

"If you ever find yourself questioning what's fair in any given situation, all you have to do is ask, "How would I want to be treated"? James Power, from the book 'Cowboy Ethics'.

I have the dreaded birthday coming up; however, I have always considered aging a real privilege. I've been so fortunate along the way to have good health, great jobs and a wonderful family and friends.

Directing the Nevada Rural Counties RSVP Program for 31 years is the best part of my life. We have fantastic, caring volunteers who give generously of their time and talents to help others; a hard working Board of Directors and the best staff any Director could hope for.

There is so much work to be done to help improve the quality of life for people in need, especially low-income homebound seniors, I have to wonder why do some people spend a great deal of their time writing horrid hate letters to the editor demeaning other people when they could use this energy to do good, such as volunteering for a change? You will see how good people feel doing something worthwhile and positive.

As to volunteering, you can expect a myriad of offerings from being a Home Companion, Lifeline installer or maybe a Respite Caregiver, or some of the nearly 300 other volunteer openings available. RSVP carries volunteer insurance and offers out-of-pocket expense reimbursement.

National Service is a very large priority of President Obama and offers opportunities which we have utilized. RSVP always gives credit to those supporting the programs that help our seniors and not be concerned if it rankles people of different political orientation of the reader than the donor. Fair is Fair!

We have many financial supporters covering bi-partisan support. Regionally, our rural county commissioners and locally the Board of Supervisors in Carson City are very financially supportive. State support comes from the Division for Aging Services via the Tobacco Settlement funds. Nationally, though we solicit our entire congressional delegation, the only support we have ever received has come from Senator Harry Reid, without whom we would not have the majority of monetary support for our programs. Over the last several years we have received over \$420,000 from Senator Reid's efforts which has kept over 1,000 seniors at home, whereas institutionalization could have cost taxpayers at least \$8.7 million since all were indigents. RSVP also receives some funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra and the United Way of the Great Basin are also generous contributors.

RSVP needs all the manpower we can get to assist others. Remember that studies show that people who volunteer live longer, healthier lives than those who don't. Do something wonderful – feel something great! Happy New Year and God Bless!