

Officials: Inflation, high gas prices could hurt local economy

By Nick Baptista, The Valley Springs News, November 4, 2022

Calaveras County's near-term economy could be in for a tricky patch, according to two county officials.

Soon-to-be Calaveras County District 3 Supervisor Martin Huberty and Calaveras County Economic and Community Development Director Kathryn Gallino warned of some tough months ahead as the county as a whole deals with inflation and higher gas prices.

Their comments were made Oct. 28 during the seventh annual State of the County presentation hosted by the Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce.

Huberty, who serves as the chief executive officer of both the chamber and the Calaveras County Visitor's Bureau, attributed "a dent" late this summer in tourism numbers to extreme heat and the higher gas prices.

"I believe there will be more of a slump in visitations this next year," he added.

To offset a downturn, he plans to "market abroad for the first time next year to our European market in the United Kingdom."

In addition, Calaveras County will be featured in an upcoming National Geographic travel magazine.

Gallino acknowledged the country is "in a recession sort of due to inflation."

She foresees "a couple of tough quarters but I'm thinking by the third quarter of next year things are going to start looking up, we're going to turn a corner and businesses are going to start hiring and booming again.

In addition to Huberty and Gallino, the other featured speakers were Calaveras County Sheriff's Lt. Greg Stark, Board of Supervisors Chair Amanda Folendorf, Dana Jorgenson from the Office of Assemblyman Frank Bigelow, and Sierra Business Council President Stephen Frisch.

District 4 County Supervisor Folendorf outlined "the many accomplishments" of county staff, including implementing Geographic Information Systems mapping, updating the Office of Emergency Services alert system, a greenhouse gas plan and completion of the long-awaited Wagontrail Highway 4 Improvement Project.

Jorgenson provided tips on how constituents can more easily get the attention of their elected leaders. Most importantly, a personalized letter or a phone call is more likely to get a response than a generic letter.