

23, 24, 25, & 37

## Save our precious heritage!

Members of the Board of Supervisors, and members of our Community.

My name is Tom Chilton. My wife and I moved to the Sacramento in 1959 when I accepted a position with Aerojet. We purchased our home in El Dorado Hills in 1967, and have lived there ever since then. I served as a member of the El Dorado County Grand Jury in 1974-1975, and have spoken to the Board of Supervisors before on other topics of interest.

My wife and I were interested in exploring the gold rush area, and purchased a 4-wheel drive vehicle. We visited many old towns, including Pino Grande, Sunny South, and Volcanoville, all of which today are little more than dots on an old map. I remember when we visited Coloma for the first time. There were just a bunch of old buildings and the ruminants of an old saw mill. It was said that developers were trying to buy the land along the American River for commercial development. Thank goodness the Board of Supervisors and the California Parks Department acted to save this **precious heritage** for generations to come.

Did you know that after the 1889 Exposition in Paris a vocal minor of her citizens wanted to tear down the Eiffel Tower? I guess they had some scheme to sell the steel for scrap in order to fund their own interests. Does that sound familiar? Fortunately this monument stands today, enjoyed by thousands of people every day.

Other monuments to our heritage have not been so lucky. The people of Sacramento still regret tearing down the Alhambra Theater in order to build a Safeway Grocery Store. And the City of San Francisco prevailed to dam the Tuolumne River and flood the Hetch Hetchy Valley. What a shame!

What is the **heritage** that El Dorado County will preserve for its future generations? A few old buildings, a museum, a sawmill, an old mine, a bell tower, and maybe a **railroad** line. A railroad that was instrumental in the development of El Dorado County from 1863 through the 1980s.

You, the Board of Supervisors, have the ultimate say in what will happen to this unique piece of El Dorado County's history. Will you preserve our **precious heritage** for generations to come, or will you acquiesce to a small but vocal minority of our citizens? Will you be remembered as the Board who preserved the railroad, or the Board that abandoned our **precious heritage**?

And why all the hurry to make this decision now? Is it because the Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad is about ready to start operating excursion trains over the tracks, and to prove that they are a viable alternative to removing the tracks?

I urge to retain this **precious heritage** for our future generations. Retain the railroad tracks and our option to have excursions trains in El Dorado County.

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Submitted by T. Chilton

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