

Sequoia Riverlands Trust Receives Grant for Festival

By Steve Pastis

Sequoia Riverlands Trust will use its \$10,000 grant from the California Council for the Humanities to sponsor the Kaweah Land & Arts Festival, a three-day cultural event in November. The festival will present stories of the Kaweah watershed told through visual art, poetry, folk music, storytelling, history and natural science.

"Because it's a storytelling grant, we will really focus on attracting artists and historians who will tell their relationship to the land here," said Niki Woodard, communications coordinator for Sequoia Riverlands Trust, who prepared the grant application. "That's how it ties back to us as a land trust. We hope we can raise awareness of the value and the beauty of the landscape and inspire better caretakers of the land."

Plans call for an exhibition at Arts Visalia on Friday, Nov. 6; a field day at Kaweah Oaks Preserve featuring live entertainers, storytellers, information booths and children's events during the day on Nov. 7; a land and arts symposium at College of the Sequoias that evening; and a schedule of readings and other events on Nov. 8.

Among those already scheduled to participate are artist and art teacher Matthew Rangel, writer John Spivey and cowboy poet John Dofflemyer.

The Council recently awarded \$200,000 to 21 projects around the state.

"This is the first time the California Council for the Humanities has funded a grant in the Central Valley since the mid-90s," said Woodard, who hopes the

event is the first of many, with the second possibly being in spring 2011.

Sequoia Riverlands Trust has received donations from Southern California Edison, Kawneer and Wells Fargo, and is looking for additional event sponsors. For more information, call Woodard at 738-0211, ext. 108, or visit www.sequoiariverlands.org.