

### Evans is right

Looking for an idyllic place to retire, we sought a location in the mountains with easy access to air travel, full service medicine and a 911 number. My late cousin, a fireman for Western Pacific, had spoken many times of Portola, so we looked. We were immediately "hooked." We visited, surveyed and decided to stay.

While we developed our house plan and were building it, I, as a retiring orthopedic surgeon from southern California and not wanting to completely leave my profession, looked into a part-time "job" at Eastern Plumas Health Care. I met, talked with and was much impressed with Charles Guenther and the medical staff.

Having practiced in Orange County for 40 plus years, I had been actively involved in local, state and national medicine. I was duly impressed with both the quality of facilities and the quality of the medical staff here in Portola.

Since our move to "paradise" and our active participation in the medical practice at the Portola Clinic and hospital, I have been totally satisfied and happy to be involved with this facility.

The editorial by John Evans could not have been more true. He is right on when he points out the contribution to the medical care of our community provided by Charles Guenther's leadership. The loss of a quality physician who had differences with a methodology threatens our entire community.

Choosing sides, asking patients to leave our local facility, or suggesting the dismissal of a true leader and innovator seeks to destroy this well-functioning medical facility. Changes may be necessary, but replacing it with what?

I have a short history here, but I see innovations and quality equipment that were slowly appearing in the large community Catholic hospital where I spent most of my practice years.

This couldn't have been by accident, and those of this community who think that "their doctor" may have been responsible for these changes are mistaken. A long-range plan, fiscal responsibility and vision are behind this. Without these ingredients and a strong, dedicated leader, none of this would have happened.

I am proud to work in an up-to-date medical facility, which has and is attracting quality physicians who can give Portola and its environs the modern medical care they need.

If our community fails to rise above its provincial bickering, fails to support the existing innovative and forward-thinking leadership that has brought Eastern Plumas Health Care to its current level of medical practice, and if the community fails to allow the growth in its own hospital, we all will be seeking care in Reno, Truckee or Quincy.

On a cold, snowy, wintry night when those facilities are then overcrowded and very distant, will we be wondering, what has been accomplished by our failure to support our community hospital?

Don't abandon your fine local hospital. We have many quality physicians and are developing an increasing scope of practice to accommodate

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the varying needs of our patient population.

My selfish concern for a close, responsive and quality 911 number makes me ask that our community look to its future and get behind our hospital, not undermine it or its staff.

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