

of the
Tuolumne County
Historical Society
Sonora, California



President Chuck Holland
in Germany

Letter from the President

Fellow Members,

Last year around this time, on November 3, 2023, to be exact, we submitted our application to the California State Historical Society to host a banner exhibit of Mexican history in California. A month later, in December, we received notice that we had been awarded the first showing of their traveling exhibition. That award and the subsequent display in our Museum, during April and May, pretty much determined the direction of our efforts for the first half of 2024. We had a few short months to organize our volunteers, plan events, develop publicity, and prepare the Museum for the coming exhibition. As we have reported here in previous issues, the exhibition was a great success, increasing the number of visitors to the Museum, increasing our membership, and increasing our presence in the community.

Now it is time to plan for the coming year of 2025. We do not have another exhibition scheduled, but we do have a number of things we would like to accomplish. Despite the recent gains, we still need to find ways to attract new members and increase Museum attendance. We also need a few existing members to consider moving into positions on the Board or as volunteers in the Museum.

Some members have suggested that we make improvements to our webpage and social media presence. We plan on again participating in community events such as the Volunteer Fair, the Columbia Cinco de Mayo celebration, and the West Side and Sierra RR model train convention. Some members would like to see the Society host more of our own events at the Museum and in the Courtyard. All of these ideas and more will be considered by the Board of Directors in the coming months.

And, the Board remains open to any ideas from our membership regarding the activities your Historical Society might consider. If you have any input you would like to share or suggestions for our Board, please leave a message on our website or you can email me directly at sierra38@sbcglobal.net.

Chuck Holland

Museum Hours:

Tues. & Thurs. (10-4)
Wed. (1-4)
Fri. & Sat. (10-3:30)

History Research Center:

Tues.—Fri. (9-4)

Welcome New Members:

Rhea Gross
Tami Keller
Walter & Sheri Lee



Christmas Open House

Thurs., December 12—1:00-4:00 p.m.
Tuolumne County Museum

Join the TCHS Board of Directors in celebrating a Christmas Open House at the Museum. Along with books and artwork for sale (great Christmas presents), the Exhibit Committee has been busy with new exhibits.

While visiting the Museum, check out the exhibit "Up in the Hills." An anchor in the display is John W. Winkler's etching of the Bennett Juniper. Winkler's prints can be found in most major museums, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Oakland Museum, and the Library of Congress.



Latest exhibit in the Museum Gallery

Weimar Joint Sanatorium

By Pat Perry

In the early 1900s, tuberculosis, also known as consumption, was one of the leading causes of death. It was a highly contagious disease that often killed slowly. Patients might cough up infected sputum for years. The disease was devastating to the individual as well as to their family.

An example is the Sonora family of Jacob and Sadie Gage. Both father and mother had tuberculosis. Sadie died in May 1909, at the age of thirty-one. She had been a patient at the Tuolumne County Hospital for three years. For at least the last two years of her life, Sadie's two daughters lived with her at the hospital. Fannie was eight when her mother died, and Esther was six. Their father, Jacob, died a year later. Unable to provide care for his daughters when Sadie died, the girls were sent to the Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum in San Francisco, where they lived until young adults.

In 1918, Tuolumne County, along with ten other California counties, became interested in building and operating a tuberculosis hospital. The other counties included Amador, Contra Costa, Colusa, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. San Francisco later joined the original eleven counties, as did Solano, Sierra, Nevada, and Inyo. Wanting to choose a site that was central to the participating counties, the facility's planners decided that Placer County would be the most appropriate. It was accessible and above the fog and below the snow, which was also important. Prior to the discovery of effective antibiotics in the 1940s, tuberculosis treatment included fresh air at higher elevations, rest, good food, and in severe cases lung surgery.

Approximately 457 acres close to the town of Weimar, 4.5 miles south-southwest of Colfax, with an elevation of 2,257 feet, were purchased for the facility. By May 1919, fourteen buildings had been constructed and were finally ready for patients in the fall. The counties chose the name Weimar Joint Sanatorium. (The term *sanatorium* was used for tuberculosis facilities, while *sanitarium* designated a facility that cared for a variety of illnesses.) The first patients, four from Tuolumne County, arrived in the middle of November. Subsequently, two more units were planned to accommodate a total of 300 patients.

Each county was to have one representative. In October 1919, the governing board of the hospital decided that there would be four meetings a year at the hospital, with each county representative attending. Other meetings were to be held in Sacramento at the Courthouse.

Tuolumne County's representative, Thomas F. McGovern, owner of the Gem Saloon, was also serving as the president of the Board of Supervisors at the time. He resigned from that position when he was appointed superintendent of the Weimar Sanatorium, effective December 1, 1919. Apparently, all did not go well for McGovern, as he was forced to resign in July 1921. Weimar Board Chairman Robert Callahan, of Sacramento, accused McGovern of creating friction at the hospital. Defending his position, McGovern stated, "Miss Julia Tesreau, head nurse, tries at all times to be the whole thing, taking up too much time meddling in affairs in which she should have no concern and which I do not believe properly fall [within her] province."

By the mid-1950s, the Sanatorium was experiencing difficulties. As the treatment for tuberculosis changed, there were less patients. In 1957, Sanitarium staff began treating other pulmonary diseases. Renamed the Weimar Medical Center in 1960, the facility closed in 1972 due to financial cuts by the state and the counties. In May 1977, a group of Seventh-Day Adventists purchased the 457 acres and undertook the parcel's development into the Christian education and health facility that exists today.



All photos are of the Weimar Joint Sanatorium.



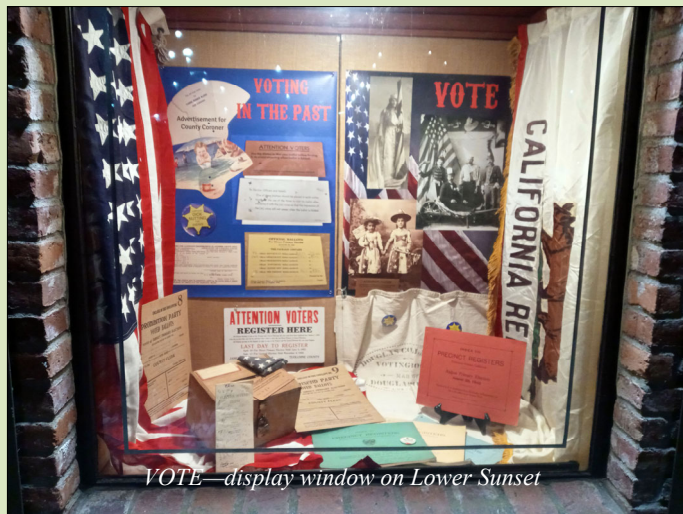
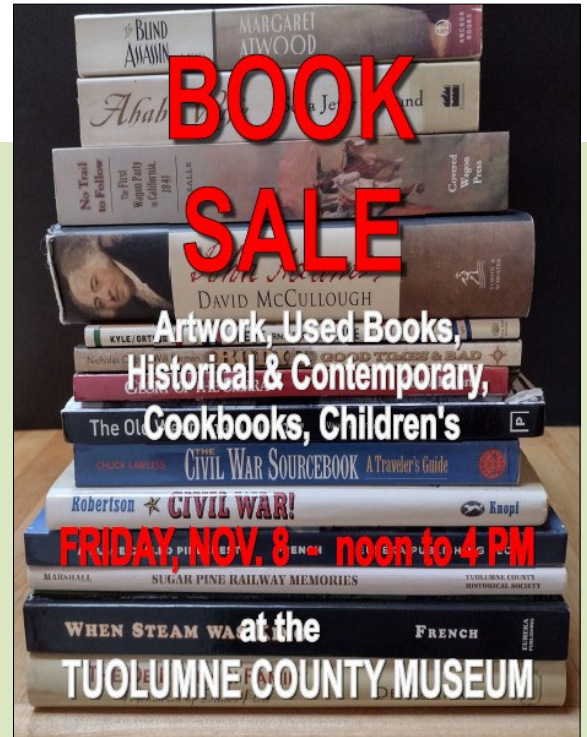
Museum Corner

Museum Book Sale

Friday, November 8—noon-4:00 p.m.
Tuolumne County Museum
158 Bradford St., Sonora

A favorite event is the Museum Book Sale. It was brought back last year after many years of being dormant and was so successful the Board of Directors decided to do a repeat. Fiction, non-fiction, historical, contemporary, cookbooks, and children's used books will all be on sale, along with artwork.

You can also purchase new books at the Museum, with discounted prices on books published by the Tuolumne County Historical Society—great Christmas gifts!



VOTE—display window on Lower Sunset



Library exhibit

Outreach

Thanks to the efforts of Lynn Sanguinetti, Brad Fisher, and the Exhibits Committee, one of the windows facing Lower Sunset now has a new display. The theme is VOTE, very topical for this time of year.

Another temporary exhibit (November only) was placed in the Sonora Public Library on Greenley Road. The exhibit encourages visitors to visit the Museum and to join the Society. Photos of exhibits, events, and programs are displayed, along with books and brochures published by the Society.

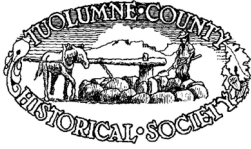
Halloween Fun in the Museum

On Halloween, fortune-teller Lori East, aka Genealogy Library Director, predicted Tom Horn's fate—"You will die tragically! In a fire!!!"

For those of you who have visited the Museum, you might remember the cell memorializing Tom, who, in 1865, died in a fire in the jail. Drunken Tom set the fire himself, but only he didn't escape.



Lori East in Tom Horn cell



**TUOLUMNE COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
158 Bradford Street
SONORA, CA 95370-4920

Non-Profit Organization
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Sonora, California

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*The Mission of the Tuolumne County
Historical Society shall be to discover, collect,
preserve, and disseminate knowledge about
the history of Tuolumne County and
the State of California.*

The *Historian* is published several times a year by the Tuolumne County Historical Society, 158 Bradford St., Sonora, CA 95370-4920 for the benefit of the membership. There is no charge for the *Historian*. (In compliance with Public Law 103-123, 39 U.S.C. 3656 subsection [j].)

Tuolumne County Museum & History Research Center
158 Bradford Street, Sonora, CA 95370
Museum: 209-532-1317—History Research Center: 209-532-4227
<http://tchistory.org>, info@tchistory.org



*Linda Crocker and Kathy "Cookie" Boone
decorate the TCHS tree in 2021 for the
Christmas Tree Lane in Courthouse Square*

Christmas Tree Lane
Dec. 4th begins
Courthouse Square

This will be the fourth year that the TCHS has participated in the Christmas Tree Lane as part of Christmas Town Sonora. Over fifty nonprofits participate showcasing their organization. Come out and enjoy some holiday festivities and drop by the Museum while in town!

For more information on events: <https://christmastownsonora.org/full-schedule-flyer/>

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Change in address or contact information?

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