



MONTHLY UPDATE

March 2022

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NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

by Carol Hallett



March signifies the beginning of spring but it is a month that also keeps you on your toes. Is it time to put away the winter sweaters and bring out the flip-flops or will it snow again?

This month has also been a busy month for our CERT members. We have done lots of drills, exercises, training, planning, preparing for our upcoming training class and responded to a few deployment requests. So our THA-CERT staff has been in action mode all month. You will read all about it in this month's newsletter.

The old wives' tale in the motherlode is that winter is not over until it snows on the dogwood bloom. I use this as my trigger to look forward to spring. As I sit here and look out the window, the dogwood is still dormant, so we might have a few more storms.



(Above) Ben Wagner prepping for UAV flight at Mono Way fire.

SPRING INTO SAFETY...

by John Buckingham, THA-CERT Safety Officer



- 1) Check your smoke alarms and change the batteries. Critical for fire safety.
- 2) Clean and replace your furnace filter.
- 3) Clean the dust covers on your carbon monoxide monitor and change the batteries. You cannot detect carbon monoxide levels in your home without sensors.
- 4) Clean around your dryer and washing machines and their ducts and dampers to prevent lint build up, which is a fire danger
- 5) Time to review emergency escape plans with your household, fire season is upon us.

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

by By Mike Mandell, THA-CERT Team Leader

This month, the big news, is all the electrical work we are doing on the Firefighter Rehab Vehicle. As luck would have it, one of our potential CERT members, Vince Carini, is an experienced International truck guru, and has been volunteering his time to help us get our Firefighter Rehab Vehicle in tip-top shape.



During our deployment on the Mono Way fire (a nighttime deployment) we realized that there were several issues with that vehicle. The seat had an air leak, the shifter did not light up, and the headlights were really dim, to name a few.

We asked Vince if he would take a look and he jumped in his car and headed right over. Randie Revilla and Vince spent countless hours going through the vehicle's electrical system, getting schematics from Horton (maker of the box on the vehicle) and ordering parts. This truck is going to work like a champ when Vince is done.

The monthly inspections on all or vehicles are ongoing and, thankfully, no other major issues have arisen. Ron Kessler and I did the inspections this month and ensured that all the fluids were topped off, tire pressure checked and windshields cleaned.

We are good to go!

DEPLOYMENTS

by Mike Mandell, THA-CERT Team Leader

Three of our units were requested to deploy to two different incidents this month.

The first was a request from THCSO for our traffic control unit to provide traffic control at Twain Harte Drive and Mono Drive during a pipe replacement project.

Mike Mandell, John Buckingham, and Wes Jordan provided traffic control from roughly 0800 to 1345 hours. Mike reported no problems or mishaps and said they were thanked at the time for their assistance. Program Manager, Carol Hallett, also reported that she received a letter from CSO offering further thanks.

The second request was for both our Firefighter Rehab and UAV Units to deploy to a large fire on Mono Way in Sonora. As luck would have it, Mike Mandell heard the call on the scanner and so had a little bit of a head start getting us ready. Carol coordinated getting both units started and between the time she received the call from Chief Gamez to the time the Firefighter Rehab Unit arrived at the scene at 2129 hours, less than 30 minutes had elapsed. That's an amazing response time! Great job everyone!



(Above) Journey Church on Mono Way

Carol Hallett was Team Lead and Driver, Mike Mandell worked as Check In/Check Out and Communications, and Randie Revilla was in charge of Vitals and Rehab.

Ben Wagner from the UAV Unit arrived about 30 minutes after that. See the article on page 4 for more details about that.



(Above) FF Rehab Area Mono Way fire

The Firefighter Rehab Unit was on scene until 0119 hours the following morning and ran approximately 18 Firefighters through the rehab process during that time. They were provided with Hero wipes, water, Gatorade, snacks, and a comfortable place to rest.

As always, both these deployments provided learning opportunities for both individual crew members, as well as our CERT Team in general. For the most part, everything ran smoothly, thanks to the efforts of our dedicated volunteers.

UAV DEPLOYMENT

by Michelle Wagner, THA-CERT UAV Unit Leader

On March 19th, our UAV Unit was requested to assist at the church fire on Mono Way in Sonora.



(Above) Chief Gamez and Ben Mono Way fire

Thankfully, one of our pilots, Ben Wagner, had just finished his day on Ski Patrol at Dodge Ridge and was able to respond from there. He was joined at the scene by Carol Hallett, who acted as his Visual Observer for the operation.

As usual, Ben kept a cool head and overcome a few technical glitches and some significant impediments to flying, i.e., a lot of overhead wires and many tall trees, not to mention the smoke and the darkness.

There were also significant distractions as many firefighters that weren't currently on assignment surrounded him to watch what he was doing. He managed to avoid distraction and did his job.

Ben was able to provide thermal imaging of a raging fire that the firefighters were having trouble locating because it was burning between the roof sheathing and the shingles.

With the information he provided, the firefighters were able to cut out the hotspot and put the fire out. They were able to complete a task that would likely have taken them several hours in about 20 minutes, thus reducing firefighter fatigue and potential injury, not to mention personnel and reconstruction costs.

Our UAV program continues to evolve as we look at other ways to be of service. As we do so, it's great to know we have a solid foundation of willing and capable people to help out when they're needed!



(Above) Chief Gamez, Ben, Carol, and Firefighters at Mono Way fire

FIREFIGHTER REHAB DRILLS & SKILLS

by Carol Hallett, THA-CERT Program Manager

There is a lot going on with Firefighter Rehab this month!

We take our job seriously and that means a lot of work but the staff and crew do it with pride and amazing attention to detail.

We mentioned last month that we now have rotating crews...here are the details. At this time, we have 7 crews with 3 people on each crew. Each crew is on call for one week (24/7) which means that theoretically they would only be on call every 7 weeks.



(Above) Crew B: Matt, Lise, Luz



(Above) Crew A: Karen

The staff wrote up job descriptions during our trip to Groveland for training last month. I drove and we called out the jobs off the top of our heads while Lise Lemonnier took notes (luckily she does not get car sick). We had radios so that all the cars in the caravan could chime in. It was a great idea but I drive too fast and so the radios were out of range. Therefore it was just the people in my car that were able to contribute...did I mention that this team never stops working?!

During this first phase we decided that we should have a drill for each crew during their week on call. This would allow folks to shake the dust off and get up to speed with the official job descriptions and duties.

We managed to drill with 4 of the crews this month and will continue until we've gotten to everyone.



(Above) Bob checking in "Mr. Turtle"

FIREFIGHTER REHAB DRILLS & SKILLS, cont'd

In addition to all of that, Mike Mandell completed Driver Training with 6 of our crew members: Bob Schreiner, Matt Kain, Randie Revilla, Ron Kessler, Wes Jordan, and Carol Hallett.



(Above) Driver Training

Mike has done an amazing job setting up a standard driving course that covers essential skills such as hill driving and turns. He is in the process of creating a classroom training including a written test. All this will ensure everyone is trained to the same high standards and will be able to perform to the standard of excellence we've come to expect from all of our CERT units.

Everyone performed fantastically and seemed to have fun doing it. It is amazing to see the cohesiveness of these crews even if they have never worked together before. It shows that everyone knows their jobs and is willing to jump in.

I am proud of each and every person!



That's a fail, huh?

BADGES? BAADGES??...

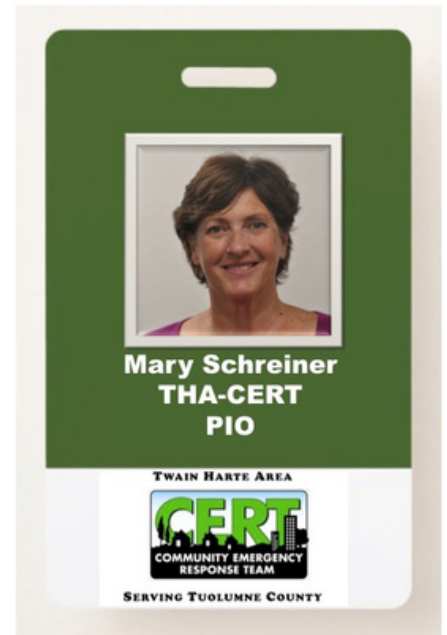
by John Buckingham, THA-CERT Safety Officer

Over the next few months, you will notice some changes in our volunteer badges as we work to take our already stellar group to the next level. CERT volunteers have always been issued badges to identify them as individuals who have completed the Basic Training Course.

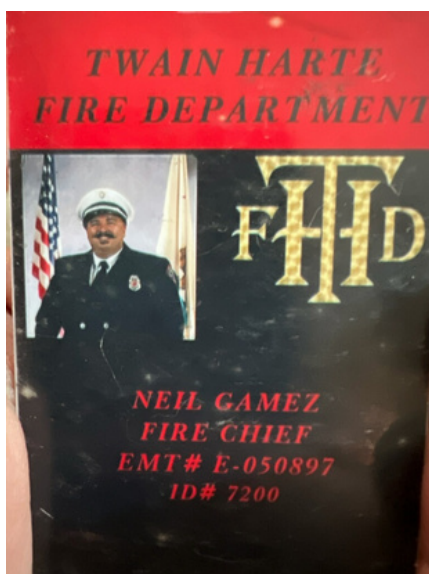
Now, we will have a new style of badge to further identify those who have gone through an additional level of screening, required for certain types of deployments, i.e. working with children, elderly, or on any premises that requires it.

This process will be carried out in phases, starting with the Executive Staff, followed by the Fire Fighter Rehab crews, and Traffic Control crews. The additional screening requires fingerprinting, which will be run through the CA State and Federal database for a very basic criminal records check.

Everyone so far has been very responsive and half of our above listed members have already been through the process! Please note, participation in this process is NOT REQUIRED to remain as a volunteer; however, deployment to certain areas or certain tasks may be limited, as many of the activities and areas we are deployed DO require this extra level of screening.



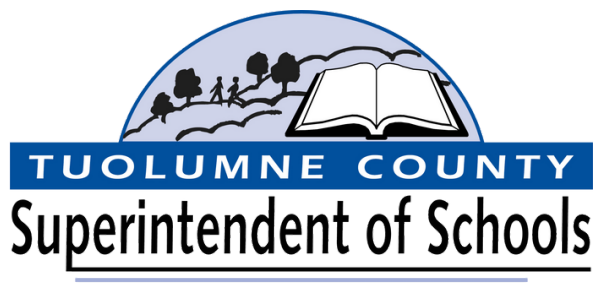
(Above) Sample ID Badge



(Above) Sample ID Badge

The opportunity to do this has been provided by grant monies from the Tuolumne County Health Department and the generosity of school Superintendent Kathy Parker, who is allowing us to do this through the school. A big thank you to both!

Be on the lookout for the new badges, and an email from John Buckingham that outlines the procedure.



GROVELAND AREA CERT FEBRUARY TRAINING

by Bob Asquith, GCERT Program Manager

Groveland Area CERT hosted a training on February 26th covering Unit 1 (Disaster Preparedness) and Unit 2 (Cert Organization, ICS) of the Basic Training. There were twenty-eight people in attendance, 12 of whom traveled up from THA-CERT. The remainder included Groveland Area CERT members, as well as representatives from GCSD Fire and Cal Fire.



(Above) February training in Groveland

We had three great guest trainers for the day.

Bob Asquith, Groveland Area CERT Program Manager, started the day by discussing Disaster Preparedness. He also talked about the organizational chart for Groveland Area CERT, which included several positions being newly filled by Groveland residents.

CERT Member, Pat Polen, who has more than 30 years teaching at College of Marin and UC Davis and working behind the scenes (literally) of the San Francisco Opera, talked with the group about Disaster Planning.

Another GCERT Member, Walt Ehmann, covered the history and structure of ICS. Walt has the unique distinction of having participated in the development of today's Incident Command Structure. He has a background of 25 years in Fire Management positions with the USFS including working as a Battalion Chief and Wildland Fire Arson Investigator and 18 years in Law Enforcement with USFS including working as a Patrol Captain in charge of Enforcement on the 1.4 million acres of the Stanislaus National Forest.

These trainings are great for new-comers and experienced members alike. There instructors were engaging and knowledgeable, capturing our attention throughout the morning. There are always new things to be learned and new relationships to be garnered. And this training was no exception.

RED CROSS CROSS-TRAINING

by Carol Hallett, THA-CERT Program Manager



As part of our preparedness for fire season, we were invited to participate in Red Cross Training to help us understand how we can all work closer in the event we are required to open an evacuation center. We have had many opportunities to work together in the past, this training provided a better understanding of the Red Cross rules and regulations.

We had a group of THA-CERT members join the virtual training class for Red Cross Shelter Training & Fundamentals taught by Debbie Calcote, Disaster Program Manager for American Red Cross in Tuolumne County. The class was roughly 3 hours a day for 3 days. The training was extremely well done, interactive, and paced to allow questions.

By the end, we all understood a bit more about each other and how we can better work in concert to help our communities.

HOW I SPENT MY SPRING VACATION

by Eric Marvel, THA-CERT Founding Member

I couldn't afford to travel to Miami Beach from Colorado this Spring so I accepted a very generous offer to head home to Twain Harte. When THA-CERT Program Manager Carol Hallett called me one freezing windy day in February to invite me to reprise my Disaster Medicine presentation, I was on board immediately.



(Above) March training with Eric Marvel

I haven't flown in a while and the whole mask-thing was a bit of a nuisance but I happily winged away to my original hometown of Sacramento and was met by my dearest friend (complete with her newly shortened locks). The winding drive along highway 49 provided many opportunities for nostalgic reflection of past decades. Carol indulged me with a stop at Mike's for pizza and beer (an all-time favorite) and we arrived at our beloved Twain Harte.

Fellow founding member Susan and I have been away from this wonderful community for three-years now and I was flooded with more nostalgia and emotion as we drove into our village. Such fond memories of our 16-years on Cedar Pines Ave and all of our friends and neighbors... 'Colorful Colorado' certainly has its charms, but we really miss Twain Harte. At the same time we are truly happy to live with our family in Colorado and the joy that is our 2 ½-year old Grandson, Hartford.

Saturday, March 26th was my day to engage in one of my favorite activities – listening to myself talk about CERT Disaster Medical Operations. The Word of Life Fellowship in Mi-Wuk provided a beautiful hall where we could spend the day of training (complete with technical support from Bob Kirk) and Jerry Day and Gary from Access Tuolumne captured the whole shebang on video for posterity. Lise Lemonnier (in true form) shuttled all of the necessary supplies and equipment for the day along with plenty of goodies and beverages.

So, for four hours and ten minutes the intrepid participants of the program listened, absorbed Power Point slides and practiced hands-on skills to help them refresh and learn the basic skills necessary for a CERT Disaster Medicine deployment. We discussed everything from controlling life-threatening bleeding to digging latrines after a major disaster – from opening the airway and treating shock to removing exam gloves covered with shaving cream without getting the Gillette Foamy all over our hands. We bandaged, we splinted and head-to-toe assessed with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

HOW I SPENT MY SPRING VACATION, *cont'd*

Speaking for myself, I had the most fun I've had in some time. And I believe our participants had a good day as well. I was so pleased that these wonderful folks participated so completely in the day and asked questions and shared their own considerable wisdom on the topic.

It's so rewarding (more than I can adequately articulate) to continue to be a small part of the amazing organization that is Twain Harte Area CERT! The people who formed, grew and maintain this valuable community resource are truly incredible. And, as anyone reading this knows, much of the credit for making THA-CERT what it is today goes to our beloved Program Manager. I'm so grateful for all she has done for this community and for inviting me to travel from the Centennial State back to our wonderful village and engage in one of my favorite activities – listening to myself talk about CERT Disaster Medicine.



Note from Carol Hallett, THA-CERT Program Manager

I would like to acknowledge the contributions from the team:

Dawn Cronin, Training Leader, for locating and securing our amazing venue.

Lise Lemonnier, Planning Section Chief, for organizing, transporting, and orchestrating the set-up of all the training materials and supplies, as well as securing all the food and beverages for our buffet. Lise took our snacks to next level! And topped it all off with fresh flowers!!

Bob Kirk for being our audio/visual coordinator for the day. Bob worked closely with Access Tuolumne and Eric to make sure the day ran smoothly.

I would also like to thank the Word of Life Church, especially Pastor Foley, for allowing us to use the Fellowship Hall, which was both amazing and perfect in every way.

I would like to extend a very special and heartfelt thanks to Eric Marvel, Founding Member THA-CERT, for providing this outstanding training. Eric brings with him a vast background in medicine as a retired RN and Paramedic. He also is a retired USAF Master Sergeant, Tuolumne County SAR, and past Interim Director of EMS at Columbia College. In addition to his extensive background, Eric is an engaging and dynamic speaker that kept us all engaged and entertained for the entire 4 hours. This experience has been a great reminder that even though we may move away, we always remain part of this CERT family.

NEIGHBORHOOD RADIO WATCH

by Rich Combs, THA-CERT Member



Fire Safety is on the top of everyone's mind. To help address this, in December Alan Thompson gave a ZOOM presentation, attended by many CERT members, which covered the massive communication failures that occurred during the Paradise Fire in 2018. The message was well received, but the common response was "What can WE DO to address the problem?" So in March Alan gave a follow-up presentation titled Radio-For the Rest of Us. He outlined a system of cheap, easy to use two-way radios, fielded in small local groups, to provide information flow in the event that the media that we rely on daily - cell phones, internet, and land lines, were to fail, as they did in Paradise, including 911 service.

These local groups of a few dozen residences known as a Neighborhood Radio Watch, would be linked to a broader level of longer-range radios, which ultimately are linked to the County Sheriff and Tuolumne Office of Emergency Services. With a two-way flow of information, the Sheriff can pass on status updates, even if the normal communication channels are disrupted.

This is much along the lines of the CERT mission, providing localized self-help assistance to the community in coordination with government agencies. In fact CERT is already using the simple FRS, Family Radio Service radios which could be used at the first level of the program. There is no test or fee to use these radios costing about \$20. More powerful radios, known as General Mobile Radio Service radios, could also be used for broader coverage, and require a one-time \$35 fee to operate which covers a user's extended family. TCARES, Tuolumne's local amateur radio group, has volunteered to provide novice users with training and practice in the use of the radios, and teach the etiquette of communicating using "directed nets" They will also provide the infrastructure for the second layer of communication, and interface with the County Sheriff and OES.

There are many details to be worked out, but we will follow the successful implementation of this plan in El Dorado County, see <https://www.facebook.com/groups/NeighborhoodRadioWatch>.

CERT and TCARES will be working to publicize the Neighborhood Radio Watch Program, establish contacts in local communities, and work with Tuolumne County officials. If you are interested in forming a local radio group, contact Rich Combs, richsfpd@gmail.com. For information about TCARES contact Ned at ned@sudduth.org or go to <https://tcares.net/>

Lots to do, but a great opportunity for CERT members to provide for our community!

WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?

by Lise Lemonnier, THA-CERT Planning Officer

The hours worked by THA-CERT volunteers in the month of March are as follows:

Administration = 214 hours
Training = 233 hours
Deployments = 31.5 hours
Total March = 478.5 hours



JOIN THE THCS D BOARD MEETING

Join the Twain Harte Community Services District (THCS D) board meeting. This is our community and this is a way to learn what is happening in it and around it!

When: Wednesday, April 13, 2022
Starts promptly at 0900

Go to <https://www.twainhartecsd.com/board-meetings> for more information.

WHAT'S NEXT?

April

Events

TUOLUMNE COUNTY ART WEEK
[HTTPS://WWW.VISITTUOLUMNE.COM/EVENTDETAIL/1423/TUOLUMNE-COUNTY-ART-WEEK](https://www.visittuolumne.com/eventdetail/1423/tuolumne-county-art-week)
SUN, APR 10 – SAT, APR 16

“Who Let the Dog’s Out?” Parade – Twain Harte
<https://www.twainhartecc.com/events/who-let-the-dogs-out-parade>
Sun, Apr 24 11:00 – 3:00

National Parks Fee-Free Day
Sat, Apr 16 All Day
Yosemite National Park

Railtown
1897’s Wildflower Train Rides
Sat & Sun, Apr 9 – Apr 17
Jamestown

Holidays

Easter Sunday
Sun, Apr 17

Victorian Easter Celebration
Sun, Apr 17 11:00 – 3:00
Columbia State Historic Park

Training

CERT Training – Groveland
Disaster Physiology
Fire Suppression
Sat, Apr 30 9:00

THCS D Brd Mtg
<https://www.twainhartecsd.com/board-meetings>
Wed, Apr 13 9:00