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Press Release

Natural Wonders of the Native Wetlands Inspire An Eco-Friendly Approach to Petaluma Educational Foundation's Premier Annual Fundraising BASH

For immediate release: August 24, 2009

Petaluma, CA: Petaluma Educational Foundation's premier annual fundraising gala event is going for green this September, in staging the high profile non-profits' most eco-friendly event to date.

Inspired by sweeping views of the many natural wonders of protected Petaluma wetlands, an expansive Shollenberger Landing location is an ideal fit for a sustainable 600 person fundraiser, due to take place on Saturday, September 12th.

As the largest commercial property owner in Southern Sonoma County, RNM Properties' generous donation of the use of its most commanding, new office suite, situated alongside 500 acres of native wetlands in Petaluma's Lakeville Business Park called for a more sustainable approach to staging this year's popular PEF event.

"This light-filled, 'next generation' office campus provides PEF with a unique site in which to raise the bar of educational fundraising for innovative, city-wide classroom programs at a critical juncture in state educational cuts," says Janet Ramatici, Executive Director of Petaluma Educational Foundation. "Expansive glass elevations will allow for abundant natural light for the early evening as guests are able to enjoy glorious views of sunset over Shollenberger Park."

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Greening this year's PEF Fundraising BASH will be all the more visible due to a first-year corporate sponsorship by new Petaluma Green Taxi Service with 50% of the gala evening profits from the sustainable taxi service going towards funding of the foundation's annual classroom grants.

Sun Logic has introduced a "Solar for Schools Program" through PEF. Petaluma-based home and business owners who choose to install Sun Logic solar panels to save money and the environment by harnessing the power of the sun to generate electricity will generate an estimated \$500 rebate per installation to be donated directly to the educational foundation.

"Our plan is to contribute \$0.10 per watt of every local solar installation back to the PEF for the next six months," says Sun Logic Spokesperson, John Knueppel. "This amounts to around \$500 per installation. Our ultimate goal is to give \$7,500. Solar electricity provides clean energy with real financial benefits. Today our schools and students need as much financial support as we can provide. This is why Sun logic sought out the help of the PEF as a charitable partner. They effectively reach out and give back to schools and students. With Solar for Schools, people who buy solar can be assured that they are bettering their environment and their community."

Upstairs tenant at the South McDowell Landing BASH location, CamelBak has generously provided 600, custom stamped PEF eco-friendly "Better Bottles" for the foundation to request \$10 donations towards funding an athletic/nutrition grant for the next school year.

Specializing in large events throughout the North Bay, Rays Catering provides the BASH with a fresh and elegant, sit-down dinner, using quality linen, silverware, glassware and flatware, recycling the evening's wine bottles and entirely eliminating any use of paper and plastic table products.

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A dessert bar will feature organic desserts donated by Whole Foods Market Petaluma, Baker Girl and Clover Stornetta.

In keeping with the earth-friendly, greener theme of the 2009 fundraising BASH, Petaluma Chapter of Realtors has stepped up to the plate this week with a \$5,000 check to provide partial funding of the continuation of Petaluma Educational Foundation's first major impact grant program: The Petaluma Wetlands Association Third Grade Science Program.

"We are so grateful that the real estate community in Petaluma has chosen to support our program in the schools," says Coordinator of the PWA 3rd Grade Science Program in the Schools, Helen Heal. "Our school program helps all third graders in Petaluma and in the Petaluma River watershed learn of the importance and wonder of local wetlands. Every year our volunteer docents bring almost 1,000 children and hundreds of parents and teachers into the wetlands for science education, and it is wonderful to have such community support to do this."

Additional green grants that will be funded during the "raise a paddle" for Fund-A-Need portion of the PEF live auction at this year's BASH include a \$5,000 pledge by Clover Stornetta for a Sustainable Agricultural Education Fund and a \$5,000 pledge by long-term supporter, Barbara's Bakery, for a new Teaching Garden construction.

Non-profit organization, Friends of the Petaluma River are offering a 'Mysteries of the Marsh' river cruise as a live auction feature for 10 guests to learn of the river's rich, natural resources and wildlife. Friends of the Petaluma River support river access and stewardship with a goal of creating a River Heritage Center to teach maritime, agricultural and outdoor heritage skills.

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Tickets for this year's BASH are priced at \$150 per person, inclusive of cocktails, live and silent auctions, dinner with drinks and dancing to the Moonalice brand of Americana rock and blues. Tickets for the 500 person event can be purchased from PEF at 707 778 5063 or online at www.pefinfo.com.

In addition to its Classroom Grant Program, Petaluma Educational Foundation funds over 200 graduating high school student scholarships each Spring, plus cultural enrichment events in art and music. PEF also manages over \$3, 500, 000 in endowment and component funds established through gifts, planned giving and corporate commitments to benefit Petaluma schools.

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