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Announcement will be made at the 9:00 a.m., August 30 meeting of the Board of Supervisors, County of San Joaquin, 44 N. San Joaquin Street, Stockton, CA 95202

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San Joaquin County Historical Museum Receives Highest National Recognition

Awarded Re-Accreditation from the American Association of Museums

LODI, California (August 30, 2011) – The San Joaquin County Historical Museum has again achieved accreditation by the American Association of Museums (AAM), the highest recognition awarded to museums in the United States. AAM accreditation recognizes the Historical Museum’s commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued improvement.

“Accreditation is emblematic of a museum’s commitment to public service and to overall excellence,” said Ford W. Bell, AAM president. “Attaining accreditation involves taking a hard look at yourself, allowing your peers in the field to do the same, and being judged to be superior in all areas. The people of San Joaquin County can take great pride in the fact that their history museum is one of America’s premier museums.”

Museum accreditation is a rigorous process, similar to the process used to accredit schools. The San Joaquin County Historical Museum conducted a year-long self-study reported to AAM in November 2010. That was followed this April by a three-day evaluation at the Museum by a team of senior museum professionals: the former director of the Nebraska Historical Society and the director of the Yakima Valley Museum in Washington.

The AAM Accreditation Commission, an independent and autonomous body of senior museum professionals, considered the self-study and visiting committee reports and voted in July to fully accredit the Historical Museum.

“The accreditation review process forced the Historical Society to step back and consider all aspects of the operation of the Museum against the highest standards,” said David Stuart, Executive Director. “The recognition by AAM tells us that all the hard work by the Museum’s small staff (four full-time, four part-time, and one temporary employee), dedicated corps of 150 volunteers, and Board of Trustees has indeed paid off. We thank the Historical Society members, donors throughout the County, and the Board of Supervisors and staff of the County of San Joaquin for steadfast support, especially during these challenging economic times.”

Less than five percent of the nation’s museums have currently achieved accreditation by AAM. The San Joaquin County Historical Museum is among 58 California museums of all types to hold the distinction. It is the only accredited museum in the northern San Joaquin Valley/Sierra foothills region, between Sacramento and Fresno. There are only two other regional history museums in the state accredited by AAM, both in northern California: History San Jose and the San Mateo County Historical Museum.

The nonprofit San Joaquin County Historical Society has since 1966 developed and operated the Historical Museum within Micke Grove Regional Park. The Museum was initially accredited by AAM in 1973, and has retained that status with reviews about every 10 years. The 18.5-acre Museum reveals the history of California’s heartland, with eight exhibition buildings, four historic buildings – including the Charles Weber cottage (1847) and Calaveras School (1866) – and other facilities. For more information, visit www.SanJoaquinHistory.org.

The American Association of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. AAM is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. The AAM accreditation program has been sustained for 35 years and is the museum field’s primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

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