



SERVING TUOLUMNE COUNTY

MONTHLY UPDATE

September 2020

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NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

by Carol Hallett, Program Manager

September is always a great time in Tuolumne County: we have the official end of the summer, school starts, and the beginning of Autumn. This year was no exception, but we had something we do not usually see...extreme temperatures for many days in a row with power outage (PSPS). CERT was ready when called upon to help our community. I am so proud of our team for stepping up, even during the holiday weekend!

Our teams are growing, which is exciting. We have new members and new leaders. I am happy to be working with all. I am still looking for someone to step up to be our Twain Harte Team Leader—contact me if you have any interest at all. You know I will help you through the transition to ensure your success!

Fall always promises change in the autumn leaves, the crisp air, and the layers of clothing needed. It is also a time for our community to prepare for the winter... rake up those leaves, trim up those trees and make sure you have provisions for your family for the winter months.

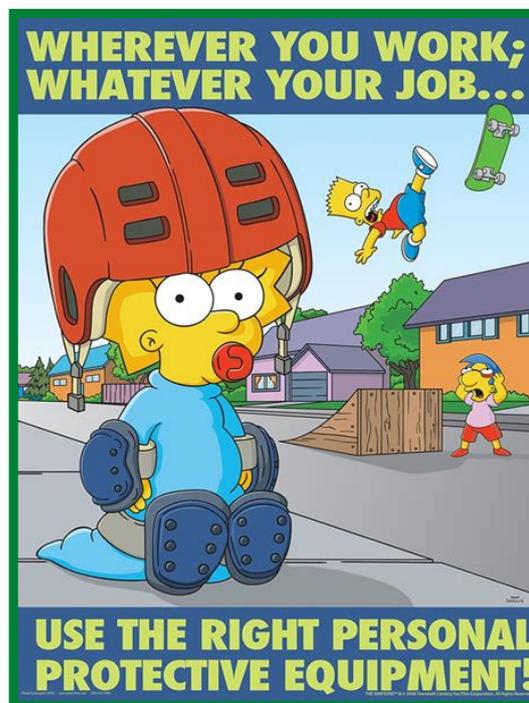


SAFETY FIRST!

by Nancy Stevens, Safety Officer

SAFETY FIRST is what we practice in CERT. We have had some gatherings, deployments and small trainings so we needed to make sure that we have COVID-19 safety protocol at each of those events. The Safety Unit is responsible to ensure that each person gets a health check prior to engaging. This means that someone from the Safety Unit is invited to each gathering...it is a great way that our team is working together for safety.

We have wonderful trainings on many subjects throughout the year, and once we get the "all clear" to begin them again, we'll send the word out. In the meantime, always keep safety in mind wherever you are and whatever you do! The safety of ALL of us depends on EACH of us!



DEPLOYMENTS

by Mary Schreiner, Traffic/Crowd Control Unit Leader

Twain Harte School Crossing Guards

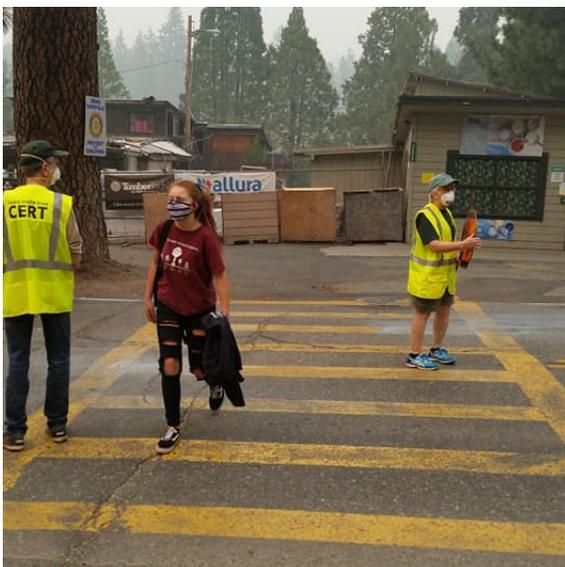
After being shut down in March for in-person classes, along with a delay in opening, all due to COVID-19 precautions, school was finally in session for Twain Harte School beginning Monday, September 14th. School is operating on a "hybrid" schedule for the time being, with half of the student population attending on Mondays and Tuesdays and the rest attending on Thursdays and Fridays. There are no classes being held on campus on Wednesdays until further notice.

(continued on page 03)

DEPLOYMENTS, cont'd

(continued from page 02)

The children were excited to see their friends and teachers again and our CERT Traffic Control Unit members were eager to dust off our stop signs and whistles and get into action as crossing guards again this year. Aside from the children smiling and saying thank you, we look forward to receiving thanks, hand waves, and blown kisses from members of our community who are driving by. So, the next time you are out and about in Twain Harte on a weekday afternoon, keep an eye out for our crossing guards and feel free to offer them a friendly wave...and, as always, drive safely!



DEPLOYMENTS, cont'd

Twain Harte Rotary ATCAA Food Bank Distribution

Summer's bounty was displayed in the food distributed in September by the Twain Harte Rotary for the ATCAA Food Bank. Meat, butter, bread, rice, carrots, cantaloupe, cauliflower, and plums were just a few of the items given out to 183 guests, and CERT members were on hand to help direct traffic and help with distributing the food. It was the largest number of people at this event, to date, and highlights the growing need in our county. There were several people coming for the first time, most of whom expressed embarrassment at needing assistance. If you, or someone you know, is in a similar situation, please know that we are your friends and neighbors just trying to lend a hand up in these trying times.



Cooling Centers in Sonora and Jamestown

Labor Day weekend brought more extreme heat to the Mother Lode, along with another unwelcome guest, smoke from fires burning all over the west, and our CERT members again deployed to staff a cooling center at the Sonora Senior Center. When PSPS blackouts forced that center to close, another center was opened in the Community Center in Jamestown. It was very rewarding to be there to help people that needed a place to cool off and see friendly faces.

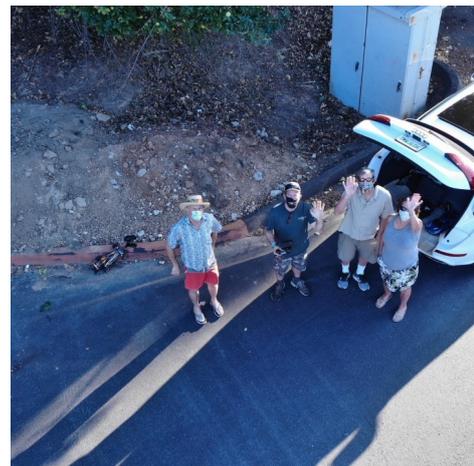


UAS NEWS

by Michelle Wagner, UAS Unit Leader

The UAS Unit continue to evolve with crews creating and participating in their own crew trainings. Already this month, they have run a number of mock SAR events and updated the software on the aircraft. Thank you to Doug Simmons, Tony White-Ramos, and Dennis Wiebe for setting those up!

Next week, we will be sorting out and marking the sUAS inventory. We have been ligently working on administrative processes, such as creating Policy and Procedures and an Operations Manual, which will help govern how we proceed. After the bugs have been worked out, we hope to organize a more formalized training and certification program for sUAS Team Members and Crew Members. We are making amazing strides toward further legitimizing this team as a solid resource in the county and already, it is something to be proud of!



FIREFIGHTER REHAB VEHICLE

by Mike Mandell, Operations Chief

It has taken some time and effort to get the Fire Fighter Rehab vehicle on the road but we are there with, the exception of figuring out what is drawing power off the batteries when parked. We are ready to move all of our equipment into the vehicle. During this past month we put the logos on the vehicle, special thanks to T&C signs for a job well done!

This vehicle will be a self-contained unit that will enable the Firefighter Rehab Unit to deploy quickly in the event of a structure fire or a large event fire. The vehicle is capable of storing all the necessary equipment as well as transporting the unit members to the site of the incident. The idea is to have a crew on call and deploy by dispatch at the same time as fire is alerted so that CERT can take care of our Firefighters.



THE AIR WE BREATHE

The smoke from dozens of fires in California caused unhealthy to hazardous air quality in the Mother Lode and beyond. Sadly, fire season is lasting longer every year. What can you do when fires rage and the air isn't fit to breathe? First, limit your exposure to smoke as much as possible. Stay indoors, with windows and doors shut. Keep indoor air as clean as possible by using a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter. Do not smoke, use wood burning stoves or fireplaces, avoid vacuuming, and avoid burning candles or incense. Limit your time outside. If you do need to be outside for extended periods, be sure to use an N95 respirator, not a homemade mask or surgical mask. And stay hydrated! Drink plenty of water.

And remember that pets, especially small animals, are vulnerable to respiratory problems from hazardous air as well. Keep pets indoors, if possible.

GROVELAND NEWS

by Bob Asquith, Groveland CERT Team Leader

We have 3 key members of the community who have gone through CERT Basic Training in January and are working hard to build up CERT in the Groveland area. We have been asked to deploy a couple of times to help Groveland community. CERT volunteers in Groveland were called upon to staff a cooling center over the Labor Day weekend. Over the course of the 5 days that the center was in operation, we discovered 3 additional community members who have had CERT Basic Training in other areas. They are now part of our growing Groveland CERT.

We plan to have a CERT Basic training in Groveland in November and we will be inviting community members along with those that have previously taken the training to attend.

CERT in Groveland is an important aspect of preparedness for our county... everyone in our county

FUTURE DEPLOYMENTS

Drive-thru Flu Clinic
requested by Public Health

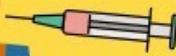
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We received a request to help with this year's drive-thru Flu Clinic. We have helped with the Flu Clinic for several years now but, because of COVID, things will be different this year. The drive-thru clinic will be on two different days and different locations, please see attached flyer for details.

Groveland CERT will provide assistance with screenings and traffic control for the clinic to be held at the library in Groveland. This clinic will be held on Wednesday, October 7th, from noon to 4 pm.

THA-CERT have been asked to provide assistance with screenings and traffic control for the clinic to be held at the Sonora Library/Senior Center. The clinic will be held on Tuesday, October 13th, from 9 am to 3 pm. This should be a very busy deployment as it is strongly recommended that everyone who is able to get a flu vaccine this year.



2020 FLU VACCINE DRIVE-THRU  **NO COST FLU SHOT** 

Shots available for ages 2 & up, while supplies last

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7
Noon - 4:00 pm
 **GROVELAND LIBRARY/YOUTH CENTER**
18990 Main St, Groveland, CA 95321

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13
9:00 am - 3:00 pm
 **SONORA LIBRARY/SENIOR CENTER**
480 Greenley Rd, Sonora, CA 95370



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

- PLEASE WEAR A PROPER FACE COVERING 
- WEAR LOOSE FITTING CLOTHING SUCH AS A SHORT SLEEVE SHIRT 
- SIT BY THE WINDOW OF THE CAR IF YOU ARE GETTING A VACCINATION
- PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN MUST ACCOMPANY CHILDREN
- HAVE YOUR REGISTRATION FORM FILLED OUT WHEN YOU ARRIVE 
- PLEASE STAY HOME IF SYMPTOMATIC

For more information call: (209) 533-7401
www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/publichealth



FUTURE DEPLOYMENTS, cont'd

Twain Harte Outdoor Christmas Market

requested by Brothers Productions

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

THA-CERT have been asked to provide traffic and crowd control for an Outdoor Christmas Market to be held in Twain Harte the weekend of October 17th and 18th. This socially distanced event will run from 10 am to 5 pm each day and will feature a variety of items from artisans, as well as food offered by local restaurants. There will also be some specialty foods such as Kettle Corn, a selection of Olive products, and Candy. There will be a variety of items for sale that would make perfect Christmas gifts.

THA-CERT will be providing assistance with pedestrian crossing to and from the event. The admission is FREE. There will be hand sanitation stations at each end of the market and masks are required to enter the market. All vendors will be wearing masks and will have sanitizers at their booths.

Columbia College Burn Day Training

requested by Columbia College

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

This has historically been a very successful training day for both the Columbia College Academy students and our CERT Units. Both the Fire Fighter Rehab and UAS units will be deployed again this year. The event is on October 29 and 30th from 9 am to 5 pm.

Fire Fighter Rehab will be using our new vehicle for the first time at this event. It will be a fantastic way to test our abilities with the new rig. We always have at least 4 CERT volunteers to check in/out, monitor vitals and hydration. We will also be refilling the SBCA air tanks (which takes at least 3 volunteers) so that the students can stay focused on the great training that they receive during this event. UAS unit will be there as well. Each UAS crew consists of a min of 3 people. It is an opportunity for us to practice with the FLIR camera, video and possibly practice dropping supplies at a drop site.

Our units will be learning how to better integrate with Fire Crews on larger incidents.



WHAT'S NEXT?

While it may seem that everything we do is reactive, there's always a lot going on behind the scenes. We are constantly training and preparing for future deployments. Here are a couple of things on the horizon for CERT:

CERT Basic Training has been scheduled in Groveland on November 20th, 21st, and 22nd, 2020, and in Twain Harte on January 15th, 16th, and 17th, 2021.

If you have taken the training in the past, you may want to help out with these classes because the material has changed a bit. Carol Hallett will be working with the instructors to share the new curriculum and get us ready for the new academy.

Space in both the Groveland and Twain Harte training sessions will be limited, due to COVID-19 standard precautions. If you are interested in attending either CERT Basic Training session, please contact us at twainhartecert@gmail.com.



**You are the help until help arrives;
Training makes it easier!**

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

by Neil Gamez, Fire Chief, Twain Harte Fire Department

As many of you know, there have been some changes within the Twain Harte Fire Department and Twain Harte CERT, all of which are positive. As stated in last month's newsletter, I have been promoted from the Training Captain position to the Fire Chief of Twain Harte Fire. This move has been challenging and exciting, all at the same time. I have been exposed to a whole different side of this job that I thought I knew before. I never imagined how much my predecessor Chief McNeal did, until I stepped into his position. I found myself calling him a few times since taking over, apologizing for everything I put him through.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) have been another important part of the Twain Harte Fire Department's emergency preparedness planning. The CERT program trains and equips resident volunteers to prepare for and respond to large scale emergencies. The Twain Harte Area CERT program has over 57 members/volunteers who have completed the initial 20 hours of CERT training and regularly attend monthly drills. The CERT members stand ready to assist their families and neighbors in the event of a large-scale emergency.

The one thing I have learned early in my new position is how much the Twain Harte area CERT program truly cares about this community. Again I thought I knew, but I honestly had no idea till I read the new newsletter. The passion and devotion from this group make me very proud as a new Fire Chief, knowing that you are all just one phone call away at any time, day or night in our time of need. I would also like to thank Carol Hallett for the constant drive to excel the program to a higher level of excellence; I am a firm believer that none of this would be possible without her and her passion.

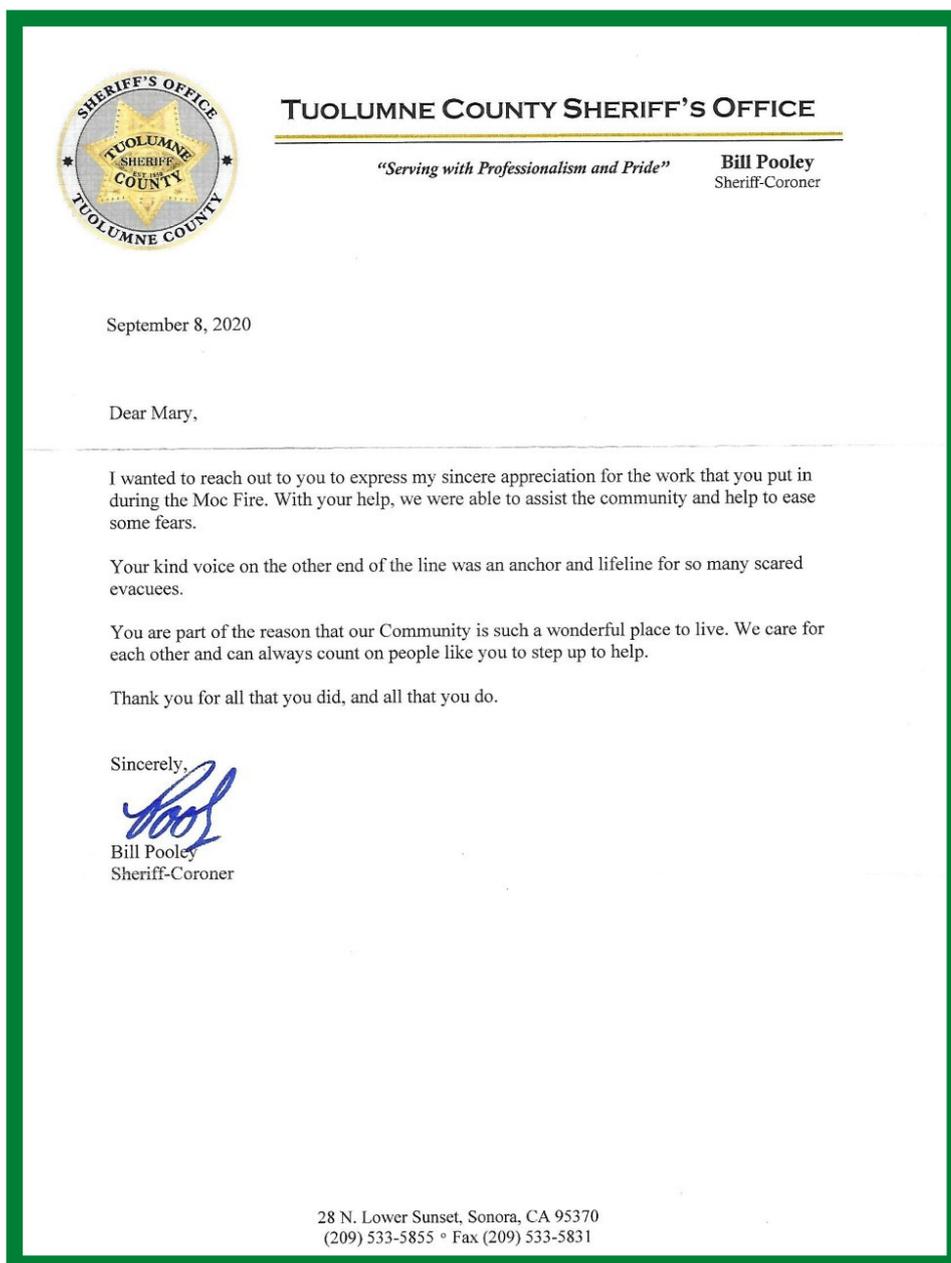
The Twain Harte Fire Department and Twain Harte Area CERT are the tips of the spear, and the community not only expects but deserves our best. Our forces must stay focused on the service we provide, while also taking care of each other. Family is a simple word with amplified meaning in times of seeming desperation. I pray for everyone's safety in this era of COVID and ask each one of you to take care of yourself, take care of your loved ones and each other, remember if you and your family are not healthy, then we are not healthy. Take care of your family. We will get through this pandemic together.

Remember, we do our job, stay true to our beliefs, and, most of all, do what we can, when we can, to do the right thing

Sincerely Chief Neil Gamez

RECEIVING THANKS

We who are CERT members volunteer our time because we care about our neighbors and our community. We do this from the sheer pleasure of knowing that we're helping, but that doesn't mean we don't truly appreciate when people take the time to thank us. All of the CERT members who assisted by answering the help line for the Moc Fire received a nice letter of thanks from Sheriff Bill Pooley. Of course, we'd do it all with no recognition, but it's nice to be noticed. Thanks, Sheriff Pooley, you made our day!



Speaking of giving thanks, this newsletter would not be possible without the contributions of Program Manager Carol Hallett, Groveland Team Leader Bob Asquith, Operations Chief Mike Mandell, Safety Officer (and proofreader) Nancy Stevens, UAS Unit Leader Michelle Wagner, and Twain Harte Fire Chief Neil Gamez. Thank you all for making my job so much easier.

Mary Schreiner, Editor