

COUNTY COUNSEL
LOUIS B. GREEN

CHIEF ASS'T. COUNTY COUNSEL
EDWARD L. KNAPP

PRINCIPAL ASS'T COUNTY COUNSEL
PATRICIA E. BECK

DEPUTY COUNTY COUNSEL
JUDITH M. KERR
REBECCA C. SUTTELL
PAULA F. FRANTZ
MICHAEL J. CICOZZI

**EL DORADO COUNTY
OFFICE OF
THE COUNTY COUNSEL**



COUNTY GOVERNMENT
CENTER
330 FAIR LANE
PLACERVILLE, CA
95667
(530) 621-5770
FAX# (530) 621-2937

DEPUTY COUNTY COUNSEL
DAVID A. LIVINGSTON
SCOTT C. STARR
TERI M. MONTEROSSO
LESLEY B. GOMES

February 17, 2010

Pat Lakey, Managing Editor
Mountain Democrat
1360 Broadway
P.O. Box 1088
Placerville, CA 95667

Dear Ms. Lakey:


The article in Wednesday's paper about the Veteran's Memorial included a quotation erroneously attributed to me. I have never spoken with Mr. Soike on this issue, and neither I nor anyone else from County Counsel's office has ventured the opinion that Mr. Soike's proposed inscription violates any law because of its religious nature.

The issue is that there are no existing guidelines on what types of messages can be expressed on benches at the County Veteran's Memorial. The veterans groups involved in the management of the memorial did not have specific enough guidelines that they could apply when determining whether to approve the proposed inscription. Various individuals and veteran's groups expressed differing views concerning the advisability of allowing inscriptions of any kind, or inscriptions including religious content. It became clear that the issue would have to be resolved by the Board of Supervisors, which has the ability to determine the nature of the public forum that will be allowed at the Veteran's Memorial. County Counsel's advice has been that once a forum is opened up to allow messages to be expressed by the public, then the law makes it difficult to make future content-based distinctions between the individual messages that would be allowed.

Very Truly Yours,

LOUIS B. GREEN
County Counsel

By: _____


Edward L. Knapp
Chief Ass't. County Counsel

ELK:km

2010 FEB 17 PM 1:38

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
EL DORADO COUNTY