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by Melissa Daugherty
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Personal bests

Like many locals, I've been thinking about Maui, particularly the residents of Lahaina. As is stated in the editorial on page 4, having experienced the Camp Fire (and North Complex fires), Butte County can empathize in a way most regions of the world simply cannot.

Indeed, aside from those who know war, not many people understand what it's like to have their entire community reduced to rubble in a few hours. It's unthinkable, unless you've been there, or, as in Chico's case, witnessed it. The residents of Paradise and a few other local foothills hamlets know this pain intimately. Our hearts go out to them, as the Maui fire has certainly triggered terrible memories.

Thankfully, the world has responded with compassion. More than \$70 million has already poured into the Maui Strong Fund.

After the Camp Fire, Butte County also received an incredible amount of support, including from local residents. Some gave money. Others volunteered or donated clothes and food. Still others opened their houses to evacuees. The selflessness that came out of the tragedy was heartening, perhaps the only bright spot during what was an extremely dark time.

To me, the generosity represented the Best of Chico.

Speaking of which, I'm hoping the community will rally around some good folks: the Phillips family. Mick and Ruth Phillips have been my neighbors for a dozen years. Chicoans may know Mick from his volunteer work with American Legion Baseball and Ruth for her many years working at Enloe Medical Center.

The Phillipses are active retirees, but they're laying low these days to protect the health of their 5-year-old grandson, Easton, who is medically fragile right now. His recent diagnosis of leukemia comes after a few very challenging years for the family. The couple's daughter-in-law, Megan, Easton's mom, recently fought her own battle with cancer. On top of that, she lost her mother last year quite suddenly.

She and husband Derek are taking time off work to get Easton top-notch care at Sutter Health in Sacramento, and in Megan's case, it'll require a yearlong leave of absence from her job at Save Mart. That's quite the financial hurdle, on top of the emotional one that comes with caring for a seriously ill child. Easton's aunt, Nicole Phillips, has set up a GoFundMe to help with the expenses. Readers can find it at tinyurl.com/EastonWarriors.

Lastly, I want to say how saddened I am by the news that my amazing long-time family doctor, Roy Bishop, of Argyll Medical Group, passed away on Aug. 22. He was 58 years old. Like many of his patients, I knew he'd been fighting his own medical battle. In fact, during a recent telehealth appointment, he talked about his treatments at UC Davis.

When I received a letter stating that he was abruptly retiring, I decided that thanking him in the Best of Chico issue would be a nicer gesture than emailing him. I did that very thing, but he didn't get to read it. And now, of course, I've rewritten it with references to him in the past tense.

I was fortunate to have known the Scotland native for roughly the past decade, finding him at the recommendation of a friend following bad experiences with another local physician. That included the guy taking a call on his cellphone in the middle of an exam to chat about his hunting plans.

Dr. Bishop was that doctor's polar opposite: thorough, professional and personable. Sometimes we'd chat about the perils of the newspaper business, something he was interested in because his father had been a journalist. Other times, we'd talk about the perils of medicine, mainly how difficult insurance companies made it to run a successful practice.

Despite challenges, Dr. Bishop provided excellent care. This patient is certainly going to miss him. Farewell, good doctor.

Melissa Daugherty is editor-at-large for the Chico News & Review