

news galleryweek

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Public invited to attend Circle J's Community Biodiversity Festival



In partnership with Alianza Ecologista – a Tulare County environmental alliance – Circle J-Norris Ranch is holding a two-day Community Biodiversity Festival, February 22-23. The public is invited to attend and participate in fun, hands-on activities suitable for the whole family. Beginning Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m., attendees can participate in the annual BioBlitz to document the biodiversity of Circle J utilizing the iNaturalist app. With help from local environmental scientists, attendees will be challenged to photograph unique living organisms they discover and upload the images to the Circle J Biodiversity Project on the iNaturalist website. Following a lunch break, attendees will spend Saturday afternoon planting trees for future wildlife habitats. On Sunday morning, the event will continue with guided nature walks, birding, and hiking.

“Data collected from BioBlitz is enabling us to create online instructional resources, such as guides on insects, wildflowers, reptiles, and amphibians at the ranch,” said Nancy Bruce, education coordinator for Circle J-Norris Ranch. “Visiting classes can access these guides before they arrive at the ranch in order to learn more about the species they will see.”

Circle J-Norris Ranch is the beautiful 620-acre field trip site located in the Sierra foothills. The program, which is operated by the SCICON school of outdoor education, offers all grade levels a

wide variety of field study experiences that enrich and extend classroom learning. Programs conducted on the property are designed to expand the appreciation of the environmental and aesthetic values of the outdoors, and increase understanding of the relationship between humans and nature. Circle J-Norris Ranch is located at 41893 Yokohl Valley Road in Springville.

For more information on the Community Biodiversity Festival, email Nancy Bruce at circlej@ocsnet.net.

Photo above:

~ Attendees at the Community Biodiversity Festival can participate in capturing images of plant and animal species at Circle J-Norris Ranch utilizing the iNaturalist app. The data collected supports Circle J's growing catalogue of online instructional resources.

Support for TCOE Foundation continues to grow as plans are made for annual family event



In November, employees were invited to participate in the annual Tulare County Office of Education Foundation Employee Giving Campaign. This year, the campaign netted 19 new employee donors, bringing the total amount donated to the foundation through voluntary payroll deductions to nearly \$24,000 annually. “The generosity of TCOE employees who joined this year in supporting the Foundation is encouraging,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire. “As we build the foundation’s reserves, more support can be given to TCOE programs that apply for grants to benefit the students throughout Tulare County.”

In addition to the annual Employee Giving Campaign, the foundation board is developing plans for a large annual family-friendly event. Scheduled for Saturday, September 19 in Mooney Grove Park, the event will kick off with a 5K run/walk in the morning. Following the race, the public is invited to attend a festival which will feature local student performances throughout the day, food vendors, art booths, a farmers’ market, and science and technology activities. The Tulare County History Museum will also be open throughout the day and will feature programming in its theater along with historical activities.

At any time during the year, employees can make ongoing monthly donations to the foundation in amounts they choose by completing the form at tcoe.org/FoundationGiving. Donations to the

foundation are tax deductible. For more information on the Employee Giving Campaign or the TCOE Foundation, contact Marlene Moreno at marlenem@tcoe.org.

The Tulare County Office of Education Foundation has been providing financial support to TCOE programs and special events since 2000.

Gabrielle Trapse wins third Tulare County Poetry Out Loud championship



Gabrielle Trapse, a junior at Tulare Union High School, was the winner in the fifth annual Poetry Out Loud competition held February 7 at 210 Café in downtown Visalia. Gabrielle, who has won the competition three years in a row, will represent Tulare County at the state competition in Sacramento, March 15-16.

Poetry Out Loud is a national competition for high school students who prepare recitations from a lexicon of over 900 classic and contemporary poems.

Photo above:

~ Three-time Tulare County Poetry Out Loud champion Gabrielle Trapse will represent Tulare County at the state finals in Sacramento.

California Center on Teaching Careers plans three virtual recruitment fairs this spring



The California Center on Teaching Careers is holding three statewide virtual recruitment fairs this spring – March 5, April 23, and May 28. Teachers and teacher candidates are invited to register to participate in the fairs, which simulate the look of a real recruitment fair through an online platform.

The virtual recruitment fairs allow teachers and teacher candidates worldwide to remotely meet with dozens of California education agencies that participate in the online events. Inside the virtual fair, registered attendees can conduct live chats and videoconferences about job openings at districts and county offices of education throughout the state. Attendees also have opportunities to visit with representatives from participating universities and teacher credentialing agencies.

To register to attend one of the three upcoming online events, visit thecentervirtualevents.vfairs.com, or contact Marvin Lopez at marvinl@tcoe.org.

Coming Up!

- **through February 28**
Student Art Exhibition
TCOE Administration Building Lobby, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
[More information.](#)
- **February 14**
National History Day - Tulare County
8:00am - 3:00pm, TCOE Conference Center, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
[More information](#)

- **February 18**
Tulare County Mock Trial Finals
Redwood High School (Visalia) vs. Exeter Union High School
5:00 - 8:00pm, TCOE Conference Center, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
[More information](#)
- **February 19**
Tulare County Spelling Championship
9:00am - 3:00pm, Visalia Convention Center, 303 E. Acequia Ave.
[More information](#)
- **February 20**
University Preparatory High School Information Night
6:00 - 7:00pm, COS Visalia campus, Yokut Room 9, 915 S. Mooney Blvd.
[More information](#)
- **February 21**
Planetarium Public Shows
6:00pm: *The Secrets of Gravity: In the Footsteps of Albert Einstein*
7:00pm: *Phantom of the Universe*
TCOE Planetarium & Science Center, 11535 Avenue 264, Visalia
[More information](#)

View more events at tcoe.org/CalendarofEvents.

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To receive *News Gallery Week*, visit tcoe.org/GetTheGallery, or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.