



NEWS



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Serrano High student may be first fatality of Bluecut Fire

Ashlee Fischer, 16, suffered from asthma, died 3 days after blaze started

Rene Ray De La Cruz, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: September 13, 2016, 12:37 PM



Former Serrano High School student Ashlee Fischer, 16, will be remembered during a memorial service at SHS on Saturday. Photo courtesy of Laura Bergener

HESPERIA — Laura Bergener said she is struggling as her family prepares for a memorial service for her granddaughter, Ashlee Fischer, who died last month.

Bergener, who lives in Hesperia with her granddaughter and daughter, told the Daily Press smoke from the recent Bluecut Fire may have contributed to Ashlee's death as the 16-year-old Serrano High School student suffered from severe asthma.

After the fire started on Aug. 21, smoke filled portions of the Victor Valley, resulting in a smoke advisory issued by area air quality management districts. Air quality also forced the closing of several school districts, including Hesperia and Snowline.

“Two days after the Bluecut Fire started, I was sent to the hospital because I was having problems breathing because of my COPD,” Bergener said. “Ashlee died at about 4:30 a.m. at home on Aug. 24. Her mother (Loraine Fischer) found her in the hallway in the morning.”

Bergener said her granddaughter, who had asthma since middle school, was probably struggling to breath as she traveled down the hall in an attempt to reach her mother's bedroom.

“We all live together in Hesperia and I probably would have found Ashlee and maybe been able to help her if I was at home — that's the guilt that is eating me alive,” Bergener said. “Ashlee's father died in 2010 and I know that her 11-year-old brother, Chase, is having a very hard time.”

Bergener said Ashlee's asthma was so severe that she'd been admitted to the pediatric ICU at Loma Linda University Medical Center roughly eight times over the last five years.

“She was going to be the editor of the yearbook this year and she was well-loved by the students and teachers,” Bergener said. “When she graduated from fifth grade, her second-grade teacher gave her a check for \$50 just because she was a good kid.”

Bergener said Ashlee’s memorial service is scheduled for Saturday at Serrano High School, a place where her granddaughter was a photographer for the school’s yearbook, played in the band, taught kids how to tie-dye clothes and was a straight-A student.

Ashlee's career goal was to become a respiratory therapist to help other people who were struggling to breathe. One day, Ashlee told a parent that their small child had asthma, a diagnosis that was later confirmed by a physician, her grandmother said.

Deputy Lewison with the San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner Department confirmed with the Daily Press the date of Fischer’s death, but also added, “We don’t have a cause of death right now. We can’t say what happened.”

High Desert Phoenix Foundation founder Julie Norton told the Daily Press her group has paid for Ashlee’s cremation and for the flowers that will be on display at her memorial service.

“It’s always a tragedy when a life so young is taken from us,” Norton said. “We are here for the family and we’ll do everything that we can to help them.”

Ashlee's memorial service is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday at Serrano High School, 9292 Sheep Creek Road in Phelan.

Donations to help Ashlee's family can be made through the High Desert Phoenix Foundation at www.hdphoenixfoundation.com or by calling 760-247-2290.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160913/NEWS/160919912>

Fatal multi-vehicle crash shuts down Phelan Road

Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: September 13, 2016, 3:40 PM



A Ford Focus was involved in a fatal traffic collision involving three vehicles on Phelan and Nevada Road in Phelan on Tuesday. David Pardo, Daily Press

PHELAN — A woman was killed in a multi-vehicle crash on Phelan Road on Tuesday afternoon.

The crash was reported just before 1 p.m. near Nevada Road in the 7000 block of Phelan Road and authorities at the scene told the Daily Press that it involved a white Ford Fusion sedan, a silver Ford Focus and a Dodge Dually towing a trailer.

According to authorities, one of the vehicles was heading west on Phelan Road when it was rear-ended, causing it to strike another vehicle. More information about the crash was not immediately available.

Extrication was required to free one person who was trapped in their vehicle, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department's** Twitter account, and an ambulance was called for transportation.

A woman was pronounced dead at the scene, authorities said.

The crash shut down Phelan Road for a period of time, but it was back open as of 3:15 p.m.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20160913/fatal-multi-vehicle-crash-shuts-down-phelan-road>

Fatal Crash Shutdown Phelan Road

Victor Valley News

Posted: September 13, 2016



(photo by Hugo C. Valdez, Victor Valley News)

PHELAN, CA:(VVNG.com)- A woman was killed following a major damage traffic collision on Phelan Road Tuesday afternoon.

At about 12:48 pm. dispatch received a report of a multi-vehicle crash at Phelan Road and Nevada Road.

Upon arrival, officers located a gray Ford Focus and a white Ford Fusion near the intersection with major damage blocking the roadway.

The third vehicle involved, a silver Dodge Dually towing a trailer was along the shoulder approximately 100 feet from the intersection with moderate front end damage.

Per a **San Bernardino County Fire** tweet, one person was trapped and required extrication from one of the involved vehicles.

According to public information officer Eric Sherwin, one person was pronounced dead at the scene and two others were injured.

“One person was transported by ground ambulance to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center with moderate injuries. A third patient declined medical transportation at the scene,” stated Sherwin.

At this time the cause of the accident remains under investigation.

Phelan Road will be closed in both directions for an unknown duration.

Information will be updated as it becomes available.

<http://www.vvng.com/fatal-crash-shutdown-phelan-road/>

Update: Vegetation Fire In Area Of East Foothill And Sterling In San Bernardino

Michael P. Neufeld, Rim Of The World News

Posted: September 13, 2016, 5:20 PM



A small vegetation fire in San Bernardino with smoke visible from Highway 18 is now under control. (Photo by San Bernardino County Fire)

UPDATE: Tuesday, September 13 – 5:31 p.m.

San Bernardino, CA – The so-called Sterling Fire is now under control, according to San Bernardino County Fire. Crews are now in the mop-up stage.

ORIGINAL STORY

San Bernardino, CA – A vegetation fire with smoke visible from Highway 18 had drawn a response from **San Bernardino County Fire**, the U.S. Forest Service and CALFIRE. The fire was reported at 4:47 p.m.

At last report, the fire was about 1.5 acres in the area of East Foothill and Sterling Avenue.

It is no longer a threat to the San Bernardino National Forest, according to the U.S. Forest Service.

Additional details will be released as they become available.

<http://rotwnews.com/2016/09/13/vegetation-fire-in-area-of-east-foothill-and-sterling-in-san-bernardino/>

San Bernardino pipeline fire closes south 215 Freeway lanes

Doug Saunders, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: September 14, 2016, 5:55 AM



A fire erupted in a pipeline along the 215 Freeway Tuesday night, sending flames in the air. (Photo by Doug Saunders/San Bernardino Sun)



Firefighters and Caltrans officials were working on what could be a hazardous-materials situation. (Photo by Doug Saunders/San Bernardino Sun)

SAN BERNARDINO >> As motorists drove down the southbound 215 freeway Tuesday night, flames could be seen shooting through a ventilation shaft coming from an underground pipeline.

Shortly after 9:30 p.m., firefighters were on scene of the blaze trying to put the flames out, but the source of the fire and the length of the pipeline has yet to be determined.

“There’s an active fire in an underground drainage system between Base Line and Fifth Street,” according to the fire department Twitter page.

Caltrans officials arrived after midnight at the incident command post on the Ninth Street overpass with maps to determine the layout of the underground system.

Firefighters specializing in hazardous materials were called to the scene to deal with possible hazardous fuels if necessary.

Two lanes were shut down so fire crews could safely work and to keep the passing motorists safe.

It's unclear how long the freeway lanes will be shutdown

More to come.

<http://www.dailybulletin.com/general-news/20160914/san-bernardino-pipeline-fire-closes-south-215-freeway-lanes>

County pulls water tender from Wonder Valley

Kurt Schauppner The Desert Trail

Posted: September 14, 2016, 8:18 am



Kurt Schauppner The Desert Trail

San Bernardino County Fire Capt. Mike Bilheimer gives a report on fire station activities.

WONDER VALLEY — County firefighters are serving this community and surrounding areas not with a water tender, which holds thousands of gallons of water, but with a brush patrol engine, which carries just 250 gallons.

This was part of some residents learned during a county fire report at a monthly community meeting at the Wonder Valley Community Center Saturday morning, Sept. 10.

Residents heard from Cept. Mike Bilheimer, who has served at the Wonder Valley fire station since July 1.

“It has been quite a learning experience,” he said. “Coming out here is a night and day difference:”

In the month of August, he said, firefighters at the Wonder Valley fire station responded to 26 emergencies, including three fire, 12 medical emergencies, one hazardous materials call, two public assists and eight misc. calls.

Among other things, he reported that a water tender which had served the area had been removed and that the area was served by a brush patrol vehicle that carries 250 gallons of water.

He tried to reassure residents that this amount is enough to initiate a fight against a fire and that more water, from firefighters in Twentynine Palms and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, is never more than ten minutes behind Wonder Valley firefighters.

“That comment you made probably raised many hackles in this room,” resident Karen Myers said.

Bilheimer noted that the water tender that was removed was something of a hybrid vehicle that was created when firefighters took a truck and put a tank on it. He noted that it was tricky to drive because of the way it had been put together.

“The brush patrol is the best piece of equipment we have up here,” he said, noting that he felt this would be true even if the station had a water tender. “We would still take the brush patrol 99 percent of the time.”

“This is the first time in 50 years there has been no water tender here,” resident Jim Copeland said, adding that he did not believe a truck carrying 250 gallons of water could provide fire protection to the area. “My home has no fire protection, not at 250 gallons.

“The canary in the coal mine was your house,” he said to a woman whose home burned down several months ago.

He urged the county to bring back a water tender.

“Without it we are dead in the water. The county has left us with no fire protection,” he said.

Bilheimer sought to reassure residents that, with help from firefighters from Twentynine Palms and the combat center, Wonder Valley residents do receive fire protection services.

“I understand the pressure for the water tender, more is always better,” he said. “I feel quite confident I what we have here.”

He noted that Wonder Valley firefighters are never dispatched to a fire without calling for help from Twentynine Palms and the combat center.

“The cavalry is coming,” he said. “They are dispatched at the same time that we are.”

“We should scream our heads off to get a water tender out here,” Myers said.

http://www.hidesertstar.com/the_desert_trail/news/article_5c426f92-7a8e-11e6-813f-63a0eb06fe27.html