

SARA honors Parkway Leaders at Annual Meeting

On a beautiful and crisp first day of December, **SARA's** role as Guardians of the American River and Parkway since 1961 was celebrated and reviewed at our Annual Meeting.

Held once again at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, **SARA's** annual event coincides with the Nature Center's Annual Sale as well as the Annual Parkway Wildlife Count - all wonderfully fused together in one location appropriately named after one of SARA's original seven founding members: Effie Yeaw.

SARA President Warren Truitt recapped SARA's activities during 2007 as well as goals for 2008. The high point of the day was the presentation of **SARA** awards to two well-deserving Parkway leaders: County Parks Director Gary Kukkola and Deputy Director Dave Lydick.

One of the most significant happenings for **SARA** in 2007 was our successful application for 501(c)(3) tax status, enabling **SARA** members and donors to receive a tax-deduction for contributions.

In celebration of this new status, a few members of **SARA's** Advisory Council established a generous 100% donation match for all *new membership contributions received after November 1, 2007*.

The offer will run to April 30, 2008 and/or match up to a total of \$50,000 - whichever comes first. SARA was presented with a first match check of \$12,128.50 at our Annual Meeting. *Thank you to all of SARA supporters as well as our wonderful match sponsors.*

SARA highlights from 2007

- ◆ The Advisory Council is now 18 strong.
- ◆ 2007 Board & Advisory Council Retreat was held in April, 2006.
- ◆ Agreement was reached to house SARA Archives in the Sac State Special Collections Library.

◆ Rallied for, and testified on behalf of, a Parkway Summer Holiday Alcohol Ban - a bill sponsored by Assemblymember Dave Jones. **SARA** had the pleasure of thanking Assemblymember Jones in person at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, Dec. 1, 2007.

◆ **SARA** Township 0 Committee met eight times with the developer of this project -- to be built between Richards Blvd. and the American River - resulting in a project significantly more sensitive to the values and needs of the Parkway.

◆ To the delight of **SARA**, and especially Advisory Council member and long-time advocate, Elmer Aldrich, seed money for a Parkway Natural Resource Management Plan has been found and a contract signed to begin the project.

◆ **SARA** continues to: battle inappropriate development adjacent to the Parkway; demand adequate funding for the Parkway; monitor upstream sewage discharges, and fight for adequate flow guarantees to support fish and wildlife.

◆ **SARA** also attended and/or supported the following events: Earth Day, American River Watershed Conference, River Rally, and the Salmon Festival. In addition, Board members regularly attend meetings of the Water Forum, Lower American River Task Force, California State Water Quality Control Board, ARNHA, ECOS, Habitat 2020, Parkway Coalition and the American River Parkway JPA Steering Committee.

In 2008, **SARA** intends to enhance our level of connection, communication and education of Parkway users and stakeholders. One desired outcome is to morph a majority of users into caring stakeholders, who better understand, embrace and are willing to speak up to protect and preserve our most precious natural asset.....***the American River and Parkway.***