

Commending Rancho Tehama

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Tuesday November 14, 2017 was a sad day for Tehama County.

Our little community of Rancho Tehama suffered a terrible, senseless tragedy that resulted in the loss of 5 innocent people, and injury to 10 others, including several children. The scars, physical, mental and emotional left by this event will be a part of our lives for years to come.

As most of you know, I have represented Rancho Tehama as the District 4 Supervisor for more than 11 years. What you may not know, is that beyond my tenure as a County Supervisor, I have been friends with many of the residents of "The Ranch" for over 30 years. I consider the residents of Rancho Tehama my neighbors and I always enjoy visiting friends in the area and attending local events. It is even where my wife Candy and I go to vote.

In light of the tragic event that took place on November 14th, I had a conversation with Chairman Garton and we thought that it would be appropriate for the Board of Supervisors to, at the very least, recognize verbally those individuals who acted so swiftly to prevent further death and injury. I also think that it is important to recognize those who have been so willing to assist this community in recovery and helping all of us to move forward.

First, I would like to recognize and thank the teachers, staff and even the kids at Rancho Tehama Elementary School. This school has been committed to conducting lockdown drills through the years, and at the first sound of gunfire, went into lockdown mode. The quick thinking, rehearsed reaction of all involved no doubt saved countless lives. All are to be commended.

Second, I'd like to recognize first responders from Tehama County, and surrounding agencies. These are law enforcement, fire and medical personnel who came quickly, putting themselves in harm's way to protect and serve innocent civilians. Even though Rancho Tehama is located 22 miles from the nearest incorporated city, reports are that help arrived in less than 15 minutes from the first call.

Next I'd like to recognize the area churches and the people of Rancho Tehama themselves. I attended a candle light vigil Wednesday night and witnessed more than 200 people from the community gathered together to offer support and prayers for their friends, neighbors and even people they didn't know. One local pastor asked everyone

to introduce themselves to at least one person that they didn't know in order to bring the community closer. It was a wonderful event!

I would also like to thank our County departments. Every Department Head that I talked to throughout this past week has been more than willing to offer whatever support that they could give. Many departments scrambled to provide (and continue to provide) assistance, counselling, food, and aid where needed. Thank you all so much!

I also need to thank the Tehama County Department of Education, and especially the folks involved in the Safe Education and Recreation for Rural Families program, better known as SERFF. On Friday, SERRF staff and volunteers from the community put on a "Fun Friday" event at the RTR Recreation Hall for all children and their families to attend. It was a chance for kids and families to reconnect with friends for an afternoon of food, fun, games and laughter. This was something that was much needed and appreciated in the community.

Lastly, I would like the Tehama County Board of Supervisors to commend all of the people, agencies and businesses in not just Tehama County, but throughout the surrounding areas that have helped with donations, fundraisers, assistance, mutual aid, concern, and thoughts and prayers. It has been said that you don't truly know who your friends are until a time of need. We are truly blessed to have so many wonderful friends.

This community will make it through this crisis and with faith, love and hope, become even better and stronger as we move forward together. As one person said to me this week, recognizing all of the help that Rancho Tehama continues to receive, "We are not just Rancho Tehama Strong. We are Tehama County Strong!"