GENERAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2008
Place: Monticola Club, 140 South Lassen Street, Susanville
Time: Meeting 11 am, lunch 12 noon, program following lunch
Cost: FREE to all members, with prior notification, and FREE to all those who join that day. Voluntary contributions for the scholarship program will be greatly appreciated.

Menu: Salad bar, dessert and beverage

Program: David Walwrath, our CRTA Legislative Advocate, will present an update on the latest happenings in the California Legislature. He has been serving our organization for 25 years. Plan to come and show your support for all his good work.

Door Prizes: will be given to benefit our scholarship program. Bring a prize early to display, such as: a white elephant, food or crafts.

Reservations: by Friday, 11/14, late by 11/17. Don't stay away because you forgot to make a reservation!

In Chester, Westwood, Graeagle, Greenville, or Quincy, Call, Hilda Morlang, 256-3960
In Susanville Area, Call, Nancy Alosi, 257-5671

President’s Report, by Louis Hamilton

There are many expressions to describe the weather outside as I am sitting at my computer. It is coming down in buckets is what it sounds like and I am happy I am inside.

Our meeting is only a couple of weeks away. Time passes quickly when you are having fun. I have been busy enjoying the outdoors hunting and fishing. It has been a great fall and I look forward to winter. Our meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19th at the Monticola Club in Susanville. We will start with our business meeting at 11:00 a.m. and have lunch at 12:00 noon. Two special things are scheduled for the day. The first will be a presentation of the Marty Mathiesen Award to Ray Craig so I hope everyone that can attend will come and be a part of this special day. Secondly, it is a pleasure to have a special guest attending our meeting this month. The board decided to have David Walwrath our legislative analyst come from Sacramento so you can hear him speak about the importance of CRTA and how he represents us. David has been our representative for 25 years in Sacramento. He is a very special person and I hope you invite a friend to
come with you.
Our donate a book idea seemed to gain some interest at our September meeting with members taking books for distribution. So bring excess books that can be placed in libraries, hospitals, classrooms, etc. We will place a sticker in them and put them out in the community. Just two weeks ago, I went to a yard sale and purchased two large tubs of books and still ended up with two full boxes to donate after Yvonne selected 15 books for our 7 year old grandson.

Free food! The Marty Mathiesen Award! David Wal-wrath! Great fellowship! Stand up and cheer because we have defined benefits. Be thankful and support each other in these tough times. I am honored to be a part of this organization.

**Proposed Scholarship Revision**

At our last board meeting, a committee was formed to brainstorm possible revisions to our scholarship program. Some members were concerned that the selection process was based heavily on GPA's and many recipients received many other awards.

Our committee (Craig, Egelhofer, Morelini) met with Lassen High's counseling staff to look at other scholarship programs for ideas. The committee then talked about possible way to restructure our program. The committee suggestions include:

1. Awarding a $200 scholarship to each school (8). These winners will be selected by the their respective schools using the following criteria: student plans to attend a community college or trade school, student has not received numerous other awards, strong emphasis on NEED.
2. Two (2) $400 scholarships to be selected from applications received from all schools represented by CRTA Division #76. No more than one $400 award to a school

These are just suggestions, please come prepared to discuss our scholarship program at our next general meeting on November 19. Donna Morelini

**Thank you from our last Scholarship winner**

Dear Lassen-Plumas CRTA,
Thank you so much for awarding me a generous scholarship to assist me in furthering my education. Enclosed please find an Enrollment Verification from Azusa Pacific University pursuant to your scholarship requirements.

Sincerely, Zach Brown

Dear Lassen-Plumas CRTA,
Thank you very much for the scholarship money. It is already in a savings account ready for college. Thanks again, Nick Delucchi

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**Treasurer’s Report, by Sheri Binswanger**

**Lassen-Plumas CRTA #76**
**September 12 thru October 25, 2008**

**General Fund**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning Balance July 1, 2008</td>
<td>$6,901.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRTA Dues-October</td>
<td>289.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest: 9/16</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest: 10/15</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>290.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>$7,192.13</td>
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**Expenses**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diamond Mt. Casino Luncheon</td>
<td>409.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer to Memorial Fund: Semon &amp; Bradley</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EXPENSES</td>
<td>509.50</td>
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**Scholarship Fund**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning Balance October 25, 2008</td>
<td>$1,590.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscione</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris Davie</td>
<td>40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luncheon</td>
<td>255.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Semon and Jean Bradley</td>
<td>200.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL INCOME</td>
<td>415.00</td>
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**Disbursements**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships Awarded</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zachary Brown</td>
<td>500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship Fund Balance, Oct. 25, 2008</td>
<td>$1,505.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance, Gen. &amp; Scholarship, Oct. 25, 2008</td>
<td>$8,188.34</td>
</tr>
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</table>

"I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice."
Abraham Lincoln, speech in Washington D.C., 1865

**Jean Bradley**

Jean Bradley passed away during her 87th year. At the time of her passing, she was living at the Olive Ridge Care Center in Newark, CA.
She passed away July 21, 2008, near her 88th birthday.
Anyone caring to contact her son his address follows:
John Bradley
4958 Basworth Court
Newark, CA 94560
As anticipated the Governor is calling the Legislature back into session to deal with the major revenue shortfall California is facing since he signed the state budget in September. As reported this morning, the California budget, due to the economy, is facing a major budget shortfall of $11.2 billion. The attachments herein include the Governor’s proposals which are a combination of revenues and cuts. The cuts he is proposing will have a devastating impact on safety net, home care and health care programs as you see from the summary below.

**Governor Proposes Sales Tax Increase**

The Governor also proposed ways to increase revenues, that includes an economic stimulus package and a temporary increase of the state sales tax, to be effective (if approved) January 1, 2009, of 1.5% for three years. At the end of three years, the sales tax would return to 5%. The Governor estimates that the increase would generate additional revenues of $3.540 billion for the current budget year that ends June 30, 09 and another $7.319 billion for the 2009-10 State Budget year that begins July 1, 09.

**Major Cuts Proposed By Governor**

All areas of the State budget were hit with spending reductions, though hardest hit was the education and health and human services budgets. Cuts proposed include:

**Medi-Cal**

* Proposal to reduce California Medi-Cal benefits to the level of optional benefits provided in most other states by eliminating permanently the following optional benefits:
* adult dental (excluding children), chiropractic, incontinence creams and washes, acupuncture, audiology, podiatry, and psychology Medi-Cal funded services.
* Proposal to reduce Medi-Cal benefits for newly qualified immigrants and immigrants who permanently live in California to the same level currently provided to undocumented immigrants. Medi-Cal benefits that would remain include emergency services, pregnancy related services, long term care in a nursing facility, and breast and cervical cancer treatments.

* Proposal to reinstate share of cost for Medi-Cal services for persons with disabilities, blind or seniors with incomes over the SSI/SSP limits. Eligibility for Medi-Cal without a share of cost for those persons was expanded in January 2001 from 69% to up to 127% of the federal poverty level.

* Proposal to cut emergency services for undocumented immigrants by implementing monthly eligibility determination for emergency services for undocumented immigrants, who currently receive up to six months of health services after an initial eligibility determination. The Governor’s proposal would limit those services to one month unless and until there is a subsequent health emergency.

* Proposal to change Medi-Cal eligibility by reducing the income level for new Medi-Cal applicants to the Section 1931 (b) program to the standard prior to March 2000 average of approximately 72% of the federal poverty level and define “under employment” as the principal wage earner who works less than 100 hours a month for persons applying for the Medi-Cal Section 1931 (b).

* Proposal to shift the federal Safety Net Care Pool funding from designated public hospitals to parts of the California Children’s Services (CSS) program, the Genetically Handicapped Persons, the Medically Indigent Adult Long Term Care, and Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment programs. The Governor’s proposal for this says that no reductions to services for persons in these programs will result from this proposal.

**In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) [correction]**

* Proposal to cut the State’s participation (matching funds) for IHSS worker wages and benefits to the level of the State minimum wage.

* Proposal to eliminate the IHSS share of cost buy-out for persons receiving IHSS with an average functional index score of less than 4 would be required to pay for more of their IHSS services before qualifying for state subsidies (money). Person on IHSS with an average functional index score of 4 and higher, would not be impacted by this proposal.

* Proposal to eliminate IHSS domestic and related services for persons receiving IHSS, as measured by a functional index rank of 4 or less. Would maintain those services for persons who have a higher functional index than 4. Proposed effective date would be March 1, 2009.

**SSI/SSP (Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Payment)**

* Proposal to reduce the State part of the grant (SSP) to the “maintenance of effort” as required by federal law, effective (if approved), March 1, 2009. This would mean, for example, that persons receiving SSI/SSP in January, who receive the maximum SSI/SSP grant of $907 (including federal cost of living increase for SSI that is due January 1, 2009) would see a reduction of about $77 dollars – or a total SSI/SSP grant level reduced to $830

* Proposal to permanently eliminate the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), effective (if approved) March 1, 2009.

**Regional Centers**

* Proposal for a 18 month 3% regional center provider rate reduction (excluding supported employment providers who had a rate reduction of 10% this year) (proposed to be effective December 1, 2008).

This is a partial lasting due to space limitations, one can visit AARP.com for full text, editor.
More on windfall elimination and GPO , 
Supplemental checks are on their way! By Dave Walrath

The exciting election is mostly over. President-Elect Obama supports repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provisi-on and the Government Pension Offset. We look for-ward to working with the new President on this goal of repeal in 2009.

California elections resulted in Democrats increasing their members in both the Assembly and, we believe, the State Senate. There will be continuing challenges for the state in bringing together a balanced budget. These chal-lenges however, will not affect pension benefits for California’s educators. Staff from CalSTRS has indicated that 85% purchasing power protection will provide benefits for those who retired prior to 1994. We expect the supple-mental check for purchasing power protection to be is-issued in the next few weeks.
CRTA Improves Pension Benefits!

CARTA Wins Increase in Purchasing Power Protection

On September 23, when Governor Schwarzenegger signed California's budget, CRTA's proposal to increase purchasing power protection from the Supplemental Benefit Maintenance Account (SBMA) to 85 percent became official. The SBMA, which was created in 1989 to help California's oldest retired teachers deal with inflation, had been set at 80 percent purchasing power protection.

Governor Schwarzenegger’s January budget proposal included effectively capping the benefit at 80 percent by vesting it and thereby limiting future anti-inflation improvements. CRTA led the fight for the 85 percent benefit when CalSTRS and CTA proposed vesting (capping) the benefit at 82.5 percent.

Legislation passed in the 1970s intended to provide full purchasing power for pensions but was undermined by the high inflation of the period. Today more than 60,000 retired educators receive supplemental payments. Those who retired in the 1970s and 1980s rely on the fund to help with basic necessities. With more than $3 billion in reserves, the purchasing power fund is a tempting target for politicians. CRTA believes the money should be used as it was originally intended to help the most vulnerable retirees.

CalSTRS Fund Built to Withstand Market Fluctuations

Recently there have been some historic changes on Wall Street that may have raised concerns about CalSTRS investments and benefits. CalSTRS benefits are safe. CalSTRS is a Defined Benefit Program, meaning investment gains or losses do not affect the benefits payable to members. The CalSTRS retirement, survivor and disability benefits are secure and guaranteed by law. Go to the CalSTRS Web site at www.calstrs.com to read more.

Are You Retiring Soon?

CRTA is the only statewide organization working to protect and enhance retirement benefits for all CalSTRS retirees.

Join us!

Go to www.calrta.org for information.
**AARP Books**

**Scam-Proof Your Life**

By Sid Kirchheimer

377 Smart Ways to Protect You & Your Family from Ripoffs, Bogus Deals & Other Consumer Headaches

It can start with a visit from a man in a pickup truck, offering a home repair at a discount price. Or with a letter from a deposed king, promising you millions for shielding his fortune in your bank account. It occurs at the car lot and in the hospital. It happens at home, at work, and on vacation. Everywhere and every day, thousands of Americans get scammed. You need not be among them. In *Scam-Proof Your Life*, you'll receive the expert guidance of industry insiders, consumer crusaders, relentless researchers—and even the crooks and con artists who once pulled these scams themselves.

Interviewed by AARP's "Scam Alert" expert, Sid Kirchheimer, nearly 100 pros offer sure-fire techniques to outwit financial predators and avoid ripoffs, regrets, and other costly mistakes:

- Car salesmen provide an inside look at the ploys they pull and disclose secret strategies that can save you thousands of dollars on your next vehicle purchase.
- Repairmen share the tricks of their trade—and explain how to get superior service at an honest price.
- Former thieves give tactics to deprive criminals of your money, your possessions, and your identity.

Scam-Proof Your Life also teems with counsel designed to protect the health and rights of you and your family: Doctors divulge simple, immediate steps to guard against medical errors and lower your health-care costs. Attorneys and career counselors tell how to protect yourself in the workplace. Consumer advocates detail how to get the most for your time and money—whether it's buying a home or applying for a mortgage, getting phone service or credit cards, booking travel, funding a college education, or more.

To stop others from taking advantage of you, this one-of-a-kind guide could be the best life insurance policy you'll ever have.

**About the Author**

Sid Kirchheimer is an award-winning investigative reporter who has written or edited more than a dozen books devoted to empowering ordinary people to make the most of their time, money, and health. He has appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and other nationally syndicated TV programs, and covers medical and consumer issues for AARP Publications. Kirchheimer's popular "Scam Alert" column appears monthly in the *AARP Bulletin*.

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**Minutes, Area II, Division #76, Lassen/Plumas CRTA General Meeting**

**Wednesday, September 17, 2008, 11 am, Diamond Mountain Casino, Susanville, CA**

Call to order 11:15 am, Flag salute, welcome, the agenda was approved, and minutes were corrected and approved. Wilma Taddys name is spelled Taddie, Polly Bacich is the pres. elect.

**Discussion items, Dates:**

Oct. 15, Wed. 10 am board meeting Westwood senior center

Nov. 19, Wed. 11 am general meeting, Monticola club house, Susanville

**Fall workshop**, will be held in Corning, Sept. 18, David Walrath will be guest speaker, Hilda, Ray Craig and Lou will be attending.

**PAC** needs financial assistance, contribute if possible.

**New membership**, we need members, free for one year if signed up for dues deduct. The drive is never over. General meetings, free lunches approved again by the board. This seems to have improved donations to our scholarship fund.

**Officers**, Insurance chairperson is still needed.

**Action items**, the 2008-2009 budget was approved, motion by Fred, seconded by Carol H.

**Officer reports**, we need to bring books for donation to schools and libraries, bring books to next meeting. Menu at Monticola will be salad and dessert.

**Treasurer**, Sheri reported a balance of $8,492.39 in the general and scholarship fund.

**Committee reports, historian**, Mary reported that her committee is working to get materials up to date at the museum.

**Publicity**, Mary is putting good articles in the paper about our meetings.

**Legislation**, Fred will try to get more information on the social security problem at the fall conf.

**Membership**, Jennie will get back to work.

**Memorial**, Ruth reported donations of $95 for scholarship.

**Resource services**, Lois Marek, chairperson, introduced materials that are very helpful and relevant to members needs. Be sure to take advantage of these materials.

**Scholarship**, Donna was absent.

**Communications**: Nancy needs volunteer hours reported.

No additional topics, meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

A delicious lunch was served followed by a most interesting program presented by Gerald Keating from the Hat Creek Radio Observatory. Read all about the Observatory in your last newsletter!

Respectfully submitted, Carol Carver, Sec.
Insurance agents and financial institutions often advertise annuities as the perfect way to generate retirement income. While annuities can be a valuable retirement tool, if you are buying an annuity as part of a Medicaid planning strategy, you need to fully understand what you are getting. And whether an annuity makes sense as part of Medicaid planning may depend on whether you are married or single.

Historically, "immediate" annuities have been used as a Medicaid planning tool. In its simplest terms, an immediate annuity is a contract with an insurance company (or a private individual) under which the consumer pays the company a certain amount of money and the company sends the consumer a monthly check for the rest of his or her life. Purchasing an immediate annuity is a way for people with assets in excess of Medicaid's limits to turn the assets into an income stream while avoiding a penalty for transferring the assets. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) changed the requirements for annuities, making it a little harder to do this. Under the DRA, an annuity must meet the following requirements in order to avoid a transfer penalty:

- The annuity must be irrevocable (you can't cancel it)
- The annuity must be actuarially sound (which means the annuity cannot cover a term longer than the purchaser's life expectancy and the payments expected during the annuitant's life expectancy must at least equal the cost of the annuity)
- The payments must begin immediately (you cannot have deferred payments or a balloon payment)
- Unless there is a spouse or a minor or disabled child, the state must be named as the remainder beneficiary (the person or entity that gets any leftover money) up to the amount of Medicaid provided.

Perhaps the best use of an annuity for Medicaid planning is for married couples, one of whom needs Medicaid-covered long-term care. An immediate annuity allows the couple to turn their excess assets into income for the Medicaid recipient's spouse. If a spouse purchases an annuity that meets the requirements under the DRA, he or she will receive the income from that annuity without having to contribute it to the Medicaid recipient's long-term care. But, as a result of a 2006 amendment to the DRA, the spouse will have to name the state as the remainder beneficiary for costs incurred by the Medicaid recipient as well as herself if she ever receives Medicaid. However, such repayment would only occur if she were to die before the guaranteed payments under the annuity had expired.

Annuities generally have been less useful as Medicaid planning devices for single individuals. For example, if a single individual purchases an annuity, the interest income from the annuity counts as income and will have to be paid to the nursing home. Then, once the purchaser dies, any remaining money in the annuity will first go to the state to pay any unpaid nursing home bills. If there is any left over, it will go to beneficiaries named by the purchaser.

However, in some states immediate annuities may have a place for single individuals who are considering transferring assets. Income from an annuity can be used to help pay for long-term care during the Medicaid penalty period that results from the transfer. In such cases, the annuity is usually short-term, just long enough to cover the penalty period.

While immediate annuities can still be a powerful tool in the right circumstances, they must be distinguished from deferred annuities, which have no Medicaid planning purpose. Also keep in mind that even following the DRA, acceptance of immediate annuities for Medicaid planning varies from state to state. Be sure to consult with a qualified elder law attorney in your state before pursuing this strategy.

For more information visit www.elderlawanswers.com.

Minutes, Area II, Division #76, Lassen/Plumas CRTA Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 15, 2008, 10 am, Senior Center, Westwood, CA

Meeting was called to order, agenda and minutes were both read and approved.

Discussion items, Dates: Nov. 19, Wed. 11 am, general meeting at the Monticola Club, Susanville, March 18, Wed.10 am, board meeting, Carol Carver’s Home, April 15, Wed. 11 am general meeting, May 20, Wed. 10 am board meeting, & June 17, Wed. 11 am general meeting.

Guest speaker, David Walrath, legislative advocate, will be our guest speaker for Nov. meeting, encourage everyone to attend, his expenses will be paid.

Political action committee in need of financial support.

Insurance chairperson is still needed please help!

Keep trying to bring in new members!

Scholarship: all scholarships have been paid. Committee will meet to discuss how recipients are chosen.

Newsletter: Nov. 5 deadline, congrats to rich for a great job!

Award presentation: our own Ray Craig will receive the Marty Mathieson award this year at our Nov. meeting.

Officer reports, Lou reported on the 85% purchasing power bill passed by legislature, will help many members.

1st VP, Donna reported on our Nov. meeting, everything is a go.

2nd VP, Hilda will try the same method used at our Sept. meeting for the raffle.

Treasurer, Sheri reported a balance of $8,853.82 in general and scholarship fund.

There were no committee reports.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Carver, Sec.
California Retired Teachers Association  
Lassen & Plumas Counties • Area II, Division 76  
c/o Sheri Binswanger  
P.O. Box 141  
Westwood, CA 96137-0141

This picture was taken on Highway 88 between Carson City and Jackson. Photo Donna Morlini  
Cover Photo, Diamond Mountains from the Bizz Johnson trail. north of Devil’s Corel. Photo Rich Egelhofer

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**CRTA Volunteer Survey**

Purpose of this survey: To enhance the image of CRTA and inform the public, our legislators and our membership of volunteer community services rendered by CRTA members.

Dates you Volunteered: From____________ to _______________ Name_____________________________

**What do we need from you?**

1. Enter the approximate TOTAL HOURS that you have given in volunteer time for all the service(s) you have listed:____________________________
2. Check off items on the list that apply to you.
3. Write in areas where you have volunteered which are not listed.

What Volunteer service(s) did you provide?

Here is a simple/partial list of some of the services that may serve as a reminder:  
- Hospice
- Crossing guard
- Hospitals/Clinics
- Fund-raising
- Service club activity
- Libraries
- California Senior Legislature
- "meals on wheels"
- Schools
- Convalescent homes
- Child Welfare
- Blood Bank
- Museum docent
- Church activities
- PTA
- Youth organizations
- Day of the Teacher
- Tutoring
- Retired Teachers week
- AARP, NRTA, ACSAR, CRTA
- Hobby/craft assistant
- Symphony/concert/art groups
- Senior services
- Civic welfare projects
- Boards and commissions (specify)__________________________
- Red Cross
- Scholarship committees
- Other__________________________
- Other__________________________
- Other__________________________

**Please include:** your Telephoning, office chores, preparations, and travel time to and from volunteer services, sites, etc.

**Thank you** for taking the time to help us. The information you provide will be collated and used for reports to the public, legislators, possibly for other public relations purposes according to CRTA policy.

Please fill out and return to me at the next meeting or mail it. You may also email your custom report sheet or telephone.

Thanks, Nancy Alosi, 335 North McDow Street, Susanville, CA 96130  
Email, njalosi@gmail.com  
Telephone, 257-5671