



NEWS



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District employees, student to be honored for bravery

Inland Empire Community News

Posted: September 15, 2016



Photo/Anthony Victoria: Bradley Elementary School aide and ICUC parent organizer Elizabeth Romero (left).

Three San Bernardino City Unified School District (SBCUSD) employees and a middle school student whose heroic actions saved the lives of six people will be recognized by the Board of Education during their meeting on September 20.

District Police Officer Eric Campa, Bradley Elementary School recreation aides Elizabeth Romero and Vanessa Paez, and Curtis Middle School eighth-grade student Janeth Santos will each receive the district's Award for Bravery and Courage.

District Police Officer Eric Campa was on his way to Arroyo Valley High School last May when he spotted an abandoned burning home. After calling the **San Bernardino Fire Department**, Campa ran into the burning home and inside a nearby shed, where he found a homeless couple sleeping.

After helping them to safety, Campa urged nearby residents to evacuate. With the home completely engulfed in flames, the fire quickly spread to power lines. Once again, Campa went into action, pushing a man out of the way just as live power lines came down where the man had been standing, according to a district press statement.

"I don't really see myself as a hero," said Campa, who has worked for the District for more than three years. "I did what any other police officer would do. It's all part of my job. But I do feel that I was at the right place at the right time."

Campa also arrested the three people suspected of starting the fire.

In August, Bradley Elementary recreation aide Elizabeth Romero saved a girl from choking on grapes. Romero resorted to her CPR training, performing the Heimlich maneuver until the student began breathing again.

"I was a little scared, but the training kicked in," Romero said. "I knew what I needed to do and I stayed calm."

Two week's later Romero's colleague Vanessa Paez helped a young boy; she spotted him with both hands around his neck. Paez also used the Heimlich maneuver to stop the fourth-grader from choking.

"The CPR training was crucial to helping that little boy," Paez said.

Curtis Middle School eighth-grader Janeth Santos used her CPR certification to save the life of a toddler choking on a piece of candy. Janeth ran out of her apartment when she encountered a mother carrying a toddler whose airway was obstructed and used her fingers to dislodge a candy from his throat.

According to the district release, Janeth had just earned her CPR certification as part of Curtis Middle School's medical pathway that allows students to explore healthcare careers through hands-on activities.

The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20 at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Room, 777 North F Street in San Bernardino.

<http://iecn.com/district-employees-student-honored-bravery/>

Bluecut Fire community meeting is Tuesday

Daily Press

Posted: September 16, 2016, 12:01 AM

Residents affected by the Bluecut Fire are invited to a community meeting hosted by the Wrightwood Fire Safe Council at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Wrightwood Elementary School Auditorium, 1175 Highway 2, Wrightwood. Representatives from the **San Bernardino County Fire** and Sheriff's departments, U.S. Forest Service, Cal Fire and Southern California Edison will provide an overview of the fire, address post-fire impacts to the community and answer questions.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160916/NEWS/160919764/0/SEARCH>

Fire erupts at apartment in Fontana

Fontana Herald News

Posted: September 16, 2016 9:15 AM



Firefighters assess the damage at an apartment where a fire broke out on Sept. 15. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

A fire broke out at an apartment in the 8600 block of Tamarind Avenue in Fontana on Sept. 15 and was quickly extinguished, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

The two residents of the apartment were displaced and the American Red Cross came by to assess their needs. There were no injuries or evacuations of other apartments.

Firefighters responded to the complex at 8:24 p.m. and noticed smoke and flames coming from the outside of an apartment on the second level of the structure. Firefighters were able to limit the fire to one unit and protect other structures in the complex.

Battalion Chief Dan Filter said that "this could have been a lot worse if it happened at 2 a.m. With this type of structure, the fire would have spread quickly."

A resident of the apartment, Dulce Calderon, said they were sitting on their balcony when they started smelling something burning. Then they saw the black smoke and flames, and the smoke alarm went off.

"We started throwing water on the fire and trying to grab our stuff," she said.

She said the fire started in an electrical outlet on the side of the apartment.

"I am so stressed. I haven't been inside the apartment, so I don't know how much is damaged," she said, adding that she had just moved into the location two weeks ago.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fire-erupts-at-apartment-in-fontana/article_cbe4077a-7c28-11e6-97b5-c3eb428c8f27.html

SBD Fest declared success despite slight drop in attendance

Ryan Hagen, The Sun

Posted: September 16, 2016, 4:32 PM



San Bernardino law enforcement and fire department agencies participate in the SB Strong 757 Plane Pull event during the SBD Fest Airshow at the San Bernardino International Airport in San Bernardino, Calif. on Saturday, Sept. 10, 2016. Law enforcement won the contest, pulling the plane 239 feet in two minutes. (Photo by Rachel Luna/The Sun, SCNG)

SAN BERNARDINO >> Airport officials announced Friday that attendance at last week's SBD Fest fell slightly from the inaugural air show in 2015, but they say the show was a solid success.

The event at San Bernardino International Airport drew 9,063 people, a drop of a bit more than 10 percent from the 10,112 who went last year — the first in two decades.

“We were pleased with attendance,” said Mark Gibbs, the airport's director of aviation, before the final tally. “All of the comments that I've either heard or seen on social media have been very positive.”

The show included air craft and classic cars on the ground, acts including the popular Patriot Jets in the air, and live music starring headliner Thompson Square.

A new addition this year was the plane pull, pitting firefighters against law enforcement in a friendly competition to see who could pull a 757 aircraft the farthest in 90 seconds.

San Bernardino police and San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies hauled the 116,000-pound aircraft 239 feet, beating out a team of firefighters from the **San Bernardino County** and New York fire departments.

Donors pledged to give a certain amount based on the distance pulled, raising a total of \$2,771 for first responder foundations, according to the fundraising website.

The event, which came a day before the 15th anniversary of 9/11, was a good chance to show the spirit of resilience and cooperation, said San Bernardino police Chief Jarrod Burguan.

“I think the folks brought out here from New York had a great time,” Burguan said. “It was good to show that cooperative relationship, so to speak, bringing them in. We all did a little razzing of the fire side and teased one another, but at the end of the day the guys were great.”

Other changes were made based on feedback received last year.

“Our big complaint in 2015 was that people got stickers in their tires,” Gibbs said. “We take those complaints seriously. This year, (there was) not a single complaint about parking.”

The annual air show comes as efforts to revitalize the former Norton Air Force Base into a successful commercial airport gain steam, Gibbs said.

For example, he said, the airport has grown to five maintenance operators, when four years ago it had one, and the number of aircraft operations grew from 25,000 to 40,000 last year and is projected to nearly reach 50,000 this year.

“We understand we’re part of the fabric of this community,” Gibbs said. “For a long time we hadn’t reached out to the community so they could see what’s taking place and make a determination with their own eyes. Now they can see what’s happening for themselves.”

<http://www.sbsun.com/arts-and-entertainment/20160916/sbd-fest-declared-success-despite-slight-drop-in-attendance>

Sheriff's Rodeo kicks off at Glen Helen Regional Park in Devore

Doug Saunders, The Sun

Posted: September 16, 2016, 8:44 PM



The 17th Annual Sheriff's Rodeo returned to Glen Helen Regional Park Friday. The Rodeo will continue through Sunday with a variety of events. Local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops benefit from the rodeo's proceeds. Photo by Sarah Alvarado

DEVORE >> As the sun began to set over the horizon and the temperatures cooled down attendees could be seen lined up trying to get a great seat for the 17th Annual Sheriff's Rodeo Friday evening.

Promoters are expecting nearly 5,000 to attend the Friday competition and are hoping more will be in attendance for Saturday and Sunday shows.

Some in attendance brought their families, while others were there for the very first time.

Wearing a straw cowboy hat and a shiny pair of cowboy boots 5-year-old Diego Martinez Jr. came with his parents, Diego Sr. and Marta, and his two older sisters Yvonne, 7, and Marissa, 9.

"I want to see the bulls and have a corndog," Diego Jr. said. "I want to see the cowboys ride all 8-seconds!"

The young rodeo fan's father said his son loves watching rodeos on TV so they decided they'd bring their family to their first rodeo.

"I'm a carpenter and have never really been that interested in rodeos, but for some reason my boy just loves watching them," Diego Martinez Sr. said. "So, we thought this would be the best time to bring everyone and have a family night out with good clean fun and great food."

But the rodeo isn't just about rope tricks and bull riding for the San Bernardino County Sheriff, it's also about giving back to the community he and his department are charged with protecting.

"The 17th annual PRCA Sheriff's Pro Rodeo is an opportunity to share and remind folks of the Western Heritage that helped to shape this great county I call home," Sheriff John McMahon said Thursday. "The success of last year's rodeo and the support from all of our sponsors allowed for over \$60,000 in donations back into the community."

McMahon hopes this year will bring in even more.

The past few years have been difficult for many of the first responders in San Bernardino County from the recent wildfire activity to the Dec. 2 terrorist attack at a county run facility in the heart of San Bernardino.

So Sunday's performance is being dedicated to first responders.

A joint honor guard team comprised of members from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and **San Bernardino County Fire Department** will be posting the colors followed by a moment of silence prior to the start of the day's events.

<http://www.sbsun.com/sports/20160916/sheriffs-rodeo-kicks-off-at-glen-helen-regional-park-in-devore>

Fiery disagreement

Hesperia, firefighters at odds over staffing levels

Jose Quintero, Daily Press

Posted: September 17, 2016, 12:01 AM



Former fire station 301 on 11th Street in Hesperia.

HESPERIA — The Pilot Fire and a recent structure fire in the vicinity of a closed fire station in Hesperia have raised concerns among firefighters, who say they believe current staffing levels in the city of 92,000 residents are inadequate.

What's more, they say they don't believe a solution to the problem is imminent. That's because city officials don't have the money to increase staffing and a proposed annexation by San Bernardino County fell apart because of pension liabilities.

“We have the worst staffing ratio of any city of this size,” San Bernardino County Professional Firefighters Local 935 Vice President Jeremy Kern told the Daily Press. “You look at incidents like the Pilot Fire, structure fires or collisions where there are rescues or extrications. We need people on scene fast to keep the fire small, keep a fire contained to the house and from spreading into the garage, vehicles or vegetation. But with the staffing that the city funds, we don't have the means to do that.”

The 8,110-acre Pilot Fire started near Silverwood Lake on Aug. 7 and quickly resulted in more than 5,300 evacuation orders for homes in the southeast Hesperia, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Gregory and Crestline. The fire burned mostly in the San Bernardino Mountains, but also scorched the southern border of Hesperia in the Summit Valley area. That sparked concern among **San Bernardino County Fire Department** officials.

Since June 2004, the Hesperia Fire Protection District, a subsidiary district of the City of Hesperia, has contracted with the San Bernardino County Fire Department to provide fire suppression, ambulance and fire prevention services. Both parties agreed on a 10-year contract in 2004. Since the contract expired, the city has been contracting for firefighters services with the department on a one-year basis.

Hesperia currently funds seven firefighters per shift per day, Kern said. They are assigned to three fire stations. A captain, engineer and firefighter/paramedic are assigned to Stations 302 and 304. An engineer is assigned to Station 305, which is a joint station funded by both the county and city. The County Fire Department funds the captain and firefighter/paramedic at that station.

Hesperia City Councilman Paul Russ admits he believes there are not enough firefighters in Hesperia.

"I don't think it's ever adequate. I would love to have more," Russ said. "I don't think the current staffing is adequate but it's all we can afford to do. We only have so much money. I don't think we can ever have enough police and fire services to be adequate. If I could wave my magic wand I would quadruple both of them. We have so much needs out there, we could never staff it the way we need to and should staff it for a city of our size. We can't print money. We are constrained by money because we don't have the ability like the federal government to just print money.

"We have a fire district fund that brings in about \$10 million in revenues a year. Like six years ago it was like \$6 million a year. That thing has grown with the population growth. They use every bit of it and we just can't afford as a city to subsidize it out of general funds as some say we should. We have to live within a confined budget. I don't know of any council member that is willing to take money out of a general fund to put into fire funds to keep ongoing operations."

Hesperia City Councilman Russ Blewett said the situation isn't as bad as it looks, given the high volume of medical calls — compared to fire-related calls and traffic collisions — that firefighters respond to.

"The vast majority are ambulance calls. That's where most of the calls are," he said.

According to figures from Hesperia spokeswoman Rachel Molina, which she said are provided by the county, Hesperia firefighters responded to 11,577 calls during the fiscal year of 2014-2015. Those figures show that 9,462 calls, or 81.7 percent, were medical calls.

However, Kern said whenever the department responds to a medical call, it's not as simple as just sending an ambulance.

"If you have somebody who is not breathing and has no pulse, you can't simply send an ambulance with two people to respond," Kern said. "You need one person to secure an advanced airway for the patient. You need another person doing compressions, another person drawing up medication and starting IV, another person getting patient information and scene safety. Through our dispatch, we try to get as much information to see what type of medical call it really is by asking a series of questions.

"In the case where somebody isn't breathing, having a significant cardiac event or stroke, minutes and seconds count. Having the firefighter/paramedics available and strategically placed throughout the city allows us to get paramedic care on scene when needed as soon as possible in cases where ambulances are not close, available, on bed delay or extended response time. This is another reason why having stations in service and able to respond is critical."

The most recent example came last week when a structure fire burned a workshop in the back of a home in the 8900 block of Hickory Avenue.

Firefighters from Station 304, located at 15660 Eucalyptus St., were dispatched at 8:55 p.m. on Wednesday and arrived at the home seven minutes later. While the 20 personnel, including assisting engines from Victorville, who responded were able to contain the fully engulfed fire to the workshop and there were not any injuries reported, fire officials said the blaze threatened nearby exposures, including the home.

The blaze was located a block west of Station 301, which closed in 2012.

In 2011, more than 80 percent of city voters rejected Measure F, which was designed to help fund the district with a new \$85 parcel tax. The rejected measure forced the closure of Station 301, located at 9430 11th Ave., and cut nine firefighter positions from the city's contract.

The closure of Hesperia's oldest fire station, which opened in 1957, trimmed \$752,000 from the Fire District's then \$9.2 million budget, according to previous reports.

The city pursued and obtained a two-year Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant, which allowed Hesperia to reopen the station from July 2013 through June 2015. The end of the grant resulted in the elimination of nine firefighters in the city: three firefighter/paramedic positions, three engineer positions and three captain positions due to the reduction of one fire engine. According to previous reports, in an effort to maintain five ambulances, 15 Ambulance Operator/EMT positions and 15 Ambulance Operator paramedic positions were added to offset the loss of staffing from the completion of the SAFER Grant.

Molina confirmed the city also funds eight full-time paramedics daily in addition to the firefighters. Kern says the figure provided from the city includes five "single function" paramedics and three firefighter/paramedics at the three stations.

Molina said the current level of service reflects the number of personnel that can be funded by the existing property tax received by the district.

"The Hesperia Fire Protection District is funded by property tax. During the recent recession, the City's General Fund subsidized the Fire District because property values had dropped significantly, resulting in a significant reduction in revenue received by the District," Molina said.

Union President Jim Grigoli said he feels the solution is simple: An agreement from the city to annex the Fire District into the county, which he believes would result in immediate improvements in various aspects, most importantly staffing levels.

Hesperia City Manager Nils Bensten agrees.

"One of the benefits of annexation of the Hesperia Fire Protection District to the county is that it enhances strategic fire protection coverage for the area. Similarly, it allows the city to focus on city-related services," Bensten said.

Such an annexation would require county approval, through the Local Agency Formation Commission or LAFCO. LAFCO governs the organization of local government services provided by cities and special

districts. An application to LAFCO, along with supporting documentation, must be made to justify the reorganization.

"We were disappointed to hear the LAFCO process stopped," Grigoli said. "We were under the impression the city was going to move forward with annexation. We thought there was light at the end of the tunnel. But it doesn't feel like we are heading that way. We have an obligation to the residents and ourselves. We feel our firefighters are working in unsafe conditions. Our whole goal is to get enough suppression people on task when we have an incident."

Molina told the Daily Press that the city is working on an agreement for annexation of the Fire District.

"We believe the county should be the provider for the City of Hesperia," Kern said. "We have served the city for over the last decade and our service has been good. If the city is unwilling to increase the service in Hesperia, then turn around and annex to the county where there will eventually be a chance to increase fire service down the road."

But it's not that easy, according to Russ, who says Hesperia and the county had a tentative agreement regarding annexation.

However, when it boiled down to the LAFCO process, Russ said Hesperia learned it would have a "huge" California Public Employees' Retirement System liability, stemming from the district's contracts prior to the original 10-year 2004 contract with the County Fire Department. A county source told the Daily Press the city's liability was in the millions of dollars and LAFCO simply refused to take on all of that debt.

"We worked around that issue and it's going to take any financial benefit we had from annexation. But we were willing to move forward anyways because over time it was still beneficial," Russ said. "But then the county did not like the deal and they backed away from the deal in the annexation."

"So we had half the (original) offer, plus the liability for the pension obligations. In addition, the county wanted us to annex the district into County Fire Service District No. 5. And when we did that there would be a per parcel tax to every property in the city. We have said that we absolutely refuse to do that and let them know that is non-negotiable."

As was the case in 2011, Molina confirmed that residents have voted four times against five ballot measures to levy a tax to support fire services in the city.

"No way are any of us going to slip a parcel tax in the backdoor," Russ said. "There is no way we will do it. If they want to put another initiative on the ballot and vote for it, they can do so. But we will not do that to our residents after they turned it down four times."

Blewett said a fire tax on every parcel in the city is not going to happen in his lifetime.

"The entire council feels that way," Blewett said. "Our residents can't afford that with an average household income around \$57,000. When they were out trying to pass Measure F, the voters let them know how unhappy they were. There is no way that the taxpayers in this city want to pay more for protection. But we are still negotiating with them and all options are on the table right now."

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160917/NEWS/160919750>

Pilot Fire: Flare-Up Within Fire Perimeter

Michael P. Neufeld, Rim of the World News

Posted: September 17, 2016, 9:24 AM



A helicopter makes a run during the August Pilot Fire that burned 8,100 acres. (Photo by ROTWNEWS.com)

Lake Arrowhead, CA – The U. S. Forest Service is reporting a flare-up within the perimeter of the Pilot Fire. The flare-up was being fought Saturday morning.

At last report, it was about a quarter acre and helicopters were dipping from Papoose Lake in Lake Arrowhead.

The Forest Service is being assisted by CALFIRE and units from **San Bernardino County Fire** near the Pilot Rock Truck Trail.

<http://rotwnews.com/2016/09/17/pilot-fire-flare-up-within-fire-perimeter/>

Motorcyclist dies after accident in Hesperia

Monica Solano

Posted: September 17, 2016, 11:30 AM

HESPERIA — A motorcyclist was pronounced dead at a local hospital after succumbing to his injuries suffered in a traffic accident that occurred Friday night, officials said.

Just before 7:30 p.m., deputies from the Hesperia Sheriff's Station and rescue personnel from the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** responded to a report of a single vehicle accident located on Caliente Road just south of El Centro Road in Hesperia.

Deputies found a red Harley Davidson on the east side of Caliente Road with a single male rider, who had sustained major injuries, according to San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department spokesperson Adam Cervantes.

Emergency personnel quickly began to render medical aid to the man as one medic engine and two County ambulances were on scene to assist, said County Fire Capt. Jeremy Kern.

Due to the severity of the injuries, the man was flown by Mercy Air to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, where he later was pronounced dead.

The Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) from the Hesperia Sheriff's Station responded to the scene to conduct an investigation.

Through further investigation, it was determined the motorcyclist was driving north on Caliente Road when for reasons still unknown the motorcycle left the roadway on the east side and continued north on the dirt shoulder before crashing, Cervantes said.

Caliente Road was closed in both directions from Rancho and El Centro Road until 1:30 a.m. while MAIT investigators processed the scene for evidence and interviewed witnesses.

The cause of the crash is still under investigation and anyone with information about the accident can contact deputies Brian LoVasco or Derek Zane.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20160917/motorcyclist-dies-after-accident-in-hesperia>

Motorcycle Accident Shuts Down Caliente Road

Victor Valley News Group

Posted: September 17, 2016



(Photo by Gabriel D. Espinoza, Victor Valley News)

HESPERIA, CA:(VVNG.com)- A stretch of Caliente Road was shut down Friday night due to a motorcycle crash.

At about 7:20pm dispatch received a report of a down motorcyclist on Caliente Road about a mile north of Rancho Road.

A medical helicopter was requested to transport a male subject reported to be in critical condition. Per scanner reports, the rider was airlifted to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center.

Authorities at the scene wouldn't comment on the circumstances surrounding the investigation.

North and southbound Rancho Road is expected to remain closed in both directions for about 5-8 hours.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.

<http://www.vvng.com/caliente-road-shut-down-for-crash-investigation/>

San Bernardino students say thanks to county first responders

Margaret Hill, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: September 17, 2016, 12:54 PM



Serrano Middle School Cadet Corps at the San Bernardino school's 9/11 observance. Courtesy photo

SAN BERNARDINO >> I had the opportunity to visit Serrano Middle and N. Verdemont Elementary schools recently as they gave appreciation to first responders.

The men and women in uniform were amazed at what these students had done to honor them.

The color guard, choir, band and student representatives at Serrano performed with the entire school population. They also collected funds to present beautiful decorated gigantic tubs loaded with lots of goodies to give to the police and fire departments that service their school area.

They said thanks to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's, San Bernardino Police, San Bernardino School Police, **San Bernardino County Fire** and San Manuel Fire departments for keeping students safe and putting their lives on the line each and every day.

The program began with the posting of colors by the Cadet Corps and a student played Taps at this patriotic event that also recognized those who lost their lives September 11, 2001. The band and the choir added to the event which was held in front of the school where parents, students and safety personnel had gathered. Two students provided very touching comments of dedication before the gifts were presented to the first responders.

Later that afternoon, I visited N. Verdemont Elementary School and watched students at all grade levels also say thanks to officers, including the California Highway Patrol. In addition to their wonderful singing, poetry, and other messages thanking first responders for protecting students all the time, they presented them with a huge cake, certificates and a beautiful plant.

This is the poem presented to the first responders and written by sixth grader Angel Martinez:

You are so proud

You would never run

From danger in a crowd

There's always something to be done.

To rescue lives

Their mission is true

The people to strive

To help me and you.

Honorable people stand for freedom

And secure it with their own lives

Seeing beyond today in wisdom

Through their sacrifice-liberty thrives.

Each of us owe respect to you

People of this nation, so true

We will always be grateful

For the many brave deeds you do.

We can learn from these students when they demonstrate there are many ways to say "Thanks."

<http://www.sbsun.com/social-affairs/20160917/san-bernardino-students-say-thanks-to-county-first-responders>

Highland man seriously injured in honey oil lab fire

Beatriz Valenzuela, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: September 18, 2016 11:23 AM



The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is investigating a honey oil lab that ignited a fire Saturday in a Highland home in the 26900 block of Fisher Street. Courtesy photo

HIGHLAND >> A man is in the hospital recovering from second and third-degree burns he received when authorities say a honey oil lab ignited a blaze at a Highland home Saturday afternoon.

Gustavo Lopez Felix, 24, was found lying in the front yard of the burning home in the 26900 block of Fisher Street, just east of Central Avenue Saturday afternoon and was taken to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center. An arrest is pending, according to a San Bernardino County sheriff's news release.

Just after 12:30 p.m. deputies and **San Bernardino County fire** personnel were called to the Fisher Street home for a fire call, officials said. When they arrived they found the front rooms of the residence burning.

After the fire was extinguished, investigators recovered "evidence of an illegal drug lab inside one of the bedrooms," sheriff's officials said in the release.

Sheriff's Bomb and Arson detectives and narcotics detectives are assisting with the investigation.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160918/highland-man-seriously-injured-in-honey-oil-lab-fire>