Habitat for Humanity is making strides....see page 3
Welcome from the SAF Board President

On behalf of the Sonora Area Foundation, I am very pleased to introduce you to “Giving Voice,” the Sonora Area Foundation’s annual report to the community. In this edition, we bring the residents of Tuolumne County an update on the Foundation’s activities, its financial status, and highlights from a few of the many projects of our community partners.

It is a privilege and honor to volunteer for the Foundation, and to see first-hand the good work all of us accomplish together in Tuolumne County.

Our Board of Directors is very pleased to welcome Ed Wyllie as the new Executive Director. Ed, a Tuolumne County native who spent his career in community development with the City of Sonora, joined our staff just a few weeks ago and already is immersing himself in learning the ropes of the foundation world. Ed is a skilled administrator with deep roots and a stellar reputation in our community – just the type of leader we know will support, strengthen and further the Foundation in fulfilling its mission.

This fall the Foundation has continued its commitment to keeping abreast of the changes and challenges in the field – and to bring that knowledge back to Tuolumne County. We revived our tradition of hosting an educational seminar for financial professionals, with more than 40 local advisors attending our sessions by nationally known experts in financial markets and investing services. We also sent four Board Members to San Francisco for an enlightening national conference for Community Foundations. All of us were struck by how fortunate and unique we are in Tuolumne County – not many rural communities in the nation have such a thriving base for community giving.

This has been another year of challenges for our local community, and the future is still uncertain as many struggle to navigate turbulent economic conditions. The Foundation has kept a special focus on helping meet basic needs in this climate and will continue that commitment in the coming year. We will however continue to respond to other local needs and opportunities.

As you’ll see in the pages that follow, the Sonora Area Foundation and its partners are truly accomplishing our mission of strengthening our Community.

Jim Johnson
SAF Board President

Mission

The Sonora Area Foundation strengthens our community by assisting donors, making grants and providing leadership in a manner consistent with our values.
Connections Building homes, building community – HABITAT neighborhood

Walls are raised, trusses are up, windows are in.

The first two homes for two deserving Tuolumne County families are taking shape at Parrotts Ferry Village, the new neighborhood under construction by Habitat for Humanity of Tuolumne County. Thanks to the efforts of dozens of volunteers and scores of local businesses and supporters, the once-stalled development south of Columbia will become home to 34 local families. A total of 34 homes will be built in stages over the next five to six years. Construction on the first duplex is now in full swing and a second will start shortly.

“We’re there at the site every day, and it’s amazing,” said Mara Armstrong, one of the first two homeowners. A widow with five children ages six to seventeen, she brings the whole family to work as many days as possible and they stop by the new home every day on their way home from school.

“The kids are so excited to see how much is getting done. We walk around every day and say to each other ‘one day, we won’t have to leave. This will be our last stop of the day.’”

As owner-builders, the Armstongs and every Habitat family must put in at least 500 hours of labor on their homes, working side-by-side with a growing number of community volunteers.

“It’s so inspiring to see the men and women who are volunteering so much time to helping my family have a decent home,” she said. “Their dedication is fantastic. There are no words.”

Momentum is building both in the construction process and for the development as a whole, said Executive Director Betsy Harden. “This project was a leap of faith at the beginning,” she said. “Now with the first homes actually going up, it’s the culmination of two years of hard work by so many – it’s remarkable.”

The project has earned growing support of dozens of volunteers and scores of donors, Harden said.

Fundraising has picked up dramatically over the last several months, as the community can see homes taking shape. Along with many $5 and $10 checks from neighbors and friends, Habitat recently received a $100,000 sponsorship pledge from Blue Mountain Minerals, a $50,000 grant for solar work from PG&E and a $150,000 grant from San Francisco’s S.H. Cowell Foundation.

The Sonora Area Foundation, a longtime supporter of Habitat, recently pledged $20,000 to be used for doors and windows on the first four homes.

“We’re so pleased to have this major support from our local Foundation,” Harden said. “That gets the attention of other donors and adds to our credibility.

“We’re in good financial shape for the first four homes,” Harden added, “but we have years to go on this project.

“Our most immediate challenge now is to coordinate the work of our volunteers,” she added. “We’re getting ready to put the roof on and close in the houses now, and could use more skilled builders to lead small teams.”

Interested volunteers – either individuals or groups – can sign up for work days on the Habitat chapter’s website at www.habitattuolumne.org.

PHOTOS:
Top & Center: Volunteer workers place siding and windows at Habitat homes.
Lower: Busy Saturday at the Habitat for Humanity’s Parrotts Ferry Village.

COVER PHOTO:
Workers prepare to roof the first homes at Habitat for Humanity’s Parrotts Ferry Village.
**Education** Sonora company nurtures the next generation

Local teachers and students have been the focus of philanthropy for a Sonora high-tech company, Front Porch, for several years. Working with the Sonora Area Foundation, the company offers quick-on-line teacher mini-grants. Any Tuolumne County teacher can apply for these awards in a flash. They have funded dozens of projects such as field trips, science equipment at Mother Lode Christian School, a classroom garden at Sonora Elementary and more.

“We call the program ‘Make It Happen,’ ” said Front Porch co-owner Holly Britton, who manages the teacher mini-grants program with a company committee. “We want teachers to come up with an idea for a lesson or activity, and make it as easy as possible for them to make it happen.”

The application on the Front Porch web site is short and simple, the company review is quick and the Foundation issues a check with no delays.

Teacher mini-grants, Britton said, fit into the Front Porch philosophy that education is the most important investment for the future of our community and our world.

“As a company, we’re always thinking about the bigger picture and long-term effects,” she said. “If we want leaders for tomorrow, how do you feed those roots? Education. And to help education, you want to reach teachers. We want to give them what they need to do their job well. “We’re just a part of the puzzle, but it’s something we can do. Giving money would do nothing if we didn’t have teachers to use it well, and they need volunteers and community partners to do their work.”

Britton said she’s impressed with teachers’ creative ideas and commitment.

“I don’t know any other profession that knows so well how to stretch a dollar!” she added.

The Foundation, Britton said, is an important part of the puzzle as well.

“They handle all of the logistics of the grants and really bend over backwards to make supporting the community easy.”

**Success** Arts Council celebrates a resurgence

Thousands of local residents and visitors alike enjoyed the recent celebration of prolific and multi-talented artist Jo Mora, a special project of the Central Sierra Arts Council (CSAC). And arts council leaders are calling the one-month exhibit – “Yosemite & California Trails of Jo Mora” – a phenomenal success that has re-energized and refocused the organization.

The exhibit included hundreds of Mora’s distinctive sketches, paintings, maps, drawings, prints and more, most related to his visits to Yosemite in the early 1900s. The Council also hosted two special receptions for the event with speakers and related information, and also assisted in producing a commemorative collection of Mora’s distinctive artwork and writings.

The Sonora Area Foundation supported the special project and related activities with $4,000 in seed funding. Interim CSAC Director Constance O’Connor-Gahagan said the exhibit signals a “reawakening of the (council’s) mission” as a public arts agency, and thanked the Foundation for providing “support and encouragement” at a key turning point.

“We’re grateful for this opportunity in helping us realize our forward motion,” she said. “The Jo Mora Exhibition was a far-reaching, diverse, cultural experience for local residents and visitors from throughout the state that came to see and enjoy Mora in Sonora!”

**Profile** ATCAA Family Center opens in Sonora

A bright friendly center filled with preschoolers, infants, young parents and skilled teachers is now opened in East Sonora. It’s the ATCAA Family Center, the permanent new home for Tuolumne County family services offered by the Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA) and its partners.

The new center brings together four programs for young families: Early Head Start and Head Start, which offer quality child care, early childhood education and parent services; the ATCAA Family Learning Center which offers parenting classes and adult education; and Cal-SAFE – the Tuolumne County Schools classroom where pregnant and parenting teens can stay in school and have quality maternity and child care services.

Program Director Marcia Williams said bringing all these programs together under one roof is providing a great atmosphere for the families. Previously these programs had to move from site to site. Now they have a permanent home, can share resources, and give the families important services in a single location.

“You can really see young families blossom here. Parents can focus on work or school and know their children are getting quality care and the best learning environment,” she said. Earlier this year, ATCAA acquired the vacant building, which is located on a convenient, level site in East Sonora. Together with the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools and the First Five Commission, ATCAA secured enough grants, loans, and community donations to have the center ready for the first day of school.

ATCAA is now in the process of raising the final $74,000 it needs to complete the remaining remodeling and moving expenses. To help, the Sonora Area Foundation awarded ATCAA a $37,000 matching grant. Project partners are now seeking contributions to match that much from the community.

“The Sonora Area Foundation challenge grant is helping us reach our goal,” Williams said. “This is an important one-time investment that will help young families for years to come.”
**Update**

**WATCH settles into new Sonora home**

Participants, staff and families of the WATCH program are happily settling into their new home in Sonora.

Their new building off Cabezon Road has spacious, single-story classrooms and workrooms, safe and easy parking, fun, bright colored walls and carpets, well equipped recreation areas, computer rooms and kitchens, offices for staff, areas for quiet time and an outdoor yard and patio area under construction. It’s quite a change from the crowded, multi-level offices and workshops WATCH had in East Sonora.

“It’s just wonderful—we all love it,” said Executive Director Chris Daly. “We had been wanting to find a better location for many years. The fact that we’re all on one level is really wonderful. The hallways are wide — no stairs or ramps. We’ve got eight people in wheelchairs and another half dozen who use walkers, so it’s a lot easier and safer for them to get around.”

WATCH serves developmentally disabled adults in Tuolumne and Calaveras counties and works to integrate them into all aspects of community life and have them live as independently as possible.

The new building helps, Daly said. “People get to be more independent in the tiniest ways — being able to wash up on your own after craft classes or getting yourself situated in the computer lab at a touch screen you can operate without help. It’s not so much about the big things as the little ones that make you more comfortable and happy every day.”

WATCH acquired its new building early this year, after raising more than $110,000 for the project. The Sonora Area Foundation and its supporting organization, the Irving J. Symons Foundation, were major contributors, providing a total of $65,000 for acquisition, remodeling and moving.

“The Foundation helped make this possible,” Daly said. “We’re happy. We’re here for a long time.”

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**2011 Competitive Grants**

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<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother Lode Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATCAA Food Bank</td>
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<td>Center for a Non Violent Comm.</td>
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<td>Foothill Pregnancy Center</td>
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<td>Sonora Sunrise Rotary Foundation</td>
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<td>Vietnam Veterans of America</td>
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<td>Central Sierra Arts Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duende</td>
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<td>Woods Creek Little League</td>
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<td>County of Tuolumne</td>
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<td>Smilekeepers Program</td>
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<td>Mind Matters</td>
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<td>Sierra Repertory Theatre</td>
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<td>Fire Safe Council Hwy 108</td>
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<td>ATCAA</td>
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<td>We Care Sober Living Recovery</td>
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<td>Sonora High School</td>
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<td>Summerville High School</td>
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<td>City of Sonora</td>
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<td>ATCAA – Heading Start</td>
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<td>T.C. Behavioral Health</td>
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<td>Habitat for Humanity</td>
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<td>Comfort Project</td>
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<td>Golden Sierra Rose Society</td>
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<td>Columbia College Foundation Osher</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td>Grants from Restricted Funds</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL GRANTS</strong></td>
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**Sonora Area Foundation**

**Consolidated Statement of Financial Condition**

including Supporting Organizations and Component Funds

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 31, 2010</td>
<td>$26,695,519</td>
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**ASSETS**

- Cash and cash equivalents: $2,639,221
- Contributions receivable: $38,000
- Investment income receivable: $21,775
- Rents receivable: $33,612
- Other receivable: $211,316
- Marketable securities: $6,724,318
- Deferred property taxes: $8,710
- Prepaid expenses: $32,211
- Note receivable: $873,088
- Planned gift receivable: $356,390
- Investments at fair market value: $6,262,696
- Other assets: $7,101
- Real property net of depreciation: $9,487,081

**Total Assets:** $26,695,519

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

**LIABILITIES**

- Accounts payable and accrued liabilities: $99,327
- Grants and scholarships payable: $386,577
- Advance rent and security deposits held: $29,640

**Total Current Liabilities:** $506,544

**NET ASSETS**

- Unrestricted: $20,426,111
- Temporarily Unrestricted: $3,425,677
- Permanently Restricted: $2,301,187

**Total Net Assets:** $24,964,141

**Total Net Assets:** $26,188,975

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:** $26,695,519

Audited financial statements of the Foundation and its Supporting Organizations are available at the Foundation office, 362 S Stewart St, Sonora, CA.
Community Grant Senior meals program earns a boost

A growing number of homebound seniors count on Tuolumne County’s Meals on Wheels program, part of Tuolumne County Senior Services. This month the hardworking team received a big boost for their efforts—a $20,000 grant as a recipient of the Irving J. Symons Award from the Irving J. Symons Foundation, a Supporting Organization of the Sonora Area Foundation.

“We were just struggling with how we would make it through the fiscal year—this will really help!” said a surprised Executive Director Mike Ruggles. The program prepares and delivers daily meals to more than 220 elderly residents 52 weeks a year.

Meals for seniors
Community Impact Award  

Staff and volunteers at the Foothill Pregnancy Center offer support, services and health education to dozens of young women, young parents and their families each week. Their efforts earned them a $10,000 award this fall, as winners of the Elaine Symons Baker Community Impact Award from the Sonora Area Foundation. Foundation Directors also presented the Sonora non-profit organization with a $6,000 challenge grant, which the group will match through a series of dinners at supporters’ homes.

“We love what we do,” said Executive Director Nicki Reeves. “We empower women with education and knowledge so they can make informed decisions for life and support them with counselors that they can get to know and trust. We help provide them with items such as car seats, layettes and cribs.”
Create Your Legacy

Donor Advised Funds. You can have ongoing involvement in the use of your gift. You work with our professional program staff identifying ways to use dollars from the Donor Advised Fund you establish to address the issues and needs you care about most.

Unrestricted Funds. Your gift can address ever-changing community needs - including future needs that often cannot be anticipated at the time your gift is made. We evaluate all aspects of community well-being - arts and culture, economic development, education, environment, and health and human services.

Field of Interest Funds. You can target your gift to address needs in an important area of community life: Arts, Aging, Conservation, At-risk youth, Environment.

Scholarships. You can invest your gift in our community’s future and show students you care, all with the guidance and personal services of the Foundation.

Designated Funds. You can direct your gift to a specific nonprofit organization or purpose. Help provide ongoing funding for a senior center, museum or virtually any nonprofit charitable organization.

Choose a giving option right for you.

Call today for your free copy of our Giving Guide. 533-2596

We’d be honored to assist you in creating your personal or family legacy.