

Wide Open Government -- for Big Business



A Hidden Hand. John Demco, founder of the Demco Law Firm, is a Windermere lawyer and broker. He/his attorneys write, revise, and teach real estate laws for DOL, while at the same time representing Windermere agents before DOL disciplinary authorities. He owns/owned multiple Windermere franchises around the state. In one incident, two of his agents (Samantha Saul and Linda Gabelein) gained the complete trust of Emma Endicott, a mentally confused, elderly widow who owned 24 acres of waterfront-view property on Whidbey Island. Saul persuaded Emma to give her power of attorney, then persuaded Emma to sell parcels of her property to them and their relatives at prices far below market value. When Emma's sons found out and objected, Demco told them that the sales were final. When the sons sued, Demco defended the agents and lost at trial: The court found the agents had violated Washington's Abuse of Vulnerable Adults Act. Demco appealed and lost again.



John W. Jacobi, former banker and founder of the Windermere syndicate. According to Windermere's web page, Jacobi is a "powerful political force in Washington." Advertising that Windermere adheres to "the highest of ethical standards," Windermere forces its wronged customers to file law suits, then tries to ruin them with aggressive litigation. As the customers face ruin, Windermere offers them a fraction of their damages and insists they sign a "Dark Clause" preventing from ever speaking or writing about their experience. And the Department of Licensing and the Attorney General's office looks on.

"Open Government" in Washington is a charade. What's the point of "open access" to government records when the decisions in Washington are made off-the-record by old boy networks of moneyed interests?

These special interests are allowed to violate Washington State law with impunity. Regulators entrusted with enforcing state law collude with big business, violate the law, and harm Washington consumers.

Don't bother asking the Attorney General to force the state regulators to do their jobs. He won't. The Attorney General will tell you the agencies have the "option" of enforcing the law. For documentation, see <http://Windermere-Victims.com>

Wanna Sell A Meth Lab House? Washington Government Won't Mind

Consider the real estate industry. Washington statute 18.85.040(2) lists the duties of the Director of the Department of Licensing: "The director *shall* [emphasis added] enforce all laws, rules and regulations relating to the licensing of real estate brokers, associate real estate brokers, and salespersons ..."

But DOL refuses to enforce the law on Windermere Real Estate, Washington's largest real estate company. And in this, DOL has the blessing of the AG's office, which advises DOL it has the "option" of enforcing state law. See <http://renovationtrap.com/ag/090724-mckenna.pdf> and other correspondence with the AG's office on <http://Windermere-Victims.com>.

With the tacit permission of DOL and the AG's office, Windermere agents and brokers have done the following wrongful acts with impunity:

- * Knowingly sold a house previously used as a meth lab to unsuspecting homebuyers. Despite court findings, DOL has not and will not sanction the broker and agent involved. AG McKenna's office stands behind DOL's decision.

- * Exploited a mentally confused old widow and sold her property to themselves and their relatives at bargain-basement prices. Despite court findings, DOL will not sanction the broker and agents involved. AG McKenna's office stands behind DOL's decision.

- * Defrauded a single mother of her home on the eve of foreclosure ("foreclosure scam"). Despite court findings in her favor, DOL will not sanction the broker and agent involved. AG McKenna's office stands behind DOL's decision.

- * Knowingly sold a rat-infested house to an unsuspecting buyer without disclosing the rat infestation. Despite indisputable documentation of the deceit, DOL refuses to sanction the broker and agent involved. AG McKenna's office stands behind DOL's decision.

- * Presented a buyer with a false property description and a forged signature. Despite court findings, DOL refuses to sanction the broker and agent involved. AG McKenna's office stand by DOL's decision.

Open Government? Who cares what the public knows? The corruption is wide open and nobody is embarrassed by public attention. Nobody can do anything about it anyway – the Attorney General says so.

Note: The State Auditor, Brian Sonntag, member of the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Open Government, was informed of the situation in June, 2009.



Samantha Saul



George Rudiger



Lance Miller



Paul Stickney

In May, 2002, George Rudiger of Windermere Northeast was the listing agent for a home in Shoreline that was infested with rats. It was only after purchaser Gary Kruger took possession of the property that he discovered the toxic problems: dead rodent carcasses in the walls, chewed out wiring, and extensive contamination of interior structural components with rat urine, feces, and festering rat nests. Kruger also discovered rodent bait stations, concealed rat holes, and wire mesh strategically installed to deter rodents. Kruger did not know it, but five years earlier in 1997, Rudiger had sold the home to Rudiger's friend as buyer's agent. (Rudiger had been friends with the purchaser for 30 years.) Rudiger knew of the rat problem in 1997 and should have disclosed it in 2002. When Kruger discovered the problem and his attorney wrote to Windermere, Windermere "categorically" denied all knowledge. But in the ensuing lawsuit, Kruger found that Rudiger knew all about the rat problem in 1997: In a document produced in Discovery, Rudiger wrote a rat abatement addendum to the sales contract in his own hand. See <http://windermerewatch.com>. But Windermere was able to outspend Kruger in court, and when Kruger ran out of money, his lawyer quit and Kruger lost the case on summary judgment. Case No.02-2-28184-2-SEA and 05-2-34433-4-SEA. Rudiger still represents Windermere.

Cheryl Jonet, now deceased, worked for Windermere Wall Street. Jonet was a defendant and judgment debtor in numerous legal actions in Washington, including suits for mishandling earnest money, breaches of promissory notes, and unlawful detainer. In February 2005, Peter Doorish was selling a home and Jonet was a buyer's agent. Jonet told Doorish her buyer was a lawyer, but the buyer was actually a clerical worker, a single mother with four children. Jonet persuaded Doorish to loan the buyer \$50,000 (assuring him that Windermere lawyers would write the papers), kept Doorish's funds for herself, gutted much of the home prior to the buyer's occupancy, incurred substantial liens on the home, told Doorish that the buyer could not sustain the debts and the home was about to be foreclosed, and persuaded Doorish to take the property back. After he recovered the property, Doorish discovered the gutted condition of the home and its financial encumbrances. Doorish had to spend hundreds of thousand of dollars to pay off the lien holders to avoid foreclosure and restore the home to a livable condition. Doorish also lost the \$50,000 misappropriated by Jonet. "Peter Doorish v. Windermere Real Estate Services Company," et al., Case No. 08-2-42345-0 SEA.

On September 11, 2007, Tom Mc Makin wrote to John Jacobi and Geoff Wood of Windermere Real Estate Services Company, informing them that Jonet victimized him and his wife with straw-buyer schemes. Mc Mackin informed Windermere of 11 (eleven) other Jonet victims. Windermere was disinterested.

Carol & Mark DeCoursey arrived in Washington towards the end of 2003 when home prices were rising. Afraid of being forced out of the housing market in April 2004, they put their trust in Redmond Windermere agent Paul Stickney. Stickney put together a home purchase/renovation package for DeCourseys and brought a construction company into the deal, assuring DeCourseys he had seen the company's work for years and it was "the best." But Stickney did not disclose to DeCourseys his business alliances with the president of the company. As a result of this undisclosed conflict of interest and the contractor's bungling, DeCourseys' house and finances were ruined. Among other things, the main hall bathtub was electrified at 110 Volts AC -- enough to kill. A lawsuit ensued in which DeCourseys were defendants, counter-claimants, cross-claimants, and third party plaintiffs. The trial court found against Windermere and awarded DeCourseys \$1.03 million in damages and legal expenses, but Windermere hired AIG's Seattle law firm to appeal the decision. Since the facts were established by jury, the Windermere/AIG law firm argues that Stickney's actions should be allowed by law. "V&E Medical Imaging Services, Inc. v. DeCoursey," Case 06-2-24906-2-SEA. See <http://RenovationTrap.com>. Stickney still represents Windermere.

Eddie and Eva Bloor moved to Longview, Washington from Missouri and bought a home from Windermere in 2004. Lance Miller of Windermere Real Estate/Allen & Associates, served as the agent for both the Bloors and the Fritzes in the transaction. Miller and the buyers decided not to disclose to the Bloors that the former rental house had been used to manufacture methamphetamine and grow marijuana. Miller and Windermere knew of the home's history because the same Windermere personnel were active in managing the property as a rental when the drugsters were raided a few months earlier, and Windermere issued the eviction notice on learning of the arrests. When the health department condemned the home and all Bloors' belongings, Bloors sued. Windermere lost in trial and lost on appeal. Washington Court of Appeals Div. II, April 1, 2008, Case No. 35740-2-II.

And how many more? See <http://Windermere-Victims.com>

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