

Some funding restored to HRN victim assistance program

BY SALLY MORRIS
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An emergency bill restoring \$16.3 million for domestic violence programs throughout California was signed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger two weeks ago, reversing one of his most controversial line-item budget cuts last summer.

Statewide, SBX3 13 restores funding to 94 shelters for victims of domestic violence that had been blue-penciled in August. In Trinity County, it means the nonprofit Human Response Network's domestic violence victim's assistance program is breathing a sigh of relief, at least for now.

Program coordinator Alisah Bundy said the governor's line-item cut last August "wiped out 100 percent of our general fund dollars for domestic violence programs." The loss of state grant funding forced the layoff of an experienced employee and reorganization of others, a reduction in youth outreach services and shortened hours at the HRN youth centers in Hayfork and Weaverville.

"We expected a 25 percent cut, but not 100 percent," she said, calling the loss "heartrending."

The emergency legislation signed two weeks ago

restores about 70 percent of the domestic violence funding that was originally anticipated by HRN for this year. The \$156,064 allocation requires a \$31,213 match from the agency and is about \$52,000 less than what was budgeted before the state funding was slashed to zero, Bundy said.

Agency staff is in the process of deciding how it will allocate the restored funding now with a wary eye cast at next year.

The bill signed by the governor transfers \$16.3 million from the state's Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Fund to its general fund as a loan to be paid back with interest by 2013.

The funding covers this year only "and for next year we know nothing," Bundy said. "California has not made a stand-up commitment to continued funding for domestic violence programs." She added that HRN also receives some federal funds that have been used to keep domestic violence services going during the current crisis.

The agency's domestic violence services include victims' advocacy and assistance during criminal proceedings; resource referrals; emergency food, clothing and housing; a crisis counseling hotline available 24/7 staffed by trained volunteers; peer

counseling/support group; and educational outreach.

In the past year, 169 Trinity County residents received services from the HRN domestic violence assistance program. The number was down from 188 the year before and a high of 258 in 2006-07.

The greatest number of calls for assistance in the past year came from the areas of Weaverville (62) and Lewiston (27) followed by Hayfork (19), Junction City (15) and Douglas City (13).

Bundy said she believes the numbers are highest in those communities only because they are closest in proximity to available services. Residents of Trinity Center, Burnt Ranch, Salyer, Mad River and Zenia were also served in smaller numbers.

"We've seen a decline in numbers from the outlying areas. A lot of our referrals come through law enforcement and people don't call when they feel there's no deputy to respond," she said, adding that is not only a problem in Trinity County, but also statewide.

"Domestic violence happens everywhere and it just continues," Bundy said, but added that nationwide, the numbers are down "so we do make a difference."

Comment sought on dredge permitting

The Department of Fish and Game is holding three public scoping meetings for input on its suction dredge permitting program.

The Redding meeting is set for 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18, at the Shasta Senior Nutrition Program Center, 100 Mercy Oaks Drive.

Meetings will also be held in Fresno and Sacramento.

DFG is currently prohibited from issuing suction dredge permits under a court order issued July 9. In addition, as of Aug. 6, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's signing of SB 670 (Wiggins) places a moratorium on all California instream suction dredge mining or the use of any such equipment in any California river, stream or lake, regardless of whether the operator has an existing permit issued by DFG.

The moratorium will remain in effect until DFG completes the environmental review of its permitting program and makes any necessary updates to the existing regulations.

Written comments must be postmarked by Dec. 3 and may be submitted, either by e-mail to dfgsuctiondredge@dfg.ca.gov or by regular mail to Mark Stopher, California Department of Fish and Game, 601 Locust St., Redding, CA 96001.

For more information, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/suctiondredge.

Hayfork SDA school had a busy quarter

The Hayfork Seventh-day Adventist Christian School just ended its first quarter, which was filled with many special events.

The first day of school began with an end-of-summer theme. Students dissected a squid, took out its pen, broke the inkwell, and signed their names with it. At Back to School Night, students shared the Gettysburg Address, sang memory verses and showed much of their work.

They went to Rio Lindo Academy in Healdsburg for the Small Schools' Sports Camp where they teamed up with other students to increase their basketball, soccer and volleyball skills.

Studying the Civil War this quarter was interesting. The Union and Confederate Camps were built in another room at the school, and last Friday the students attended the Civil War Re-enactment near Anderson.

Auction scheduled in Hayfork

An auction will be held Thursday, Nov. 5, at Linda Hall in Hayfork beginning at 7 p.m. Soup, bread and drink will be sold for \$1.

All proceeds will go to Hayfork Seventh-day Adventist Christian School for continued operation. Many businesses in Hayfork and Weaverville have donated items for purchase, and individuals have baked many delightful desserts.

Everyone is invited to come out and support this event. For more information, call Janet at 628-1020.

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