Giving

Search and rescue team gets a helping hand

Tuolumne County's natural beauty draws thousands of visitors every year seeking outdoor adventure of all kinds, from backcountry hiking and skiing to water sports, rock climbing, river rafting and more.

It also creates a year-round need for emergency rescue, and a highly trained group of volunteers willing to go out on a moment's notice to save lives in all kinds of difficult situations. They're Tuolumne County Search and Rescue (TCSAR), the all-volunteer squad of more than 35 men and women who put in hundreds of hours every year in their unique field of service.

The Sonora Area Foundation this spring awarded the team a $31,455 grant to purchase a range of equipment, including specialty gear for diving, swift water and rope rescues. The grant honors both their dedication and the essential service they provide.

TCSAR team leader Randy Malm said the new equipment will give the organization a much needed boost in safety.

"You have to have quality gear when you're already in an emergency situation," he said.

"Equipment constantly has to be replaced, so this will be a big help."

Search and Rescue volunteers operate under the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office, with Deputy Sheriff-Coroner Rob Lyons as liaison. The team is one of the most active in the state. They're called out more than 70 times each year, and also devote many days to training to keep skills sharp.

"These are people who love outdoor adventure, but want to take their skills to a new level and are willing to do it for the community."

Education

Franco family honors father with new scholarship fund

When the late Richard Franco was a student in Sonora High School's Class of 1968, he made a lasting impression. A four-sport athlete, a fine scholar and a student leader, he was the kind of student his classmate and long-time Sonora High Athletic Director Rick Francis says you don't forget.

"He was such a nice guy, very popular and well-liked by everyone," Francis recalls. "He was an excellent student, so well-rounded - kids like that are few and far between."

So when Richard's son, Jake, approached the Sonora Area Foundation to create a scholarship, Francis and others who remember his dad agreed it was a fitting way to honor his memory.

It's also been a way for Jake, his sister, Sarah, and the family, to reconnect with the Franco family's hometown. Their roots in Sonora date back to the late 1800s, when Richard's grandparents first came here from a small village in Northern Italy. They had a large family - six girls and a boy. All went through Sonora High and, for the most part, went on to raise their families in Sonora and Jamestown, but recent generations have scattered far and wide.

Richard himself went on to serve in Vietnam, after a brief stint at UC Santa Cruz, then settled in Modesto where he raised his family and had a long career in real estate and investing. Larry, his older brother, is a prominent film producer in Southern California, while Jake is an international banker who settled in London, and his sister is a counselor in San Diego.

The family considered many options to honor Richard after he passed away in July, 2012, such as donating to his favorite interests or having people give to their own selected charities.

"But we were keen to do something more impactful," Jake said. "The idea of a scholarship at Sonora High resonated with many. It will go each year to a student who excels in academics and leadership, and the Francos will participate in the selection of the recipients along with the Foundation."

It's been a long-distance project, but Jake said the Sonora Area Foundation has made it easy to establish and manage.

"They've been extremely supportive and I'm really happy with what they've been doing," Jake said. "They have a good structure in place."

"He always said 'We want this to be around for awhile,'" he said. "I think my father would have been pleased."
Donor Funds

ADvised FUNDS – Charitable purposes in Tuolumne County
Acorns to Oaks Fund
Bergsund Family Fund
Boyd Family Fund
CB Celebration Fund
Comazzi Family Fund
Donald A. and Elisabeth Weber Fund
Farrell Family Fund
Foothill Ministry Fund
Front Porch Charitable Fund
Geer Family Fund
Gianelli Family Fund
Grimes Family Fund
Hohne Family Fund
Irving J. Symons Trustees Fund
Kevin Bates Fund
Joe Martin Family Fund
Julie Hulet Memorial Fund
Kathleen Caletini Memorial Fund
Kiwani Club of Sonora Fund
Marjorie L. Coffill Charitable Fund
Norbert & Elaine Wilson Endowment Fund
Ozbirn Family Fund
Phil and Barbara Harvey Charitable Fund
Priest Family Fund
Robert and Kathy Boyer Fund
Sierra Nevada Service Fund
Todd and Cyndi Simonson Fund
Tuolumne Angel Fund
Tuolumne Sunrise Fund

DESIGNATED FUNDS
Barbara McClymont Fund – Student needs at Sonora School
Betty Regelin Fund – Support ATCAA Family Homeless Shelter
Bill of Rights Fund – Bill of Rights education at Sonora Elementary School
BOB Health Van – Support of BOB the Health Van
Brizard Fund for South Side Seniors Inc. – Support programs and needs of the Gathering Place
Calaveras Tennis Fund – Support Tennis in Calaveras County
Children’s Holiday Party Fund – Programs for children in need in Tuolumne County
Christmas Partners Fund – Support Christmas programs
Comfort Project Fund – Quilts for children and elders in need
Comfort Project Endowment Fund – A growing endowment for the Comfort Project
Community Indicators Project Fund – Measurement and assessment of Tuolumne County
Dan Imfeld Educational Incentive Fund – Support at-risk youth through educational incentives
Donald and Renee Paulsen Fund – Charitable purposes in City of Sonora
Dorothy Daniels Memorial Fund – Endowment for Sonora United Methodist Church
Duende Drama & Literature Fund – Support programs and projects of Duende
Dylton Bonella Memorial Fund – Diminishment of cancer related suffering
Economic Prosperity Council of Tuolumne County – Support Programs of Economic Prosperity Council
Elks Event Fund – Support qualified nonprofits’ use of Sonora Elks Lodge
Ernest Olivieri Fund: Elks Lodge 1587 – Support Elks Lodge Scholarship program
Friends of the Children’s Park Fund – Park maintenance and youth education
George James Memorial Education Fund – TuCARE fund for teacher education in natural resources
Graser-Kudson Memorial Fund – Endowment for Twain Harte recreational purposes
Keep Railtown Rolling – Support for Railtown 1897
Kiwani’s Childspree – Back-to-school shopping spree fund for children in need
Leadership Tuolumne County Fund – Support the Leadership Tuolumne County program
Lucille Arnold Fund – Provide success for youth at risk
Marjorie L. Coffill Local History Fund – Tuolumne County Library materials on Mother Lode history
Mary J. Breteron Fund – Program support for Omega Nu Memoir Center Fund – Tu. Co. Veterans History Project
Miller Endowed Fund: Elks Lodge 1587 – Support Elks Lodge Scholarship program

Minnie Wind Wolfinbarger Fund – Support special education and RP Nursing at Sonora High School
Mrs. Pringle Music Fund – Classical music appreciation for any K-B school in Tuolumne County
Smile Keepers Fund – Support dental needs of the underserved in Tuolumne County
South Tuolumne County Museum Library Fund – Maintenance of the Groveland museum-library
Stage 3 Theatre Company Fund – Support programs and projects of Stage 3
SOS/Safety Net Fund for Tuolumne County – Support safety net programs in Tuolumne County
Tuolumne County Eye Care Fund – Eye care needs in Tuolumne County
Tuolumne County GRACE Fund – Assistance for unmet needs of Tuolumne County residents
Tuolumne County Juv Juvenile Judges Fund – Needs of Tuolumne County youth referred by justices
Tuolumne County STEM Fund – Support for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
Twain Harte Skate Park Fund – Skate park maintenance
Vial for Life Fund – Support Vial for Life project
William and Mary Crook Fund – Support of the Alano Club
Wings Fund – Expenses for the non-medical care of ill children
YES Partnership Fund – Support of the YES Partnership coalition

FIELD OF INTEREST FUNDS
Elenor F. Brown Endowment Fund – Endowed fund for Tuolumne County educational purposes
J .R. Christensen Family Fund – Nursing and health education in Tuolumne County
J im and Louise Angelo Family Fund – Endowment for Tuolumne County schools
Local Emergency Services Support Fund – Disaster prevention and recovery
Mother Lode Wellness Fund – Support of medical/wellness purposes in Tuolumne County
Robert C. Jones Fund – Advocacy for those who experience discrimination

AGENCY DESIGNATED FUNDS
ATCAA Family Literacy Fund
Calaveras Heritage Council Fund
Central Sierra Arts Council Fund
Economic Development Co. of Tuolumne County Fund
Friends of Tuolumne County Library Fund
Habitat for Humanity of Tu. Co. Fund
Hospice of the Sierras Fund
Humane Society of Tuolumne County Fund
Meals on Wheels Fund
Northern Mariposa County History Center Fund
Rose Wolf Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Fund
Salvation Army of Tuolumne County Fund
Sierra Foothills Residential Care Fund
Senior Resource Services Fund
Sierra NonProfit Support Center Fund
Sierra Repertory Theatre Fund
Southside Senior Services Fund
Summerville High Foundation Endowment Fund
Support Sonora School Endowment Fund
Support Sonora School Fund
WATCH Endowment Fund

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS
Cunningham Family Fund
Geiger Fund
Homer Latimer Fund
Martha Barnes Tuolumne County Betterment Fund
Nikki J & John Karpinski Fund
Sonora Area Foundation Futures Fund
Thomas Pugh Fund
Toni Gibson Fund

Message

Executive Director

Welcome to our Spring newsletter. In this issue, we have presented stories reflective of the variety of programs and projects that have been awarded grant funds from the Sonora Area Foundation and its two supporting organizations, the Symons Family Fund and the Irving J. Symons Foundation for Tuolumne County. Since our first grant making year in 1990, we have awarded grants in excess of $17 million responding to critical community needs.

You should be very proud of what you have helped to build as a result of your support for our community foundation.

By being a donor, you help to support the Foundation’s mission to strengthen our community. You understand the efforts of the Foundation to make Tuolumne County a better place to call “Home.” We have highlighted for you several stories that help to illustrate the meaning of our slogan – “For good. For ever.”

A’s always, the Board of Directors and staff are available to respond to your inquiries. Do not hesitate to call or come by our office at 362 S. Stewart Street to learn more about how the Sonora Area Foundation serves our community.

Ed Wylie
SAF donors support local Habitat for Humanity projects

**Giving Search and rescue (continued from page 1)**

looking for a different kind of satisfaction," Lyons said. "They're incredibly devoted and we rely on them all year round."

The squad has a number of specialty teams who train for specific types of situations, including underwater search, river rescues, back country skiing and more. The highly skilled technical rescue team is one of the most active, ready to work with ropes and specialty gear that can be used on cliffs, out of helicopters and with boats.

When the TCSAR team is called out on an emergency, they rarely know how long or how complicated the situation will be — from half a day helping a stranded hiker off a precarious perch to diving for a lost swimmer after a boating accident to covering a vast backcountry area for an overdue skier or hunter.

Sometimes they already know the results will be tragic, especially for dive teams and swift water specialists. But even in those calls, the TCSAR squad can help loved ones find closure.

For Malm, the rewards are immense. "We get calls and letters from people years later, still so thankful," he said.

**SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS**
Irving J. Symons Foundation for Tuolumne County
Symons Family Fund

**SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS**
Aaron Baker Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: agriculture
Aronos Women's Research Club Scholarship — Columbia College attendee
Bill Gerber Memorial Scholarship — Summerville High: athletics
Black Oak Casino Scholarship — Employees and dependents of Casino — higher education
Brett Laws Memorial Scholarship — Columbia College: fire science
Brockman Family Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Bruce Paxton Memorial Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: music
Class of 1946 Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Doc Curtiss Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Earl and Mary Purdy Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: music or physical education
Elaine Symons Baker Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Eva Schickle Memorial Scholarship — Nursing or fire science
Firefighter Michael Chad Harris Scholarship — Columbia College & Napa College: fire technology
Frank Sael Youth Fund — Benefit Tuolumne County youth
Front Porch Scholarship — Tuolumne County High Schools: math, engineering, computer science
Garreda College Fund — Sonora High: interest in local government or politics
Gilbert Poultier Scholarship — Sonora High, Summerville High and Columbia College: higher education
Gina Marie Garreda Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: agricultural interest
Harry A. Riedinger Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Harvey H. Uhl Scholarship — Sonora High: trade schools or higher education
Highland Oaks Agricultural Scholarship — Columbia College: agriculture & natural resources
Homer Latimer Scholarship — Sonora High and Summerville High: academics
Jeff Sanders Memorial Scholarship — Bret Harte High: academics
Jeff Vassallo Memorial Scholarship — Summerville High: Friday Night Live
Jennie Evans Memorial Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: business
Jerry Ryder Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: Korean War Veterans' relatives
Jessica Elizabeth & Jager Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Joe Martin Family Scholarship — Sonora High: natural resources
John Greeno Memorial Scholarship — for children of fallen wildland firefighters
John E. Kelley Memorial Scholarship — Mother Lode Round-Up Queen
Kathleen Celestini Memorial Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: Sonora Elementary graduate
Kristi Francis Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Larry and Virginia Reed Twain Harte Rotary Scholarship — Summerville High: vocational leadership
Lil Dawson, Winifred Black, Big Oak Rebehak Lodge #259 Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: academics
Lyle R. Scott Scholarship — Vocational/trades education
Lynn Gates Nursing Scholarship — Columbia College: nursing
Martha Barnes Scholarship — Summerville High: females, non-traditional fields
Martin and Bethel Lijedahl Scholarship — Sonora High: agriculture
M.L. Interagency Training Officers Scholarship/Bass — Tuolumne and Calaveras high schools: public safety
Mother Lode Stanford Club Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: Stanford University attendee
Mt. Springs Women's Golf Scholarship — Scholarships for women in golf
Myers Family Fund — Tioga High: vocational education
Pearl Segerstrom Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Pecchinno/Sylvia Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Perricone-Hobbin-Hodge Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: University of California
Richard A. Franco Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics and leadership
Rockwood Scholarship — Sonora High: art
Ross Jones Memorial Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: fire science or law enforcement
Sgt. Bobby Rapp Ski Scholarship — Official Ski Race Team
Shaws Flat Scholarship — Sonora High: academics and vocational
Sierra Music Scholarship — Tuolumne County student: classical music lessons
Sierra Quilt Guild Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: academics
Sonora Elementary Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: Sonora Elementary graduates
Sonora Lions Varvandakis Scholarship — Sonora High: male: academics
Stephen H. Manson Scholarship — Sonora High: art and nursing
Teresa Mary Thors Scholarship — Secondary education for disabled students
Terry Campbell Loshalegro Award — Summerville High: academics
Ticket Out Scholarship Fund — Sonora and Summerville High: attending Columbia College
Tuolumne County Community Tennis Scholarship — High school students involved in tennis or the arts
Tuolumne County Farm Bureau Scholarship — Tuolumne County high schools: agriculture industry
Tuolumne County Sheriff's Posse Scholarship — Tuolumne County students: agriculture or related field
Tuolumne County Women's Network Scholarship — Women's education
Tuolumne Medical Auxiliary-Connie Leonard Nursing Scholarship — Columbia College: Nursing
Tuolumne Sunrise Scholarship — Summerville High: academics
Twain Harte Chamber of Commerce Scholarship — Summerville High or Mother Lode Christian
Vicki White PEO Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High Alternative Ed.: vocational/trade, college or university education
Wally Berry Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Wes and Ruth Wylie Memorial Art Scholarship — Summerville or Sonora High: art
William and Doris Morris Memorial Scholarship — Sonora High: academics
Wilma Lindberg Memorial Scholarship — Summerville or Sonora High: elementary teaching
Jamestown center’s garden is ready to grow

This summer promises to be bountiful for the Jamestown Family Resource Center. Director Mark Dyken has made sure of that, with ambitious plans for a large community garden and teaching kitchen now underway on property owned by and adjacent to Jamestown Elementary School. The lot includes a vacant home, mature fruit trees, half an acre of excellent gardening space. Dyken also has a team of community volunteers including trained master gardeners all eager to launch.

“We’re going to jump out with a boom,” Dyken said.

That’s been possible thanks in large part to a surprise $40,000 grant from the Sonora Area Foundation awarded to the center as the recipient of the Irving J. Symons award.

Dyken said the co-op garden addresses a critical need for Jamestown’s low-income residents.

“Right now, Jamestown is a food desert,” Dyken said. “This is a very low income area, and there are no places within walking distance where people can get a good selection of fruits and vegetables. This garden will change that — it’s right next to the school and just a couple of blocks from one of the poorest neighborhoods.”

Dyken said people already are volunteering for work days to put in a variety of raised beds and watering system, and he expects a full harvest of fruits and vegetables in short order. The lot’s vacant house, which once housed the school district’s alternative day class, now will be converted to a community teaching kitchen where neighbors can learn how to prepare and preserve the garden’s produce.

“‘You’re not just getting food, you’re teaching people how to use it and improve their nutrition,’” Dyken said.

Master Gardeners help Jamestown children plant their school garden.