

Spencer: Experience, vision to rebuild EDC

Publisher's note: *Profiles for the four El Dorado County District 5 supervisorial candidates will be running on May 6 and May 7.*



Jeffrey Spencer

Name: Jeffrey Spencer

Age: 58

Occupation: Planning professional

Education: Master of Science, transportation management, San Jose State University; Bachelor of science (2), Business administration and business management, University of Phoenix; Associate of Science (2), business, real estate, Sacramento City College

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?:
Committee/panel member, National Academy of Sciences, Transportation Research Board

Board of directors, Natomas Basin Conservancy
President, Dry Creek Conservancy
Planning Commissioner, Yuba City
Chairman, Antelope Planning Council, Antelope
Board member, Sacramento Quality of Life Committee
Vice president, Antelope Community Association
Member, Sunrise Parks & Recreation, Park Development Committee
Member, East Antelope Specific Plan Steering Committee
Facilities chair, Catholic School Advisory Committee, St. Isidore School
Sacramento and California Association of Realtors committees

Commissioner/Scout leader, Boy Scouts of America
President, Mineta Transportation Institute Alumni Association
Member, Sacramento Sheriff Community Representative Forum
Creek Clean-up Area coordinator, Urban Creeks Council
Member, Knights of Columbus
Member, Active 20-30

Why do you want to be supervisor?: It was borne out of frustration with the current issues. I didn't seek to be elected, but rather, many residents that know me and my experience urged me to represent them, and I listened. Working as an elected official should not be just a popularity contest.

I have been in public service over 40 years, holding various community planning and environmental positions. My experience in the federal, state and local government and various nonprofits has prepared me to tackle the job of protecting and rebuilding the communities of El Dorado County.

This is a nonpartisan position. How will you conduct your duties in a nonpartisan manner?: The duties of any elected position is to represent the people. This means to represent all of the people, regardless of partisanship. Our Constitution set up a representative form of government, not a ruling one. Extremism and polarity is not welcome and will not

achieve our goals. We need to come together and find consensus and compromise to address the issues we face. When we work together, we can move mountains.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: I possess the expertise and heart to tackle our issues. We are a small community, yet have big problems. Past elected officials have been locals with great interest in the issues, but they may lack the outside experience needed to get the job done. I have been working at these various issues my entire career.

What has been lacking is the big picture view. Our housing, economic and transportation issues are not just local issues, they are being felt across the region. To resolve the issues at hand requires an experienced individual with the partnerships and relationships I have forged over many years with government and business representatives at all levels, including the state Legislature and U.S. Congress. No other candidate brings this kind of experience.

How are you going to resolve the CalPERS issue?: I cannot resolve the CalPERS issue single-handedly. State pensions are a contract between the government and unions. They are funded by regular deductions from workers' paychecks and contributions from the state. CalPERS invests the money to cover future benefits.

At the state level, CalPERS was solvent until political policies undermined their investment strategies. Not unlike the Social Security system. People have been compelled to contribute to retirement their entire lives, and now some call it an "entitlement." The federal government has borrowed nearly \$2.8 trillion as of 2014 from the Trust Fund and used the money for other purposes.

The state government created the issue by dipping into the CalPERS account then passing the buck along to the cities and

counties. Gov. Pete Wilson took \$1.6 billion from CalPERS accounts in 1991 to help close a state budget gap. Wilson also reduced retirement benefits for new state employees, effectively creating a second class of state workers.

Then Gov. Gray Davis signed SB400 in 1999 that gave employee unions the kind of retirement security normally reserved for the wealthy. The law took effect in 2000, and that same year CalPERS investments were hammered by the bursting of the dot com bubble. Eight years later, the housing market collapsed and the Great Recession set in, putting the pension fund in a deep hole. CalPERS investments lost 3 percent in 2008 and 24 percent in 2009 – wiping out \$67 billion in value. The fund has a fiduciary responsibility to maximize investment returns on behalf of the retirees whose money it controls – and on behalf of state taxpayers.

Now you have Gov. Jerry Brown and his state policy creating further problems. CalPERS had a \$2.9 billion surplus in 2007 and now has an estimated deficit of more than \$138 billion. Last year, CalPERS announced its Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Five Year Strategic Plan, which is a blueprint for the agency's so-called socially responsible investment strategy. Last summer, CalPERS sent letters to 504 companies represented on the Russell 3000 Index calling for them to develop and disclose a board diversity policy. They have placed undue influence on business.

According to a report by the American Council for Capital Formation, the CalPERS fund's "environmental-related investments comprised four of its nine worst performing private equity funds last year, accounting for more than \$600 million in committed capital." It noted that "none of the system's leaders put their own money into environmental investments."

There are those public employees that have taken advantage of the system, boosting their retirements beyond reasonable

benefit. We need to address those within our responsibility and make sound decisions.

Politicians need to realize that these accounts are not a blank check for the latest scheme in government, but a security meant to cover those that dedicated their lives to public service.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: Homelessness is a result of a few factors, including joblessness, substance abuse, and mental health. Social programs have not kept pace with these issues and the government has a responsibility to offer help. I am in favor of a hand up, but not a hand out. There has to be limits to assistance as collecting government benefits should not be a career.

The residential population of South Lake Tahoe fell by 9.3 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the Census Bureau, and the median income cannot afford housing. This is not unique to Tahoe, but across California. However, Tahoe is one of the most unaffordable in the state. According to Zillow, to buy a median house in SLT, you need an income of \$114,576. The Tahoe region's average-household-income-to-home-value ratio is 10-to-1, meaning average home cost is roughly 10 times higher than average annual wages. San Francisco, by comparison, is 8-to-1.

Due to a lack of good paying jobs and unaffordable housing we are exporting our future as younger people cannot afford to live here. The Lake Tahoe Community College is suffering enrollment, largely due to the cost of living. We have more people commuting into Tahoe to work and that affects our road congestion, contrary to environmental policy. What will happen to our community if we eventually have no local residents?

To date the county has not been able to fix the traffic issue in Meyers with tourists clogging up residential streets. What is your solution?: There is no one solution. We need to have a suite of options. The transportation demand has far outstripped our supply. While the economy of the Lake Tahoe Basin is largely dependent on tourism, it also brings many of the traffic problems at a high cost. The traffic problem extends the whole length of U.S. 50. I would work to implement a solution that makes all of the communities along the Hwy. 50 corridor less congested at peak times. It takes time and cooperation by many agencies to accomplish, and I know the ropes to get it done.

I have offered many ideas and suggestions to assist in resolving the problems we are experiencing with weekend and holiday traffic. One is called congestion pricing. Electronic toll collection with congestion pricing was supported by the CHP, the county sheriff, and many citizens in attendance at the meeting in February 2016. Another suggestion is using an odd-even license plate restriction like we saw during the gas crisis, and in critical events such as we saw in February, institute a periodic contra-flow that would improve flow leaving the basin.

One suggestion published in the *Tahoe Tribune* suggested a "better solution is to build a multi-modal transportation system that allows people to leave their cars at home." This is where we need a reality check. That would not work for a multitude of reasons. Plain and simple it is not practical. I support local transit systems, but TTD hasn't even provided regular service to Meyers, which is a community that has no transit. The folks out there cannot get into town for their shopping, recreation or jobs without a car. Who genuinely thinks a family of tourists is going to load the kids, all their baggage, and bulky recreational equipment onto a bus to come into Tahoe?

What would better serve our residents is to have affordable

housing near their jobs, and land use zoning that concentrates tourist accommodations near the attractions. These two would greatly reduce traffic and pollution which are primary goals in the basin.

The simple fact is funding for our roads is not enough to keep up with maintenance, and we have the impacts of about 150,000 people every week, nearly a 700 percent increase in our population. We need to mitigate these impacts and we need to find a way to do it. We always hear what can't be done, but never what can be done. It takes time and cooperation by many agencies to accomplish, and I know we can get it done.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?:

As with most proposals, there are pros and cons. I have heard that Placer and El Dorado in California should form one county in the basin, and Washoe and Douglas on the Nevada side should form one county in the basin. This may help focus efforts on local issues unique to the Tahoe basin. Still, there are already many layers of bureaucracy and paring down two is not likely to change things much.

The effort would be costly and not likely favorable since both states would have to ratify such a move. I am not in favor of further dividing folks, but rather, uniting them to be a community.

What entities would you not take money from?: I will not take money from any entity that expects a quid pro quo for donating. I also would not accept donations from any illegal or otherwise dubious entities. I would hope that donations come as support for my work ethic and ability to work on the issues we face. Any entity that expects favors in return will get their money returned. That may be the current practice, but not in my personal, ethical conscience.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 5 and how do you propose to resolve it?: The district is large and diverse, and

no one issue can be attributed to the many people we serve. The Tahoe basin faces a critical problem with housing. The West Slope is facing many development pressures. We need to look at our guiding documents and stick to the plan. We need to enforce the laws on the books instead of creating new, confusing and contradictory ordinances.

The two main issues I see are housing and transportation. We have a serious shortage of affordable housing in the Tahoe basin, while the West Slope is experiencing pressures from urban sprawl. The condition of our roads and congestion needs full and immediate attention.

Do you believe supervisors should meet in Tahoe more often? Why or why not?: Yes. Those elected to represent the people should be seen by the people. Staying out of touch means being out of touch with your constituents. Although we have districts with distinct representation, the whole of the board represents the whole of the county.

Would you support having more tax dollars from the county coming to the South Shore? Currently, more dollars leave the basin than come back.: Unfortunately, in government budgets, there are donors and recipients. The populace and economy in Tahoe is the strongest among the cities in El Dorado. This would be one argument in the "pros" column to make Tahoe its own county. The needs are distributed throughout the county and the budget is made to cover those needs. I will work with our CAO and staff to represent the whole district's interests to the best of my ability.

What is your vision for the 56-acres in South Lake Tahoe?: I do not have a different vision than what already exists. The analysis should be on the benefit for the county to keep it or transfer it. TRPA has limited coverage and development allocations, so other than what is there, we need to assess what else can be done. It will take a full view of the costs, revenues, benefits, and existing law and ordinances before

anything should be decided.

Although surrounded by the city, the county has services that it provides at that location. The county has let their investments fall into a terrible state of disrepair. If the city has defaulted on their agreement, it is wasteful to allow these facilities to become so bad. People deserve decent facilities to serve them. Again, a full cost/benefit analysis needs to be completed.

Do you support having vacation home rentals? Why or why not?:

Vacation home rentals is a complicated issue. Although I support private property rights that come into the issue, also we have zoning laws and one of the basic principles in real estate, the right to quiet enjoyment. I support licensing and letting the industry show they can be responsible. I have proposed a Vacation Home Owners Association to police the members. It should not be the responsibility of the taxpayer for the liability of benefits and retirement of more public servants policing commercial interests. VHRs are an industry and we do not want to suppress commerce, but we must also protect the rights and liberties of our residents.

Zoning, in its basic form, attempts to separate residential property use from commercial property use. We are experiencing incompatible uses. Houses are generally built for families and not typically built to be used as a business.

Years ago, people would allow their second home to be used by family and friends that knew the neighbors and respected the tranquility of the neighborhood. Today, these are being advertised internationally by online services and our housing stock is being snapped up by outside investors solely for the purpose of making a profit. Vacation-home owners say they rely on the income. That makes them a commercial enterprise. We have to use our common sense.

South Lake Tahoe has 1,400 vacation rentals, mainly entire

homes, in neighborhoods. South Lake Tahoe has 15,000 housing units, but more than half of them are second homes or seasonal rentals. These mostly are non-resident investors and speculators that have driven up the cost of housing to be unaffordable to those that live here. Only 18 percent of local residents can afford to buy the median-priced home, and 75 percent of our residents spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing.

Jim Hamilton, 2005 president of the California Association of Realtors, told a group, "Real estate was never intended to be an ATM machine. This country was not founded on owning a home and making millions of dollars. Real estate should be about home ownership."

The landscape of real estate is changed. Ethical standards are in question. How is it an investor can bid up a home with the intention of making it a business, yet use a standard market appraisal and obtain a regular mortgage? Any other business has to use proper methods such as an income-based appraisal and business financing. We have to question the logic of allowing businesses to operate in our residential neighborhoods. Absentee investors do not live and work here. Residents report they feel trapped in their homes and on extremely bad traffic days, they tell of people that have done the unthinkable such as leave their cars, knock on the door and ask to use the bathroom, or even relieve themselves in the yard. My priority lies with the residents who live here and vote for me to represent them.

Unmovable traffic congestion, bad behavior, and the trash have left locals in a fit. It is a tourist economy, but even welcome guests can wear out the welcome mat. We need to protect home ownership and affordability for our residents.

The one thing we know since I was a Realtor is that the landscape of real estate is changed. Ethical standards are in question. How is it an investor can bid up a home with the

intention of making it a business, yet use a standard market appraisal and obtain a regular mortgage? Any other business has to use proper methods such as an income-based appraisal and business financing. We have to question the logic of allowing businesses to operate in our residential neighborhoods. Absentee investors do not live and work here. Residents report they feel trapped in their homes and on extremely bad traffic days, they tell of people that have done the unthinkable such as leave their cars, knock on the door and ask to use the bathroom, or even relieve themselves in the yard. My priority lies with the residents who live here and vote for me to represent them.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: I was a part-time actor and have been in movies and industrial films. “An Operation Lifesaver” film that I was a principal actor in won both a Telly (the industrial equivalent of an Academy Award) and a Communicator Award.

Editorial: Defending Calif.’s right to clean air

Publisher’s note: *This editorial is from the May 2, 2018, Los Angeles Times.*

World leaders may negotiate their climate change accords in foreign capitals, but the efforts to stem global warming may succeed or fail based on what happens in United States courtrooms, where the state of California is leading the charge to block the Trump administration’s anti-environment, anti-science agenda.

On Tuesday, Gov. Jerry Brown and state Attorney General Xavier

Becerra announced that they have filed the state's 10th, and potentially most consequential, lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Joined by 16 other states and the District of Columbia, California is trying to preserve a planned increase in vehicle fuel-economy standards, which were designed to make passenger cars more fuel efficient and less polluting.

Read the whole story

Union, lawyers spar over wildfire 'shadow lobbying'

By Taryn Luna, Sacramento Bee

A high-stakes battle over wildfire liability is turning ugly between interests at the California Capitol.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1245, which represents PG&E employees, is working with PG&E on a controversial pitch asking state lawmakers to reduce property damage liability for utility companies in the aftermath of the devastating 2017 fire season. The insurance industry, consumer attorneys and other groups are pushing hard against changes to existing state law.

There's big money for special interests and financial consequences for consumers on all sides. The current system in California could leave PG&E on the hook for as much as \$15 billion for the fires last year. Changes could put more of the responsibility on insurance companies and, as some argue, make it harder for homeowners to recoup losses.

Read the whole story

D.C. Dems playing favorites in race against McClintock

By Emily Cadei, Sacramento Bee

Officially, the national Democratic party has stayed out of the hard-fought Democratic battle to take on Rep. Tom McClintock in California's 4th district. But unofficially, D.C. Democrats have sent a pretty clear signal about who they favor to finish among the top two candidates in the June 5th primary.



Roza Calderon, Regina Bateman, Jessica Morse

Campaign finance reports reveal that the number two House Democrat, veteran Maryland Rep. Steny Hoyer, donated \$7,000 to former State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development staffer Jessica Morse in late March – \$2,000 from his congressional campaign and \$5,000 from his political action committee, AMERIPAC.

The DCCC has not weighed in on the 4th district contest, which is not a top-tier race for the party at this point. President Trump won the sprawling district, which includes Lake Tahoe, by a comfortable margin in 2016, and McClintock has faced little competition in recent elections. But the contest has crept onto Democrats' radar in recent months, thanks to local grassroots organizing efforts and a flood of money that has buoyed Morse and a second Democrat, Regina Bateson, a political science professor on unpaid leave from MIT. Political handicappers have moved the race from "safe" Republican to "leans" Republican, as a result.

Less than a month from the primary election, Morse and Bateson remain locked in a fierce race for party votes.

Read the whole story

State releases Washoe Meadows Park enviro documents

With the **lawsuit** involving Washoe Meadows State Park favoring the plaintiffs, the state agency is moving forward with a plan to reconfigure the Upper Truckee River where it runs through the South Shore park.

While Washoe Meadows Community won the lawsuit, the documents and actions needed for closure are not yet all resolved in the court.

The latest proposal has Lake Tahoe Golf Course being reduced by 19 acres. Five holes would be moved out of the floodplain into less sensitive land.

This project would restore approximately two miles of the river through Washoe Meadows State Park and Lake Valley State Recreation Area.

It remains to be seen if this “volume six” of the environmental document will satisfy the group that successfully sued the state.

In the Washoe Meadows Community email sent out this week it states, “In our last email we noted that the first Appellate Court of Appeal issued an order to set aside the State Parks approval of the project to move up to nine holes of a golf course into Washoe Meadows State Park. Though State Parks appealed to the California Supreme Court, in January that court declined to hear the case. The matter was then sent back to the original court to finalize the remaining documents needed to close the case. In a stunningly awkward move, State Parks has proposed a new project even while the court has not specified the actions required for compliance with their ruling. Even more surprising, State Parks has attempted to limit public comment to a narrow band of topics regarding this newly proposed project. Washoe Meadows Community’s attorneys are reviewing State Parks’ actions since it is not clear if their actions are in compliance with the law.”

Comments on the draft of the preferred alternative and additional environmental analysis are due June 15. The document is **online**; scroll to El Dorado County. For more information, email utproject@parks.ca.gov.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Kili Ongoy and Diana Madson are the newest members of the South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission. They take over for Jamie Orr and Jesse Dwyer who both moved out of the city.
 - Lyndsay Bryant, founder and owner of Lake Tahoe Sitters for the last nine years, has sold the business to Holly Avila.
 - Zephyr Cove Library will be showing “Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle” (rated PG-13) on May 19 at 2pm on a big screen in the meeting room. Free popcorn will be provided.
 - D’Lish Catering & Burrito Window is opening this month in Kings Beach.
 - On May 8 at 6pm Truckee staff will bring a request to the Town Council to extend the current moratorium on the establishment or expansion of cannabis businesses in Truckee. The meeting will be in council chambers.
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Paris: Military background an asset for DCSO

Publisher’s note: Four people are running for the position of sheriff of Douglas County Sheriff’s Office. Their profiles will run May 4 and May 5.



Dean Paris

Name: Dean Anthony Paris

Age: 47

Occupation: Retired Marine Corps military law enforcement

What groups, nonprofits, other civic involvement are you part of outside of work?: Member of the Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce, member of WAVE (Welcome all Veterans Everywhere), volunteer for the Carson Valley Community Food Closet.

What is your opinion about teachers having guns at school?: It is a constitutional right to carry a firearm. However, a teacher needs to focus on the education of their students, not analyzing a treat or possible threat. There are a lot of cons with arming teachers. First, who is going to pay for training, certification and the firearm for that teacher if they are found qualified to carry a gun? Second, who is going to cover the cost of personal protection insurance for that teacher? A third is the firearm going to be carried on the teacher during the day or secured in a classroom? Who is going to make the decision on which teachers will be allowed to carry or is it a volunteer basis? How many teachers will be authorized to carry a firearm?

Vacation rentals are allowed at Lake Tahoe. Should they be allowed everywhere in Douglas County? Why or why not?: I would have to look at the statics before I can make a recommendation.

How best to enforce vacation home rental regulations?: This is something new to me and I am not familiar with and would have to conduct more research.

Why do you want to be sheriff?: My time in the Marine Corps I have learned how to be a successful leader by setting the example and I enjoy helping others to succeed. I believe in bottom-up leadership which allows others the opportunity to become leaders. My core values guided me through my career in the military that I have so honorably served the people of the United States for 20 years now I would like to serve the people of Douglas County with the same honor and leadership that I gave the Marine Corps. I will be constitutional sheriff and protect what you" the people value most."

Why should someone vote for you over someone else?: I have the proven leadership and experience that made me a successful leader in the Marine Corps for 20 years, with the leadership, knowledge and experience I can lead the sheriff's office. My ethics, my leadership and my values have never been questioned. I hold will hold all personnel accountable to include myself and always set the example.

How are you going to deal with people driving under the influence of marijuana?: As sheriff, I will ensure that the deputies are currently trained and certified to recognize the indicator(s) of person(s) under the influence of marijuana, and per Nevada Revised Statue Section 484C.110(3) the suspected offender will be charged and processed for that violation.

What do you believe is needed for a good relationship between the sheriff's department and county commissioners?: More open communication between the commissioners and the sheriff's office.

If the commissioners cut your budget by 10 percent, what program or people would you cut? Please be specific.: The

sheriff's office's budget comes out of the General Fund which is controlled by the county commissioners, but if I had to cut funding I would have to start with training. I would not cut personnel. With the new five-year budget for personnel the office can keep the deputies we have now and is paid for five years.

What is your relationship with businesses at Lake Tahoe that work with the sheriff's office on various events? If anything, what would you consider changing?: I currently don't have relationships with Lake Tahoe business, but it will be my priority to be involved and work on those relationships. I do know the sheriff's office does aid with summer events at the lake and that assistance would continue. But I would need to know what the business would want from the sheriff's office.

Deputies use targets to practice marksmanship. Is there a better way to train people so not so many unarmed people are being shot? Please elaborate.: There are various ways to train deputies to engage a threat. You can conduct training using paintballs or sim munitions which allows the deputies to experience a real-life experience of being shot at while returning fire and the ability to engaging that threat without causing harm to incident bystanders. Another option is computer-based training scenarios, the computer places the deputy in real life situations and anytime during the training if a bystander is shot the training scenario stops or if it a bad shooting the training scenario will stop. Then the instructor can walk and talk through the training and educate the deputy on what went wrong with the shooting and how to address it.

If you could make the rules for New Year's Eve at Stateline, what would they be?: The sheriff does not make the rules, the sheriff enforces the law.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies make less than South Lake Tahoe police officers and El Dorado County sheriff's deputies.

Does this hamper efforts to recruit employees? Do you believe deputies should be paid more? Why or why not? If yes, how would you go about getting them more money?: It does hamper efforts to recruit new deputies, but let's look at other aspects, California pays a lot more in taxes so yes, the officers and deputies in the Tahoe region do make between \$2 to \$3 more per hour than Douglas County. The cost of living is currently high in Douglas County so trying to hire new deputies with high housing prices is discouraging potential sheriff candidates. Looking at the new pay agreement the current pay, incentives, and the increase is locked into a five-year plan. I would propose to the commissioners for additional money and attempt to hire new deputies by offering incentives to live and work in Douglas County.

What is lacking in the department right now in terms of personnel or equipment or other resources? How would you address those needs?: I would hire two more school resources officers and push for more funding for recruitment of new deputies.

What do you think is the biggest issue facing Douglas County Sheriff's Office and how do you plan to resolve it?: Moral, and the status quo. I would want to be involved with the deputies, get to know them and their families, have family functions, establish team building exercises to help boost morale. I would also empower my personnel to lead, be involved and working side by side with the deputies and doing and always set the example.

Body cameras are about to be required throughout Nevada. What are the pros and cons?: We are in a profession that is always under the watchful eye of society and cell phone cameras. I do support the use of body cameras by law enforcement personnel for several reasons. First, the cameras are designed to record what the deputies see in real time, and that the recording can be used in a trial as evidence. Second, it's a system of accountability that will ensure that the deputies are

maintaining a standard of professionalism while interacting with the public. Additionally, when a civil complaint is filed against a deputy, the recording from the body camera shall be used to either corroborate the claim or clear the deputy for any wrongdoing.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not already know: During my time in military law enforcement, I have investigated over 55 cases of domestic violence, over 80 assaults, around 50 thefts of property, 25 sexual assaults, six child abuse cases, processed 12 DUIs, investigated eight suicides, and written over 400 traffic citations. As a leader, I was always setting the example and responded to as many calls for service as I can. It's not that I was micromanaging my Marines but supervising and assisting with calls for service because "we too" had a shortfall of manpower. And instead of putting the burden and pressure on my Marines as a leader I chose to do the right thing and to be active and either assist in the investigation or take one over so they can move on to other calls for service. The numbers show that I have the experience in investigating and that I do understand the aspects involved in responding to and investigating crimes. Military law enforcement does the same types of functions as civilian officers. But the one difference that we as military police officers have to be concerned with on every call we respond to is never to let our guard down because the military are trained killers, and almost every household has a service member that can be armed, and they know how to use it. I am a bottom-up leader and believe in empowering your juniors and allowing them an opportunity to become leaders. I have mentored over 100 Marines in my career and helped them in the advancement of their career. I always have but my Marines first ahead of myself and as your next sheriff I will be there for the people of Douglas County and the sheriff's office. When I see a problem, I approach the problem, provide a solution and follow through to the end.

Vietnam Wall replica coming to Carson Valley

The Moving Wall, a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., will visit Douglas County for the first time from May 31-June 4.

Eastside Memorial Park in Minden will host the wall.

The Moving Wall's visit will provide a remembrance site for community members who have not been able to visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

There will be an opening ceremony on June 1 at 10am, candlelight vigil on June 2 at 9:30pm, and closing ceremony June 3 at 7pm.

Visitation is allowed around the clock.

Burn permits available through CalFire

Residential burn permits are now required for residents in the Amador-El Dorado Unit of CalFire.

The free permits are valid for three years from the date of issuance and allow for the burning of dry landscape vegetation (not household trash) that originates from the landowners' property. Residential burn permit are available at most of the

local staffed fire stations.

There should be a minimum of 10 feet of clear bare soil for every 4 foot by 4 foot pile.

The use of burn barrels is no longer legal in Amador and El Dorado counties.

Winning flowers for Mother's Day

By Melinda Myers

Give mom a gift that provides beauty all season long with minimal care. A basket, container or garden bed filled with these award-winning annuals is sure to generate a smile and enjoyment all summer long.

If mom likes to garden, provide her with a few seeds, potting mix and a container. Include a few new varieties of traditional favorites. Marigold Super Hero Spry is a compact French marigold with 2 inch dark maroon and golden yellow flowers. The striking bicolor blooms top 10- to 12-inch-tall plants. Best of all, mom will have flowers eight weeks from the time she sows the seeds until frost.



Canna South Pacific Orange is a compact vigorous variety with large leaves and blossoms that attract hummingbirds. Photo/All-America Selections

Surprise mom with a container of instant beauty. The 2017 All-America Selections (AAS) winner Calliope Medium Dark red is beautiful alone or mixed with other flowers in containers, hanging baskets or in-ground gardens. It was selected by AAS, a nonprofit national plant trialing organization, for its outstanding performance for home gardens.

Brocade Fire and Brocade Cherry Night are two more winning geraniums selected for their striking foliage and colorful blooms. The semi-double orange flowers and green and bronze foliage are sure to brighten any garden location or container. The green edged bronze leaves and red blooms of Brocade Cherry Night will surely impress mom and any of her visitors.

Or provide some added seasonal interest with Pinto Premium White to Rose geranium. Mom will enjoy watching the flower petals change from white to pink to rose-pink. The change occurs over time, providing interesting color combinations throughout the growing season.

Help mom bring the birds, butterflies and bees to her garden with a few sunflowers. They're easy to start from seed right in the garden and mom will enjoy the motion and color the visiting pollinators provide. Don't let a lack of space stop your mother from enjoying these colorful beauties. Suntastic Yellow with Black Center produces 5- to 6-inch flowers on 20-inch plants; perfect for containers and small space gardens.

Grow the taller, 4- to 5-inch-tall Ring of Fire sunflower for its unique blooms. The flower's chocolate brown center is surrounded by a ring of red and golden tipped petals. Mom can cut a few blooms to enjoy in a vase and allow the rest to set seed for wildlife to enjoy.

Add more wow to mom's garden with Onyx red ornamental pepper. The dark black foliage contrasts nicely with the shiny red fruit. Its stunning beauty adds ornamental appeal to containers and garden beds. Ornamental peppers are edible but very hot, so it's best to look and not taste. Or include the family-friendly Chilly Chili ornamental pepper for all the beauty without the heat. Perfect for families with young children that like to explore. The abundant upright fruit changes from yellow to orange to red, providing a wonderful display throughout the season.

Bring the tropics to your mom's patio or deck with cannas. Their large foliage and bright colored flowers make any home feel like an exotic escape. South Pacific Orange, South Pacific Scarlet and Tropical Rose are compact vigorous varieties suited to containers and the garden. The large leaves add drama to the garden and once their blossoms emerge they'll provide lots of color and hummingbird appeal.

Make this Mother's Day one you and your mother will remember throughout the summer. Give her a gift of winning beauties to brighten her containers, gardens and uplift her spirits all season long.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening." She hosts the Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" gardening DVD series and the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio segments.