



The Rotary Clubs of Josephine County have distributed \$80,000 in 2017 Duck Derby money to 4-H for livestock pens and to their parks nonprofit for a water spray feature in Riverside Park.

Each project received \$40,000. Duck Derby Committee Chair Dennis Roler presented the ceremonial checks at meetings of the four Rotary Clubs this week. The committee is already taking project applications for next year's Duck Derby money.

At the presentations, Roler thanked sponsors, gift donors and all those who worked on the campaign. People "adopt" ducks for \$10 each. These are dumped into the Rogue River at the Grants Pass Parkway bridge and float to Riverside Park, with the first dozen or so winning their owners prizes, including \$15,000 toward a car.

Roler said the 2017 Duck Derby, the 15<sup>th</sup> one, presented some unique challenges. For one, it was the first time more than one project was a beneficiary of the Duck Derby. Another was that it was possible both projects could be done before the race, possibly leading some people to wonder why they should buy ducks if the projects were already done.

In fact, having two projects proved a strength, he said. Some people liked one project, while others liked the second. And many people liked both of them, he said.

The 4-H actually borrowed against the Duck Derby money so its members could have new livestock pens for this year's Josephine County Fair. The old ones were literally held together with baling wire. The Duck Derby money will pay half of the estimated \$80,000 project cost, with the rest being raised by 4-H.

Work has not begun yet on the "sprayground" at Riverside Park, which is part of a larger renovation of the park. Cost of the spray feature is estimated at \$314,000. The \$40,000 in Duck Derby proceeds will go to buy "extras" for the water feature. The money was donated through a longtime Rotary Club nonprofit, Riverside West All-Sports Park, Inc. This account was also used to develop Reinhart Volunteer Park and Morrison Centennial Park.

Applications for the 2018 Duck Derby proceeds are available on the race's website, [rotaryduckderby.com](http://rotaryduckderby.com). The 2018 application isn't available yet, but the eligibility rules for 2017 will almost certainly stay the same, Roler said. They include that the project must benefit Josephine County youth and families, that the applicant must be a registered nonprofit and that the derby will pay, at most, only half the cost of a project.

People with questions about applying can contact Roler at 541-479-4272. Applications can be turned into any of the four Rotary Clubs in the county.