

Letter to the Editor – Argus-Courier 10-26-17

## **Grateful to Petaluma**

### **EDITOR:**

Our hearts go out to our fellow Sonoma County residents who have lost their homes or loved ones or have been displaced due to the devastating fires. No matter how prepared an individual or community may be, our bodies and souls feel the effects of crisis or disaster.

And yet, our hearts are also full of love and pride here at the Petaluma Health Care District. The extraordinary response of first responders, including courageous fire and police personnel, from this region and around the state and nation has kept our community safe. The physicians and staff of Petaluma Valley Hospital, Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital and other neighboring hospitals treated thousands of people, including patients transferred from Kaiser and Sutter Santa Rosa when they were forced to evacuate. It is inspiring to see everyone come together to meet the needs of our community when so many themselves lost their own homes.

And you, Petaluma, came together with a response that is truly awe-inspiring. You volunteered your time and opened your homes, your schools, your wallets and your hearts to our neighbors in their hour of need. We cannot thank you enough. It is truly an honor to work with and on behalf of such a committed and generous group of people.

As a community and District, we will play a critical role in the long-term healing and resiliency-building of our county. Now that our work turns from responding to a crisis to nurturing a recovery, we will be bringing together agencies and organizations to consider what we can do to further support the health of our neighbors to the north, as well as our own residents. Understanding how our greatest health priorities – mental and behavioral health, cardiovascular health, housing, education and health care access – may have shifted as a result of this disaster is critical. As your local health care district, we remain dedicated to working with our partners to improve the health and wellbeing of all our residents.

In the meantime, continue your wonderful work Petaluma. We will emerge as a stronger community and county.

We are #SonomaStrong and #PetalumaProud.

**Ramona Faith**

CEO Petaluma Health Care District