

VETERANS DAY 2009: Remembering those who have served

HIKING THE PARKS —pages 6~7



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WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THREE RIVERS AND SEQUOIA~KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS

CSD incumbents re-elected

by JOHN ELLIOTT

In the Tuesday, Nov. 3, election there was little of the fanfare generated by the presidential election of one year ago. There was, however, one race on the ballot with important implications for the monitoring of the Kaweah River and local water quality.

Within the boundaries of the Three Rivers Community Services District (CSD), 451 people went to the Three Rivers Memorial Building and voted to return incumbents Mike Cannarozzi (38 percent) and Rex Black (34 percent). Challenger Greg Meis (27 percent), a member of the board of directors of the North Kaweah Mutual Water Company, was unsuccessful in his bid to win one of the two four-year terms up for election.

Noteworthy in the local election was that there were 67 “under votes.” Under votes are tallied when the voter chooses to vote for only one instead of two of the three candidates vying for the two seats.

In other Tulare County election news, incumbents were not treated so kindly in the race for Visalia City Council. Former Visalia mayor Jesus Gamboa lost his bid for a fourth term. Incumbent Greg Collins is also expected to be unseated when all provisional votes are finally tallied.

In national results, Republicans made in-roads into a democratic plurality when conservative Bob McDonnell was elected as governor of Virginia. Republican Chris Christie also unseated the Democrat incumbent Jon Corzine in the New Jersey gubernatorial race.

—see **ELECTION**, page 11

BURNED OUT



The charred remains of a 1999 Toyota Camry that, for no apparent reason, burst into flames on Salt Creek Drive near the Craig Ranch. The driver had noticed the car was running hot when she returned home and was inside the house when it ignited. Firefighters responded quickly and doused the flames.

Missing Mount Whitney hiker found dead

The body of Kenneth “Wade” Brunette, 73, was discovered at the bottom of the east face of Mount Whitney near what climbers refer to as the “Mountaineer Route.” Discovery of the victim’s remains was made by an Inyo County search-and-rescue dog-sled team on Saturday, Oct. 31.

Brunette, from Hansville, Wash., was said to be day-hiking Mount Whitney, a 21-mile roundtrip, but was reported missing on Monday, Oct. 26, by his wife who was awaiting his return in nearby Lone Pine. The search for the missing hiker began Tuesday, Oct. 27.

The helicopters assigned to the multi-agency SAR team were grounded by extremely windy

conditions until late Wednesday. Ground searchers were unable to reach the summit until Thursday.

On Friday, Brunette’s pack and ice axe were spotted on the western slope of the mountain by the crew of a National Guard helicopter. The body was located the following day.

It is unknown if Brunette ever reached the summit of the 14,505-foot peak. According to Adrienne Freeman, Sequoia-Kings Canyon public affairs officer, he did not sign the register nor was any other evidence reportedly found on the peak.

He was reportedly last seen at Trail Crest, where the trail from

—see **HIKER**, page 11

Volunteers needed to keep 3R Ambulance rolling

by ANTOINETTE CLOUTIER

The state of the Three Rivers ambulance service was presented as a part of this month’s agenda at the Town Hall meeting on Monday, Nov. 2.

“With the new contract for county ambulance service in place, the entire system is stronger than before,” said Dale Dotson of Central California Emergency Services.

Discussion centered on response times and the call for additional Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) volunteers to keep the ambulance service local. The county response time criterion is 20 minutes or less.

If an ambulance company exceeds that limit they pay hefty fines. Three Rivers, being a rural area and staffed with volunteers, is exempted from the fines. However, there is a performance expectation that Three Rivers

Ambulance volunteers take seriously.

Sandy Owen, a Three Rivers EMT since 1974, said there is some discrepancy between what the county has for Three Rivers response times and the local logs kept by Three Rivers Ambulance. Three Rivers response times are mostly within the mandated response times, but there are unique challenges in the foothills.

Three Rivers is first on the scene for calls reaching up to Hospital Rock on Generals Highway and at the South Fork entrance to Sequoia National Park. This huge coverage area, along with other distance and communication factors, can skew the average response time to longer than 20 minutes for some calls.

“The average response time for September was just 16.3 minutes

—see **AMBULANCE**, page 10



ON THURSDAY, Oct. 29, campaign supporters helped John Zapolac (fifth from right), Woodlake chief of police, kick off his 2010 election campaign for Tulare County Sheriff/Coroner at the Visalia Marriott. —PHOTO COURTESY MIKE LONG

• KAWEAH COUNTRY OUTLOOK: three rivers • lemon cove • woodlake •

Saturday, November 7	Sunday, November 8	Monday, November 9	Tuesday, November 10	Wednesday, November 11	Thursday, November 12	Friday, November 13
Partly cloudy Hi 76 • Lo 49	Partly cloudy Hi 77 • Lo 50	Sunny Hi 82 • Lo 50	Partly cloudy Hi 81 • Lo 50	Clouds and sun Hi 78 • Lo 48	Sunny Hi 72 • Lo 48	Sunny Hi 69 • Lo 48

WEATHER WATCH

Cooler air will follow the moisture that passed through the Central Valley on Friday. Temperatures will feel a lot more like November with highs throughout the workweek around 70 degrees. There is a chance for a major rain event in the week before Thanksgiving, which should make cattle ranchers and ski operators a little more optimistic about heading into the holiday season. The sky will be at its darkest on Nov. 16, a perfect time for crisp, clear stargazing.