

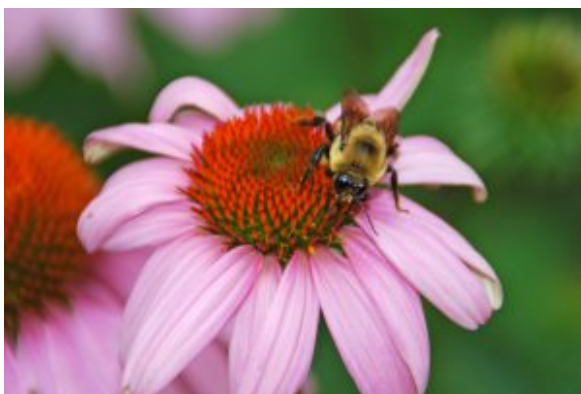
Manage garden pests and mosquitoes in the landscape

By Melinda Myers

A garden filled with flowers, birds, bees and butterflies is a sight to behold. These winged beauties add color, sound and motion to our gardens. Plus, they help maximize a garden's productivity by pollinating plants and managing plant-damaging pests.

But what about those unwanted visitors to the garden? The aphids, mites and cabbage worms that feed upon our plants or the mosquitoes that feed upon us. There are ways to have a beautiful garden and at the same time enjoy the outdoors when we work with nature to manage our landscape.

Add a birdbath, a few birdhouses and plants for the birds. They'll repay you by eating many of the insects that feed upon your plants. Include seed-bearing plants like coneflowers, Rudbeckias and cosmos as well as berry plants like Juneberry, dogwood and firethorn. Add an evergreen and a few trees for shelter and nesting, if space allows.



A bee pollinating a coneflower. Photo/Melinda Myers

Include a hummingbird feeder and a few of their favorite flowers like columbine, salvia, penstemon, and phlox. Then watch as these fast flyers feed upon aphids, mites and mosquitoes in between sips of nectar.

While watching the birds, bees and butterflies, examine your plants for garden pests. Catching insects early may mean the difference between a successful harvest and disappointment. Before reaching for the pesticides and destroying their food source, attract the good guys and manage unwanted pests with a few of these eco-friendly strategies.

Tolerate a bit of damage and wait for the birds, lady beetles, praying mantis and other beneficial insects to move in and eat the bad bugs in the garden. Use barriers like row covers to keep cabbage worms off your cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels Sprouts. Sink shallow containers filled with beer into the soil around hostas and some of the other favorite plants of slugs and snails. These pests are attracted to the fermenting yeast, crawl inside and die.

If the bad guys persist, step up your eco-friendly control. Knock small populations of aphids and mites off plants with a strong blast of water. Apply insecticidal soap or Summit Year-Round Spray Oil if nature needs a helping hand. These organic insecticides are effective at managing pests, while gentle on the good guys when used properly.

Keep mosquito populations to a minimum. Drain water from toys, buckets or any object that can hold water and serve as a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Change the water in birdbaths several times a week. Toss a Mosquito Dunk in rain barrels and water features. This organic insecticide only kills the larvae of mosquitoes, black flies and fungus gnats. It won't harm bees, butterflies, birds, pets and people.

Evaluate your success and make needed adjustments. Write a note in next year's calendar to watch for the return of these

pests. You'll be ready to step in and lend nature a hand if needed.

As you begin to work in harmony with nature you will find more birds, bees and butterflies visiting your garden. Together you can grow a beautiful and productive garden for all to enjoy.

Gardening expert Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening" and the "Midwest Gardener's Handbook." Myers is also a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine.

No report on CTC board's evaluation of leader



Patrick Wright

KINGS BEACH – The California Tahoe Conservancy for the first time in four years decided to give Executive Director Patrick Wright a performance review.

The board members spent 2½ hours in closed session in the middle of the June 15 meeting to do the review. This was while many CTC staff members mulled about – on the clock – and the public was kept waiting for the rest of the agenda items to be heard.

Board member Larry Sevinson was absent.

The board had asked staff what they thought about their leader, but that information has not been released to the public.

Wright has been a lightning rod in recent years. His interactions with agencies in the Tahoe basin have been criticized by many.

At the end of the closed session it was reported that no action was taken other than for the board to meet with Wright again in six months. What incentives or directives he may have been given to improve have not been disclosed.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

The new landscape of adventure



Actor-comedian Rob Riggle, right, indulges in a selfie with a fan at Tahoe's celebrity golf tournament. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Emily Harrington, Moonshine Ink

Being an "adventurer" used to mean something different. It was a solitary act; something people did to get away from normal life where they could find meaning away from the modern world of technology, money, fame, and ego. Or rather, that was the intrinsic definition we once gave to the act of "adventuring."

It was the Stone Masters in Yosemite Valley, who climbed walls once deemed impossible to conquer, but told no one, only to have the legendary tales leak out through word-of-mouth and rumor. It was similar with big ski descents in the High Sierra. The saying goes, "There's no such thing as a first descent in the Sierra, because someone surely did it back in the day. You just didn't hear about it."

Nowadays adventuring is a business. Instagram, Snapchat,

Facebook, Twitter, etc. – every outdoor company and professional athlete are expected to promote themselves and the brands they represent in a shamelessly overt and public fashion.

Read the whole story

Letter: Important to say yes to SLT roads

To the community,

South Lake Tahoe City Council will be placing a road improvement measure on the upcoming Nov. 7 ballot. If passed, this one-half cent sales tax measure would provide approximately \$2.5 million annually that could only be used to fund the repairs that our aging roads in South Lake Tahoe desperately need.

Passage of the road improvement measure would mean fixing potholes and cracks, and also paving, maintaining, repairing and rebuilding local streets and roads. This measure will improve roadway safety for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists by making essential road repairs and adding bike lanes and sidewalks, where possible. We need this measure in order to provide safe routes to schools for local school children. Repaired roads will ensure ambulances, fire trucks, police cars and other emergency vehicles can respond to emergencies quickly and safely. Additionally, improved roads will reduce the fine sediment that enters Lake Tahoe, and improves lake clarity and water quality.

Accountability protections will include a citizens' oversight

committee and independent audits that will ensure funds are spent as required by the law. No funds could be taken by the City Council or the state or used for any other purpose by the City Council now or in the future.

The city is strictly prohibited from paying for the campaign to pass this important measure. Because a 66.7 percent yes vote is required to win, a flawless campaign is essential. A recent survey of voters shows that the measure can pass. Everyone wants our roads fixed once and for all.

An aggressive campaign with a robust budget for direct mail, lawn signs and a strong grassroots effort to reach voters in our community is needed. With your donation, we can succeed in passing this Measure to fix our roads and improve roadway safety for automobilists, pedestrians, children and limit the cost of car repairs due to potholes and cracks.

Residents for Better Roads is a grassroots organization of local volunteers and community leaders that have come together to spearhead this effort. The committee's goal is to raise \$50,000 to run this campaign.

Leon Malhed and Jerry Bindel, campaign co-chairs for Residents for Better Roads

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• Volunteers are needed June 28 from 9am–noon at Ed Z'berg Sugar Pine Point State Park to remove an invasive annual grass from a small area that is mostly populated by native species. Kids ages 10 and up welcome with a legal guardian. For more info, go **online**.

- Douglas County Public Library in Minden will be closed July 4.
 - Here are the El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra roadwork schedules for the week from Caltrans.
 - Climb Out of the Darkness, the world's largest event raising awareness of pregnancy and postpartum mental health disorders, will have a regional climb in South Lake Tahoe on July 9. For more info, contact Rachel Szumel at 530.220.3741 or climbSLT@gmail.com.
 - The nationally celebrated classical music festival, Classical Tahoe, is July 28-Aug. 12. For more info, go **online**.
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Angora memories: Living with the forest

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News* this month will be running several stories leading up to the 10th anniversary of the Angora Fire on June 24, 2007.



A scorched tree in Joanne Marchetta's back yard is a constant reminder of the Angora Fire. Photo/Tom Lotshaw

By Joanne Marchetta

Ten years later, I recall it like yesterday. "Hey Joanne, come look at this." I stood on our deck and squinted. I could see a wisp of smoke, maybe five miles distant. It was Sunday, hot and hazy with strong winds. It reminded me of the weather when I was living in the San Francisco Bay Area on the afternoon of the Oakland Hills Fire.

Even though it was a thin wisp, I had an uneasy feeling. Ten minutes later, a more urgent, "come look at this." I climbed on the boulders across the street and could now see a plume of smoke. My uneasiness grew. I went back inside, feeling distracted. Five minutes later, back up to a vantage point for

a look. All the neighbors were congregated, shifting and restless. We could see flames now. Someone said, "This is bad." Someone else said, "I've lived here 30 years, never seen anything like this." Another scrambled down and headed to the fire station down the road to see what they could find out.

In 20 minutes, the situation went from concerning to dire, thin wisp to billowing plume, and now a menacing crown fire in trees just two blocks from where we stood. We all gave each other one last silent look and one spoke for the rest, "It's time to get out of here."

I sprinted off the rocks and into the house. Without any conversation, we agreed quickly on what we needed—the dog and the fire safe box with crucial documents. With no time to spare, it was grab and go. From the closet, I grabbed blindly without thought only what I could collect on hangers with one hand. With the other hand, I grabbed one pass of clothes from the dresser drawer. That was it. As I walked through the kitchen to our garage door, I saw the roof of the house behind us on fire. I yelled, "We have to leave now, the house behind is on fire." We each threw our one load in the car with the dog. We didn't have an evacuation pack or emergency grab bag then. We do now.

The neighbors had said, "Let's meet at Raley's parking lot." But when we arrived, we realized it was no safe haven. We exchanged phone numbers and kept driving. We were relatively new to Tahoe and the moment was disorienting. Where should we head? We drove to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency parking lot near Stateline. As I got out of the car, the first thing I noticed were the burning embers and ash floating erratically in the wind. The haze was now smoky air, making it uncomfortable to breathe. We regrouped, gathered our wits, what little we had in the midst of emotional shock, and said this time, "we need to get out of the basin."

Only two years new to Tahoe, we didn't yet have a deep network

of friends to call on. We headed to the only friends we knew in Carson Valley. We didn't know at the time that they were returning from a visit to Placerville and could see the smoke plume from a different vantage coming into the basin. No answer when we called, but we went anyway. That night as we gathered in front of the TV, on the screen was an image I recognized: "I think that's our backyard on fire." I could barely sort my feelings: Fear, grief, loss, sadness, shock, and more.



The Angora Fire ignition point, above, on June 26, 2007. The fire started from an illegal, abandoned campfire near Seneca Pond on June 24, 2007. Illegal and abandoned campfires continue to be the leading cause of wildfires in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Photo/U.S. Forest Service

Lying in bed, sleepless but exhausted, my phone rang. Norma Santiago, a TRPA Governing Board member and a lead El Dorado County official who monitored the fire response from its start and through the night, had called earlier to ask for my street address. She knew I lived in the county. The call in the

middle of the night was beyond kind: "We are inventorying houses still standing. Your house number is on the list." I was incredulous, but relieved. I wondered what condition I would find it in.

It was 10 days before we returned to the house. We stayed two nights with friends in Gardnerville and then checked in at MontBleu, one of the businesses offering help to those displaced and homeless. It became our home away from home, with only the dog and the clothes we carried out. It was laughable what had made its way with us. Sports bras, but no underwear. Mismatched everything. Shorts and one pair of jeans. Dress clothes of little use. The dog was bewildered but goofy, greeting people in the elevator as her new pals.

We were among the lucky ones. Our house was still standing. Insurance covered the smoke damage and the \$32,000 dry cleaning bill. We had to have every piece of cloth and clothing in the house laundered to remove the smoke smell. But that was nothing compared to friends, colleagues, and strangers who now felt like friends who were left with nothing. People who lost lifetimes and had to start over. For me, it was miraculous, really. I thought I would return to nothing. There were clues when I did return home what luck means. My and my neighbor's garden hoses were strung together, still extended out across the length of the backyard. Someone, a good Samaritan or firefighter—I'll never know—fought the fire at the back end of our lot and prevented it from reaching the home and the deck. Thank you. I will pay it forward. Where once I could only see a dense thicket out the back windows, now the view is open so we see through clear to the nearby road and a trail behind the house. The whole landscape morphed. It was almost unrecognizable.

There was no pattern to who was lucky. Two houses across the street burned to the ground. On another, the siding melted. At the house behind us, the roof burned. The fire had moved so fast, stoked by high winds and tinder dry conditions. It is

almost unfathomable how an ember did not ignite our house. There was a house with an old cedar shake roof across the main road, still standing like ours, defying all odds. How could that be, when just next door there was nothing but a pile of ash left of a new home built the year before. Fire is humbling, capricious, mean. Terrifying in its strength.



Joanne Marchetta on the boulder pile where she and neighbors watched the Angora Fire. Photo/Tom Lotshaw

The outfall from the fire also consumed TRPA and its employees. We concentrated on nothing else for well over a year. It brought all other work to a stop while our employees, just like the rest of the town, picked up their lives, recovered from the terror, and brought life back to some semblance of ordinary. We had been working toward forest policies that would help prevent and protect against wildfires like Angora. But it was slow. The Angora Fire kicked everyone

into high gear. TRPA and other agencies improved regulations and practices. And TRPA organized with nearly two dozen other agencies to better collaborate as the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team to improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk. Now it's easier for property owners to remove trees and brush for defensible space, and fire preparedness and forest health are top priorities for the agency.

We saw and experienced all sides of humanity after the fire. Mostly we saw a community come together to help those most in need, to make sure all were cared for and had something to fall back on. Care and concern from all corners emerged. There was the other end of the emotional spectrum, too. Anger and hatred as people searched for someone to blame for the fire. TRPA and its staff absorbed a lot, publicly and privately. The agency received death threats by phone, causing us to take special security precautions for the safety of employees and our building.

During those early days after the brave first responders brought the runaway blaze under control, the aftermath set in. I went to public meetings. And it was my first feel of the decades of pent up hatred against TRPA. We didn't know then that an illegal and abandoned campfire started the wildfire that perfect storm winds fanned into an unstoppable conflagration. It was this early experience that caused me to question why some people in Tahoe are so angry. It also led me later to champion remaking the agency's reputation into a partner rather than an adversary. We have changed ourselves over the last decade for the better, becoming part of and a supporter of our community, not it's foil.

The Angora Fire changed everyone it touched. I can still recall the feelings like they were yesterday, smell the smells, hear the sounds, see the sights that are pressed into my memory, imprinted like a reverse image on the insides of my eyelids. My beloved dog Zin died last year. But I still recall the years after Angora when we'd return from a long walk to

Angora Creek through Washoe Meadow when I'd have to wash the finely ingrained soot off her paws and fur. It rose like fine dust, permeated everything, even years later. The fire burned so hot it left inches of nothing but ash, with no organic matter to bind the earth together.

The lessons I have taken from Angora are deep and enduring. We live in the forest. We came to make this home after the trees had grown up. It is our responsibility to live fire safe, to create defensible space, to prepare our evacuation pack, to live responsibly on a sensitive and fragile landscape that we all call home. I learned that we at TRPA are part of this community. I committed myself to make an agency that serves the community and protects the special environment we call home. I committed to dedicate myself to make it better for all of us. And Angora showed us all that fire is part of Tahoe's life. It will remain long after we are gone. All we can do to live in harmony with what will inevitably be the next fire is to change ourselves and adapt.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Opinion: The coverup and the excuses in EDC

By Larry Weitzman

The current conspiracy to eliminate senior legal has become a tag team wrestling match. First in the ring was Don Ashton who said, "I needed to find another \$250,000 to cut to make the \$280 million General Fund budget work."

Ashton was cutting another one-tenth of 1 percent (a one-one thousandth) of the budget by doing that. That would be like buying a TV and saying I can't pay \$1,000 for it, but if you reduce the price to \$999, we can make a deal. This issue isn't about saving an extra dollar on that thousand-dollar TV, it's about politics and it's going to severely hurt our senior population. It is effectively a war on El Dorado County seniors.



Larry Weitzman

The new Goliath jumping in the ring against seniors is the director of Health and Human Services Agency, Patricia Charles-Heathers (PCH) who has filed a propaganda memo, sort of an imitation of the new county \$150,000 spin doctor, Carla Hass. Dated June 8 and addressed to the board members is an attempt to reinforce the CAO's proposed budget of terminating senior legal. By using the principle of Lord Kelvin who once said, "That when you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meagre and unsatisfactory kind." You can see the obvious smoke screen.

PCH's knowledge is meager on this subject she attempts to enlighten us on because she fails to use numbers and provide us with the data necessary to make a more educated judgement. One can only conclude that this was done to mislead or at best not to fully inform the appropriate parties (the board) who have the power to make such a decision.

Here's the deal. PCH says in support of her position that we have "only" the third highest percentage of seniors over 60 years old, but have the lowest percentage of seniors of individuals over 60 classified as "low Income." Don't you love the word percentage and low income. What does that tell you? Absolutely nothing.

What is the definition of low income and by whose definition? My understanding it is about \$12,000 for one person and \$16,000 for two which are defined as the federal poverty level. But what we don't know is the average income, the median income or the spread of senior income across the income spectrum. Not many people can live of \$12,000 a year. But not many can live on \$18,000, \$20,000 or \$25,000 and we don't know that even more important information. It is critical information that is not before the board. Anyone who thinks you can afford a lawyer making \$20,000 a year is sadly mistaken (unless it is on a contingency) and it looks like PCH is one of those sadly mistaken people using her position to destroy seniors. For PCH, talk is cheap, but it is obvious she has never talked to a lawyer.

Other information left out is the growth rate of our senior population. According to the Commission on Aging, on a per county basis is one of the fastest growing in California (faster than the two counties, Nevada and Amador, that are one and two above as to the percentage of seniors) and will continue to do so with our county's limited growth of new housing. See Mark Twain adage: "Figures don't lie, but liars figure."

PCH also makes the claim that HHSA cannot supervise lawyers with non-attorneys. What a crock. She cites what appears to be a bankruptcy ruling saying: "The court made it very clear that the attorneys in the case were taking direction from a non-lawyer, and indicated that a third person cannot control the attorney's professional judgement." PCH demonstrates why she is not a lawyer. The court didn't say you can't supervise non-

lawyers; sure you can. You can set their hours and limit their cases. What the court said is you can't intercede with their legal judgment. As to attorney-client there is an absolute privilege of secrecy. PCH isn't the client, the senior is. What? PCH wants to know the contents of a will or trust? It's not her business to judge the professional work of senior legal and she has no ability to do so as she admits she is not a lawyer.

This supervision red herring has nothing to do with senior legal any more than the supervision of county counsel, the DA and the PD by other staff or members of the board as claimed in her letter. By her thinking, no government agency can employ a lawyer because they can't be supervised. Corporations run by non-lawyer CEOs employ on a salaried basis staffs of in house lawyers supervised by non-lawyers. As to telling lawyers what to think legally, that would be like having a fool of a client. Lawyers are independent professionals. Of course, any lay person can supervise lawyers, keep your office clean, you have to be here 8am to 5pm, dress appropriately and so on. You can't tell them, what legal advice to give. HHSA can supervise senior legal in matters other than how they should advise a client. Otherwise hire lay people to advise senior legal clients. Even better, let's see what the State Bar would think of PCH telling lawyers what legal advice to give.

As to the "case" cited by PCH, I am sure it related to a non-lawyer who was probably disbarred who hired licensed attorneys and told them how to run their cases. It has nothing to do with the situation with senior legal. PCH citing such a case is known as a "red herring" a term used by lawyers as to issues that do not exist just as that bankruptcy ruling has nothing to do with senior legal.

Now to the real issue. The county pays out in salary and benefits to about 1,861 employees \$170 million and to the top 100 earning employees over \$20 million. A 1 percent cut in salary of the top 100 would pay for senior legal. Better yet,

eliminate one low performing administrator. I am sure there is more than one.

There are no other layoffs being made in the entire county other than senior legal, not one. Even the propaganda specialist, Carla Hass gets to keep her \$150,000 job. The county may tell you that there are three people who are losing their jobs. Not true. Two of those three are retiring and the other person has been promised a similar job elsewhere in the county.

I am learning that this whole mess has a nexus with the PACE program which is conning and ripping off seniors into buying overpriced and unnecessary solar systems. PACE was a poorly instituted program by former CAO Larry Combs, who only cared about his paycheck and power. One senior I know of was sold a bill of goods and may lose her home because of PACE as she cannot afford the substantially higher property taxes while saving next to nothing from the solar. I believe this is retaliation against a senior legal attorney whose attorney relative filed a lawsuit to protect the aforementioned senior.

Stop the presses, news flash, last week the budget agenda was posted and modified on item 35 in an attempt to placate seniors. It says that senior legal will remain for seven to eight more months, funded by \$160,000 in remaining donations, a federal grant of about \$53,000 and anticipated future donations of \$46,000. This is a ruse. The fact is senior legal will still be removed from the budget and once the funds are gone it's over. To add it later to the budget will take a four-fifths vote, which is highly unlikely. I have a better idea, fund senior legal for \$250,000 and if a better program is created, then it can be removed from the General Fund budget.

Something else. Why weren't we told the county was holding \$160,000 in collected donations for senior legal? The pressure must be maintained. Without the budgeted \$250,000 program,

senior legal will become a memory, but the suffering of seniors will become ever more apparent. This must be stopped. If they need to cut effectively \$1 out of a thousand, look at county administration and the huge salaries paid and the failure to get rid of deadwood because of bad management and leadership.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Study: More than a third of teen girls experience depression

By Ariana Eunjung Cha, Washington Post

Depression is usually considered an issue parents have to watch out for starting in the turbulent teenage years. The CW channel, full of characters with existential angst about school, friends and young love, tells us so, as do the countless parenting books about the adolescent years in every guidance counselor's office.

But what if by that time it's already too late?

A large new study out this spring contains some alarming data about the state of children's mental health in the United States, finding that depression in many children appears to start as early as age 11. By the time they hit age 17, the analysis found, 13.6 percent of boys and a staggering 36.1 percent of girls have been or are depressed.

Read the whole story

Water expected to subside in time for Burning Man

By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal

It's mid-June, and the Black Rock Desert is still a giant mud puddle.

Although it's been a game of wait and see for Burning Man organizers, they are still confident that Burners will be able to come home for their annual end of summer bacchanal.

Burning Man, a massive arts rendezvous, is set for Aug. 27 to Sept. 4 outside of Gerlach, about two hours north of Reno.

About an inch of water still stands on much of the playa, an alkaline dust flat that 12,000 years ago was Lake Lahontan.

Read the whole story

Letter: Making a case for senior legal services

Publisher's note: *This letter was sent to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors on June 15, 2017.*

Dear Board of Supervisors,

As the chair of Friends of Seniors, a local nonprofit under the El Dorado Community Foundation, I have become familiar

with the excellent senior services we have in El Dorado County, and the incredibly dedicated staff who run the programs. There is a wide variety of services, housed together, aimed at protecting the health and well-being of seniors.

The coordination of these services has created a safety net for the elderly that has resulted in fast responses to meet the needs of seniors, both on a daily basis and in a crisis. Even seniors who have never needed the services should feel comfort, knowing they are available.

Yes, we may be the only county in California that has our own senior legal program, but that is something we should be proud of. The coordination of that service, with other senior services the county provides, serves the needs of our ever-growing senior population.

In comparing El Dorado County with other counties, we must realize they, in turn, have programs and services we don't have.

In 2016 El Dorado County ranked 29 out of 58 California counties in terms of population. With 28 percent of our population being seniors, we ranked 16 out of 58 counties in terms of percent of seniors aged 60+. The California State Plan on Aging predicts that by 2030 El Dorado County will see an 83 percent increase in the number of seniors aged 60+. UC San Francisco's Institute for Health and Aging and the Alzheimer's Association released a report in 2009 predicting that El Dorado County will see a 142 percent increase in the number of patients with Alzheimer's Disease by 2030, the steepest rise in our region.

If the El Dorado County Senior Legal Program were to be removed out of the county's budget, our vulnerable seniors would never be served in the same manner, and many would never be served at all. By protecting the health of seniors, it protects the health of the community, and saves the county

money in other areas. In addition senior legal staff holds workshops and seminars throughout the county to senior groups, county volunteers and the general public on topics pertinent to the health and well-being of seniors. I hope you will take the time to hear from the staff who run senior legal about the many significant facets of the program.

The senior legal program is very cost effective; \$50,000 comes from the Older Americans Act, and in the last 12 months, the program has received \$95,000 in donations. This leaves a balance of \$268,000 to come out of the county budget; \$268,000 out of a budget of \$280,000,000.

El Dorado County is a very special place to live. We have a reputation both for excellent schools for our children, and outstanding services for our seniors. It is important that we do what we can to maintain what we have.

Sincerely,

Kathi Lishman, chair Friends of Seniors