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Moraga Historical Society Honors Two Members

Submitted by Elsie Mastick



Susan Sperry and Maria Rieger Photo provided

in the area, where she still lives today with her two daughters and their families. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley she taught fifth grade at Los Perales Elementary School. With graduate degrees in special education, Sperry moved to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School in 1983. At JM for 23 years, she developed the curriculum for teaching the history of Moraga. Her unit included a walking tour of Moraga, often accompanied by descendants of original Moraga families - Carr, Sanders, Baitx, Trelut. This unit is still in use today in the third grades of the Moraga School District. After teaching in Moraga for 37 years, Sperry retired and joined the board of the Moraga Historical Society. Currently she is recording secretary and served as president for two terms. She has collected oral histories of many "old timers," turning them into a video in 2005. Sperry has watched Moraga grow from grassy hills to a thriving community. Mayor Dave Trotter calls Sperry a "living history of the Town of Moraga and this community."

Honored for their contributions to preserve local history, two Moraga Historical Society members received awards from the Conference of California Historical Societies at a June 22 luncheon in Sacramento.

Receiving the Scholarship/Authorship Award was Maria Rieger. Born and raised in Spain, Rieger has a deep understanding of her native country and culture. She is invaluable at translating Spanish documents and researching pre-American California history. Rieger is one of the most prolific contributors to the El Rancho Moraga Quarterly, the Moraga Historical Society's newsletter, and she is consistently reliable and passionate about her work. In 1993 Rieger was recognized with a certificate of appreciation from the National Park Service for her leadership and contribution to the plan for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which the public can now follow with beautiful markers from Arizona to Northern California. Her support of and contributions to the Moraga Historical Society have been invaluable over many years.

Susan Sperry has been a staple of the Moraga community her entire life. Sperry grew up on a cattle ranch

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