

The

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Natural History Association

ACORN



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Summer 2011

EYNC to Hold Second Annual *Painting Where the Wild Things Are*

by Stephanie Monzon

Feeling the wind on your face, and hearing the song of the birds, and watching the sun move across the land is to know there is no greater job than to be free to paint.

– Andrew Hamilton

Spring is back again, and nature is abloom throughout the Nature Preserve here at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center (EYNC). The palette of seasonal color not only reveals nature's new beginnings, but also signals that it is time for the reinvigorated EYNC to hold its second annual art gala fundraiser, *Painting Where the Wild Things Are*.

On Saturday, May 21, 2011, EYNC and the American River Natural History Association will join with the Sacramento Fine Arts Center to present an all-day celebration highlighting paintings of the American River Parkway. After its great success last year, we bring this lovely event to you again this year to help continue our important programs that bring the wonders of nature alive for so many people.

The evening reception will take place at EYNC in Ancil Hoffman County Park from 4pm to 9pm. It will include a first-class live and silent auction of award-winning paintings by the likes of Jian Wang, Pat Mahony, Greg Kondos, and Alan Post, delicious food and wine, and delightful music by the Sacramento Brass Quintet and Lisa Phenix.

Paintings will first be juried by the talented and renowned artist, Pat Mahony, who will choose works to go on display in an open exhibition at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center, located at 5330B Gibbons Drive, Carmichael, from April 27 to May 14.

The works will then be

moved to EYNC for the May 21 gala. To preview the art, visit the open exhibition or attend the Second Saturday reception at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center on May 14 from 5:30pm to 8:30pm.

During the day of May 21, artists will be creating *plein air* paintings throughout

see "*Wild Things*" page 3

Marilee Flannery Yields EYNC Management Duties

by Peter Hayes

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. – Rachel Carson

After 17 years of striving to keep the Effie Yeaw Nature Center exciting, safe, educational, and open, Marilee Flannery is stepping down as executive director to join her husband, Steve, in retirement. But she is by no means severing ties to her "much-loved" Nature Center.

"Without managerial duties, I want to do some 'ed-u-taining' programs for children and at the Nature Center that will be fun and educational," she said. "I hope to help develop new Nature Center exhibits and rehabilitate the four exhibits that EYNC now owns. And I want to have more time to paint wildlife and natural landscapes."

Marilee said she and Steve, former county regional parks chief ranger, will be taking bike tours throughout the western states and perhaps into east coast states. (see the *Steve Flannery retirement story*, page 3)

Meanwhile the American River Natural History Association Board of Directors began a search for a successor to Marilee, who officially retires May 31.

see "*Marilee*" page 5



See "*Sacred Places*" page 6

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President's Message

I am at two with nature. – Woody Allen

Join us at the Nature Center, and head out for a real true adventure through the woods, past the pond, and down to the American River. On your way, you can expect to see a variety of animals including deer, turkey, rabbits, and a wide variety of birds. Step inside our nature museum where you can look at live animals like king snakes and owls or turtles, and then enter the exhibit hall which offers hands-on interactive experiences for kids of all ages. Enjoy the gift shop, and look through the books and jewelry and other great gifts. Bring the family and friends and make a day of it; there are plenty of picnic tables nestled under the native oak trees near the Maidu Indian Village. If you stay for dusk, watch the wild turkeys fly up to the big native oak trees east of the Nature Center to reach their nightly roosting places. If you find yourself at two with nature as Woody Allen has expressed in his humorous quote, then break way, and enjoy a day at Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

Sign up before it is too late for some of our award winning programs that are coming. Our fundraiser gala, *Painting Where the Wild Things Are*, complete with children's program and *plein air* painting session, is scheduled for May 21. Summer Fun Days begin on June 13.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend my most sincere thank-you to Marilee Flannery for all of her devotion and dedication to the Nature Center. Marilee Flannery will be retiring after 17 years of service to the Nature Center, 10 of which were as our director, and one as executive director. We wish Marilee and her husband, Steve, lots and lots of good luck in their retirement. Marilee will be sorely missed by all of the board and the staff at Effie Yeaw as well as many many members and friends that she has known during her career here at the Nature Center.



Keep up to date with all of the events at Effie Yeaw Nature Center on our new web site: SacNatureCenter.net.

Larry Washington
President, ARNHA

New Mission Statement

The following is the new mission statement adopted at the ARNHA membership meeting Jan. 5

The American River Natural History Association and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center are dedicated to bringing awareness of the beauty and diversity of the natural world to children, families, and the community through education initiatives that foster appreciation, enjoyment, and stewardship of the unique natural and cultural resources of the Sacramento region.

“Wild Things” from page 1

the Nature Preserve, and these paintings will be available through the silent auction that evening. To participate in the *plein air* event, contact the Sacramento Fine Arts Center at 916-971-3713, or email aquacolorist@yahoo.com. Visitors are invited to come and watch the artists at work.

A children’s painting program between 8am and noon will offer the younger set, ages 4 to 14, a chance to participate in their own art show and sale. For more information, go to www.sacnaturecenter.net/gala.html and download the flyer.

Tickets for the evening gala are \$40 (reservations required). Call 916-489-4918, or go to SacNatureCenter.net/gala.html to reserve your place using PayPal. Make it quick, though—we expect to sell out very soon!

Many thanks to our generous sponsors who are making this event possible:

The Sacramento Fine Arts Center, Western Health Advantage, Ted and Melza Barr, Ralph and Janice Livingstone, SMUD, Capital Public Radio, Inside Publications, Sabbadini Appraisal Services, California Wilderness Coalition, Abba Daba Rentals, Larry Washington and Two Rivers Architects, Fort Hemenway Manor Bed and Breakfast, Raley’s Family of Fine Stores, Kim Pacini-Hauch of Lyon and Associates Realtors, and [sbwdesign](http://sbwdesign.com).

If you are interested in sponsoring *Painting Where the Wild Things Are*, please email Betty Cooper at bettyc@SacNatureCenter.net or call 916-489-4918. ■

Peter Hayes Honored as Cleanup Chair — Linda Thomas Assumes Role

Stacy Carlson of American River Parkway Foundation presented a plaque to Pete Hayes at the March 9 Board meeting in appreciation for his six years of service as site captain at Ancil Hoffman Park in foundation’s twice yearly Great American River Clean-

Chief Ranger Flannery Retires

When Sacramento County Parks Chief Ranger Steve Flannery retired in March, he was saluted for not only 33 years of outstanding law enforcement work but also for natural history interpretation, resource protection, supervision of the ranger staff, and professional investigative integrity.

A resolution of appreciation by the County Board of Supervisors pointed out how Steve worked to ensure justice for the victim of a sexual assault by tracking down the identity of the suspect who then was sentenced to 29 years in prison. In another case, he successfully made a prominent court official pay for the crime of vandalizing several heritage oak trees.

“He could also act with compassion,” County Parks Director Janet Baker told a large crowd at Steve’s retirement party at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center on March 9. “For instance, when encountering fishermen where fishing was prohibited, he might simply advise them to try elsewhere.”

Steve, who is married to soon-to-be-former EYNC executive director Marilee Flannery, was credited in the

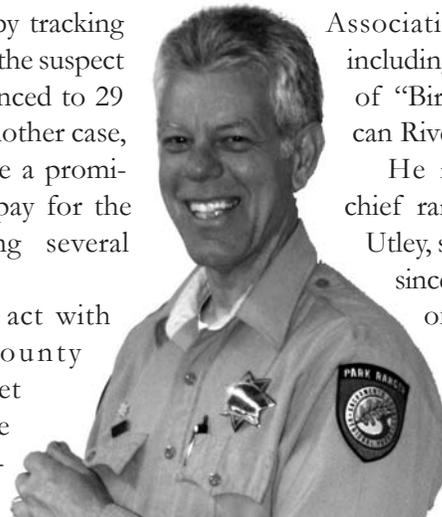
board resolution with researching and writing the ordinance banning glass beverage containers within the American River Parkway, opening the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge to visitor use, and leading the current parkway fuel reduction partnership program between Sacramento Metro Fire, the Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps, and the Parks department.

He also has contributed to American River Natural History Association publications, including writing the text of “Birds of the American River Parkway.”

He is succeeded as chief ranger by Kathleen Utley, supervising ranger since 2008. A graduate of Sacramento State

University with a major in environmental studies, she joined the Rangers in 1990. “She has

a reputation as an intelligent, well-trained law enforcement officer who is well-versed in the operation of the ranger unit,” Steve said. “She also is known to be tough, energetic, helpful, team-oriented, and a leader.” ■



ups. ARNHA is responsible for Mile 16 on the Parkway in Ancil Hoffman Park. ARNHA board member Linda Thomas is replacing him. The fall cleanup is 9am-noon, September 17. ■

Stacy Carlson of the American River Parkway Foundation presents service award to Peter Hayes at March 9 ARNHA Board meeting.

ARNHA BRIEFS

'Great' Birding Class

Asked to describe the recent ARNHA fundraiser *Birds of Winter in the Sacramento Valley* class, Associate Board member Connie Wade said, "It was great! We saw many songbirds, wading birds, ducks, gulls, and raptors during our field trips with Ed Harper, Sacramento's own renowned birder."

"Highlights," she said, "included a yellow-shafted Northern Flicker outlier in the oak woodlands in Ancil Hoffman Park and three Bald Eagles feeding and resting on a hillside in the spring-green grasslands east of Stockton."

Ed donated \$870 in proceeds to ARNHA from the capacity enrollment for the class in which he discussed in lectures and field trips the finer points of winter bird identification, natural history, and calls. ■

EYNC can always use the following for Maidu and fun day programs:

- Stain-grade/reversible baseboard, standard size (about 2.25" width), full length or cut to size, 8 inches each.
- Spools of 100% cotton twine from Home Depot or a hardware store.
- Soapstone pieces, approx. 6 to 8 oz size or larger, available at Pearson's Lapidary on Auburn Blvd. Must be in "natural" shaped pieces—not blocks.
- 1 to 10 lb packages of clay (air dry or never hardens kind), available at Michaels or other craft stores.
- Gift cards to Home Depot or craft stores.
- Gift Cards to Cornflower Farms Nursery or other native California plant nursery. ■

Summer Fun Days:

Once again, the Effie Yeaw Nature Center is offering its unique, fun, and challenging **Summer Fun Days**. Children who are entering kindergarten through 6th grades may sign up to learn about nature through games, activities, trail walks, stories, crafts, and more. Preregistration is required. Go online to SacNatureCenter.net for day-camp descriptions and times. All programs are led by trained staff, assisted by enthusiastic volunteers.

Nature Rovers is our class for the kids entering kindergarten in the fall. Children will learn about salmon and other creatures of the river, explore different colors and shapes in nature, and learn about what exciting animals live right here in our very own woodlands.

Nature Detectives is for children entering 1st or 2nd grade. It gives children the chance to learn about aquatic creatures, identify tracks and other animal signs, and learn about the earth and creatures of the sky!

Our **Outdoor Adventure** camps, led by staff naturalist, Brena, are designed for 3rd-6th graders. They always fill up quickly because of the variety of challenging, yet fun, activities. This year we are offering another one-week program for this age group as

well, **American River Safari**, where children will study different animals everyday!

Sessions are one or two weeks long, 9:00 am to 12:00 noon, and some (for the older kids) include off-site drop-off and pick-up on certain days.

Go online for more information, or come by the Effie Yeaw Nature Center to pick up a flyer! ■

Second Graders Release Steelhead Trout Fry into the American River

On March 19, Sherri Wallace and her 2nd grade class from Patwin Elementary School in the Davis Joint Unified School District released 34 steelhead trout fry into the American River at Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve. For just over a month, the 2nd graders cared for fish eggs as the eggs developed into alevin and then into fry. California Department of Fish and Game coordinated the teacher workshops for the program and provided the tank and all necessary equipment to house the fish eggs.

"They took their job of raising eggs very seriously," Wallace said. "As we watched the eggs develop, we read and learned about the life cycle of steelhead trout and why they're endangered and what we can do about it."

"We got to watch them grow," says Kavi McKinney, with the thrill and certainty of new learning in her eyes. ■



Sherri Wallace and her 2nd grade class at Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve.

“Marilee” from page 1

“It will be a real challenge to find someone with Marilee’s talents and ability,” ARNHA President Larry Washington said. “She is really a special person, caring for the Nature Center, teaching kids about nature, and working with all kinds of people, including maintaining a great relationship with the Board.”

Marilee came to work for the Nature Center in 1993 as exhibit director and interpretive specialist after serving 15 years in the same roles with the Sacramento Science Center (now Discovery Museum Learning Center). She was appointed director in 2000 and executive director last July when the economically-struggling Sacramento County government handed the Nature Center over to the nonprofit ARNHA to manage.

The opening quotation by Rachel Carson above, a favorite of Marilee’s, typifies her approach to the manifold duties as director and executive director of a nature center. For her it has been a management balancing act that, among other things, has meant presenting educational school programs based on state standards, plus vacation Fun Days that are educational, fun, and safe; keeping EYNC-designed exhibits engaging and changing; maintaining EYNC buildings and keeping them clean; caring for the Center’s wild animals; overseeing the 77-acre Nature Preserve; and being involved in the ever-present pursuit of additional funding.

“All of this is possible only because the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in partnership with ARNHA has been able to attract a group of professional and hard-working staff, volunteers, and

wonderfully generous members and donors,” she said.

Marilee’s watchwords are diligence and teamwork, attributes that she feels she gained when, beginning at the age of 11, she served as the “eyes” for her single mother who had lost her sight to an illness in her early childhood but which did not prevent her from earning her Master’s degree and becoming a respected therapist.

“I would safely navigate the streets and dangers for both of us,” she said. “She depended on me to help her in all things from writing checks and paying the bills to helping her with make-up and household maintenance including minor repairs.”

Other experiences that led to leadership development were serving as sophomore class president at Sacramento’s McClatchy High School and as commencement speaker at her graduation.

Reflecting on what the Nature Center means to the community, Marilee said: “It is a preserve for wildlife; it is a place to feel healed by being close to nature, according to some visitors; and others have said it is their church. For the guided school groups

that see the interactions of the animals and plants in the preserve and walk in very close proximity to the wildlife, it is a lesson from nature that they may never forget.

“I will be forever grateful that ARNHA rescued my much-loved Effie Yeaw Nature Center from closure. I am honored to have been chosen to be ARNHA’s first executive director, and, with the help of the Board, begun the process of restarting the operations of EYNC alongside a very dedicated staff

and host of devoted volunteers.”

“With all my heart, I wish ARNHA the very best in its management of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. ARNHA’s accomplishments and guidance since July of 2010 have demonstrated that the Nature Center is in good hands.” ■

Marilee Remembers . . .

As Marilee Flannery retires as executive director of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, she offers a favorite memory of her 17 years with Center:

“It was over ten years ago, and I was working late on a spring or early summer day. The sun was just starting to set, and the sky was a soft azure mixed with a bit of orange glow. I just finished locking up the Nature Center building and was headed out when I saw a small group of people gathered on the dirt hill that is next to the Nature Center’s main building to watch the turkeys fly.

“The group may have been a family, but what I remember most was the young boy with no hair on his head who sat in a wheel chair with a blanket around him. A man stood next to him and spoke softly while he pointed to the turkeys gathered on top of the hill. With a loud noise of flapping wings and gobbles, each turkey took a running start and lifted off the ground, to fly almost directly over the head of the boy in the wheel chair. The boy watched spellbound and then clapped his hands and smiled.

“Every evening about 40 turkeys make this same pilgrimage to the top of Oat Hill and then beat their wings furiously to gain enough altitude to clear the Nature Center buildings and end up on the top branches of the oak trees. To some people, this ritual is worth viewing over and over and has been shared by their families and friends for a lot of years.” ■



Marilee Rides Again!

A Fabric of Sacred Spaces

essay by William E. Avery, illustration by William E. Avery and Nanci Avery

Imagine a special place to which you return again and again, or a place you would love to revisit if only it were easier to get there. Imagine a place that gives you a sense of peace, connection, and expansiveness. Imagine a place that you love so much that it feels, for lack of a better word, *sacred* to you. I have found a couple of places like this within the American River Parkway.

One of them a friend of mine and I call *Sacred Spirals* – a secret open place in the middle of thick blackberry bushes, dense cottonwoods, and willows, where someone long ago created spirals of river rocks now partly concealed by mosses and grasses.

Another is *Paolo Beach*, with a log bench next to the river and the most exquisite water sounds and late afternoon lighting which glitters across the river surface. You won't find these places on any printed map, but they are mapped in my mind.

We all have such places somewhere in the geography of our lives. Most of us find these kinds of spaces in nature. We sense something special in certain locations and, whether or not we're religious, we may say we feel something of a spiritual nature there. This seems to be a normal and common experience for members of our species. Biologists call this sense *biophilia* – an innate love for nature, upon which we

depend and to which we have become adapted and, by necessity through natural selection, have come to love.

Of course, there may be more to it than this – some deeper meaning, perhaps just beyond our grasp. This mystery, the possibility of recognizing a connection with something greater than ourselves, may serve as a calling

and some to you alone. But if you could see everyone's special spaces on a map, you would see a rich network of points connected by trails, both well-known and secret.

And so there actually is an invisible, but very real, network of "sacred" human spaces woven throughout our preserved and protected wild landscapes and even extending into our domesticated landscapes including some of our places of worship, parks, and perhaps our own back yards.

Now consider adding another layer to this network of unique and special spaces that you are still holding in your mind. How about adding a layer for another couple of species – perhaps mule deer and coyote?

All *individuals* of these species have places that they consider home and also places where they go to find food or sweet water. Might they also have, in the course of their lives, discovered special places that give them a sense of peace, perhaps calm safety, perhaps some kind of lovely sense of connection that we too would understand if we could see through their eyes?

Imagine a secret glade, surrounded by safe layers of trees, soft grasses under hoof or paw, light coming through just right at certain times of day. Good food and water are nearby, familiar fragrances fill the air, the place just feels really good for deer, or good for coyotes.

continued next page



Northern River Otter and underwater light

to evolutionary ecologists and spiritual seekers alike.

So, for the human species, our parkways and wilderness areas may harbor a rich network of sacred spaces. Many of these places are known to a lot of people, some are known to only a few,

continued from previous page

When wildlife biologists use radio collars to track animals over long periods of time and then plot the animals' movements on maps, the pathways, the denning sites, bedding sites, and also sites that are repeatedly visited, for some reason or another, become clear. If we add these additional layers of special spaces and pathways to our mental map, the network of potentially sacred spaces has suddenly gotten a lot denser and richer.

Now, if you will, consider a salmon returning to a home riffle to spawn. He or she will see and smell and feel his or her way to the absolutely perfect-feeling place for a nesting redd. Something about the place just feels sweet and right – good flow, good oxygen levels, lovely gravel.

"The world exists as the one truly sacred place"

Sacred - As used here Webster's 2b: "Entitled to reverence and respect." This is an entirely human concept and is here used only to communicate (to humans) the potential importance of places that other living beings know i.e. register in their nervous systems, just as humans do, as especially important in their own frames of reference, whatever they may be.

"I've come to see that the geometry of human progress is expanding the circle of compassion. And that nature and human dignity require each other. And I believe that - if the word 'sacred' means anything at all - the world exists as the one truly sacred place." *Carl Safina, Ph.D. Recipient of MacArthur Genius award; Founder and Director of National Audubon Society's Living Oceans Program; author of Song for the Blue Ocean and The View From Lazy Point, from which the quote was taken.*

Or think of an otter diving to a special place underwater where the glorious sunset light beams through the depths, a network of light dancing on perfect logs for cover and play, crayfish are nearby, and other otters might soon show up to play or climb out of the water together for a lovely grooming session. Perhaps the crayfish itself, as it moves around the bottom of the river, has found the ideal flat stone with a cave underneath to visit during its foraging excursions – the best rock, in the best place, in the best river on the planet! Imagine sacred spaces for songbirds, perhaps a Bushtit – maybe she knows of a place with that perfect balance between protection and accessibility – perhaps in an oak tree that held the very hanging nest in which she, herself, was hatched.

This exercise can be continued with layer upon layers of intensely important spaces and the pathways connecting them, for populations of species at all levels - from the countless microscopic invertebrates and their special places in the soils and leaf litter to the many larger insects and their special leaf perches. Think of all the tree crickets you will hear again this summer. Each one of them will find a singularly lovely, unique, spot on a leaf or branch, where conditions are just right for safety, food, sweet resonance for their loud music, and the possibility of finding a precious mate. They might move around but then will always return to these special spots.

Consider all the frogs, salamanders, fishes, small mammals, lizards, and snakes and their favorite rocks or logs, and then think of larger mammals and all the individuals of all the species of birds that you can think of! Now, you get an interesting picture. Imagine the American River Parkway – land and water – composed of an incredible multilevel fabric of interwoven sacred spaces considering especially all the richness in meaning represented. Each thread held in the minds, if you will, of countless living, perceptive beings. It's

hard to know where to step! What an interesting idea to hold in *our* minds as we do step or paddle or bike through the parkway.

The entire biosphere is like this. Yes, there are the individual creatures, and species we care about, and we have thought about the webs of interaction such as food webs and energy pyramids. But we don't often stop to think of the specialness, certainly meaningfulness, perhaps even sacredness of the places themselves to all the other individuals of other species.

Holding this vision may be another approach to "oneness" we often hear spiritual leaders talk about. The entire biosphere becomes potentially "sacred" – certainly precious. We may find a new empathy for other life forms and a new motivation to work to protect and preserve intact sections of the biosphere such as the American River Parkway, State Parks, National Parks, Wilderness Areas, and Wildlife Refuges. Doing so doesn't just have a practical value and an economic value for us but – for lack of a better term – a sacred value, a compassionate value for our deeper relationship with others.

We will continue to paddle, bike, and walk on this American River Parkway, but we can walk gently and mindfully. And as we walk, we remember the incredible value of protected landscapes like this, not just to us but to thousands of other species made up of countless millions of individuals living out their own singularly precious lives returning every so often to seek the grace of their own sacred spaces.

William E. Avery, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, California State University, Sacramento, and a frequent contributor to The Acorn.

Nanci Avery, Bill's younger sister, is a Graphic Artist, living and working in St. George, Utah. ■

New ARNHA-County Lease Agreement Reached

The American River Natural History Association has reached agreement with Sacramento County on a long-term lease replacing the interim accord signed last July when the County handed over control of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center to the nonprofit ARNHA. Among beneficial provisions of the new agreement, the County will pay for most of the Nature Center's utilities.

Past president Noah Baygell, who negotiated the new lease, told the ARNHA Board of Directors on April 13 that the County will retain maintenance control of the Nature Preserve, while ARNHA will be responsible for the land around the EYNC buildings and Oat Hill adjacent to the Center – about five percent of the natural area. “The new lease runs up to 30 years with the option to cancel at any time,” Noah said.

“This is the best opportunity an environmental education group has gotten from a municipality in this region,” Noah said. “We have no facility costs, which often is the biggest trap for most nonprofits. It's an incredible opportunity to succeed as a nonprofit.”

Noah negotiated the agreement with Interim County Executive Steven Szalay and Regional Parks Director Janet Baker. He said the Board of Supervisors has approved the lease, but no date had been set at presstime for its sign-off. ■

Professional Growth Workshops for Local Teachers

This June, Effie Yeaw Nature Center will offer teacher training which will give service credits to teachers of the San Juan Unified School District. Other districts may have also certified these classes by the time you read this!

The first workshop, on Wednesday, June 15, is **Connecting Children to**

New Honor for Jo Smith

The late Jo Glasson Smith, ARNHA co-founder, artist, editor, and advocate, was inducted into the California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) regional Hall of Honor, which celebrates quality of life through parks, recreation, and leisure. She thus follows in the footsteps of such previous honorees as teacher-activist Effie Yeaw, Sacramento County Parks Director William B. Pond, and William Land, whose bequest funded land for Sacramento's Land Park.

Dick Conzelmann, CPRS District 2 past president, presented a plaque reciting Jo's accomplishments to members of her family, husband George and daughters Cindy Smith, Susie Durant, and Shelly Smith, at an awards banquet, on April 1.

Jo's honors and accomplishments include the following:

- Illustrator, author, and editor and/or publisher of eight publications related to the American River Parkway and the Sacramento region including *American River Journal* and *Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region*;
- co-founder, Sacramento chapter, Creeks Council, and coordinator of the first annual creek cleanup. 1990;
- founding member, American River Natural History Association, 1981;

- founding member, Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 1975;
- member of Sacramento County Parks and Recreation Commission; member of Advisory Committee to update American River Parkway plan;
- member of Sacramento County Open Space Task Force;
- member of Arden Arcade Planning Council; member of Sacramento Science Center Board of Directors;
- Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District Board of Director;
- naming of the Jo Smith Nature Trail along Arcade Creek;
- recipient National Chevron Conservation award,
- Sacramento, Regional Pride award,
- Girl Scout leader, environmental mentor, Girl Scout Role Model award.

“She left a wonderful legacy, and she touched many lives,” Marilee Flannery, Effie Yeaw Nature Center executive director, said in remarks at the ceremony. ■

Our Environment. This workshop will give teachers both content and classroom ready activities to help them teach the new California State Environmental Standards. The second workshop, on Saturday, June 18, is the **Maidu Cultural Heritage Program.** This workshop will help teachers understand and teach their students about the culture and lives of the local Maidu Indians.

Both of these days will include nature

walks and hands-on activities. There will be a limited number of spaces available, so those interested should sign up soon, and earn professional growth credits at the beautiful Effie Yeaw Nature Center! These are only \$60 each and include a \$20 teacher's guide and other handouts. Go to SacNatureCenter.net for more information! ■

Lessons From Outer Space

Editor's note: On Feb. 10, Nature Center supporters turned out 175 strong for the IMAX Hubble 3D movie, raising more than \$1,500 for the cause. Among those who returned from a journey through distant galaxies was ARNHA Board member Carol Doersch, who offered the following eloquent reminder of the fragility of our own small planet.

by Carol Doersch

Landing aboard the space shuttle after a trip to repair the 20-year-old Hubble telescope for NASA, we left the IMAX theatre downtown realizing our own infinitesimal place in the unfathomable hugeness of even the wee part of the universe that the mighty Hubble's lens can see. The enormous telescope's maximum vision is only 13 billion light years into the vastness. We saw our lovely, blue earth silhouetted against webs of stars, galaxies, gorgeous clouds of gases, and blackness, and we were awed.

A light year is a unit of length: the distance light travels in a vacuum in one year, (186,000 miles per second, or 6 trillion miles.) The Milky Way - Earth's

galaxy - is about 100,000 light years across. Let's see - that's about 6 trillion miles times 100,000 = I don't know - you figure it out. Our little galaxy is merely a smallish whirling bunch of stars, planets, and gases among "gazillions" of galaxies out there that are not even visible to our modest eyes, even with Hubble's help. The light from the most distant object Hubble has seen has traveled 13 billion light years to reach the telescope. Stars are dying and developing all the time.

Now let's get back to earth and our ability to almost comprehend all this. We human beings find ourselves caretakers of this beautiful planet of the sun within the Milky Way galaxy. We are thinking beings, and we appreciate the wonders of our small planet - natural creatures of earth, sky, and sea, and the bounty of resources and beauty of earth. And we know we must preserve them. We teach about these things and their fragility, so that children want to preserve them too. That's what we do at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and in ARNHA's publications. That's what we do. ■

Friend of Turkeys

It's fair to say that ARNHA volunteer John Speth has a special relationship with the wild turkeys that strut about the Effie Yeaw Nature Area and expanding environs because of his role in the widespread introduction of the species to California.

A retired state Fish and Game wildlife biologist, John helped trap a small group of previously-planted turkeys in San Luis Obispo County in 1964-65. The Department of Fish and Game had imported them from Texas and Colorado as a game bird.

John and his team used what was called a cannon net trap to corral the turkeys. Wheat and barley bait were laid out close to a 50 x 30 foot net folded accordion style. A pipe containing black powder was fastened to the net. The Fish and Gamers would hide in the bushes and with electric caps set off the cannon and send the flying net settling over the turkeys. The turkeys were then crated up and transferred to different locales throughout California and presumably became the forebears of the Effie Yeaw Nature Area flocks.

John, who with his wife Janice are members of the ARNHA mail crew, is pleased to see how the toms and hens have acclimated themselves to California. "They're doing well," he says. "We have them running through our yard at Sun City, Roseville. They don't have too many known predators. I think they're great." ■





Let's GO!

This mile-by-mile narrative of the natural and cultural history along the Jedediah Smith Memorial Bicycle Trail, from Discovery Park to Beals Point on Folsom Lake, guides the hiker and biker with more than a dozen maps showing access points, restrooms, parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains, and side trips.

The new 4th edition from ARNHA Press is available at the Discovery Shop inside the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, and selected local bookstores, for \$14.95.

American River Natural History Association
P.O. Box 241 Carmichael, CA. 95609-0241
www.arnha.org

Sacramento Audubon

Honors Pete Hayes

On March 17, Sacramento Audubon Society (SAS) recognized Pete Hayes for his many years of environmental activism in our area by donating \$1,000 to ARNHA in Pete's honor. Presented at the March general meeting, the award was a surprise to Pete, but many of his friends, family, and fellow ARNHA members who knew the presentation was coming attended the meeting.

Pete is the author of *An American River Almanac* and *An American River Journal* and an editor of the invaluable *Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region*. In addition, he contributes the popular column "Field Trip Findings" to the Sacramento Audubon Chapter newsletter *The Observer*. "His dedication is very much appreciated by all of us who enjoy our natural world," said Keith Wagner, SAS President. ■

Taste of Carmichael Offers Food, Wine, Music

You are invited to support the Effie Yeaw Nature Center by buying tickets to the 9th annual Taste of Carmichael on Saturday, May 14, from 4:30pm to 8pm at the La Sierra Community Center, 5325 Engle Road, in Carmichael, and is sponsored by Carmichael Kiwanis.

This event provides samplings of culinary treasures from the restaurants and food stores of Carmichael as well as regional wines and beer. Music groups, including nationally recognized folk and blues group Vintage Fare, will perform. You can browse the exhibits, sample superb food and wine, and enjoy great entertainment. Door prizes, a silent auction, and raffle prizes are part of the fun.

Tickets cost \$35 per person in advance or \$40 at the door. The full value of tickets sold by EYNC or ARNHA goes to ARNHA to support EYNC. Phone 489-4918 to buy tickets. ■

Richard Horgan, Innovator

Some might say that Richard Horgan was a handyman, someone who performed various small tasks. But Effie Yeaw Nature Center Executive Director Marilee Flannery says he was much more than that: "Richard was an innovative problem-solver when it came to building imaginative nature center exhibits."

The quiet-spoken, friendly volunteer, who died Jan. 13 at the age of 85, brought his outstanding building, electronic, and engineering skills to bear on many exhibit and other projects at the Nature Center and the Sacramento Discovery Museum since 1993.

Marilee remembers especially his work on the *Endangered Species of the Central Valley* exhibit. "We had planned to have a set of 10 ft. condor wings in a 'nest' on the loft in the exhibit room for visitors to try on," she recalls. "But we didn't want them to 'fly off' the loft. So Richard built a holder for the wings and attached it to a pole. This allowed people of any height to try on and even flap the wings safely while it prevented the visitors from flying off the loft."

Richard, who retired from radar installations work at McClellan Air Force Base in 1986, also repaired animal enclosures and assisted with special events at EYNC.

"His work helped to bring important educational messages to thousands of school children," Marilee said.

Among his survivors is his wife, Jane, who backed him as he devoted hundreds of hours annually to EYNC. She also donated to the *Bountiful Harvest* exhibit in the name of their grandson, Austin Smith. ■



Bird & Breakfast a Hit

ARNHA's annual Bird and Breakfast fundraiser was another resounding success March 12 as a turn-away crowd at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, guided by Sacramento Audubon's expert birders, contributed more than \$3,500 to check out avian species and then enjoy a hearty breakfast of casseroles and fruit prepared by ARNHA Board members.

A rare Lesser Black-backed Gull spotted by Ed Harper foraging with a few other gulls along the river's edge was the highlight bird. Coordinator Jack Hiehle reported that 55 species were counted, including Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, White-tailed Kite, four active Anna's Hummingbird nests, Western Bluebird, and Spotted Sandpiper. ■

Layers of ethereal planes

Across the godsbreath of the earth
the pure essence rests in the celestial fold
where what is of the earth meets
what is of the sky

And as the eye of the horizon closes
slowly, we hold our breath and
hold our open wide eyes trying
to catch and seize

the transfer each morning and eve
of dark to light and back
we reach each day but are not
quick enough to grab

that starry sigh, that turn
of inside out membrane, elixir
of light, green flash that we
would drink

perhaps a quest for immortality,
a quenchless thirst to know
what all the sky has seen of
dark and light

what echoes in our own infinity
the suns that rise and sink
illuminate or hide
our day and night.

JoAnn Anglin

Donors January-March 2011

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- Anonymous in honor of Carol Doersch
- Jason Auriemma & Ann Marie Kennedy
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 - Debi & Paul Baker
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Fancy Flyers

A dozen gulls are standing at attention on the big snag in the middle of the river. Mouse-gray wings folded against white bodies, they have positioned themselves equidistantly apart in claiming their territory, a nice bit of symmetry as the river rolls by.

Then a gull perched in the uppermost limb of the dead tree spreads its long wings and springs into the air. It wheels and swoops and glides, recalling the line in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* in which the flight instructor tells his students, "You've got to understand that a seagull is an unlimited idea of freedom. . ."

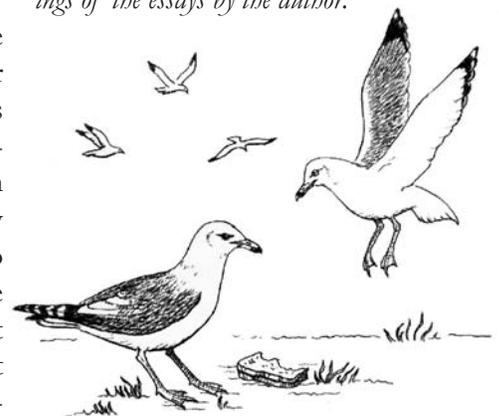
Technically, "seagull" is a misnomer of course, else why the big population

of herring, California, and ring-billed gulls around Sacramento Valley water courses? With their hearty appetites, they are valuable scavengers disposing of dead fish from the rivers and mice and insects from the fields. There's even a monument in Salt Lake City to the California Gulls that saved the crops of Mormon settlers in 1848 by destroying a plague of grasshoppers.

Now our herring gull lands in the American River, riding high in the water like one of Columbus's little ships. Its strong webbed feet help propel it to locate morsels of food in the water. Then it vaults skyward again, utters a few squealing *klee-klee* calls, and returns to its dominant position in the uneven line of sentinels. There they stand in vigilant repose, waiting for an opportunity that will launch them into an effortless ada-

gio. . . an unlimited idea of freedom.

From "An American River Journal," published by ARNHA. It features drawings by ARNHA co-founder Jo Glasson Smith and nature essays by Peter J. Hayes, retired newspaper editor and ARNHA associate board member. It is available for \$9.75 at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, arnha.org, and selected stores. Visit arnha.org "Podcasts" to hear readings of the essays by the author.



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ARNHA Calendar of Events

- **Taste of Carmichael**
Saturday, May 14, 4:30pm - 8pm
La Sierra Community Center, 5325 Engle Rd.
Phone 489-4918 for tickets (See story page 10)
- **Painting Where the Wild Things Are**
Saturday, May 21 from 4pm to 7:30pm
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (See story page 1)
- **Dine Out at Mateo's (flyer enclosed)**
Wednesday, June 8
- **Summer Fun Days – June 13 to August 12**
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
www.SacNatureCenter.net for details (See story page 4)
- **Teacher Inservice – Connecting Children to Our Environment**
Wednesday, June 15 from 8am to 3pm. Preregistration required.
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (See story page 8)
- **Teacher Inservice – Maidu Cultural Heritage Program**
Saturday, June 18 from 8am to 3pm. Preregistration required.
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (See story page 8)

Welcome, New Members!

- Laura Amaya & Jim Waters
- Christine Bailey
- Gail Bakewell
- Trish & Matt Baskin
- Judy Bell
- Laurie Bellini
- Jessica Bender
- Victoria Bermudez
- Kate Burns
- Shirley Campbell
- Michael Cardwell
- Lisa Clark
- Jeri Clark & Brian Grattidge
- Shawn Clemmer
- Peter A. Cross
- Glen Cunningham
- Linda Daugherty
- Gordon Dean
- Anne & Jerry Del Core
- Susan Detwiler
- Misty, Chase, Mordacai & Theis Dyas
- Trinia Dzurny
- Miles Feinberg
- Jaden Fong
- Donna Furlow
- Frankie Gary
- Karen Gary
- Cathy George
- Josiah Everett F. George
- Patricia Getz
- Pam Giarrizzo
- Pam Gow
- Dona Hall
- Charles Halnan
- Hosanna Hannaford
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- Syboun S. Marquez
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- Sean McCartney
- Wendy Money
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- Peter Nguyen
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- Edith Richmond
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- Thomas Rumsey
- Selah Schoech
- L. W. Smith
- Beth & Stephen Smith
- Danyae Spada-Chessey
- Karl Speth
- Will Speth
- Leigh Stamets
- Derek Stevenson
- Joyce & Brian Syftestad
- Barbara Turner
- Lenuta & John Urs
- Long Vu
- Sheryl Yamamoto-Watkins
- Marilyn Watson
- Laurie Weir
- Ruth Younger
- Mark Zahn
- Migdalia Zamora

Summer Fun Days at EYNC from June 13 to August 12