

PRESS RELEASE

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ANONYMOUS DONOR MAKES \$35,000 CHALLENGE GRANT TO KEEP THE PETALUMA ADOBE OPEN.

At its December Board Meeting, the Sonoma/Petaluma State Historic Parks Association (S/PSHPA) approved an agreement with an Anonymous Donor by which the donor will match every dollar raised up to \$35,000 to keep the Petaluma Adobe State Park open through to June 2013. The historic building and 41 acre park, once the center of General Mariano Vallejo's one hundred square mile ranch, has been slated for closure along with sixty-nine other State Parks on July 1, 2012 as part of the budget.

Mary Ann Maslowski, President of the S/PSHPA, said "We are thrilled about the generous offer of matching funds, which will go a long way in helping the Association meet its goal of \$70,000."

A Save the Petaluma Adobe Committee has been working for the past three months to structure a funding package to keep the Petaluma Adobe open for a year beyond the July 1, 2012 closure date set by State Parks. The Committee, chaired by S/PSHPA board member Philip Sales, includes County Supervisor David Rabbitt, the Petaluma Chamber of Commerce, the Petaluma Lions Club and Native Sons of the Golden West.

The Committee has proposed a plan which would keep the Petaluma Adobe open four days a week; Tuesday and Wednesday for schools and Saturday and Sunday for the general public. The cost of this is \$110,000/year. The Committee has identified approximately \$20,000 in "mothballing costs" which State Parks would be incurring even if the building is shuttered and the artifacts and displays removed to Sacramento. These costs include security, weed abatement and mowing and the maintenance and operation of a water system which also serves the State Parks District office on Casa Grande Road and park employee housing. In addition there will be a loss of \$20,000 in revenue from school groups and day use fees if the park is closed. "The \$70,000 is the hard cash that has to be raised", said Chairman Sales.

By funding the State to keep the park open for a year, it will give the S/PSHPA time to develop a business plan and identify new revenue streams which will offset the costs of the park and respect the historical integrity of the buildings.

To date the S/PSHPA has raised almost \$6,000 in smaller donations and pledges. There will be a Campaign kick off event “Love Your Park” fundraiser slated for February 14 (Valentine’s Day), at the Lagunitas Brewery on McDowell Avenue. Sales added, “There has been a fantastic outpouring of support since we launched this effort in late August. We are grateful to the media in covering this. We have recruited over sixty new members of our Association from Petaluma residents, each with their own story about how important it is to preserve the oldest building in the Petaluma Area and its history. We are fortunate that so many of Petaluma’s residents and locally owned businesses such as Lagunitas Brewery are engaged in this effort”.

To make a donation, mail a check to S/PSHPA Save the Petaluma Adobe Fund PO Box 1702, Sonoma CA 95476. The S/PSHPA is a registered non profit and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information call Philip Sales at 707 592 1601 or email savethepetalumaadobe@gmail.com or check out the Save the Petaluma Adobe Facebook page.