



**SERVING TUOLUMNE COUNTY**

# MONTHLY UPDATE

March 2021

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## **NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER**

**by Carol Hallett**

March blew by this year with all the notable days that depict the month. There was March madness, the Ides of March (I remember from Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar"), St. Patrick's Day...then there were days I never knew about before: National Women's History Day, National Pig Day, Caregiver Appreciation Day, Employee Appreciation Day, Dentist's Day, Namesake Day, Be Nasty Day and Barbie Day to name a few. I found lots more but the other two that stood out as good days are: National Ravioli Day and National Hug a G.I. Day. Both seemed like good things to celebrate!

March is traditionally known as a windy month. So why is March so windy? The answer lies in the fact that March is a month of seasonal transition. We are moving out of the cold days of winter and into the longer and warmer days of spring. The cold air is still situated to our north, while warm air is trying to approach from the south. So typically March is a good kite-flying month as it is a windy month. This year it was the gusty month; no kite could withstand those winds.

## **NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER, cont'd**

CERT was busy again this month with the vaccine clinic and Columbia College Academy Burn Day Training being two very volunteer intensive activities. Both were tremendously successful. Our team step up to the challenge and made it look like a walk in the park. I could not be more proud of the team and all our volunteers.

As we end this month we look forward to a beautiful spring, enjoy every single day!



Daffodils help usher in Spring in Tuolumne County

## **CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!**

by **Carol Hallett, Program Manager, THA-CERT**

Twain Harte Community Services District (THCSD) is THA-CERT sponsoring agency. We have enjoyed our relationship for the past 7 years. Now we are engaging in an additional feature that will be great for THA-CERT and our community. Thanks to THCSD, THA-CERT will have a web presence. We currently have a landing page on the THCSD website and we will be actively updating it with important information about CERT and our involvement with the community. Thanks to Tom Trott, General Manager, who is always looking forward to what is best for Twain Harte and Kim Silva, Administrative Coordinator who will work with us to make this happen.

The website address is: <https://www.twainhartecsd.com/twain-harte-area-cert>



# TWAIN HARTE SCHOOL CROSSING SAFETY

by Gabe Wingo, Principal, Twain Harte School

Approximately 2 years ago, a parent contacted me concerned about the safety of our students who walk home from school each day. Upon looking into the situation it was evident that not only was there insufficient signage and striping on the road, but we also needed someone to help stop traffic so our students could cross safely.

The first step was to work with the county to re-stripe the road, crosswalk, and signage to make drivers aware they were entering a school zone.

The next step was to provide crossing guards to guide our students safely across the road. It was recommended that I contact the local CERT team to see if they would be available to assist. That was the beginning of a very productive partnership between Twain Harte School and the Community Emergency Response Team.

Every day, rain or shine, the volunteers are there to make sure students get home safely. In turn, our kids enjoy being greeted by a smile as they head home for the afternoon.

The willingness of these volunteers to provide this crucial service to keep our students safe, highlights the importance of community/school partnerships to create a safer and more effective learning environment.

We continue to seek out opportunities to increase the awareness of drivers in our community to improve the safety of everyone in Twain Harte. In the meantime, we are so grateful for the assistance of the CERT volunteers and all they do for our community.



THA-CERT member Bob Schreiner prepares to assist students across a snowy crosswalk

# ***LIBRARIES OPEN!***

**by John Buckingham, Secretary, High Country Friends of the Library**

The Tuolumne County Public Library is excited to announce that we are now reopening for in-person service at both the Tuolumne Branch Library and the Twain Harte Branch Library.

Due to the COVID-19 local health emergency, the library buildings will open but with some restrictions. Patrons will now be allowed to enter the library to use the computers and browse and check out their own materials.

In line with the guidance from the California State Library, as well as the CDC, we are implementing some safety guidelines and restrictions to help keep you, your family, and our community healthy and safe:

- The number of patrons in the building will be limited to a maximum of five (5) at any one time
- Each patron's visit will be limited to thirty (30) minutes
- Masks/face coverings that cover the mouth and nose must be worn at all times while in the library
- Social Distancing of 6 feet will be enforced through out the library
- Hand sanitizer will be stationed at the main entrance and throughout the library for patron use

All returned materials will be quarantined for 72 hours prior to being checked back in and shelved, to meet the State Library's guidelines for corona virus disinfection.



Twain Harte Library

## **LIBRARIES OPEN!, cont'd**

The hours for in-person library use are:

Twain Harte Branch—Starting Tuesday, March 30th, the library will be open Tuesdays from 10:00am-2:00 pm and Thursdays 2pm-6pm.

Tuolumne Branch—Starting Wednesday, March 31st, the library will be open Wednesdays from 2:00 pm-6:00 pm and Fridays from 10:00am-2pm.

The hours will change as the training of the new Librarians progresses.

Come in and get books, DVDs, use the computers and copy machine, and introduce yourselves to the new staff!

"Indoors or out, no one relaxes in March ...."

- Ogden Nash.

## **UAS NEWS**

by **Michelle Wagner, UAS Unit Leader**

The quote (above) goes on, but that pretty much sums up this last month for our unit!

We started our month off with a collaborative training that included students and instructors from the Columbia College Geographical Information Systems (GIS) program, as well as a couple folks from Condor Earth. We are working collaboratively to train and obtain equipment necessary to perform mapping missions during emergency deployments. The hope is to provide near real-time maps of disaster, fire, or search and rescue areas for use by OES, Incident Command, and the people working on the ground.

UAS equipment is ready and waiting at the Columbia College Burn In training



## UAS NEWS, cont'd

We are working to obtain the necessary equipment and are in discussion with both Columbia College and Condor Earth, who have offered to make software and computing power available to us. It's all very exciting and we are looking forward to seeing how far we can take this collaborative effort!

From there, as with every other unit, our members continue to help out at the Public Health Vaccine Clinics.

We also have had a number of deployments this month. We were called to assist in a search for some missing horses. Not our regular type of deployment, and not one we would normally do; but we decided to use it as a training exercise, and help the community at the same time. Doug Simmons took the controls on that one and I acted as Visual Observer. We didn't spot them, but were able to clear the inaccessible areas and they were eventually found.

We also flew at the Columbia College Burn Days on the 24th and 25th. Thank you to Ben, Nancy, Tony, Doug, and Krystalyn. Things were a little slower this year, which worked out well for Ben. He was able to put the controls down and go get a little more experience taking vitals with the Firefighter Rehab folks.

And lastly, during a training this past Saturday, Twain Harte Fire, CDF, and Sugar Pine Fire all responded to an escaped burn pile off Tuolumne Road. We asked if they wanted us to provide an aerial perspective. Of course, they did! So, Doug, Krystalyn, Anthony and I all deployed and provided the folks on the ground valuable information about the direction of the fire, hottest areas, and fuel load. Afterwards, the CDF Captain asked us to fly the fire line to check for hot spots. The following day, Tony and Carol deployed again at the request of Chief Gamez to again check for hot spots and help direct firefighter on the ground to the areas that needed more work.



Program Manager Carol Hallett meets with the UAS Unit

## UAS NEWS, cont'd

And in case that isn't enough, we continue to build and develop our unit. Krystalyn has stepped into the role of Assistant Unit Lead and has graciously offered to help with scheduling and other administrative duties. While I have been developing our training manual, Krystalyn is working on "onboarding" checklists in preparation for new members. We are also looking at some new computer programs and apps to better utilize data gathered by our aircraft and to help us better track our projects and time.

All in all, a very productive and successful month for our Unit! Thank you, Crew!!



THA-CERT UAS Member Anthony White-Ramos prepares vehicle for flight (left) and confers with CalFire (right) during a recent fire deployment

CERT UAS Unit Member Doug Simmons checks out the camera on the UAV



# DEPLOYMENTS

by Mary Schreiner, Traffic/Crowd Control Unit Leader

As Michelle said in her article, above, all CERT units have stepped up to answer the call for help in providing traffic control for the POD clinics, hosted by Tuolumne County Public Health. Twice a week, with few exceptions, our members have offered their time to help serve our community, while still participating in activities with their own units.

Our members still serve as Crossing Guards every day school is in session. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, to help accommodate our POD vaccine clinic schedule, Twain Harte School now provide one person to assist with crossing guard duties to work along side a CERT volunteer.

One thing I've really come to love about Tuolumne county is the willingness of people to help each other. By the school providing a person for crossing guard, there is one more person available to help at the vaccine clinic. That's community spirit!

"Good to see CERT at the vaccine clinic today.  
Great job with the logistics. Smooth operation."  
- Jacob Foiada

As of this week, Public Health report that over 28 thousand doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered within Tuolumne county. That is a huge accomplishment, especially for a county of this size. Congratulations to Public Health for a job well done! While we volunteer at the clinics in non-medical positions, Public Health are responsible for every aspect of every clinic. We take our direction from them and we appreciate everyone being so easy to work with. They listen to our ideas and consult us on how the traffic flow can be improved. Rather than just being relegated to the roles of worker bees, we're treated as part of the team and they never fail to express their appreciation.



CERT volunteers at a recent POD clinic at Sierra Bible Church



## ***DEPLOYMENTS, cont'd***

If you have not received your COVID-19 vaccination yet, you may schedule an appointment, or put your name on the list for when you are eligible to receive the vaccine, at:

<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/1317/COVID-Vaccine>

In March, we also had the opportunity to support the Columbia College Fire Academy during their "Burn Days" training in Twain Harte. Our Firefighter Rehab Unit was deployed, along with the UAS Unit.

It is always great to work at this event...seeing the young women and men of the academy getting hands-on training at a "live" fire event is so inspiring, and it's fun to chat with the students while they are "rehab-ing" in our unit.

This year, the in-person hands-on training was more important than ever. Like students everywhere, the Fire Academy students have had to do most of their coursework remotely, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The instructors were just as pleased as the students at being able to meet in person. There is just no good way to evaluate skills remotely. As with many jobs, much of the training for firefighters needs to happen live. Remote learning cannot adequately prepare students for being in a hot, smoky building, breathing through SCBA equipment, dragging a body from a burning building, or breaking down a door.

This training allowed the instructors to give instructions on essential basic skills first hand and evaluate the students' progress.

And, finally, I'd like to personally thank Lise Lemonnier for taking on the unenviable task of scheduling all of the CERT volunteers for these last two deployments. No one knows where to go or what to do without Lise. Scheduling up to 32 people twice a week for months isn't a task for just anyone. Thank you to Lise for not only doing a great job, but doing so with great humor and patience.



## DEPLOYMENTS, *cont'd*

CERT members Lillian McLeod and Mary Schreiner check on students from Columbia College Fire Academy



Student Firefighters check in at the Rehab Unit with CERT Firefighter Rehab Unit Leader Mike Mandell

Cert member Ben Wagner checks vitals in the Firefighter rehab vehicle



# **HPP GRANT AWARDED TO CERT**

**by Carol Hallett, Program Manager, THA-CERT**

Tuolumne County Hospital/Healthcare Preparedness Program (HPP) opened a grant application submission for the July 01 2020 to June 30 2021 grant year. The HPP grant allows for some funds to be budgeted for coalition partner projects. Projects must satisfy one or more of the Healthcare Preparedness and Response Capabilities as outlined in the Project Request Form and must be related to a top hazard as identified by the Hazard Vulnerability Matrix (HVA).

THA-CERT (Twain Harte Area Community Emergency Response Team) met all the requirements, which included:

- Having a physical location in Tuolumne County
- Serving Tuolumne County
- Attending the HPP monthly meetings
- Projects must be awarded to an organization
- Organization must purchase items and get reimbursed
- Organization must have signed the Tuolumne-Calaveras Health Care and Safety Coalition Governance Document and Participation Agreement
- Organization must not be fire or law enforcement agency

The project that we focused on was the Pandemic and supporting our community at the Vaccine Clinics. The items that we will be able to purchase are a CERT canvas canopy with walls and door and more high visibility vests. We were awarded a little over \$1600.00 to make the purchases and we are in the process of completing those orders now.

These items are so important to ensure our CERT volunteers are safe when we are in the public doing traffic control. Thanks to the Tuolumne County Public Health Department for allowing us to be part of the solution to this pandemic.



CERT canopy with walls and door

# A NEW LOOK FOR OUR TOW VEHICLE

by Mary Schreiner, PIO, THA-CERT

If you have been at a recent POD clinic, you may have noticed something new about our beloved CERT truck/tow vehicle. Thanks to the efforts of Carol Hallett, Mike Mandell, and Lise Lemonnier, we were able to buy a second-hand shell for the back of the truck, get it cleaned up, and get it installed on the back of the truck. Now our canopies, tables, chairs, and everything else we need can stay safe and dry if we are not using our trailer at that particular deployment. I think it looks great...our little truck is all grown up!



## TIME'S UP

by Lise Lemonnier

The number of hours for THA-CERT for the month of March are as follows:

Administrative: 160  
Training: 23  
Deployments: 1302.5  
Total hours = 1485.5

# VOLUNTEERING



# AN UNUSUAL SAR MISSION

by Mary Schreiner, PIO, THA-CERT

In early March, THA-CERT's UAS Unit were asked to perform an unusual SAR mission. Two miniature horses went missing from their pasture in Tuolumne.

While most SAR requests are of the human variety, our UAS Unit were happy to lend a hand to help locate the wandering equines.

Their relieved owner posted this message on Facebook:

"Thank you for your prayers, your help... we are forever grateful. These two are home, safely in the barn eating their nummies after 6 whole days missing. And worrying everyone in Tuolumne County (and beyond!) They were happily grazing at a neighbors house when they spotted them and called. I literally cried. Funny thing, they're just grazing and we had drones flying, airplanes looking, people hiking, Twain Harte Emergency Response Team was helping today... all the while they were just having fun. The stress can ease, but we want our community to know how grateful we are for all of the help! We are emotionally and physically exhausted but ready to have a good nights sleep for the first time in nearly a week. I did get a ton of exercise in this week thanks to these two, found some awesome trails and BLM land entrances, and met some INCREDIBLE neighbors. Feeling very blessed." - Casie Schornick

Two missing horses, home safe and sound!

