

West Sac woman represents region on 'senior legislature'

By Al Zagofsky
Correspondent

For three days in October, 120 members of the California Senior Legislature met in the State Capitol building to propose legislation regarding senior citizens at both state and federal levels. Charlotte Dorsey of West Sacramento attended as an Assembly Member representing Yolo County.

"I think the California Senior Legislature is extremely important," Dorsey said. "I heard a quote the other day, It was by a radio personality, he said, 'Discrimination against seniors is the only remaining acceptable discrimination.' I believe that is true."

"Until you become of that age, you do not realize how differently seniors are treated many times," she continued, "and how the existing services are not necessarily geared for seniors."

"There are a lot of ways



CHARLOTTE DORSEY

By Al Zagofsky/News-Ledger

this happens. From the way that people communicate with seniors to the kinds of laws that are put in place that may or may not include support for seniors."

"Everything from putting in sidewalks and making sure that the handicap ramps are kept in working order—so that when people go from a sidewalk to a street, there isn't a pothole in the bottom of a ramp."

The California Senior Leg-

islature was established by state law to help preserve and enhance the quality of life for older Californians and their families, and is primarily funded by the Code 402 checkoff on the California State Income Tax form.

Forty Senior Senators and eighty Senior Assembly members are selected in elections in 33 planning service areas as established by the federal Older Americans Act of 1965. Area 4/Yolo County, is represented by Senior Senators: Gloria Plasencia - Foresthill, and Lola Young - Sacramento; and Senior Assembly Members: Seth Brunner - Davis, Charlotte Dorsey - West Sacramento, Pam Epley - Arcata, and Lynne Farrell - Lincoln.

Dorsey first became acquainted with the CSL early last year through her involvement with the Area 4 Agency on Aging Advisory Council. She and fellow Assembly Member Seth

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ner were appointed to represent Yolo County currently on the Council. The Council elected Dorsey as a CSL Senior Assembly Member.

"The California Senior Legislature was proposed in 1979, and its first session was convened in 1981," Dorsey explained. "You have to be over 60, and be elected by your peers."

"There are limited voices for seniors in the state and in the country," she noted. "There are not many like the CSL—and it's all volunteers."

"Without the CSL, there would be fewer voices for seniors," Dorsey concluded. "They would be forgotten."

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