



NEWS



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Mixing things up at the annual Mt. Baldy fire fundraiser

Mick Rhodes, Claremont Courier

Posted: June 16, 2016, 4:23 PM

Mt. Baldy Fire Department's 59th annual fundraiser takes place Saturday, June 25, from noon to 8 p.m., and this year the traditional steak fry has given way to two of the more trendy culinary fads of the moment—food trucks and craft beer.

"It's kind of a popular thing, so we thought we'd give it a whirl this year and see what happens," said Mt. Baldy Fire Chief Graham Hendrickson.

The annual event has routinely provided about half of the department's approximately \$50,000 yearly budget, but recently those numbers have begun to wane. In the past, tickets were \$25 and there were about 1,000 dinners served.

Profits have been steadily declining, said Chief Hendrickson, and raising the prices to cover the shortfall didn't sit well with him.

"That's a lot of money when you bring your whole family up," he said. "This way, it might be a little more affordable for families."

Instead of charging per meal, this year patrons will pay gate fee, then pick and choose between three food trucks (Eat 'em Up, Bacon Nation and Mustache Mike's). Guests 21 and over have four craft breweries from which to choose: Last Name Brewing, Old Stump Brewing, La Verne Brewing and Fireman's Brew.

Entertainment this year will be provided by classic rock cover bands The Huge and The Fugitives.

The tax deductible entry fee is \$10 for those 13 and up and \$5 for kids ages six through 12. Kids five years and under are free.

The Mt. Baldy Fire Department is an all-volunteer unit—one of just a handful in Southern California—made up of 17 men and women. The crew's day jobs include engineers, airline pilots, ambulance services, firefighters and retirees. All of the firefighters live in Mt. Baldy.

Chief Hendrickson, a Pitzer College grad, has been with the department 32 years. He joined when he was 18, and spent 15 years as assistant chief before being appointed chief in 2015, following longtime chief Bill Stead's retirement.

"It's to serve our community and protect our own," Chief Hendrickson said of the all volunteer force.

His own son, Blake Hendrickson, also has the service bug, having joined the department when he was 18, in 2012. His day job is as a **San Bernardino County Fire Department** ambulance operator.

"It's kind of a tradition for kids that grow up in the community, when they turn 18, to become part of the department," Chief Hendrickson explained.

It remains to be seen whether bucking tradition and trying something new will be a success with respect to the department's annual fundraiser. Chief Hendrickson said he will go with the flow and see where it leads.

“I tell all my guys, ‘You know, it’s either going to be a huge success or a big flop,’” he said. “If it’s a big flop we can always go back to the way we used to do it.”

Mt. Baldy Fire Department’s fundraiser runs from noon to 8 p.m. next Saturday, June 25, at Mt. Baldy Trout Pools, located at 6945 Mt. Baldy Rd. More information is available at mtbaldyfire.com or (909) 982-1213.

<https://www.claremont-courier.com/articles/news/T19479>

Santa Barbara fire explodes to 1,700 acres and again closes Highway 101

Alexia Fernandez, Jason Song and Joseph Serna, Los Angeles Times

Posted: June 16, 2016, 11:44 PM



A wildfire near Santa Barbara continued to grow Thursday and spread deeper into the Los Padres National Forest as crews struggled to find hilltops and trailheads where they could mount a strong defense, officials said.

“The fuel, topography and weather have been very challenging, to say the least, with this fire,” said Capt. Dave Zaniboni of the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. “This has been a significant and challenging fire in an area notorious for structure loss.”

The Sherpa fire grew in size overnight as sustained 40-mph winds pushed the blaze across areas that hadn’t burned in 60 years, officials said. The flames crawled toward Highway 101 between El Capitan State Beach and Gaviota, forcing the California Highway Patrol to shut down the coastal route for a time Thursday morning.



Los Padres National Forest fire (Dillon Deaton / Los Angeles Times)

By early evening, the fire had burned 1,700 acres and forced the California Highway Patrol to again close Highway 101 for 30 miles between Winchester Canyon Road and Highway 246 in Boulton.

Photos on social media show vehicles driving through the 101 was the center median on fire and a chopper dropping water onto the highway.

The blaze began about 3:20 p.m. Wednesday near Refugio Road, the site of a devastating fire in 1955 that scorched homes and farms and burned more than 50,000 acres before it was done.

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office said mandatory evacuations for El Capitan, Refugio, Venadito and Las Flores canyons north of Santa Barbara remained in effect, while residents of neighboring communities such as Las Llagas, Gato, Las Varas, Dos Pueblos and Eagle canyons received evacuation warnings.



Sources: USDA Fire Service, Google Earth, Times reporting (Los Angeles Times Graphics)

Among those who were evacuated late Wednesday night were Charlie and Elizabeth Hatten, who were camping at El Capitan State Beach.

The couple had heard that a small brushfire was burning to the north, and suspected things were getting worse as ash began to rain down on them later in the evening, prompting them to sleep in their car.

A park ranger woke them up and told them they had to evacuate.

"The flames looked so close," Charlie Hatten said. "You couldn't see the moon anymore."

The couple headed to Santa Barbara Community College, where the American Red Cross had cots and water for evacuees.

"There were a dozen RVs in the parking lot last night," said Gayle Robinson, a volunteer for the Red Cross. "This place can hold up to 120 people."

The fire is burning in steep, chaparral-covered terrain in Los Padres National Forest and spreading east where there are no roads and few trails, Santa Barbara County Fire Chief Eric Peterson said.

On Thursday, DC-10 air tankers bombarded the blaze with fire retardant. The jets were among a number of aircraft that fire crews were using in the battle. More than 400 firefighters are involved, officials said.

No injuries or structural damage has been reported, according to the U.S. Forest Service, which is directing the firefight with the Santa Barbara County Fire Department.

But fire officials said erratic "sundowner" winds could pose a danger to some areas such as Refugio Canyon, where 60 homes are located, and El Capitan Ranch, where 80 homes are located. And flames could pose a threat to Circle Bar B Ranch, a guest ranch in Goleta.

"We're going to get ... 35-to-40-mph winds tonight," U.S. Forest Supervising Chief Robert Baird said. "We have more resources going to the areas where we expect the fire to go."

More than 800 fire personnel are on scene and reinforcing fire lines to prevent the blaze from spreading. So far there is no containment of the fire.

An evacuation center has been opened at Wake Center, 300 N. Turnpike Road in Santa Barbara. Horses and other large animals can be taken to the Earl Warren Showgrounds in Santa Barbara.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Hatten, the evacuated camper, predicted that the Sherpa fire would be one of a number to strike this summer.

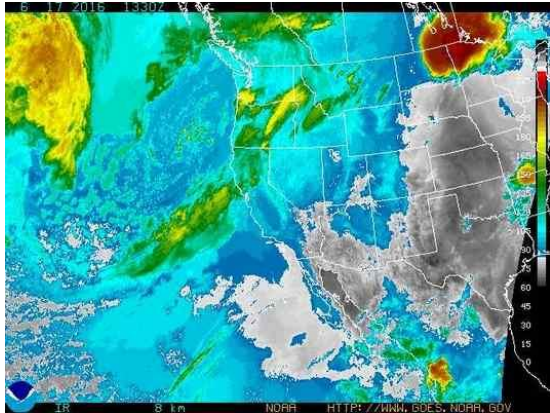
"They were expecting El Niño, and that didn't quite happen," he said. "Fires are going to get worse this season. This weather's going to make the perfect storm."

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-santa-barbara-fire-refugio-20160616-snap-story.html>

Southern California, are you ready for triple-digit heat?

City News Service, LA News Group

Posted: June 17, 2016, 7:32 AM



High barometric pressure in the Southwest on Friday, June 17, 2016, is keeping clouds out of Southern California and is about to trap heat in. Dangerously high temperatures continue to be forecast for Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. (Enhanced infrared satellite image courtesy of NOAA)

LOS ANGELES — Southland residents were under warning today to protect themselves, their loved ones, their pets and the power grid during the heat wave expected to start over the weekend and last through early next week.

Temperatures are forecast to climb sharply starting Saturday, with Monday expected to be the event's hottest day, with temperatures ranging between 100 and 110 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the National Weather Service. Next week's "dangerously hot conditions" will result from "an extremely strong area of high pressure" over Arizona and New Mexico, according to an NWS statement.

Some relief is expected in coastal and valley areas Tuesday, but the San Gabriel Mountains and the Santa Clarita Valley "will remain dangerously hot," according to an NWS statement.

The NWS issued an excessive heat watch that will be in force in most of L.A. County from Monday morning until Monday night but expire only Tuesday evening in the Santa Clarita and Antelope valleys.

"Dangerous heat-related illness is possible, especially for sensitive populations, those conducting outdoor activities, and people without access to air conditioning," according to an NWS statement.

Forecasters urged Southland residents to schedule outdoor work only early in the morning or in the evening, wear light, loose clothing, drink plenty of water and guard against heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

"Anyone overcome by heat should be moved to a cool and shaded location. Heat stroke is an emergency -- call 911," warned an NWS statement. It added: "Never, ever leave people or pets in enclosed vehicles, even for a short time."

The warning about leaving people in hot cars applies especially to children and the elderly. And monitoring pets needs to extend outside the family vehicle, according to animal experts.

Los Angeles city animal services officials say pet owners must make sure their cats, dogs and other animals are kept cool during the heat wave. Pet owners should watch for signs of heatstroke, such as fast and noisy breathing, difficulty swallowing and distressed behavior.

If heatstroke is suspected, pet owners should place a cold, wet towel on the back of the animal's head, and towel-wrapped cold compresses on their back legs and belly. The pet should be immediately taken to the veterinarian to be checked.

Other tips include:

- Making sure the pet has fresh drinking water served in a large container, instead of a shallow bowl, to allow the water to remain cold longer
- Giving your dog ice cubes to eat or adding them to the water bowl
- Avoid burning dogs' paws by keeping them off of hot pavement or concrete during walks, and if necessarily do the walks early or later in the day when it is cooler
- Taking extra care to provide shade to pets with lighter coats because they are more likely to be sunburned

Also of concern is the state's power grid, prompting Los Angeles Department of Water and Power officials to urge customers to reduce their energy use whenever possible.

"During times of extreme heat, we strongly encourage customers to conserve electricity as long as it does not jeopardize their health," DWP General Manager Marcie Edwards said. "Doing simple things such as turning up your thermostat to 78 degrees and turning off your lights will save electricity use and reduce the risk of outages."

DWP officials noted that outages can occur during episodes of high heat when residents and businesses crank up their air conditioners at the same time. According to the utility, conservation is particularly essential from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The utility recommended that customers save energy by:

- Turning thermostats to 78 degrees or higher
- Turning off unnecessary lights
- Adjusting water heaters to 120 degrees
- Using major appliances only late in the evening or early in the morning
- Turning off pool pumps

Residents were also urged to prepare for possible power outages by having flashlights and batteries readily available and keeping a battery-operated radio handy. DWP officials also recommended that people keep a phone charger in a car to ensure they can contact friends or relatives during an outage, keep a supply of non-perishable food and have a cooler available to use for food that needs to be refrigerated.

The NWS forecast sunny skies today and highs of 69 in Big Bear; 71 in Avalon; 73 at LAX; 74 in Torrance; 75 in San Pedro; 79 in downtown L.A.; 80 in Long Beach and on Mount Wilson; 83 in San Gabriel, North Hollywood and Burbank; 84 in Whittier; 85 in Van Nuys; 86 in Pasadena and Rancho Cucamonga; 87 in West Covina and Ontario; 88 in Northridge, San Bernardino and Redlands; and 89 in Woodland Hills, Saugus, Lancaster, and Palmdale.

Temperatures will climb Saturday -- minimally in some communities, sharply in others -- and again on Sunday and Monday.

Downtown L.A., for example, is forecast to have a high of 79 today, 86 Saturday, 92 Sunday, 100 Monday and 91 Tuesday before slipping back into the 80s. At the same time, Woodland Hills is forecast to reach 89 today, 98 Saturday, 106 Sunday, 110 Monday and 101 Tuesday before reverting to the 90s.

<http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20160617/southern-california-are-you-ready-for-triple-digit-heat>

Wildfires continue to burn near Santa Barbara, in New Mexico

Associated Press via LA News Group

Posted: June 17, 2016, 7:55 AM



In this photo provided by the Santa Barbara County Fire Department, a firefighter knocks down flames as they approach a ranch near the Las Flores Canyon area west of Goleta in the early morning hours of Thursday, June 16, 2016. (Mike Eliason/Santa Barbara County Fire Department via AP)



In this image made from video, a wildfire burns in a remote coastal area west of Santa Barbara on Thursday, June 16, 2016. (KABC-7 via AP)

GOLETA — The Latest on wildfires in the Western U.S. (all times local):

8 a.m.

A wildfire racing across central New Mexico has charred more than 26 square miles and destroyed two dozen homes near the small community of Chilili.

Authorities said Friday that the latest infrared mapping shows the fire is holding south and west of State Highway 337 and is a half-mile from Chilili, which was evacuated earlier this week as the fire ballooned in size thanks to hot, dry and windy conditions.

Authorities expanded the area covered by mandatory evacuations overnight to include a few more subdivisions. They could not immediately say how many homes were immediately threatened by the fire.

Several roads are closed in the area and shelters have been set up in surrounding communities.

7 a.m.

A wildfire west of Santa Barbara is still burning out of control in coastal canyons above the Pacific Ocean.

The blaze burned down to U.S. 101 overnight, forcing closure of one of California's major north-south highways from 8:30 p.m. Thursday until it was reopened shortly before dawn Friday.

The fire was last measured at just over 2 square miles, but that number is expected to increase when officials hold a late-morning press conference.

The blaze broke out Wednesday afternoon and has been churning through vegetation that hasn't burned in decades. Despite vigorous fire activity, there have been no injuries and no loss of homes.

7:39 a.m.

A wildfire burning in tinder dry forest and grassland in central New Mexico southeast of Albuquerque has destroyed 24 homes and 21 minor structures.

Fire managers released the damage information overnight after saying previously that the blaze destroyed some structures near the small community of Chilili as it made a big push Wednesday night.

Approximately 630 personnel are assigned to the fire. It has burned 25 square miles since it started Tuesday morning.

The cause remains under investigation.

Gov. Susana Martinez declared a state of emergency hours before residents in Chilili, Merced, Escobosa and Yrisarri were forced to leave their homes Wednesday.

<http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20160617/wildfires-continue-to-burn-near-santa-barbara-in-new-mexico>

Fireworks Alert from San Bernardino County Fire

Staff Reports, High Desert Daily

Posted: June 17, 2016

(Victor Valley)– Possession of any type of fireworks, including “safe and sane” fireworks, is against the law in any unincorporated area of San Bernardino County. In the event a fire occurs due to the unsafe use of fireworks, the responsible persons are likely to face criminal charges and be held liable for damages.

“Safe and Sane” fireworks are only allowed in the following cities: Adelanto, Barstow, Chino, Colton, and Rialto, as well as specific locations in Fontana, Grand Terrace, and San Bernardino. Please call the fire department in these cities for more information. All fireworks are illegal elsewhere in the county. All fireworks that explode, shoot into the air or move along the ground are termed dangerous and are illegal anywhere in California.

With San Bernardino County facing a dangerous wildland fire season, the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** (SBCoFD) has increased its vigilance in enforcing state and county firework laws to protect public health and safety. Fire officials will be issuing citations for the illegal use of fireworks, with fines up to \$1,250 for the first offense with the possibility of arrest. Property owners may be cited if they allow fireworks to be possessed, stored or used on their property.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, on a typical 4th of July, fireworks cause more fires in the U.S. than all other causes combined. While “Safe and Sane” fireworks are allowed in some San Bernardino County communities, the County Board of Supervisors and SBCoFD encourage residents to watch fireworks at community celebrations rather than use their own. Visit sbcofd.org for a schedule of local firework displays.

When using fireworks where allowed, SBCoFD offers some safety tips:

- Always use fireworks (“Safe and Sane” only) with an adult present. Even a “Safe and Sane” sparkler burns at a temperature that ignites clothing easily
- Always read and follow label directions
- Always have water (garden hose/bucket) and a fire extinguisher within reach
- Always place fireworks on a firm, non-combustible surface, like a sidewalk or pavement
- Never alter fireworks
- Never re-light “dud” fireworks
- Homemade fireworks are often deadly; leave the making of fireworks to the experts
- Never point, throw or mishandle fireworks

In addition to fires, fireworks cause deaths, blindness, and maiming injuries to children and adults every year. For more information on fireworks safety, contact your local fire station.

Have a SAFE celebration!

<http://highdesertdaily.com/2016/06/fireworks-alert-san-bernardino-county-fire/>

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