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The Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program was honored recently with a \$2,500 grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation. *Courtesy photo to the Gold Country Times*

## Wells Fargo Foundation Donates \$2,500 for Youth Mentoring

Longtime mentor and Wells Fargo customer Don Amo brought the mentoring program to Wells Fargo's attention. Don and his mentee Sam were matched in the program for more than five years before Sam graduated from high school, and they are still close friends. Don is also a member of the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program's Advisory Committee, where he became aware of the program's effort to attract Wells Fargo support.

"I've been a loyal customer at the San Andreas store since it opened," said Don. "So I asked the program director to let me present the application." "We are always eager to support our community and were pleased to make this connection with our local youth mentoring program," said Wells Fargo San Andreas store manager Gil Valtierra. "We hope this is the first of many opportunities to work together."

The mission of the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program is to connect Calaveras County young people in first through twelfth grades with safe, positive adult role models who will offer support, guidance, friendship, and help the youth make healthy life decisions. Potential mentors are thoroughly screened to ensure the safety of the youth in the program. Once matched, mentors and mentees spend a couple of hours a week together for at least a year doing things they both enjoy—sports, going out to supper, seeing a movie, or working on a project. Mentors receive extensive pre-match training and then additional education throughout the year, plus regular monitoring of the friendship, as-needed support, and invitations to group field trips and events.

The mentoring program is always seeking volunteer mentors, and currently has five eager boys waiting for mentors in the San Andreas area. For more information, call 209-736-6078 or visit online at [www.calaverasmentoring.org](http://www.calaverasmentoring.org)



## Ralph Emerson Named February 2012 Mentor of the Month

The Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program is proud to honor longtime mentor Ralph Emerson as February 2012 Mentor of the Month. "Ralph is a great friend, both to his mentees and to the mentoring program," said Kathryn Eustis, Director of Youth Development and Prevention Programs. "Throughout the many years

he has been in the program, he has continually stepped up to help other mentors, to support our recruiting and fundraising efforts, and to offer resources and suggestions for improvement."

Ralph joined the mentoring program in 2006 when he recognized his young neighbor Colleen Dolan in the brochure given to him at a school board meeting. He and his wife Mona have four children of their own who were all grown and had moved away, and Ralph had been coaching sports for over 25 years but felt the time with the kids was limited. "The mentoring program gives me quality time to help kids on their life course," he says.

"My first mentee hadn't been introduced to a lot of the activities that other kids are familiar with, and every new experience brought a glow to his eyes," Ralph remembers. "He was so excited to try new things, even things like playing catch, and going to dinner and the movies.

He moved away for a while, which was hard, but then he came back and we were matched up again. He is a young man now, and I am proud of who he has become."

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## Mardi Gras Party & Cajun Cook-Off

It's Mardi Gras! Come in Costume! March 10th, 2012 will be the 1st Annual Mardi Gras Party & Cajun Cook-Off. The event will start at 6:30 and will be at the Sutter Creek Auditorium, 18 Main Street. Tickets are \$15 adults, \$10 teenagers and \$5 children under 13 yrs. This great event is a fund raiser for the exterior renovation of the Historic Sutter Creek Grammar School. Fun at the event includes: Cajun Cook-Off, Live music for dancing featuring the band "Late For Dinner", Black Jack Tournament, Saloon, Madame Luna Bella Fortuna the Fortune Teller, and the infamous Jail House, where the Sheriff will roam the room and anyone can have someone arrested for just \$1.00 and that person must pay \$1.00 to get out of jail, (or be released after 10 minutes) There will be a costume contest and you might just win, so come in your wildest, most creative costume. There will be an area for kids to have fun, too.

Your ticket includes the Cajun Cook-Off tasting! Restaurants and residents battle it out with their own Cajun concoction. Visit each booth, try their Cajun recipe and then cast your vote for your favorite. The team with the most votes wins \$100 and a trophy. There will also be prizes for Cajun Team Best Booth and best Cajun Team Best Costume. All proceeds from this event will go to the exterior renovation of the Historic Sutter Creek Grammar School which is on the National Historical Registry. National Register number is 15.904 by the Department of Interior, National Parks Service in Washington D.C. and the California State Historic Registry #76000477. For more information, visit online at [www.suttercreek.org](http://www.suttercreek.org) or call (209) 267-1344 or (800) 400-0305.

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