



NEWS



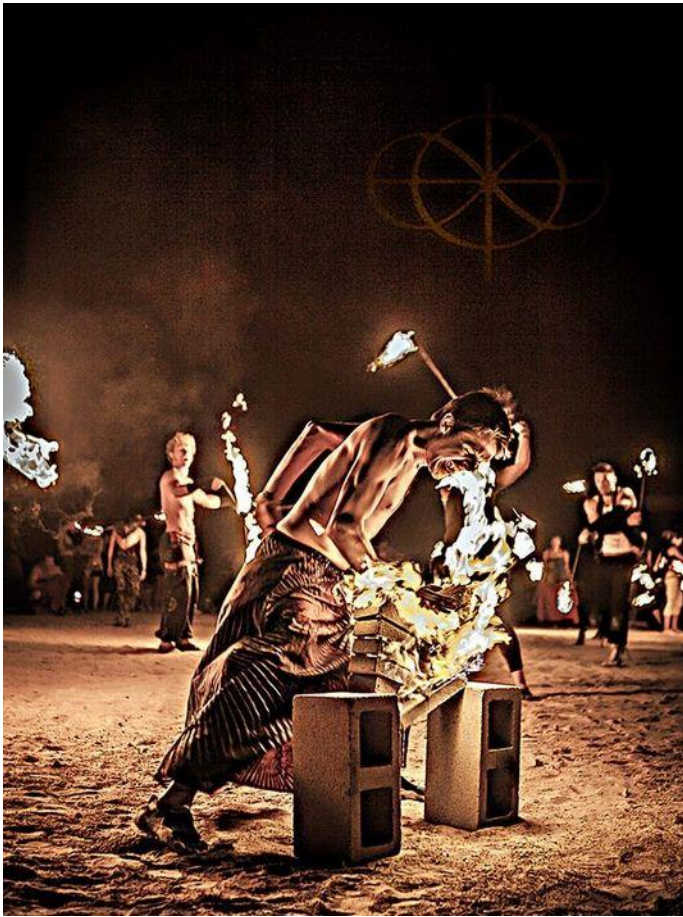
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Burning Man-styled conference IgNights Joshua Tree

Bruce Fessier, *The Desert Sun*

Posted: June 15, 2016, 9:51 AM



(Photo: Courtesy of The IgNight Conference)

Screenwriter Michael Engel used to attend Burning Man -- the week-long gathering in Northern Nevada dedicated to community, art and self-expression -- with his friend, Burning Dan.

Burning Dan's dream was to one day create a conference dedicated to the art and philosophy of fire flow, an extension of what Engel calls the flow arts or "moving meditation."

Fire flow, says Engel, is literally playing with fire in a large outdoor circle.

Burning Dan died in 2011, but his passion for a fire flow conference affected Engel so deeply, he literally took the torch from Burning Dan and founded the three-day IgNight Conference at the Joshua Tree Retreat Center off Highway 62.

The fourth annual IgNight starts Friday with activities including flame-throwing, fire dancing, fire juggling and a re-creation of the Polynesian myth of how fire came to humans from Pele, the Polynesian god of fire. It all happens within a 150-foot circle that spokeswoman Susan von Seggern calls the nation's largest fire circle next to Burning Man.



The ancient art of spinning fire is featured at the IgNight Conference in Joshua Tree. (Photo: Courtesy of The IgNight Conference)

“We have a lot of different fire spinners,” Engel said. “A lot of licensed pyro-technicians from the film industry are coming, some of them wearing portable flame throwers, which you wear with a backpack. There’s a guy that does amber spinning. We have all these beautiful flying ambers up in the air and he creates a show just on that. You have hoops and staff, poi (the practice of swinging lit, tethered weights in rhythmical and geometric patterns), fire juggling with clubs, stilts fire walking. I run this event and every year, I’m constantly surprised with what people come up with. It’s a new art form. Every year people show up with stuff and I’m like, ‘What the hell is that thing?’”

The conference is more than just about spinning sticks or ropes of fire. The weekend features 192 workshops in 12 different venues on the campus designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. They include any type of activity that features movement and meditation.

“We have 12 different classes running concurrently,” Engel said, “including archery, fire walking, sweat lodges, yoga, martial arts, knife throwing – you name it. You will find something to get you out of your funk and focused on the now. If you’re asking me what my motivation for this is, it’s to teach people to focus on the now. We give them tools for that.”

Engel doesn’t know how many fire flow conferences there are in the world. But, with 800 people coming to IgNight, including teachers and volunteer helpers, he figures IgNight is probably the biggest in the United States. He attended the Fire Drums conference in Northern California. He sees the flow arts as a means to reduce stress, even though he’s been meditating regularly since he was 16.

Now in his 40s, Engel was president of the nonprofit Scriptwriters Network in Los Angeles, which staged 40 events per year, including a Seminar with Hollywood, to help young people. He made the 2002 documentary, “Xingu, Land of No Shame,” exploring the daily rituals and culture of the Xingu inhabitants of the Lower Amazon Basin, and acted in the 2006 Deepak Chopra film, “How To Know God.”

He said he founded IgNight because he didn’t see anyone teaching the many varieties of flow arts he had discovered.

“The biggest killer in America is stress,” he said from Los Angeles. “We find that one way people can reduce stress is by meditation. Most people in the Western world do not want to sit down and meditate for any given amount of time because it’s a difficult thing to do. But they would do a moving meditation. So we are teaching moving meditation.”

The conference literally goes 'round the clock on Saturday. Attendees get up at dawn and check into a sweat lodge. Then they take a yoga class and attend workshops throughout the day. Engel said he spent six months finding and scheduling instructors for all the different kinds of flow arts in the conference, including “Intro to Fan Throws,” “Club Passing: Tricks and Technique,” “Ritual Magick” and “Bare With Us – Burlesque.”

One of his biggest challenges was finding a Buugeng teacher.

“Because it’s a new form,” he said. “When you see it, you’re like, ‘What the hell is this thing.’ But it’s such an amazing thing and so hypnotizing. I own a pair of Buugeng (squiggle sticks) and when I play, children stop. ‘What is that?’”

At 8 p.m., all of the instructors, and their students, go inside the fire circle to exhibit their skills or stand outside to observe. But first, all of the fire flow artists have to take a half-hour fire safety class and be certified by the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**. Sheriff’s deputies are also there and, if they find any of the participants are inebriated, they aren’t allowed to “spin fire.”

“After that, we open the circle for everyone to spin,” Engel said. “Our fire circle is comparable to the (Burning Man) conclave where they burn the man because we can have over 100 people spinning fire at the same time. And you’re talking about the best fire spinners in the world. So it’s a site to see.”

It’s a bit much to take in all at once, so the conference offers a \$100 Saturday evening pass where people can come and watch or try their hand at fire spinning after taking the fire safety class. The evening also features DJs, food from a cafeteria, stargazing from an observatory and many opportunities to make your own entertainment.

“It is a spectacle,” Engel said. “It’s unlike anything you’ll ever see, unless you go to Burning Man.”



The IgNight Conference will be rekindled for the fourth year in Joshua Tree beginning Friday. (Photo: Courtesy of The IgNight Conference)

IgNightning the fires

What: IgNight, a flow arts conference

When: Noon Friday through 5 p.m. Sunday

Where: Joshua Tree Retreat Center, 59-700 Highway 62, Joshua Tree

Tickets: \$195, for all three days, including camping; \$100 for Saturday evening only from 5 p.m. to dawn.

Must be 18 and over.

Information: ignightconference.com

<http://www.desertsun.com/story/life/entertainment/events/2016/06/15/burning-man-styled-conference-ignights-joshua-tree/85894732/>

Woman suffers severe head trauma in I-15 crash

Paola Baker and Monica Solano, Daily Press

Posted: June 15, 2016, 5:41 PM

Updated: June 15, 2016, 6:05 PM

VICTORVILLE — A woman was airlifted with major head injuries after a rollover crash on Interstate 15 on Wednesday, authorities said.

Reports of a crash on southbound I-15 north of Stoddard Wells Road and south of Dale Evans Parkway were received just before 4 p.m. According to California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Mumford, a blue Chevy sedan was headed southbound at “an elevated speed” and drifted off the road before it made a sharp right turn and overturned in the desert.

CHP traffic logs indicated the vehicle was seen all over the road and almost hit other vehicles before before going off the roadway and overturning. It is not yet known if there were other factors besides speed that caused the crash, authorities said.

San Bernardino County Fire Department and Apple Valley Fire Protection District officials arrived to provide medical aid. Mumford said the driver of the Chevy, a woman from Apple Valley, suffered severe head trauma. A medical helicopter was requested to take her to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center for treatment.

No other passengers were in the Chevy and no other vehicles were involved in the crash.

The crash remains under investigation by the Victorville CHP. More information will be updated as it is received.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20160615/woman-suffers-severe-head-trauma-in-i-15-crash>

Two-alarm fire damages two San Bernardino houses

John M. Blodgett, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Posted: June 15, 2016, 9:45 PM

Updated: June 16, 2016, 4:30 AM



Firefighters work to put out a house fire in the 1100 block of Bobbett Drive in San Bernardino Wednesday evening. Photo by John M. Blodgett



Firefighters mop up a house fire in the 1100 block of Bobbett Drive of San Bernardino Wednesday evening. Photo by John M. Blodgett

SAN BERNARDINO >> Firefighters from six agencies responded Wednesday evening to a two-alarm fire that damaged two houses in the 1100 block of Bobbett Drive.

San Bernardino City firefighter Mike Arvizo was not aware of any injuries. Rhianon Alvarez, who said she lives a few houses down the street, said that one of the two houses had been abandoned since February.

The fire, which was reported at 5:41 p.m., took about 90 minutes to knock down, Arvizo said. "Packrat conditions" inside the larger of the two houses, where the fire apparently started, forced firefighters to begin their attack from outside, he said.

The fire then spread to a small house behind the house to the south, Arvizo said.

Powerlines behind the larger house collapsed, and Alvarez reported seeing electrical boxes explode.

San Bernardino City fire battalion chief Mike Bilheimer said Wednesday night the fire was under investigation.

More than a dozen fire trucks from San Bernardino City, **San Bernardino County**, San Manuel, Rialto, Redlands and Colton fire departments responded and staged along Bobbett Drive and nearby Base Line.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160615/two-alarm-fire-damages-two-san-bernardino-houses>

County Increasing Firefighter Coverage

Mike Harris, Mountain News

Posted: June 16, 2016, 6:00 AM

Fulfilling a promise she made more than a year ago to Crest Forest area residents, **County Fire's** Mountain Division Chief, Kathleen Opliger, will increase the number of firefighters staffing engine companies at Stations 25 and 26.

“Yes, I’m thrilled to be able to do this,” Opliger told the Mountain News. “It was a promise I made. We got support from the board of supervisors and (county chief executive officer) Gregory Devereaux and I couldn’t be more thrilled.”

The promise was made to residents and property owners in the Crest Forest area, including the communities of Crestline and Twin Peaks during the final stages of the county annexing Crest Forest Fire Protection District and taking over fire suppression services.

In the annexation, Crest Forest Fire Protection District was dissolved as an agency on June 30, 2015, and Station 25 in Crestline and Station 26 in Twin Peaks, along with all capital equipment such as fire engines and ambulances, cc become the property of the county.

Just before the annexation took place, Opliger promised residents that she would do everything she could as division chief to increase engine staffing on Medical Engine 25 at Station 25 and Medical Engine 26 at Station 26 in Twin Peaks, going from two firefighters to three.

The move is important because there must be a minimum of three firefighters reporting to any incident of fire. What the county has been doing is sending a medical engine and an ambulance, each staffed by two firefighters or firefighter paramedics to each incident.

That meant there were times when a medical ambulance and its two-person crew had to be sent from one of the county’s other fire stations, meaning response times might not be as quick.

The increased staffing was approved in the county’s fire agency budget for 2016-17. At Tuesday’s board of supervisors meeting, the new budget was approved unanimously.

Mountain Regional Service Zone’s budget will increase by just over \$2.6 million, adding 15 positions for the conversion of limited term firefighters to regular staffing status.

Opliger also said that another of her promises, creating a commemorative park area at the Station 25 site in Crestline’s Top Town section, is still in the works. The park will honor Crest Forest Fire’s 85 years of service. It will include a building to house Crest Forest Fire’s classic 1929 Studebaker fire engine, Crest 1, and a small museum to showcase Crest Forest Fire memorabilia.

Opliger said she is budgeting roughly \$30,000 a year to put toward the park.

“There’s \$30,000 to get started with plans for the retaining wall and plans for interpretive markers,” she said. “I plan additional funds over the next three years so can have (the commemorative park) in five years.”

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_9b5b54f6-3357-11e6-b303-c74bb67a832a.html

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