACTURED HOME COMMUNITY AND MOBILE HOME PARK NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Curt Hames	1-2
Owner's Call	1
All Rent, All Time	3
MHP Owners' Symposium	4

NAI Iowa Realty Commercial

**A Berkshire Hathaway
Company**



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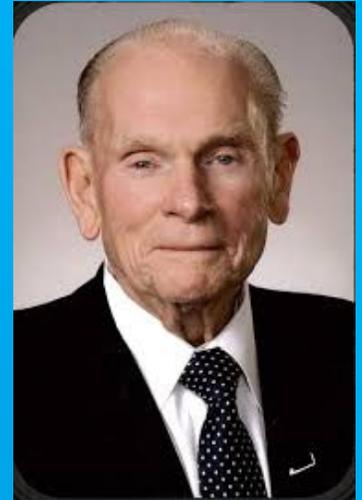
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Curt Hames, In Memoriam

A Manufactured Home giant and a leader passed away May 1st, 2017. He was 92 years old and worked up until the end at the magnificent family business he founded, Hames Homes and Hames Manufactured Home Communities. Always on the forefront of all things concerning manufactured homes and manufactured home communities, Curt was a whirlwind of business, family, and political accomplishment. Perhaps Curt may best be described for his uncommon common sense, his love of family, and his vision to advance the image of mobile homes and the parks.



Curt built two wonderful communities in Cedar Rapids. The first one he built, somehow didn't attract much media or citizen attention. Even though Curt was able to annex the land into the City, it didn't have many residential neighbors. Anyway, he rather easily won the rezoning without the usual NIMBY free for all. The second community was a different story. Curt wisely surmised that the press and the local citizenry would mount a full court press against the new park. What did Curt do? He transported his loyal residents of the nearby first community he built by bus to the public hearing. The mobile home park residents packed the public hearing room and spoke favorably of their desire to have another mobile home park built in the vicinity. There were only a few seats for the naysayers. He successfully obtained zoning for that community.

Naturally, it didn't hurt that Curt cultivated friendships with the City Council members. He was known for not only his financial support of politicians but was also famous for his 'pep talks', especially when the political chips were down. Curt had friends and cordial relationships with the masses; everyone from his residents, his employees, politicians on the local, state, national and international scene! When a young Terry

2017 June

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MHP Owner's Call:

Our Newsletter is now
a call-in show!
Thursday at 1 pm
central.

Dial: 1 408 638 0968

ID: 948 357 166

Branstead (former Iowa Governor and newly appointed Ambassador to China) was running for governor, it was Curt that formed a nucleus of support-financial and otherwise-to elect Governor Branstead. Ultimately, Branstead won and holds the record as the longest serving governor of Iowa.

When our family was embroiled in local rezoning for a new manufactured home community in the 1990's, Curt came to the rowdy public hearings, along with his wife, Norma, and son, Troy, and spoke in favor of the new MH community. It took courage for him to speak up in a packed City Hall chamber, full of Mobile Home Park "against-ers". Not only did we obtain the MHP zoning but Curt Hames leased every vacant new site as the lots became available to install a home. That was a godsend because when a new park is built, it hemorrhages cash in the beginning, like you wouldn't believe. Curt knew there was a pent-up demand for new mobile homes in the market and he delivered home after home for years to come. That was the kind of guy Curt was.

Curt was an unbeatable combination of an extraordinary home retailer and community owner, operator and developer. One of the best hallmarks of his success as a home retailer and community owner, operator, and developer is the cleanliness of his communities and the sense of community. Many residents have lived in his communities for decades and referred family and friends to the home sales center to buy new homes, so satisfied were they with Hames Homes and Hames Communities. Without a doubt, Curt's communities are some of the nicest parks in the Midwest.

His legacy includes his leadership of producing business friendly landlord-tenant laws for Iowa. There is no licensing, no rent control, and swift resolution of abandoned homes in the parks. Another important legacy was his relentless push for mobile home parks to be assessed and taxed as residential, not commercial real estate. In Iowa, the assessed value of mobile home parks has been rolled back by 40% (5% per year for 8 years). This achievement took years to get passed in the state legislature. But then, Quitting was never a part of Curt's lexicon.

Curt will be dearly missed by all who knew him. Many times, I told Curt he was my role model. And he was for his vision, his energy, his leadership, and his tenacity. Curt is survived by his wife, Norma; children, Barbara, Troy, and Cynthia; grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



How to Collect **ALL** of the Rent, **ALL** of the Time (Originally published May 2013, Updated)

1. **Communicate Often.**

Remind residents frequently of the policy on late rent and the **savings to the resident** for paying on time. It is in the resident's best interest to pay on time

2. **Take Action.**

File the proper notices the day that rent is late. Tracking down the resident, leaving voicemails and so on is fine, as long as the eviction process is proceeding.

3. **Follow the Golden Rule.**

Everyone need to pay their fair share (we call it rent) to keep the community operating. It is disrespectful to the residents who pay on time, if others are late with rent. Ultimately, the costs of filing on the late payers are passed through to all residents as a cost of doing business.

4. **Weekly Payments.**

Consider putting late payers on a weekly payment schedule

5. **Be Clear.**

When a resident calls the office to say they will be late with their rent, NEVER say "Okay". It is NOT okay for them to pay the rent late, ever!

6. **Offer Suggestions.**

Give the residents a list of ways to raise rent money. Ideas such as having a yard sale, selling something, borrowing against life insurance, working extra hours or getting a part time or seasonal part time job, borrowing from friends or family, seeking aid from their minister, getting a cash advance on their credit card, purchasing fewer discretionary items (pizza, pay per view, beer). Go over their monthly budget with them. What can be eliminated? This might sound like overstepping a manager's bounds by asking the late payer about their money. Where money is involved it is the manager's job to collect. A manager that asks the late paying resident about how that resident could raise money is doing their job.

7. **Be Firm.**

Be compassionate, be respectful, be professional, but be firm and do not waiver from the fact that they owe you money. By being consistently insistent on collecting rent, asking the resident a lot of question about their budget and what they can do to pay the rent, the non-payers might decide it is easier to just pay the rent rather than have to go through an inquisition with you and / or the manager. This is the point. You want the late payer to feel like it is too much of a hassle to pay late; it's easier for them to pay on time.

8. **Use a Non-Payment of Rent Schedule. (on our Website)**

1. On 6th day of the month (after grace period) 3-day notice: posted on door and mailed.
2. 7th day of the month: fill out small claims paperwork, put in envelope and tape to door.
3. 8th day of the month: Phone call (if not reachable –note on door to call management).
4. 9th day of the month: List of costs posted on door –no discount, \$85 filing fee, \$41 service fee, minimum \$100 legal fee, \$15 late charge: minimum \$256 (for ours).
5. 10th day of the month: Statement of charges (bill/transaction listing) taped to door.
6. 11th day of the month: Statement of costs of late fees, discounts missed, etc. from the last 12 months
7. 13th day of the month: 24 hour notice to pay to avoid legal action

WHAT IS YOUR PARK/COMMUNITY WORTH?

In the last 36 months, have you:

1. Added homes to your park or community?
2. Lost occupancy?
3. Increased rent?
4. Passed through water & sewer to your residents?
5. Experienced changes to you operating expenses?

IF YOU ANSWERED YES, YOU NEED TO KNOW YOUR PARK'S CURRENT WORTH!

I am always happy to do a FREE, NO OBLIGATION, Real Estate Review for your park(s). You ought to know today's market value of your real estate investments.

If this is something you would like, simply give me a call at 319-378-6786 or email me at

joannestevens@iowarealty.com

Joanne Stevens is a specialist in listing and selling mobile home parks and manufactured housing communities throughout the U.S.

With her 20 plus years of experience in developing, zoning, owning, retailing, managing, turning around and brokering parks, she can maximize your sale price.

<http://joannemstevens.com/>



SAVE THE DATE:
George Allen's 26th Annual International Networking Round Table
 September 6-8,
 2017, Indianapolis,
 Indiana
www.community-investor.com

MHP
 Broker-in-
 Training
 exhausted
 from looking
 at parks all
 day.

The MHP Owners' Symposium by Joanne Stevens

Join us in Cedar Rapids, IA, December 11th & 12th, 2017 for an informative conference featuring Accountants, Appraisers, Lawyers and Brokers discussing Capital Gains Tax, inheritance laws, 1031 exchanges, market value, & everything YOU need to plan your future. Every attendee gets a Real Estate Review.

HAVE BUYERS! NEED LISTINGS!