

# area angels

Assistance League of Sierra Foothills

by Kimberly Horg-Webb

Comprised of more than 50 female area residents and formed less than two years ago, the Assistance League of Sierra Foothills meets once a month to discuss what can be done to make the community a better place in which to live. More specifically, they work to create programs that can help those



less fortunate. Chapter president, Jackie Nelson, was involved in the Diablo Valley chapter for 35 years, and when she moved to the area she wanted to start a local chapter of the same organization. "It is a wonderful organization," she says, "and it is exciting to be able to raise money that can be used locally."

The Assistance League is a national non-profit organization that facilitates community-based philanthropic programs. Unlike most national charities, their focus is on local chapter needs. All funds raised stay in the community. Some of the most successful programs have been the "Seniors Holiday Shopping Spree," which allows seniors of Placerville Senior Day Care to enjoy the experience of shopping, as well as "Children's Coat Giveaway," "Assault Survivor Kits" and the "Duffle Bag Project," which support children in foster care. These programs are all ongoing projects for the group.

The group's two annual yard sales fund these activities and additional funding is raised through the sales of See's Candies, government grants, and private donations. This year's major funding activity will be "Gardens of the Hills." This event will tour El Dorado Hills' gardens on May 16. It is co-sponsored with Friends of the El Dorado Hills Library. All members volunteer their time and last year they worked over 3,500 hours on various projects.

"I had always been involved in 'giving-back' programs while in corporate America and wanted to participate in [one] that was more personal and hands-on," Crista Dixon, a League member says. Many of the members of El Dorado Hills Newcomers Club became the initial charter members of the group. It

is currently recruiting women of all ages in the community.

Dixon says many of their members are retired educators, fundraisers, former corporate or government employees or just women concerned about giving back locally. The League is actively seeking stay-at-home moms or mothers of teens as members since several of their projects involve children. "We work with the County Welfare Department, Child Protective Services and various local organizations to source needs," Dixon states. "The membership votes on which projects we choose to undertake," she says.

The group is currently working on the "Sports Locker Project," which will provide recreation equipment to children who do not have the financial means to participate in sports. "Books on Wheels," just recently initiated, will provide books to homebound individuals who do not have access to the El Dorado Hills Library.

There are more than 120 chapters of Assistance Leagues throughout the country, which have raised nearly \$36 million to benefit local communities over the last few years. •

*If you would like to join, donate, or for more information, call 916-939-2433 or visit [assistanceleague.org](http://assistanceleague.org). The Sierra Foothills League is located at 2222 Francisco Drive, Suite 510-249 in El Dorado Hills.*

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