

Big Sur Fire News December 2018 Farewell

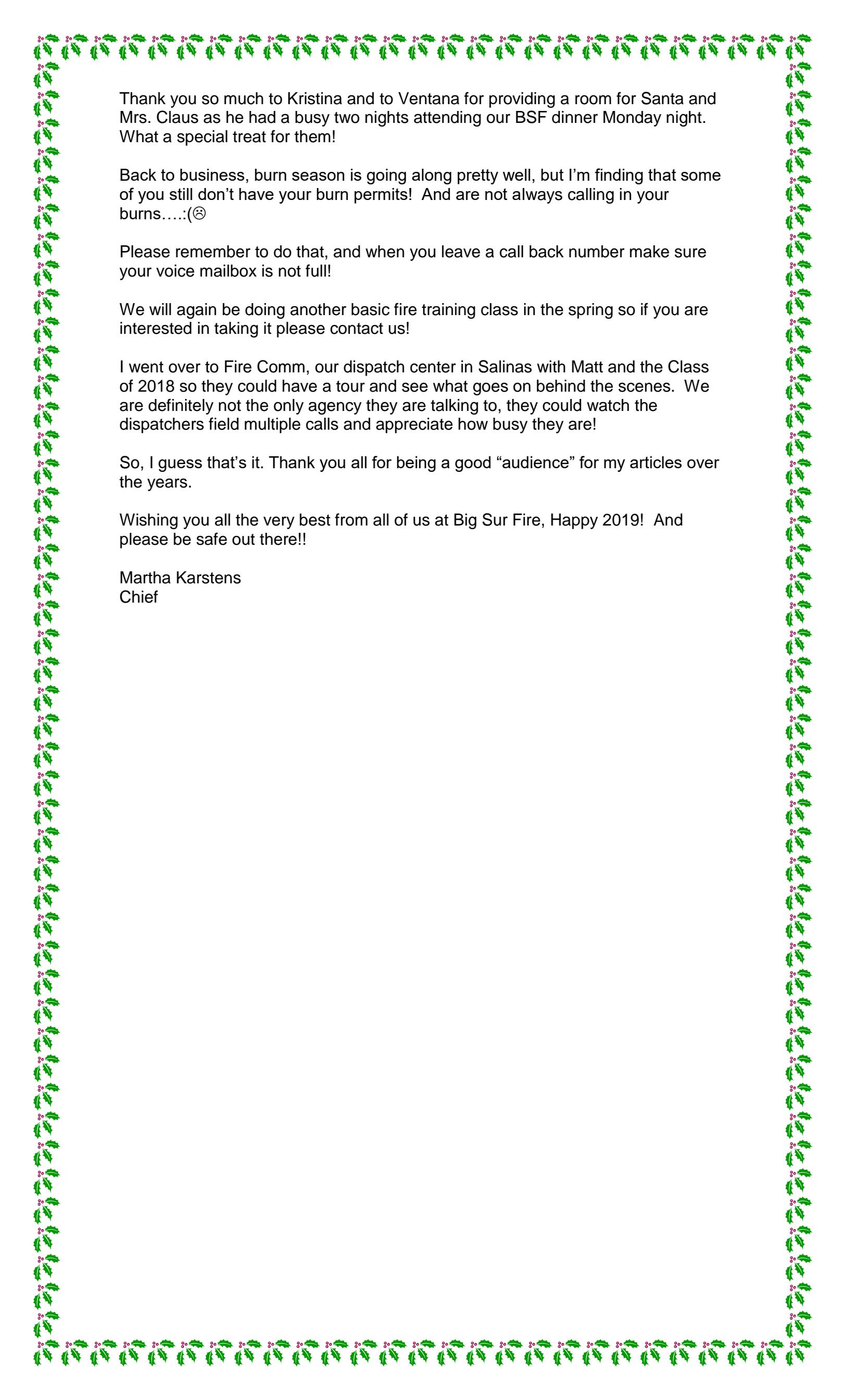
Bittersweet, this is the word Mike Higgins suggested as to how I might be feeling, how right he is. Bittersweet, I have rarely, if ever, used this word but it is now so very apt and appropriate for what I am feeling.

This will be my last article for Big Sur Fire...I will miss many things that I have done over the years as a Red Cross ambulance volunteer EMT and a Big Sur Fire (Brigade) member. One of which has been writing these articles. I must confess I will not miss the deadlines always looming!!! Lately everyone has been so sweet and kind with their comments to me. Our Face Book page has over a hundred posts from well-wishers for my "retirement". I received many emails after the word went out, my favorite being the one from the person saying she always thought I was a "bad ass super woman", can I say that in the Round Up? Retirement to me is for someone who has sat behind a desk or had a real job for 40 years. How can you classify what I do as a "job" with the most magnificent backdrop in the world around you while you "work" and volunteer. How many other people can have condors flying overhead or whales spouting and breaching in the ocean at their "workplace". So many memories of calls, some good, some not so good, some even humorous, countless trips driving on Highway One, even the late night calls could be beautiful with the full moon coming up over the hills, nothing prettier than that in my opinion. Memories of walking over Hurricane Point in '83 when the road was out to go pick up our new ambulance, sitting in the middle of the highway with Mary and our dogs because there was no traffic☺, having the rescue team come out to rescue Mary's dog, who fell over the side near south 40, so many road closures and the challenges they all presented! So many thousands of hours spent along Highway one and in the mountains down here!

I will miss going on the calls and driving my truck code 3, I will miss seeing the people I have gotten to know over the years in the emergency services "family", although some of them I will be keeping in touch with. I will miss the good feeling of helping to make someone's otherwise bad day possibly a little better, I even enjoyed flagging traffic!! But most of all I will miss helping to take care of the people in Big Sur..... We shall see what the New Year brings with no pagers or radios, another chapter as they say.

We have had a busy month with our annual dinner again generously hosted by Nepenthe. As always it was just delicious! We do our annual awards at this time as well. Matt Harris handed out our beautiful new badges to all the members. The Class of 2018 was honored for all their time and hard work over the last year. We had a "funny" award with Oscars, (just like Hollywood) going to the best actor and actress for their incredible performances as an injured Husband and Wife in one of our motor vehicle accident scenarios, just hilarious, one of those things you had to be there to appreciate☺ Lyle Southall received the "Rookie of the Year" award, so well deserved, his great grandfather Walter, our first Chief would be so proud. Volunteer of the Year went to Fabian Perez, for all his accomplishments in addition to just being such a willing BSF member. Thank you so very much to Kirk, Holly and Nepenthe for hosting Big Sur Fire!! What a wonderful way to wrap up the year!

Santa Claus also again found time in his busy schedule to "fly" around in BSF's big red engine handing out gifts to all the children. What fun that is!! We started at the party for the children at Ventana, who knew there were so many kids in Big Sur??!!!! They were all just beside themselves with excitement to have Santa arrive with sirens and flashing lights. We then went to River Inn and delivered three more bags of gifts, Santa led us all in singing Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer then we loaded up and made our way to Nepenthe for our final stop, enjoying hot cider and cookies. (don't tell the kids but after changing clothes Santa came back and with his helpers all enjoyed ambis:☺)



Thank you so much to Kristina and to Ventana for providing a room for Santa and Mrs. Claus as he had a busy two nights attending our BSF dinner Monday night. What a special treat for them!

Back to business, burn season is going along pretty well, but I'm finding that some of you still don't have your burn permits! And are not always calling in your burns.....(☹)

Please remember to do that, and when you leave a call back number make sure your voice mailbox is not full!

We will again be doing another basic fire training class in the spring so if you are interested in taking it please contact us!

I went over to Fire Comm, our dispatch center in Salinas with Matt and the Class of 2018 so they could have a tour and see what goes on behind the scenes. We are definitely not the only agency they are talking to, they could watch the dispatchers field multiple calls and appreciate how busy they are!

So, I guess that's it. Thank you all for being a good "audience" for my articles over the years.

Wishing you all the very best from all of us at Big Sur Fire, Happy 2019! And please be safe out there!!

Martha Karstens
Chief