

**Wednesday, November 16, 2005** Last modified: *Wednesday, November 16, 2005 4:19 AM PST*

## **Animal core services not met because of mismanagement**

*By: Rosemary Frieborn*

A history of uninspired senior mismanagement at Placer County Environmental Health and Health and Human Services - stemming from a lack of adequate understanding of animal sheltering - has placed the Animal Services Department in a reactive mode with core services barely met, if at all, leaving the county exposed, its citizens exposed, and the animals hardly provided for.

In spite of a largely dedicated and caring staff, the department struggles to meet its statutory mandates, mission, vision and values. Seven leaders have managed the department in the past eight years, each one arriving with more passion than his predecessor to meet the demands of the citizens.

However, the struggles caused by the overwhelming layers of excessive management soon force the most driven individuals into submission by defeat, followed by their departure shortly afterwards

Unfortunately, the result is a continuing decline of staff morale, manifesting itself in cynicism, poor customer service, poor attendance, high attrition levels, lack of motivation, reluctance to accept responsibility/accountability, (and) lack of creativity.

The third and most recent shelter review (09/05) contains significant discrepancies and is a waste of taxpayers' money on a shelter that has outlived its usefulness. Among the many items for which the report has incited outrage, is the professional history and resume of Dr. Dena Mangiamele, the reports author, including a laundry list of critics and rescue groups who challenged her performance as the director of Animal Control of San Diego that resulted in her being given the dubious title of "Dr. Death."

Mangiamele was ultimately fired when she refused to accept a demotion at San Diego.

What is even more alarming is that I brought together former department leaders who spoke of concrete issues relative to the on-going problems at Animal Services and collectively we requested Dr. Dena research models of reporting at other agencies and present her findings to Placer County administration.

Dr. Dena's final report makes no mention about our meeting, our request or even the numerous items that were outlined as on-going and critical problems.

Once again taxpayers have been raped, as this most recent review and expenditure was not dedicated to resolving issues that prevent a level of success the department should enjoy, but instead, was controlled and contrived by Environmental Health and Health and Human Services Administration to meet their personal agenda and support current policy, regardless of its inadequacy.

It's time for the citizens of Placer to shout, "we've had enough!"

*Rosemary Frieborn is president of Friends of Placer County Animal Shelter. She can be reach through <http://www.animalplace.com/placercounty>.*

[http://www.animalplace.com/placercounty.](http://www.animalplace.com/placercounty)