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Fontana residents pay tribute to victims of Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks

Fontana Herald News

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Attendees at the Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony at the Steelworkers' Auditorium say the Pledge of Allegiance.

On the 15th anniversary of the worst terrorist attacks in United States history, hundreds of Fontana residents attended an event at the Steelworkers' Auditorium at the Lewis Library on Sept. 11 to remember the victims of the 2001 tragedy.

"On this day 15 years ago, our world was turned upside down," said Fontana Mayor Acquanea Warren in her remarks to the audience. "The deaths of so many people must never be forgotten."

Nearly 3,000 people lost their lives when airplanes that had been hijacked crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania on Sept. 11, 2001. Although the mourning for the victims will continue, the incidents did not destroy America, but instead "brought the country together," Warren said.

When the U.S. stands united, "nobody has been able to triumph over the democracy we all enjoy," she said. Fontana Police Chief Robert Ramsey added that Americans are "a resilient lot," and "we never let a person or group bring us down."

Fontana Fire Protection District Chief Jeff Birchfield paid tribute to the 343 New York firefighters who were killed on that fateful day and said that firefighters throughout the nation share a common bond. "Regardless of where we're from, we're all family," he said.

Music at the ceremony was provided by the Loveland Church Men's Choir, and the presentation of colors was by the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Honor Guard and the Professional Firefighters Pipes and Drums Band.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fontana-residents-pay-tribute-to-victims-of-sept-terrorist-attacks/article_a037d65e-7892-11e6-9e97-1748e034d463.html

Pinon Mesa students honor 9/11 victims, military personnel and first responders at annual Patriotic Day assembly

Jose Quintero, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: September 12, 2016, 4:21 PM



Pinon Mesa Middle School students carry flags representing each of the Nation's 50 states during the annual Patriotic Day Assembly Monday morning in honor of the 9/11 victims and in tribute to military personnel and first responders. Jose Quintero, Daily Press

PHELAN — Hundreds of students gathered in the Pinon Mesa Middle School quad area for their annual Patriotic Day assembly Monday morning in honor of the victims of Sept. 11, 2001, and in tribute to military personnel and first responders.

The memorial event has been a staple at the school since Sept. 13, 2001, two days after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C.

Principal Burt Umstead said the event has evolved over the years, with this year's focused on honoring first responders in the wake of the Bluecut Fire. Umstead said the school sent out invites to local first responders and several uniformed San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department personnel and firefighters from various agencies, including the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**, attended the event.

"This year's event is a little different because we had two family members from the school lose homes in the Bluecut Fire," he said. "So we wanted to honor all first responders this time because the fire really had a huge impact on our community. Even though our event has taken a different twist, it's still always about 9/11."

The event kicked off with the annual parade of flags, as students carried a large flag from from each of the nation's 50 states. Following the Parade of Heroes, the National Anthem and speeches by the school's co-ASB presidents, Vietnam veteran Ernie Fry, the grandfather of a seventh grade student at the school, delivered the event's patriotic address.

Over the years the event has had numerous guests and speakers, including veterans and first responders who were in New York during the attacks.

Umstead said that has played a vital role in helping children who were not born, or are too young to remember, the day's significance.

"When those people speak here, it really puts things into perspective for them," Umstead said. "What we do now is prepare students with history lessons. We're never going to forget and will continue to teach students of what the day means to the country.

"We have CNN broadcasted in each of our classrooms and I think once the students see the visuals and graphics, they get an idea of the significance to some extent. It's a lot like when John F. Kennedy was shot. Those who were alive at the time remember the importance of that day, those that weren't born will never really have a true idea of the significance."

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160912/NEWS/160919942/0/SEARCH>

SBD Fest gets bigger and better

Hector Hernandez Jr., Highland News

Posted: Monday, September 12, 2016, 1:44 PM



Paratroop demonstration. The WWII Airborne Demonstration Team in WWII-era dress and gear after making a demonstration jump from a C-53, an unsung hero of WWII.

Bigger was better for the second annual SBD Air Fest at San Bernardino International Airport with more aircraft, more vendors, a bigger car show and exciting aerobatic and musical performers giving the expected 10,000 show spectators more to enjoy on Saturday, Sept. 10.

According to San Bernardino International Airport Aviation Director Marks Gibbs, this year's show grew to a footprint of 20 acres, double last year's show of 10 acres.

Filling those 20 acres were numerous vendors, historic and military aircraft on static display, a dirt bike stunt performance, a country music show featuring Thompson Square and a 200-car car show organized with the assistance of the Over the Hill Gang car club.

New this year was the SB Strong Plane Pull pitting local law enforcement officers against local firefighters (and three New York firefighters) in a challenge to see which team of 17 could pull a 116,000-pound Boeing 757 the farthest in 90 seconds.

The challenge was conceived as a way for the air show to honor and fundraise for San Bernardino's first responders whose actions helped protect the community during the Dec. 2 IRC shooting as well as those who responded to the 9/11 terrorist attack - Sunday was the 15-year anniversary. Donations to the San Bernardino

Police Foundation, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Volunteer Administrative Support Unit and the **San Bernardino County Firefighters** Association were made through anython.com in flat donations or pledges by the foot.

The first responders proved more than up to the challenge as the two teams were pulling their respective planes faster than expected and the contest was called at 40 seconds. After measurements, law enforcement was pronounced the winner at 239 feet; the firefighters pulled their 757 194 feet.

Among the many historic displays was the WWII Airborne Demonstration Team which made a reenactment parachute jump from a C-54, a military version of the DC-3, commonly used in World War II.

"Our purpose is to honor the World War II veterans, especially the paratroopers so many of which gave their lives and are buried overseas, said one of the team members.

The team also shared with spectators that, while generally not as cherished as some of the war's fighter and bomber aircraft, the C-54 is a great unsung hero as it dropped the troops and equipment so vital to victory in every theater of the war.

Anthony Hernandez of San Bernardino said he enjoyed the show and its many improvements and additions. "It's great and the weather's wonderful," said Hernandez. "It's completely different from lat year's. It's way better and bigger, and the bike stunts were intense."

The show also offered the opportunity to tour the interiors of several military aircraft and other vehicles including a C-17, Humvees and many others.

http://www.highlandnews.net/entertainment/sbd-fest-gets-bigger-and-better/article_b78fdc06-7929-11e6-9f9f-ffb4872cd615.html

Historic Clyde Ranch, destroyed in Blue Cut fire, a big loss for region

Mark Landis, San Bernardino County Sun

Posted: September 12, 2016, 3:16 PM



Gary Hopkins Sr., at the Clyde Ranch house in Lone Pine Canyon, just a few days after the Blue Cut fire destroyed several of the historic buildings on the property. Hopkins has been the caretaker of the Clyde Ranch since 1994. The remains of the apple shed can be seen in the background.



The "Earp Cabin" in December 2008. This cabin was used by the Clyde family beginning in the 1870s. The cabin took on the Earp name in later years because Virgil and Wyatt Earp were friends of the Clyde family, and would visit the ranch to hunt and relax. Photos By Mark Landis

Editor's note: Part-one of a two-part series on the historic structures lost in the Blue Cut fire.

On Aug. 16, a wildfire that later became known as the Blue Cut fire began its three-day rampage through the Cajon Pass area, the rugged natural corridor that separates the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountain ranges.

The fast-moving blaze destroyed more than 100 homes and another 200 structures. The wildfire did extensive damage to utility infrastructure, and scorched more than 36,000 acres of vegetation, ranging from dense underbrush, to majestic Ponderosa Pines.

Amazingly, no lives were lost in the fire.

Compounding the tragic loss of homes, property, and watershed, the Blue Cut fire destroyed irreplaceable structures in three of the areas' most notable and historic sites. Major structures at the Clyde Ranch near

Wrightwood, The Summit Inn at the top of the Cajon Pass, and the Inman Ranch near the southbound 15 Freeway truck-scales, were all reduced to ashes and rubble by the blaze.

From ancient times, the Cajon Pass has been a critical passageway in and out of Southern California, beginning with Indian footpaths that connected the desert regions to the coast.

In the 1850s, pioneer settlers began cutting wagon roads through the pass, and those routes evolved into the first crude automobile roads. The early roads were improved into a highway, which later became part of Route 66. Today, the Cajon Pass is traversed by a massive eight-lane concrete path formed by Interstate 15.

One of the historic sites badly damaged by the fire is the Clyde Ranch, in the upper section of Lone Pine Canyon, about 4 miles southeast of Wrightwood. The Clyde's beautiful old red ranch house and battered old gas station building have been greeting travelers driving on Lone Pine Canyon Road for decades, and they serve as charming reminders of simpler times.

The 160-acre ranch was originally homesteaded in 1863 by Almon Clyde, one of the region's early Mormon settlers. The Clyde family settled in a small cabin on the southwestern slope of the property and began developing the ranch.

During these early years, the Clydes became friends with the famous Earp family who were living in the San Bernardino area. Virgil Earp was a good friend of the family, and he and his brother Wyatt would visit the Clyde Ranch to hunt and relax. The Clyde's original cabin was enlarged over the years, and it became known as the "Earp Cabin" due to visits by the famed brothers over the years. The weathered old structure had survived intact until the Blue Cut fire.

Around 1910, the Clydes planted an apple orchard near the cabin, and began a successful apple business. A large apple-packing shed (barn) was built in the late 1910s or early 1920s to support the business. The current ranch house was built around 1940.

The Clyde family no longer lived on the property, and Gary Hopkins Sr. has been caretaker of the ranch since 1994.

"I've been taking care of this place so long, it was really hard to see all the damage" said Hopkins. "The house and other buildings survived the Sheep fire in 2009. I cut firebreaks around the property with the dozer, and a gel team helped save the buildings."

The ranch wasn't so lucky in the Blue Cut fire. The flames began advancing up Lone Pine Canyon shortly after the fire started. "They were trying to get me to leave on Tuesday, but I told them if they can get someone up here with a dozer, I'd leave," said Hopkins. It looked like the ranch may be spared, but on Aug. 17 the fire came over a ridge and raced toward the orchard and buildings.

Advancing from the south, the wind-driven flames began consuming the orchard and ranch buildings. "We lost most of the trees, maybe 10-12 of them will survive" said Hopkins. The fire tore into the old Earp cabin, leveling it in spite of its fireproof roofing materials. The nearby blacksmith shop and chicken coop were also destroyed.

In the hours before the fire reached the property, Hopkins had been cutting more firebreaks, and firefighters applied fire-retardant to the ranch house. Miraculously, the ranch house and gas station were spared.

Over the years, many pieces of the ranch's antique equipment had been stored in the apple shed for protection from the elements. Tractors, farm implements, and even the original gas pumps from the old station were stored inside. The fire leveled the old wooden building, leaving only the concrete foundation and the charred remains of the treasures inside.

"We sold apples out of the shed, and it was a real experience for the kids who had never seen anything like this," Hopkins said. "There won't be any apple sales this year."

The historic structures and antique contents of the buildings can never be replaced, and according to Hopkins; "the insurance will barely be enough to get the cleanup done."

The devastation has been particularly difficult for Gary Hopkins; "I raised my son here, and kept this place going pretty much on my own" he said. "If it weren't for all of the wonderful people in Wrightwood, I don't know what I would have done. They've brought me hot meals, and just really kept me going."

A heavy equipment operator and mechanic by trade, Hopkins lost thousands of dollars of his own tools in the apple shed. Wrightwood residents have set up a fund at the local hardware store to help replace some of Gary's tools.

To donate, in person or by mail at:

Mountain Hardware
Gary Hopkins Account
PO Box 398
Wrightwood, CA 92397

<http://www.sbsun.com/lifestyle/20160912/historic-clyde-ranch-destroyed-in-blue-cut-fire-a-big-loss-for-region>