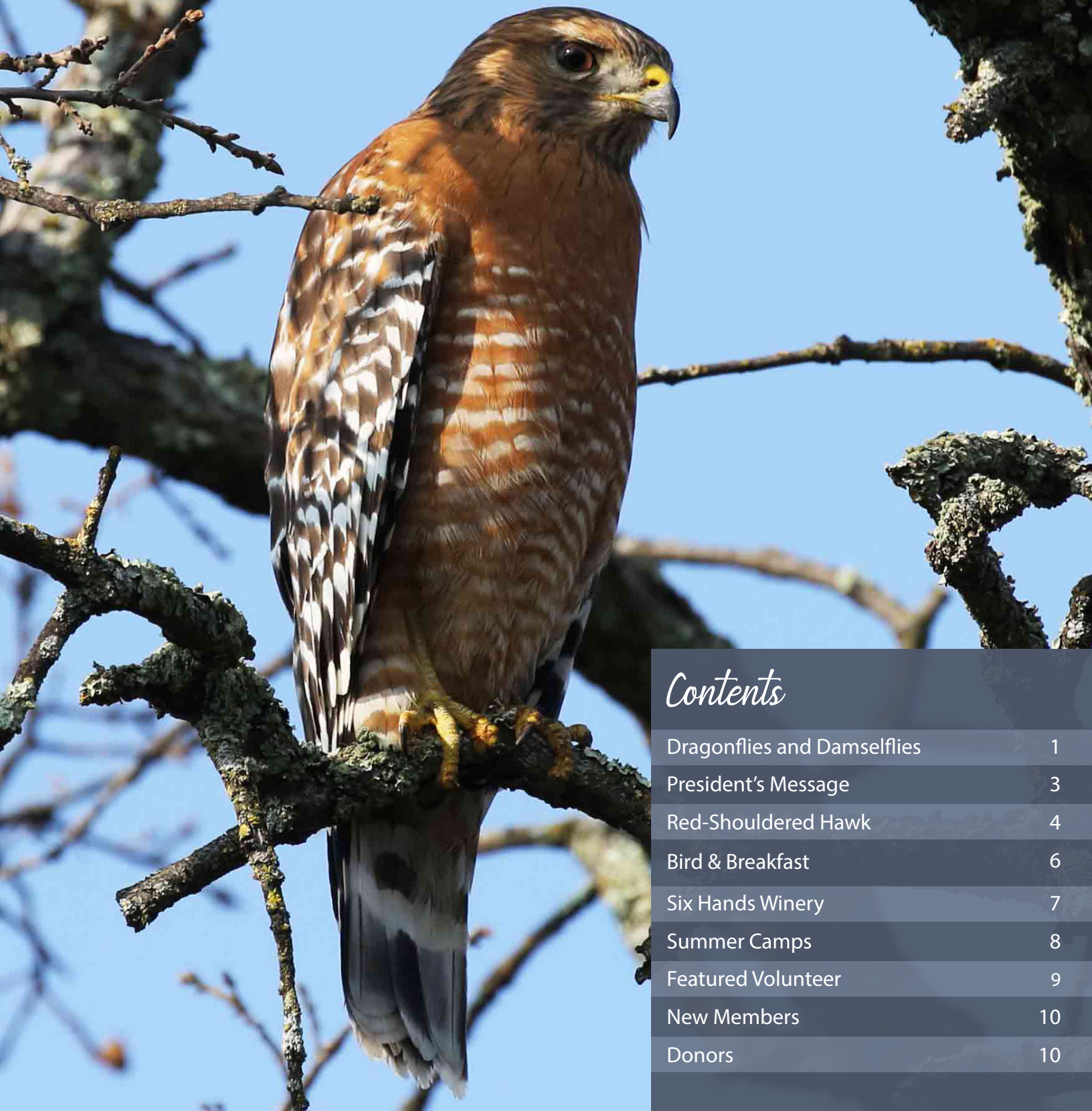




# THE ACORN

American River Natural History Association Members' Magazine – Summer 2019



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# Dragonflies and Damselflies

Mary Louise Flint

Some of the most beautiful creatures inhabiting the Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve are also among the most ancient. Long before the advent of flowering plants, mammals or even dinosaurs, dragonflies and damselflies graced Earth's ponds and landscapes. Fossilized dragonflies from 250 million years ago look very similar to the ones we see flying around our nature preserve today.

Adult damselflies and dragonflies are characterized by two pairs of membranous wings with many veins, very large eyes, tiny antennae, and a long narrow abdomen. These features distinguish them from every other group of insects. They are members of the insect order Odonata (from the Latin word for tooth) named for their large, extendable mouthparts.

Damselflies are more slender and delicate than dragonflies and have more widely separated and protruding eyes. They hold their wings together above their body when at rest whereas the dragonflies keep their wings spread out. The flying apparatus of the Odonata is masterfully engineered, especially in dragonflies, allowing them to fly from plant to plant with amazing speed and agility: forward, backward, up, down or just hovering in place.

Dragonflies and damselflies spend the adult part of their lives on land but their immature stages in water. They are voracious predators during all stages of their lives. Adults catch small flying insects such as mosquitoes and gnats in flight. The immature nymphs (often called naiads) feed on all kinds of aquatic animals including insects, tadpoles and even small fish.

For most species, there is usually only one generation a year, and some species may take two or more years to develop from egg to adult. Most of their lives are spent as nymphs living in the water hunting aquatic animals, breathing through gills, and molting 6 to 15 times as they grow. The last stage nymph comes out of water to rest on a rock or plant and molts one last time, emerging as a winged adult. Adults may emerge in spring or throughout summer, with the largest numbers of adults observed in July and August.

Although shape varies by species, damselfly nymphs are more slender than those of dragonflies and have three featherlike tails, which are external gills. Dragonfly nymphs have internal gills and are rounder and more compact with three short spines on the tip of the tail. Odonata nymphs

Common green darner dragonfly, *Anax junius*



Damselflies, such as this female bluet, hold their wings together when they rest and are more fragile than dragonflies.



Dragonflies, such as this big red skimmer on a car antenna, hold their wings out rather than folding them when resting.



An adult dragonfly has emerged from the cast skin of this last stage nymph.



tend to be more common in ponds or inlets where water is not flowing fast and where prey are abundant.

There are over 100 different species of dragonflies and damselflies in California, many adapted to specialized microhabitats, but others are widespread. Eight to ten species are common in our nature preserve. With high sensitivity to water quality and temperature, they can be important indicators of ecosystem health. They are an essential food source for fish and amphibians as well as birds, bats and lizards and feed on mosquitoes and other biting insects. But most of all, they are a joy to watch as they flit through our landscapes with their shimmering wings.

*Photos: All photos by Jack Kelly Clark, University of California Statewide IPM Program except photos 6 and 7 by Lorry Dunning. Used with permission.*

A dragonfly nymph eating a mosquito larva under water.



Damselfly nymphs are slender with 3 feathery tail-like gills.



Dragonfly nymphs are more compact with 3 spines at their tail.



## President's Message, Summer 2019

Summer 2019 is just around the corner already. The lush green of spring will fade soon into summer's rich browns. This year has gone so fast, it is hard to keep up. Early summer in the Nature Study Area is so fun. Because we had a late spring, some wildflowers may be in their prime. The young who are just appearing remind us that there are so many good things happening in the world.

Here at Effie Yeaw Nature Center, we are busily putting the final touches on the Spring Gala and Auction. If you haven't attended this event yet, think about doing so, if tickets are still available. It is an amazing evening in a beautiful setting for a wonderful cause. The money raised from the auctions and from Raise the Paddle help insure that students from all economic backgrounds have access to our nature education programs. This goes such a long way in meeting our mission and vision to inspire and educate people to be informed stewards of the natural environment.

Summer camps will be starting soon. These young campers become engaged in learning about nature and being awed by it. They will never see the world around them the same after these experiences. If you feel you have become a bit jaded and want to see how bright the future can be, stop by the nature center, join a talk with a naturalist, explore the museum, walk the trails, or sit by the river and discover some awe of your own.

If you are asking yourself "How can I support the Effie Yeaw Nature Center", think about becoming a Sustainer member by pledging a monthly amount. Monthly giving gives us regular income throughout the year and evens out the roller coaster funding that all nonprofits live with. Another way of supporting this organization that you love, is to include us in your estate planning. Legacy giving insures that your hard earned dollars benefit your core values even after you are gone.

I hope to see you around the nature center. Have a wonderful summer.

*Joey Johnson*



***Wherever you go, no matter what the weather,  
always bring your own sunshine.***

-Anthony J. D'Angelo

**Going to the Gala? Be sure to check out Joey's submission.**



# Our Local Forest Raptor, the Red-Shouldered Hawk

Mary K. Hanson

You see and hear Red-Shouldered Hawks (*Buteo lineatus*) along the American River Parkway almost every day, and in the Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve they seem to be everywhere. You'll probably hear them well before you see them, as they can be very vocal, especially during the breeding season. A typical call is a bright loud "kee-yar, kee-yar, kee-yar" with the note lowering slightly with each iteration. Mates call to one another, juveniles call to their parents. They can all be very chatty.

Smaller than Red-Tailed Hawks, they look mostly orange from a distance with mottled brown and white wings and back, and a black-and-white barred tail. Close up, you can see the almost translucent quality of the faint rusty-colored barring on the chest. That rufous coloring bleeds into the shoulders of the bird as it matures. In flight, look for the white half-moon shapes across the outer rim of the wing feathers. Adults have dark brown eyes, and juveniles' eyes can be yellow to pale brown. As in many raptors, the females are a bit larger than the males.



Here an adult Red-Shouldered Hawk breakfasts on a vole on top of one of the bat boxes at the Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve. [Photo by Mary K. Hanson]

There are actually five subspecies of Red-Shouldered Hawk, but the one we see here in California (*Buteo lineatus elegans*) is the only one on this side of the continent. The other four subspecies are found in the eastern and southern United States. However, migration studies done from

*The rufous coloring of the bird bleeds over onto its shoulders as it matures; thus, its name the Red-Shouldered Hawk. Those round shapes near the hawk's feet in this photo are old galls made by the cynipid wasp *Andricus quercuscalifornicus*. [Photo by Mary K. Hanson]*



Washington state to New Mexico seem to indicate that the California subspecies is expanding its range east and north.

Our local forest raptor, the Red-Shouldered Hawk prefers riparian areas, oak woodlands, and sometimes urban area where there are tall trees with ready access to a permanent source of water. So, the Effie Yeaw Nature Preserve is a perfect place for them. It also provides them with the variety of food stuffs these hawks crave: small mammals, snakes and other reptiles, other smaller birds and even crayfish.

The breeding season starts in April and usually goes through July. Once they find a good nesting area and are successful in raising a brood or two, the hawks will return to the same area – and sometimes even the same nest – from year to year. One Red-Shouldered Hawk under study maintained its nesting area for over 15 consecutive years. Frequent visitors to the Effie Yeaw preserve know that a pair of Red-Shouldered Hawks set up a successful nest right next to the nature center for several years and raised several broods of chicks there. Today, if you walk down the Pond Trail and stop at water stanchion 4B and look up, you'll also see one of their nests sitting high in a tree right beside the trail.

The nests are built by both the males and females and are made up of manageable twigs. Once the main shape has been established, the birds will then line the nest with bark, chunks of moss or lichen, and fresh leaves before the egg-laying starts. Two eggs are normal for a brood, but the hawks can lay up to five or six in a clutch. The eggs are dull white or very pale blue and have brownish specks on them.

Because Great Horned Owls are opportunistic and sometimes try to take over the hawks' nests rather than build one of their own (and are also known to raid hawk nests



to eat hawk chicks), the Red-Shouldered Hawks are not particularly fond of the owls. According to the Cornell "All About Birds" website, the hawks will sometimes team up with American Crows to mob the owls and chase them from the hawks' nesting areas.



*The hawks' nests are built by both the males and females and are made up of manageable malleable twigs. This is a photo of a female hawk trying to get a better grip on a twig just before she carries it to her nest. [Photo by Mary K. Hanson]*

When the chicks hatch, they're fuzzy and pure white, and their down actually gets thicker just after they hatch. They fledge out in about six weeks but will stay with their parents until they're about five or six months old. They'll be mature enough to breed themselves when they about two years old. Chick mortality can be high -- in some places less than 30% of them reach adulthood -- and most of them die from starvation. However, if they survive their first year, they can live for about 25 years in the wild.



*This is a young Red-Shouldered Hawk just starting to fledge out. It was spotted in 2017 in a nest next to the Effie Yeaw nature center. [Photo by Mary K. Hanson]*

Mary K. Hanson is a Certified California Naturalist who received her certification from the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. She is an author and nature photographer who also founded and currently teaches the naturalist program from Tuleyome in Woodland, CA.



## Femme Fatale

Praying Mantis  
finger puppet  
6 inches tall • \$8.95



Or choose: frog, tarantula,  
crow, bat, butterfly, owl,  
and many more!

THE  
DISCOVERY  
SHOP

AT THE EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER  
TUES-SUN, 9-5  
489-4918



Imagine, it's a lovely morning in late March on the Nature Preserve. The trees sparkle with bird songs and dew drops. Nature lovers gather and head out on the trails guided by some of the best local birders who have scouted the area for weeks so they can point out nests and local rarities. When they return they enjoy a delicious breakfast, good coffee, and a silent auction and raffle. You've just dreamt of Effie Yeaw Nature Center's annual Bird and Breakfast event.

The popular event regularly sells out and did so again this year.

We are so grateful to all the volunteers and participants who make this event possible, and whose support of the Nature Center provides environmental and cultural education to schools and the public.

Please enjoy these photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner at both the Traditional Event and the Family Events and keep an eye out for next year's event in the Spring of 2020. Be sure to register early.

In the meantime, we hope to see you out on the trails!



# Wine Tasting Experience at Six Hands Winery

Joey Johnson

We have been auctioning special experiences at the Spring Gala for a few years now, but seldom do we hear how it all went. I had the distinct pleasure of winning the Wine Tasting at Six Hands Winery at the Gala. This was a tasting experience for 10-12 people at the winery located in Walnut Grove on the delta. It turned out to be a delightful day of learning, tasting and enjoying friends.

Six Hands is a small winery that creates wine from grapes grown on the property, or nearby. Peter Marks, who owns the winery in partnership with his wife, Richéle, is incredibly knowledgeable about all things wine, having studied at UC Davis. He and his wife have put together a total tasting experience that includes learning to detect “flavors” through the sense of smell, what cheeses, or chocolate, pair well with what wines, and why that pairing works.

Peter’s presentation is relaxed and easy to understand. Everyone in the room was totally engaged in learning about wine and how to enjoy it more. I came away from this with much more appreciation for wine and a better understanding of what wine to serve with what food. And, most of us left with some wonderful wines to take home for practice.

This was most certainly a great experience that I would not have had were it not for the Silent Auction at the Gala.

A Six Hands Wine Tasting will be auctioned again this year along with numerous other wonderful experiences.



OUR 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
**Spring Gala & Auction**  
EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER

**Attend the Gala**  
**Saturday, June 8, 5pm-8pm**

Enjoy an evening under the trees at the Nature Center, live and silent auctions of unique experiences and local art, food, wine, and raffle while supporting the Nature Center and environmental education in our region!

**Enter the Raffle : Tickets \$50 each or 3 for \$100**  
You do not have to be present to win.

Top prizes include a 5-night stay in the Tahoe Chalet in South Lake Tahoe (\$1000 value) and a full-day sailboat cruise (\$500 value). Other prizes from Sacramento Ballet, Pier 39, B Street Theater, Green Acres, and much more!

**Purchase Your Gala & Raffle Tickets Call: (916)489-4918**  
2850 San Lorenzo Way Carmichael, California 95608  
[www.sacnaturecenter.net](http://www.sacnaturecenter.net)

Art by Bobbie Baldwin







# Summer Camps

Parker Stewart

Effie Yeaw has an exciting Summer Camp schedule for your young ones! Summer 2019 is going to be a blast with a wide variety of exciting, fun camps!

Our nature camps have become a popular resource for parents throughout the Sacramento region. We want to instill or grow upon a passion for the natural world with your children. Through our summer camps students can focus on specific animal groups, plants, outdoor recreation, or natural processes throughout the Sacramento area. Effie Yeaw's Naturalist team offer in-depth knowledge about the specific camp topics while also providing a safe, educational, and fun environment for kids to be kids! These weekly programs offer families a trusted, enjoyable and more engaging camp experience.

Our Summer Camps are categorized by age range: 5 year-olds, 6-7 year-olds, 8-11 year-olds and 11-15 year-olds.

Camps are either one week or two weeks long. Descriptions, dates, times and fees will be listed under each weekly camp title on our website. Camps are filling up fast so make sure you get a spot ASAP.

[sacnaturecenter.net/education/nature-camps/summer/](http://sacnaturecenter.net/education/nature-camps/summer/)

We hope to have your campers with us soon!



Photo by Linda Thomas



Photo by Kari Bauer



Photo by Rachel Cowan



Photo by Kari Bauer

Photo by Rachel Cowan



# Max McGregor-Featured Volunteer

Animal Care



Recently, 17 year old Max McGregor completed 1000 hours of volunteer service at the Nature Center! You can now find his name etched into a plaque honoring volunteer service at the entrance to the museum. Nature Center Staff and volunteers gathered to recognize the accomplishments of volunteers like Max at a Volunteer Appreciation event this past spring.

Max began volunteering at the Nature Center when he was 14 years old. He had been home schooled and spent a lot of time exploring nature at the American River. Max brought some experience rescuing animals and was excited to learn how to care for the animal ambassadors at the Nature Center. Animal Care staff JoLynn and Jackie guided him through this process.

Max is currently a Fire Explorer with the Woodland fire Department and attends weekly trainings while doing community service such as directing traffic during special events. He worked as an observer for an eight-hour shift at the station and has even assisted during fire events.

In addition, Max is now a staff member and field trip guide at Sacramento Splash where he started as a volunteer two and a half years ago. Like Effie Yeaw Nature Center, Splash is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping local children understand and value their natural world through science education and outdoor exploration.

Max's knowledge of our animals at the preserve and at the vernal pools is extensive and he is a natural educator. When he assists in our week long camps, the children listen attentively to this young mentor. He loves the challenge of working with the animals, especially Echo the Great Horned Owl, and observing their behavior.

He hopes to attend Fire Fighter school to acquire an EMT license and Fire Fighter One certificate. When he has completed his training, he will be eligible to work for Cal Fire. His hobbies include working on cars and flying when the opportunity arises. He also hopes to someday complete a pilot licensing program.

**Dream big and fly high, Max!**

**How can you make your donation to the Nature Center stretch even further?  
Join our Live Oak Sustainer Program and make a recurring gift.**



Recurring gifts have a greater impact to the Nature Center – providing a consistent income, improving our bottom line, and allowing for more-informed planning.

And recurring gifts also come with perks for YOU:

- **Once and done.** A one-time sign-up and your donation will be withdrawn automatically each month.
- **A bigger impact.** By spreading your donation over a year, it's easier to give more generously.
- **No more remembering.** Your Nature Center membership will automatically be renewed each year.
- **Satisfaction.** You'll know that your gift is consistently being used to provide valuable nature education, to maintain the nature preserve and to inspire future stewards within our community.

**Become a Sustainer today at [www.SacNatureCenter.net](http://www.SacNatureCenter.net)**



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- Randy Fisher
- Victoria & Matthew Foster
- David Fudala
- Jeffrey Gamache
- Shauna Garrett
- Melody Gere
- Jon Grant
- Brigitt Graves
- Don Griffiths
- Krista Hall
- David Harlow
- Kenneth Hassman
- Christina Hines
- Pam Hofstad
- Rosemary Howard
- Michael Hunt
- Rosemary Jagus
- The Jakle Family
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- Matthew Kawamura
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- Cody Newport
- Sarah Newton-Scott
- Onyekachi Okoye
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- Ariele Rodriguez
- Gustavo Rodriguez
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- Gabriel Singer
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- Karen Tarp
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- Nakano Thomas & Angela Ruvalcava
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- Maria Trapalis-McDonald
- Marcia Tyler
- Talitha Van der Meulen
- Matthew Victoria
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- Karen Schwalm
- Sara Sealander
- Megan Seely & Jonathan Sher
- Jennifer Senlio
- Lanna Seuret in honor of Charlie Klinger
- Katharine Severson
- Linda Shannon
- Gayle Sheeks
- Carolyn Shepherd
- Sherry Sherry & Kathryn Griffin
- Mark Barman Shila Ortiz
- Jill & Mike Short
- Tom & Barbara Silver
- Patricia Simms
- Edvardas & Anna Doris Simonis
- Gabriel Singer
- Kip & Illa Skidmore
- Michael & Mary Sloss
- Starlene Smith
- Steven & Janet Smith
- Robert Smith & Claudia Charter
- Lisa Snelling
- Richard Soehren in honor of Marsha and Dave Prillwitz
- Susan Solarz
- Somach, Simmons & Dunn
- William & Anne Marie Spaller
- Colette Spencer
- John Speth
- John & Janice Speth
- Donald & Marilyn Spiegel
- Frances Spivy-Weber
- Jane Steele
- Joni Stein
- Sarah Steinheimer-Strauss
- Morna Stephens
- Kristie Lee Stevens
- Paula Stewart
- Daniel & Cindy Stone
- Todd & Elizabeth Stone
- Darcy Struckman
- Carol Sutton in memory of J.R. Gittins
- Allison Suznovich
- Harvey & Jane Swenson
- Norma Tabatabai
- Paul & Gay Tanner
- Katherine Taylor
- Jaclyn & Jon Teofilo
- James & Kathy Thompson
- Laura Thompson
- Terry Tice
- Barbara Tilton Keill
- Teresa Tork
- Diane Torres
- Maria Trapalis
- Sigrid & Jill McGuire Trevino
- Stephanie Turner
- Stephen Tuttle
- Marcia Tyler
- Lindsay Tzur
- UBS Matching Gifts Program
- Colleen Ann Uhlenhop
- Violet Underwood
- United Way California Capital Region
- Robert Velazquez
- Matthew Victoria
- Steven Vilter
- Janet & Roy Vogel
- Ron Vrilakas
- Dorothy & Patrick Wagner
- Pam Walker
- Robert Wall
- Sally Walters
- Colleen Ward
- Ella S. Warloe
- Kathryn Webb
- Frederick & Elizabeth Weiland in memory of James Cooper
- Laurie Weir
- Dorothy West
- Western Health Advantage.
- Jane Wheaton in honor of Cora Jane Goebel
- John & Loretta White
- Theodora White
- William White
- Heather Widen
- Audrey Wiechman
- Wild Birds Unlimited Roseville
- Walter Wiley
- Kate Williams & Tom Gohring
- **In honor of Kate Williams' Birthday**
  - Joyce Arnowitz
  - Devilina Bakhtiari
  - John Blake
  - Caroline Gohring
  - Kristin Hansel
  - Sarah Hansel
  - Robin Jenkins
  - Bob Kennis
  - Martha Lueg
  - Lynn Polon
  - Margaret Trott
  - Molly Wantuch
  - Ann Williams
  - Liz Williamson
- Leslie Wilson
- J.M. Wilson
- Carolyn Woodruff
- Lucinda Woodward
- Roxanne Young

