



SERVING TUOLUMNE COUNTY

MONTHLY UPDATE

November 2020

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In This Newsletter

Notes From The Program Manager
page 01

Thanksgiving
Page 02

Giving Thanks
pages 03 & 04

Staying Safe
page 05

Groveland CERT News
page 06

Park Expansion
page 07

Pinning Ceremony for Chief Gamez
pages 07 & 08

sUAS News
page 09

Let It Burn!
page 10

Deployments
pages 11 & 12

Lighting Up Twain Harte
pages 12 & 13

NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

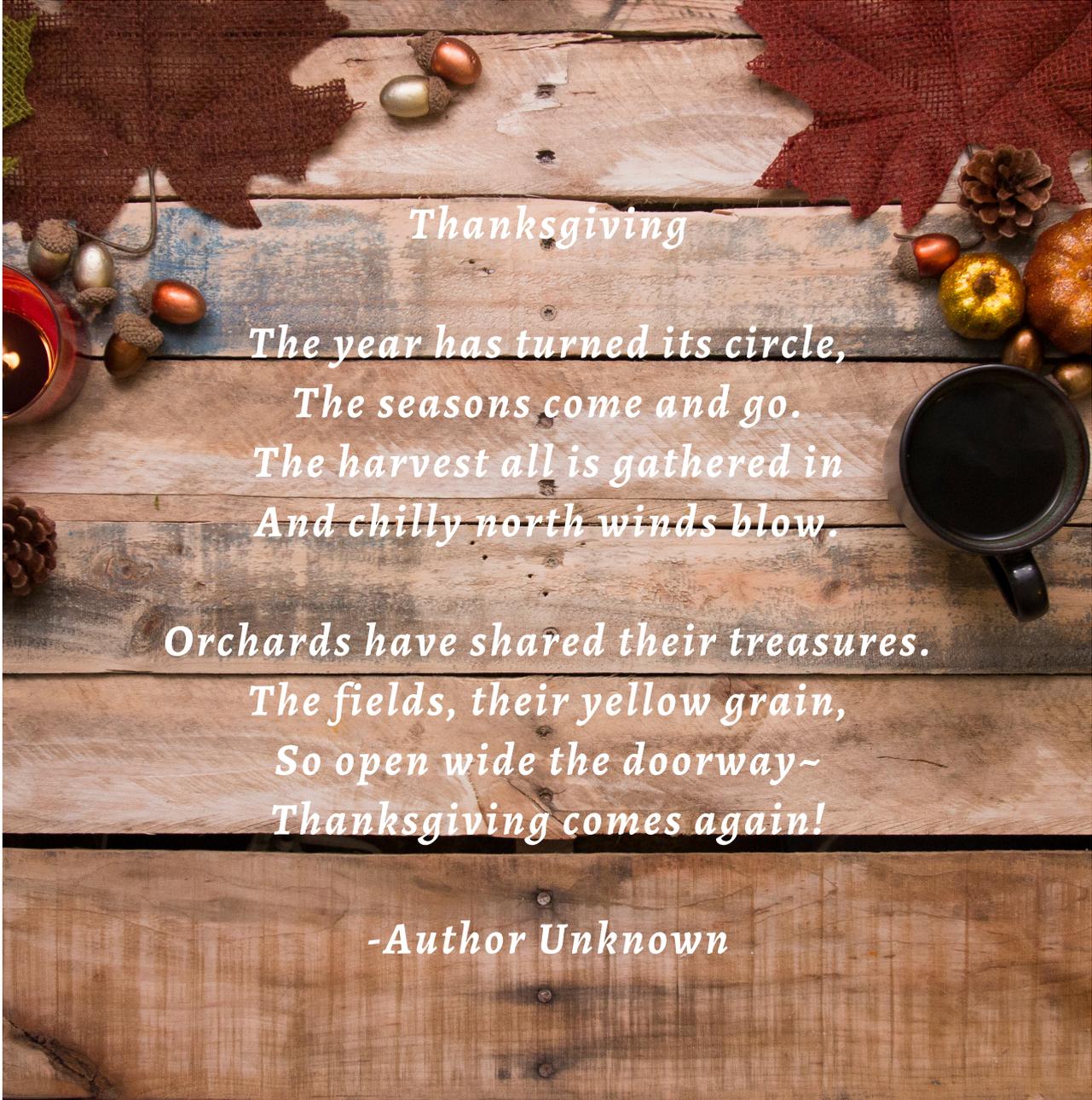
by Carol Hallett

November is that transitional month that comes between fall and winter. By then, most leaves have fallen off trees, and football becomes the main sport of the month.

Those who were born in November probably know their birthstone is the topaz and their flower is the chrysanthemum.

November is best known for Thanksgiving and Veteran's Day, but it's packed with an abundance of special days of awareness and observances to celebrate, such as the Marine Corps birthday on November 10th. The Safety Observances for 2020 are: November 1-8 Drowsy Driving Prevention Week November 16-Dec 31 Tie One on for Safety

For CERT it is a time to start preparing for the winter months, replace your batteries in your smoke detectors, make sure you have your pantry items stocked, drain outdoor pipes, and basic winterizing of your home. Smart planning ahead allows for an enjoyable winter. Happy November to you all!



Thanksgiving

*The year has turned its circle,
The seasons come and go.
The harvest all is gathered in
And chilly north winds blow.*

*Orchards have shared their treasures.
The fields, their yellow grain,
So open wide the doorway~
Thanksgiving comes again!*

-Author Unknown



GIVING THANKS

by Carol Hallett

As we approach Thanksgiving, our thoughts turn to the blessings in our lives. We at CERT are fortunate to have many people who are willing to drop everything and help out.

For instance, most people probably don't think twice about our lovely green CERT "pop up" canopies that we use for shade and shelter during deployments. Well, they are stored in nice large (not to mention, heavy) canvas bags. As you can imagine, these bags see a lot of use and had torn at the bottom. How to mend something so heavy and awkward? Lise Lemonnier to the rescue! She has given new life to the storage bags and made separate bags to hold the panels for the walls and doors. This has saved THA-CERT the cost of either sending them out for repair or replacing them.

"Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well." -Voltaire

CERT member Allan Hancock and his wife, Carol, allow the Traffic Control Unit to store the tools they need for crossing guard duty in their store, The Harte of the Kitchen, in Twain Harte. This saves everyone a lot of time and energy coordinating things so the people doing crossing duty have the stop signs and high-visibility vests/coats they need to keep themselves and the children safe.

And, speaking of The Harte of the Kitchen, Carleen Smith and her husband, CERT member Lee, donate the fabric, materials, time, and energy to make masks that are available for purchase at the shop and they donate all of the money to CERT, which has totaled thousands of dollars, to date.



Lise Lemonnier, repairer of canvas bags

GIVING THANKS, cont'd

There are so many other people for whom we are thankful:

The Traffic Control Unit for being at the crosswalk every single day to ensure that our children get across that busy street safely, including the "non-official" members who have volunteered to step in on short notice if someone has to be out unexpectedly.

Mike Mandell, who is always there for everything that needs to be done such as ensuring the Firefighter Rehab vehicle gets on the road, charging batteries, calling members to help staff events, making sure we have goodies to give to the Columbia College Academy Students...I can go on and on...I text and he is there!

Mary Schreiner, a new member who has stepped up to be more than just an active member of CERT; she is our PIO, Facebook Admin, our Traffic Control Unit Leader, and our newsletter editor...she is one busy lady and I never have to think twice about if something is going to be done if I know Mary is on the job.

Michelle Wagner, a really new member (CERT#99) who has just finished the online training and has been working as a CERT member even before she took the course. She is our sUAS Unit Leader and has taken on the huge task of writing our Policy & Procedures, Ops Manual and Training Manual for the team. She has taken this Unit to new heights (excuse the pun).

Nancy Stevens, our Safety Officer is always thinking ahead. She took on the Safety Unit and worked closely with the previous unit leader, Bill McManus, to ensure that our CERT members are safe during this pandemic. Writing Policy & Procedures, and developing our Pandemic Safety Guidelines that are being utilized during each deployment and training. Nancy is always there to help!

Tom Trott, THCS D General Manager, who is such a blessing to our community. He supports CERT and has since the beginning, even before we knew what it would mean, because he cares about the people in Twain Harte and wanted to pursue the possibility if it would mean improving people's lives. Tom does more for this community than most will ever realize.

And let's not forget Kevin Rice! Kevin has tried three times to become "official" but circumstances have prevented him from being able to complete the training. This has not stopped Kevin from volunteering. He has helped with crossing guard duty, assisted with the Twain Harte Rotary food bank, worked as traffic control at the flu clinic, and helped fill SCBA tanks at the training with Columbia College last month, just to name a few of the things he's done lately.



Thank You All!

STAYING SAFE

by Nancy Stevens

Crossing Guard duty at the Twain Harte Elementary School has proven to be a much-needed addition to our volunteer work in THA-CERT. Thanks to the request last year by Jacob Foiada, weekly rotating teams of CERT members have helped the students across busy Twain Harte Drive when school lets out. "Thank you! Thank you!" can really make one's day. Since Twain Harte Drive is undoubtedly one of the busiest streets in town, stopping the cars for the crossing kids, or even slowing the cars near the crosswalk area before we get our "customers", has shown to be a very worthwhile and necessary function for CERT.

Mary Schreiner has been diligent in the scheduling of the crossing guard volunteers. If you'd like to join in, please contact Mary at: maryschreiner@live.com



Jan Morris and Nancy Stevens stay warm while helping the students stay safe at Twain Harte School



GROVELAND CERT NEWS

by Bob Asquith

Groveland CERT is on its way! Last month, we received the donation of a decommissioned ambulance from the Copperopolis Fire Protection District that we will be converting into a firefighter rehab vehicle in the weeks ahead. It is currently living at GCSD, our sponsoring agency.

Earlier this month, several Groveland CERT members met with CalFire to review both the new vehicle and upcoming meetings and procedures. Because the Groveland/GCSD facility, which is operated by CalFire, has only two people on duty at a time, they very much look forward to CERT helping whenever they can.

Groveland CERT also received t-shirts with their logo and a supply of brochures to circulate within the community. The brochures describe what CERT does and how to join. Many thanks to Business First of Twain Harte for help and contribution in providing these materials.

Groveland area basic training is underway. We are utilizing the hybrid version from Utah which includes about 12 hours of online study, plus a one-day in person training session. The one-day training session will take place in January in cooperation with the Twain Harte CERT training.



Patrick Cohen and Travis Chunn of CalFire, with Groveland CERT members Bob Asquith and Bob LaPlaca

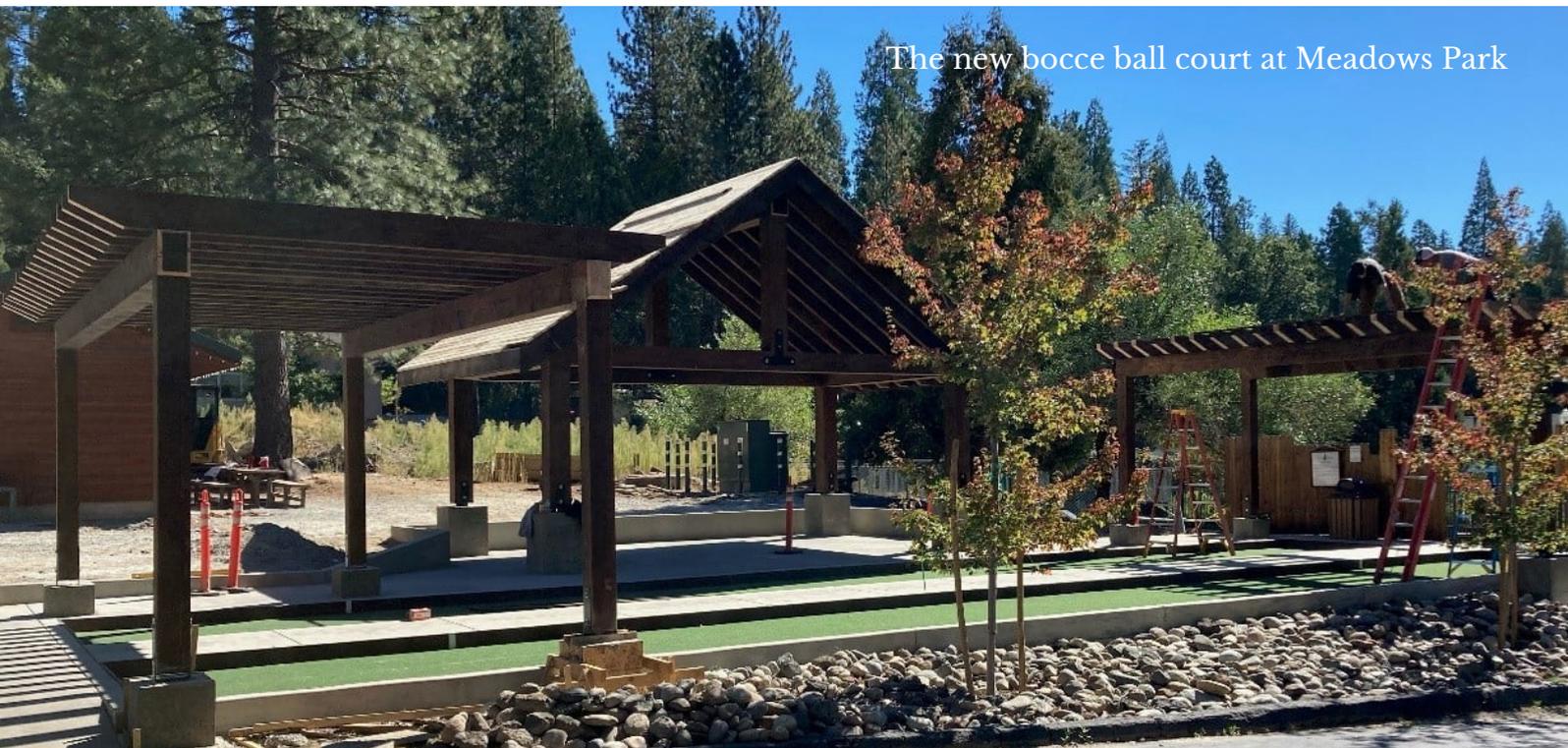
Groveland Area
CERT

The new shirts for Groveland CERT

PARK EXPANSION IN TWAIN HARTE

by Carol Hallett

Twain Harte Community Services District (THCSD) have big plans for the park and you can see it developing. In August they announced that construction was underway for the first phase of Twain Harte Meadows Park – Bocce Court Improvements. As we enter into the fall season, they are excited to share the progress thus far and report that the pavilion and shade structures are anticipated to be completed in the month of October. For more information on the progress we've made and what's to come, please visit our website: <https://www.twainhartecsd.com/twain-harte-meadows-park>



The new bocce ball court at Meadows Park

PINNING CEREMONY FOR CHIEF GAMEZ

by Carol Hallett

A pinning ceremony was held for the new Chief of the Twain Harte Fire Department on Thursday, November 12th. Former Fire Chief Todd McNeal was on hand to perform the pinning of Chief Neil Gamez with more than 80 people on hand (outside, wearing masks, and socially distanced, of course) to observe the ceremony, which also included a video of congratulations. The pinning for Captain Joe Schuller, THFD's newest Captain, was also performed during this ceremony.

Attendees included representatives from THFD, THCSD Staff, THCSD Board, THA-CERT, New York Fire Department, Chicago FD, San Jose FD, San Francisco FD, Burbank FD, Columbia FD, and CalFire, along with family & friends. A bagpiper welcomed guests and refreshments of coffee, pastries, and pizza were served.

PINNING CEREMONY FOR CHIEF GAMEZ, *cont'd*



THA-CERT members and representatives of several fire agencies watch the pinning ceremony



Valerie Gamez pins her husband, Chief Neil Gamez, at the ceremony on November 12th

sUAS NEWS

by Michelle Wagner

With the cold and rainy weather this month, the UAS team didn't train as much as usual; however, that doesn't mean we haven't been busy!! With the help of Anthony White-Ramos and Doug Simmons, we successfully updated the firmware on our Matrice.

Carol joined us and we were able to carve out and design a new space in the new garage building at Vantage Point. If all goes as planned, we will have a secure area with a workbench, charging station, and storage all our own!

Carol and I, along with Chief Gamez, met with various personnel from Cal Fire to discuss how CERT, and particularly the UAS Unit, can assist them. They were very supportive and even came up with some ideas I hadn't thought of. Here's a list of some of the things we can do (just to mention a few!!):

- Video capture of training
- Incident over-watch
- Pre-planning (aerial photographs, fire load, exterior building/roof inspection)
- Fuel break mapping
- Fire perimeter mapping
- Hot spot location/nighttime
- Photo documentation for fatality accidents
- Search and rescue
- Disaster damage assessment
- Remote communications (loud speaker)
- Small payload delivery (i.e. cell phone, lead lines, etc.)
- Photo documentation for use by Accident Review team

There is still much we need to do, but the future is bright and we are looking forward to working together and developing this new relationship!

The Matrice, our UAV with a thermal imaging camera



LET IT BURN!

As of November 20, the restriction on burning in Tuolumne County has been lifted. Of course, just because burning is permitted doesn't mean it's always safe to do so; on November 23rd, the Tuolumne-Calaveras unit of CAL FIRE responded to a reported escaped burn pile fire that ended up burning 5.7 acres. Fortunately, there were no injuries from that incident. The party responsible for that fire received a citation, due to lack of burn permit.

To ensure that you don't suffer the same fate, you may obtain a permit online at <https://burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/>

Also, you may only burn under certain conditions:

- Only dry, natural vegetative materials may be burned, such as leaves, pine needles, and tree trimmings
- The burning of trash, painted wood, or other debris is not allowed
- Do *NOT* burn on windy days
- Piles shall be no larger than 4 feet in diameter and in height; you may add to the pile as it burns down
- Clear a 10 foot diameter down to the bare ground around the pile
- Have a shovel and water source nearby
- An adult is required to be in attendance of the fire at all times

As our weather continues to be dry and clear, it is especially important to follow all of these guidelines. Please always burn safely!

A 5.7 acre fire on November 23rd was the result of an escaped burn pile, near Lake Don Pedro



DEPLOYMENT - COVID-19 CALL CENTER

by Carol Hallett

I'm sure it comes as no surprise to you that Tuolumne County has experienced a surge of COVID-19 cases this month. As a result, CERT received an urgent request from the Public Health Department to help staff the Public Health COVID-19 Call Center starting on the 18th of November. We have volunteers for staffing the call center through the end of November at this point. Special thanks to the following volunteers:

Carol Hallett
Mary Schreiner
Nancy Stevens
Karen Lytle
Dawn Cronin
Lise Lemonnier
Jan Morris
Mike Mandell

At this time we do not know how long the deployment request will last but we will be there to help support our community.

As a reminder, the COVID test site at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds is now open 7 days a week. Testing is free. Appointments are still required and can be scheduled several days in advance. Make your appointment at www.lhi.care/covidtesting or by calling (888) 634-1123.



Dawn Cronin (left) and Nancy Stevens (right) answer phones for the Public Health Department's COVID help line

TWAIN HARTE ROTARY FOOD BANK

by Mary Schreiner

Thoughts of Thanksgiving always bring images of family and friends around a table full of delicious food. The reality is that millions of Americans are going hungry every day, and the number continues to rise as COVID takes its toll on jobs and businesses lost to the pandemic. The lack of nutritious food affects almost 1 in 5 children in California.

We at THA-CERT are proud to assist the Twain Harte Rotary at their monthly ATCAA Food Bank distribution event. This month saw a record number of households...sixty-two families, over one hundred seventy-two people, seeking food assistance.

As usual, this month's supply provided people with a variety of whole, nutritious food so recipients can make healthy meals for themselves and their families.



Bob Schreiner and Lise Lemonnier help direct traffic at the November ATCAA Food Bank distribution

LIGHTING UP TWAIN HARTE

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, you may have noticed that Twain Harte suddenly looked a lot more festive. It was not a CERT function, but many CERT members, as well as the shop and restaurant owners, were on hand to help string up lights and decorations around town.

The town Christmas tree will be lit on Friday, December 4th at 6:00 pm, although there will not be a parade. Come on down and cruise through the town to see that the Christmas spirit is alive and well in Twain Harte, and while you're at it, stop and shop at our local businesses! This year, more than ever, our local shops and restaurants are relying on your patronage to stay afloat. Remember all of the times they helped support your children's school, your scout troop, or any other local organization with donations and advertising? Shopping locally is a great way to say thank you.

Volunteering to decorate were: Mike Mandell, Matt Kain and his grandson Nathen, Michelle Wagner, Ben Wagner, Randie Revilla, Linda Postma, Allan Hancock, and Carol Hallett.

LIGHTING UP TWAIN HARTE, *cont'd*



The Harte of the Kitchen, China House, and the Sportsman all sparkle in downtown Twain Harte



All That Matters, The Little Cottage Cafe, and The Clouterie get into the holiday spirit with festive decor



Carol Hallett makes sure Twain Harte puts on its best show for the holidays