

# LOCAL NEWS

## Audubon program looks at the threat to the future of seafood

CONTRIBUTED BY LEN MCKINZIE

Seafood is one of the most popular and healthful food choices today, but overfishing, pollution, coastal development and climate change are increasingly threatening the world's marine fisheries. Populations of tunas, sharks and swordfish have declined by 90 percent from historic levels. Fish farming is quickly replacing fishing as the predominant source of seafood. Scientists project that if present trends continue, most major commercial fisheries could collapse by 2048.

Michael Sutton, vice-president of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, where he directs the Center for the Future of the Oceans, will discuss the threat of unsustainable fishing and what the aquarium is doing to counter it at the March program of the Yosemite Area Audubon Society. Sutton will present his slide program, "The Future of Seafood," Thursday, March 11, at the Mariposa Methodist Church parish hall on Sixth Street between Highway 140 and Bullion Street. The program will begin at 7 p.m.

Governments have been unable to reverse the decline of ocean health through public policy alone. Building powerful commercial incentives for ocean conservation is essential to effective management of marine fisheries. The Sustainable Seafood movement harnesses market forces and the power of consumer choice in favor of sustainable fisheries.

Sustainable seafood programs show consumers how

their seafood choices make a difference to the health of the oceans. Commonly used pocket guides help consumers make better choices when shopping and dining. More detailed information is available for chefs and seafood buyers. These programs are based on simple economics: If those who buy seafood also demand sustainable, well-managed fisheries, the industry will shift to support more effective fishery management. All levels of the seafood supply chain are involved: seafood lovers, chefs, wholesalers, retailers, culinary school faculty and students, and food service companies.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium works at the forefront of the Sustainable Seafood movement. In the last decade, it has distributed tens of millions of Seafood Watch pocket guides (Sutton will have them available at his program) and illuminated the issue for consumers and chefs. Today, large-volume seafood buyers such as Wal-Mart and ARA-MARK have committed to using only sustainable seafood sources.

As his role at the Monterey Bay Aquarium suggests, Sutton is a highly accomplished authority on ocean conservation. In 2007, and again in 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger appointed him to the California Fish and Game Commission. He recently co-authored a book, "Ocean and Coastal Law and Policy," published by the American Bar Association. He has lectured at graduate seminars on ocean conservation at Harvard, Yale,

Columbia, Stanford, Tufts, George Washington University and the University of Rhode Island.

Previously, Sutton helped establish ocean conservation programs at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), where he founded the Marine Stewardship Council. He currently serves as chairman of the Wild Salmon Center and a board member of LightHawk, Ocean Champions and the Sea Change Investment Fund.

Before joining the WWF, Sutton served as a special agent with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and as a park ranger with the National Park Service in Yosemite, Yellowstone, Biscayne, and Virgin Islands National Parks and Death Valley National Monument. He received a bachelor's degree in wildlife biology from Utah State University in 1978 and pursued graduate studies in marine biology at the University of Sydney, Australia. In 1992, he received a law degree in international and natural resources law from George Washington University's National Law Center in Washington, D.C. He lives in Carmel Valley with his wife and two children.

Sutton's presentation is open and free to the public, although donations to defray program costs and to support Audubon's local activities are welcome. Refreshments will be available.

Call 742-5579 for additional information.

The Yosemite Area Audubon Society is affiliated with the National Audubon Society. Both the national organization and the local chapter are dedicated to the preservation of natural habitats and native species, and to educating and inspiring others to help protect those resource values.

## PERS group to meet

The next regular meeting of the Public Employees Retirees Association (PERS) will be held on Tuesday, March 16 at the senior center on Spriggs Lane at noon. Lunch will be free for those attending.

The guest speaker for this meeting will be District Attorney Bob Brown.

Those planning to attend are asked to call in a reservation by March 15 at 742-7182.



SOROPTIMIST MEMBER ANGELA HEISS (LEFT) IS PICTURED WITH VIOLET RICHARDSON AWARD RECIPIENT SYDNIE EDWARDS.

## Edwards receives Richardson Award

CONTRIBUTED BY ANITA STARCHMAN BRYANT

The recipient of Soroptimist International of Mariposa's 2010 Violet Richardson Award is Sydnie Edwards, a MCHS student heading the Triangle 4-H Million Trees project. Soroptimist members are committed to improving the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world. The Violet Richardson Award scholarship program is a way to recognize young women between the ages of 14 and 17 for their volunteer service to their communities.

The program is named after Violet Richardson Ward, the first president of the first Soroptimist club. Edwards is recognized by Soroptimist for her leadership in a local effort to unite with 4-Hers across the country to plant a million trees by 2011. Triangle 4-H's original goal was to plant 200 trees. To date Triangle 4-H has planted over 1,700 trees.

Recently, much of the club's efforts focus on replanting trees where the Telegraph Fire occurred. For more information about Soroptimist International of Mariposa call Gwen Nitta at 742-6332.

## Local Rotarians hear of Special Olympics

Five members of the 20-member Mariposa Special Olympics team joined guest speaker Sarah Brewster at the Rotary meeting last week. Special Olympics athletes enjoy a year-round training and competition program that serves participants ranging in age from 15 to 60.

Mariposa Special Olympics is part of a regional, statewide, national and worldwide program comprising two million athletes. There are 13,000 athletes in northern California alone. Coaches work with the athletes for about eight weeks of practice before an event. Since coaching is often a one-to-one arrangement, the program needs about as many coaches as athletes.

Special Olympics is de-

signed to help each participant be a winner. Competitions are divided into five member teams with gold, silver, bronze and two ribbon winners. Brewster noted that the athletes are awesome, hardworking and enthusiastic. Team members who joined her seconded that statement.

During the winter games they hold a track meet in Mariposa then travel to the regional games in Merced. Later, teams will travel to UC Davis where there will be an opening ceremony with a torch that has traveled from Monterey. Team members always look forward to the Saturday night dinner and dance as much as the daytime competitions.

Mariposa community members are invited to learn more, even to come out to the track to cheer on the competitors. Information on the northern California organization is available at <http://sonc.org>. Call David Wise at Natural Environments, 742-7004 to make the connection to volunteer.

## Audubon holds birding trip

The Yosemite Area Audubon Society will offer a birding trip down White Rock Road, an especially productive route in spring, on Saturday, March 20, beginning at 8 a.m. at the Mariposa County Fairgrounds. Suitable for beginners, the trip is free and the public is welcome. Dress in layers and bring binoculars, field guides, lunch and beverages.



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