



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Passing the Torch – Longtime Executive Director of Safe Nest Announces Retirement  
*Estelle Murphy Welcomes Liz Ortenburger to Take Over Executive Director Role***

**LAS VEGAS – Feb. 28, 2017** – For the first time in almost four decades, [Safe Nest](#) will be under new leadership as **Estelle Murphy**, long-standing Executive Director of the non-profit organization, announces her retirement today. After an exhaustive search for leadership and unanimous board approval, non-profit executive **Liz Ortenburger** will take the reins of Nevada’s leading domestic violence organization in March. A highly qualified leader, Ortenburger most recently was the Chief Executive Officer of the Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada. Murphy will lead Ortenburger and the entire staff at Safe Nest through the transition. Serving approximately 50,000 people annually, Safe Nest is the primary provider of domestic violence services in Southern Nevada, is the only agency with access for 24/7 Emergency Temporary Protection Orders and has the largest, most comprehensive program for the entire state.

Estelle Murphy has served as Executive Director of Safe Nest: Temporary Assistance for Domestic Crisis since 1979 providing shelter, counseling, advocacy, and prevention services for domestic violence victims and their families. During the 38 years that Murphy has managed the agency, it has grown from a small organization with a handful of volunteer staff to a well-established agency with a \$5.5 million budget and over 90 paid staff. Murphy has developed and managed programs that empower women to overcome the adversity of abuse and to realize their full potential as individuals and as heads of households. The Safe Nest programs that Murphy has established helps victims escape abuse, regain self-sufficiency, and start over in violence-free lives. The parenting programs at the shelter strengthen the parent-child relationship and help rebuild healthy families. Prevention and outreach programs educate the next generation to stop the potential cycle of violence.

“For the majority of my career, I have been dedicated to Safe Nest, developing programs, raising awareness of the issue of domestic violence in our community and helping the people of Nevada,” said Estelle Murphy, Executive Director of Safe Nest. “It’s been my life’s work; Safe Nest and its mission will always be close to my heart. I’m tremendously proud of the organization I helped build, and value all the talented, committed colleagues I’ve worked with over the years. Now it’s time for me to pass the reins to a new leader, step into a volunteer role, and enjoy the next phase of life and time with my family.”

In addition to Safe Nest, Murphy has been a board member of various community advocacy organizations. She is the co-founder of the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence (NNADV), now called the Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (NCEDSV). In her work with NNADV and other coalitions, she has helped form public policy and state legislation that addresses protections for battered women and children and has testified on bills that impact families in Nevada. As a state-licensed Substance Abuse Counselor, and as a member of Soroptimist International of Metropolitan Las Vegas (SIMLV), she has had many opportunities to benefit her local community. As a former President and current member of SIMLV, she has volunteered her time with projects that help women and girls, including programs that provide working moms with scholarships to improve their earning power. Murphy has been honored over the years for her work on behalf of women. In 1989 and in 1995, the Vegas Valley Professional Women's Association named her "Woman of the Year." In 1990, the Women's Council of the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce honored her as a Finalist for the "Women of Achievement" award. Soroptimist International awarded her the "Advancing the Status of Women" award in 1993 and the "Woman of Distinction" award in 1997. She received the Working Mothers Advocate Award in 2005 from the International Working Mothers Association, and is a recipient of the Laurel Society Award from Soroptimist International of the Americas. Most recently, in 2016, Safe Nest honored her with its first Humanitarian Award.

Murphy herself has been a working mother throughout her career. She attended graduate school at UNLV and received her Master of Public Administration degree while she was still a young mother. Murphy and her husband, Bill Bianchi, are the proud parents to two grown daughters and are devoted grandparents.

As Murphy departs the organization, Safe Nest welcomes new executive director, Liz Ortenburger. As the most recent CEO for Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada, she worked tirelessly to give every girl in Southern Nevada the opportunity to be part of Girl Scouting and worked to ensure the organization delivers on its history to nurture and develop the next generation of great female leaders. It's with this commitment to women that Ortenburger proudly joins the team at Safe Nest.

"While I'm sure the community will be sad to see Estelle depart Safe Nest, I'm overjoyed to continue her legacy," said Liz Ortenburger, incoming Executive Director at Safe Nest. "I continue my work with empowering women in the community, this time through the power of transformation and ensuring that every woman in Nevada can be in a safe, healthy and happy environment."

Ortenburger had a long career with the Girl Scouts while leading the Tres Coronados in Santa Barbara, Calif. before transitioning to chief executive officer of the organization in Southern Nevada. During her nearly 10 years in California, she worked in various positions in both programming and membership before her appointment as chief operating officer. Previously, Ortenburger served as the executive director of camping at YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles in 2008 and YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties in Washington in 2011 before returning to Girl Scouts in 2013. Notable achievements include contributor to the *Harvard Business Review's* "Sustainability in Business Forum," as well as receiving the Frances Hesselbein Leadership Award for excellent Girl Scout leadership and advocacy for local change. Ortenburger received her master's in business administration from Instituto de Estudios Superiores de la Empresa (IESE) Business School in Barcelona, Spain.

A problem that impacts the safety and well-being of individuals, families and communities throughout Southern Nevada, domestic violence can take on multiple forms including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, financial control and social isolation. It affects all communities, regardless of

socioeconomic status, race or religion. Safe Nest serves battered women (or men), children or teens affected by family violence, adolescents in violent dating relationships, offending partners, family members or significant others impacted by the violence, at-risk individuals, and the community at large by offering a variety of programming and services including counseling, crisis intervention, individual and group therapy, residential services, protection order assistance and employment/life-skill classes. Safe Nest aims to put a stop to all immediate abuse and break the cycle of abuse for generations to come.

### **About Safe Nest**

Established in 1977, Safe Nest is Nevada's largest and most comprehensive non-profit agency devoted solely to domestic violence issues. Serving approximately 50,000 people annually, Safe Nest's programs include a 24-hour confidential shelter, a 24-hour hotline and protection order services, counseling, advocacy, court assistance, and prevention education. For more information, please call 702-877-0133 or visit [www.safenest.org](http://www.safenest.org).

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