



# Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY – MARCH/APRIL 2015

## Supervisor's Message: April Is Healthy Tulare County Week



Improving health through prevention, healthy eating, and exercise is easier than you may believe. Small steps in the home, at the office, and in our community can have large impacts on your overall health. Prevention is also more effective as a community-based approach, and the Tulare County Board of Supervisors has declared April 6-10 "Healthy Tulare County Week." Healthy Tulare County Week brings a focus to a healthy lifestyle through health and wellness activities and the promotion of eating well and staying fit. This is a county wide initiative that promotes the commitment of citizens, public and private institutions, community organizations, businesses, and schools to increase our level of health as a community.

Seven out of ten deaths are due to preventable chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Small personal changes like walking and better nutrition, eliminating cigarettes, and moderating the use of alcohol, in addition to preventive measures like annual screenings for blood pressure, blood sugar, and BMI, and managing stress, with your personal physician are worth the effort to implement these changes.

The good news is that prevention works—it saves both lives and money. For example, routine childhood immunizations nationwide save almost \$10 million in health care costs and prevent 14 million cases of disease annually. Being healthy from the start is of utmost importance, and to that end we're asking you to tell us what is important to you in building a healthy community here in Tulare County. Please take a moment to reply to this one-question survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S5QTTL8>.

A different aspect of public health and prevention will be highlighted on each day of Healthy Tulare County Week. Monday will focus on promoting a Healthy Community by 2030 by raising awareness of best practices to improve the overall health of our community by the year 2030. Tuesday will focus on Living Active, and will promote physical activity by offering free gym passes, dance classes, and school activities. Wednesday will highlight Improving How We Eat, featuring tasty food demonstrations and store tours to locate healthy and affordable food options. Thursday will focus on Breaking Bad Habits by encouraging residents to avoid tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption which can lead to increased health risks. Friday will highlight Knowing Your Numbers by offering free screenings for key bio-

metrics such as blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and Body Mass Index (BMI). We're offering many free opportunities for community members to be involved and you can find the full schedule of activities at [www.tchhsa.org](http://www.tchhsa.org) under the Spotlight tab.

Each community member can take part in making Tulare County a safer and healthier place to live, work, and raise a family. Again, you can find our full schedule of activities at [www.tchhsa.org](http://www.tchhsa.org) under the Spotlight tab, on Facebook at TulareCountyHHSA, and on Twitter at TulareCo\_HHSA. Again, please take a moment to reply to this one-question survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S5QTTL8>. Join us and help spread the word about the power of prevention and it's impact on public health.

**Steve Worthley, District Four  
Chairman of the Board of  
Supervisors**

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## April is Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month, a time to remind Tulare County residents to be eyes and ears for all children. Tulare County Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) and Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency have collaborated to send out the message that "It Shouldn't Hurt to be a Child - Be Their Voice!" - symbolized by wearing a blue ribbon.

"People everywhere have a tendency to believe this problem is handled by the professionals", says Galen Quenzer, President of CAPC. "The truth is that it takes all of us to see that children are safe and protected."

The month kicked off as it has

for the past 20 years, with CASA's March on Main, a procession down Main Street in Visalia. This year's event took place on Saturday, March 28th, at 9:00 a.m.

CAPC member agencies and programs are offering a variety of activities to highlight child abuse prevention and bring awareness to our residents by tying blue ribbons around the trees in downtown areas, holding Blue Ribbon events, and offering resource tables at different events around the county.

Quenzer notes, "Not all parents provide love and proper care of their children, and if we know of such situations, we need to fill the gap. Your silence could endanger the

child and serves to protect the perpetrators while ignoring the victims. You can remain anonymous and you only need to report your suspicions. Make the call at 1-800-331-1585."

For more information about Child Abuse Prevention Awareness events in Tulare County, ideas of how you can help children, support prevention efforts, and strengthen families in need, contact the CAPC at (559) 735-0456, or on the web at

[www.tularecountycapc.org](http://www.tularecountycapc.org).

For more information, call Billie Shawl at 559-735-0456, or email her at [billieshawl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:billieshawl@sbcglobal.net).

## Fitch Ratings



International credit rating agency Fitch Ratings affirmed stable credit ratings for Tulare County's implied general obligation and certificates of participation (COPs) series.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Steve Worthley said the affirmation of stable credit ratings is reflective of Tulare County's strong financial performance during tough economic times.

Citing Tulare County's stable economy, healthy financial position, and manageable

long term liabilities, Fitch Ratings affirmed the implied general obligation at AA- and the COPs series at A+. An "A" assignment denotes high credit quality while an "AA" assignment denotes very high credit quality, according to Fitch Ratings.

County Administrative Officer Jean Rousseau said the stable credit ratings will save taxpayers' money should Tulare County choose to borrow money in the future because the positive ratings allow for

more flexibility and lower interest rates in financing long-term projects such as roads and facilities.

Fitch Ratings is one of three nationally recognized statistical rating organizations (NRSRO) designated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in 1975.

To view the report from Fitch Ratings, please visit:

[https://www.fitchratings.com/creditdesk/press\\_releases/detail.cfm?pr\\_id=982081](https://www.fitchratings.com/creditdesk/press_releases/detail.cfm?pr_id=982081).

## Work Begins on Gov't Plaza Parking Lot Expansion



The Parking Lot Expansion project at Government Plaza began construction on Monday, March 30.

The project will improve the existing ADA parking spaces and construct a new secure parking area.

The reconstruction of the ADA spaces will be done in two phases to allow for ADA accessible parking spaces during construction.

The west building entrance will remain unlocked during public business hours to

allow for alternate access to the building for members of the public utilizing the ADA spaces.

The project is expected to be completed in 60 days.

## Employee Spotlight: Frozen Justice & Retirees

### “Frozen Justice”



On Saturday, March 14, investigators, prosecutors, and staff from the Office of the District Attorney braved the chilly waters of Bullard High School’s swimming pool during the annual Polar Plunge charity event.

The team, aptly named “Frozen Justice,” was made up of staff members from the Office of the District Attorney.

Since all Polar Plunge partici-

pants were encouraged to wear costumes for the plunge, Team Frozen Justice donned classic courtroom attire including dress shirts and ties.

Plunging this year were Criminal Investigator Floyd Hager, Deputy District Attorney Shant Taslakian, Investigative Technician Jeff Sorenson, and Team Captain and Supervising Deputy District Attorney Phil Esbenshade.

### Retirees

The County lost three of its greats to retirement during the March 17 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Saying goodbye were Chief Deputy County Counsels Julia Roberts and Harold Wood along with Probation Officer/Background Investigator Joseph DeRose.

All three individuals dedicated over 30 years of service to the

County of Tulare.

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Steve Worthley presented each one with an honorary plaque in recognition of their achievement.




There are many County employees who are doing outstanding things for their community outside of their job.

Do you know a County employee who should be in the spotlight? Let us know at:

[newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us)

## Program Spotlight: LOOP Bus/Sequoia Shuttle Partnership



The County-sponsored Local Organizations Outreach Program, more commonly known as the LOOP Bus program, is offering no-cost transportation for at-risk youth to the City of Visalia’s Sequoia Shuttle bus stops.

Local after-school programs, community and faith-based organizations, as well as local government entities and school districts are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity

for disadvantaged youth to explore the outdoors at no cost.

With the assistance of the Kids to Trees Grant and inspired by the Healthy Parks Healthy People initiative, the Sequoia Shuttle is offering complimentary transportation, for groups of six or more, to and from the national park for underserved youth throughout the region.

This offer also includes a short orientation upon arrival to the national park by an interpretative park ranger who will greet each group at the Giant Forest Museum prior to the group’s self-guided venture into the park.

Reservations for departure and return trip pick up times are re-

quired for both the LOOP Bus and the Sequoia Shuttle.

For more information on the LOOP Bus and Sequoia Shuttle partnership, please contact LOOP Bus staff at (559) 636-5000.

To apply for the LOOP Bus, please visit: [www.stepuptc.com](http://www.stepuptc.com).

To make a Sequoia Shuttle reservation, please call: (559) 713-4577 or visit [www.sequoiashuttle.com](http://www.sequoiashuttle.com) to learn more about the Shuttle service.



Want your program to be in the spotlight? Please send suggestions to:

[newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us)

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**Public Meetings Scheduled for Input on Proposed Animal Control Ordinance Changes**

Residents of the unincorporated areas of Tulare County can expect to hear about proposed changes to Tulare County Animal Control ordinances and lend their opinion and expertise to staff during public meetings that are being held by Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency.

Animal Control hopes to provide increased clarity while continuing to serve the residents of Tulare County.

Key proposed changes addressed at the meetings include:

- Creation of a procedure using a Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
- Distinctions and requirements for types of kennels
- Microchips for outgoing dogs
- Jurisdiction of Animal Control and Officers

Public meetings will be held in Earlimart, Dinuba, and Porterville:

- Earlimart: Thursday, April 16, 5-7:00 p.m. at Earlimart Elementary School, 192 S. Church Rd.
- Dinuba: Thursday, April 23, 5-7:00 p.m. at the Dinuba Recreation Center, 1390 E. Elizabeth Way
- Porterville: Thursday, May 14, 5-7:00 p.m. at Porterville City Council Chambers, 291 N. Main St.

For more information on the proposed ordinances and Tulare County Animal Control, please visit: [www.tchhsa.org/TCACOrdinances](http://www.tchhsa.org/TCACOrdinances).

We appreciate your questions; please send them to: [AnimalControlSupport@tularehhsa.org](mailto:AnimalControlSupport@tularehhsa.org) or call 559-636-4080.

**Library For London 5K Featured "McFarland, USA" Heroes**

The 2nd Annual Library For London 5K Run/Walk/Festival took place on Saturday, March 28 and featured legendary McFarland High School cross country coach Jim White and many of the McFarland runners who inspired the Disney film "McFarland, USA."

Coach White delivered a pre-race speech and was on hand to award trophies to participants at the end of the run. Former members of the McFarland High School cross country team also ran in the race.

A festival for all community members and race participants immediately followed the 5K. The festival had 21 vendors including a DJ and live musical/dance performances. Food, carnival games for kids, and a raffle were also a part of the post-race festival.

The main goal of the Library

For London 5K Run/Walk/Festival was to be an upbeat event that would bring people from across the County to the lesser-known town of London, population 2,134.

Race event organizers hoped to make people aware of London's existence within the County through their participation in the 5K.

The Library For London Project was founded by school teacher and former London resident Rob Isquierdo in February 2014. The mission behind the project is to create a fully functional library for the community of London that is centrally located and accessible to all citizens of the town.

For more information about the project, please visit [www.libraryforlondon.com](http://www.libraryforlondon.com) or call (818) 482-8140.

**AROUND TULARE COUNTY**

Around Tulare County is published once a month as a service to the public. Unless otherwise noted, articles are written by County staff. For additional information, contact Melissa Withnell.

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**APRIL COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS**

Event/Meeting: (Date/Time)	More Information:
Healthy Tulare County Week: April 6 - 10	(559) 624-8000
Board of Supervisors' Meeting: 9 a.m. April 7, 14, 28.	(559) 636-5000
Tulare County Planning Commission: 9:00 a.m. April 8, 22.	(559) 624-7000
National Library Week activities: April 11 - 18	(559) 713-2745
Tulare County Water Commission: 3 p.m. April 13.	(559) 636-5005
Tulare County Association of Governments: 1 p.m. April 13.	(559) 623-0450
Tulare County Youth Commission: 3 p.m. April 27	(559) 636-5000



**Places to Go Play:** Valley Oaks Golf Course in Visalia is now an official course for the American Foot-Golf League (AFGL). FootGolf is a combination of the popular sports, soccer and golf. To play FootGolf, athletes use soccer balls on a traditional golf course with 21-inch diameter cups. The rules largely correspond to the rules of golf and the game uses golf's basic model including tee boxes, greens, bunkers, hazards and 18 holes to play. Learn more about FootGolf by visiting [www.playvalleyoaks.com](http://www.playvalleyoaks.com).