

The Peters Family receives 2006 Carl Gibbs Environmental Excellence Award

The Calabasas Environmental Commission presented its 2006 Carl Gibbs Environmental Excellence Award at the commission's February 6, 2007 meeting to the Peters family of Calabasas for their dedication to the streams, trees and natural beauty found throughout the community. The late Carl Gibbs was a prominent environmental commissioner and one of the City's founders.

Laura and John Peters moved to Calabasas in 2000 with their daughters Rebecca, Hana and Claire. Rebecca, the youngest Peters daughter, was the catalyst in getting her family involved in Mountains Restoration Trust, the organization to which they devote the greatest amount of time.

"When we first moved here, my dad and I did a stream cleanup when I was 9," Rebecca said. "I started volunteering after that, and so did my sisters." Rebecca and her sisters, Claire and Hana, both away at college on the East Coast, participated in tree plantings, served as camp counselors and filed papers in the Mountains Restoration Trust office. The Peters have supported the trust by donating money and, most important they said, themselves as a family. "We go over there frequently," Laura said. "We do the cleanups and any event really- we are there."

Rebecca, a sophomore at Calabasas High School, has taken her knowledge to school with her, serving as co-president of the school's Earth Club. She also runs a program called Tamed Animals in the Lives of Seniors/Students (TAILS), bringing her rabbits to cheer up lonely senior citizens and curious youngsters.

The Peters weren't just recognized for their involvement in local organizations, but for their way of life. Laura Peters said "We have been wondering why we won this award. . . . We thought it might be more than the fact that we use the same bags over and over at Whole Foods. We thought maybe it is because we have been doing things every citizen in Calabasas can do." She said the family washes clothes in cold water, utilizes solar energy and switched to energy efficient light bulbs, low-flow shower heads and low-flush toilets. She encouraged others to shop at Calabasas' farmers' market, drive low-emission vehicles and landscape with native vegetation rather than water-consuming lawns. "Most importantly, my husband and I have educated our children to care for and shepherd the environment," she said.