



# NEWS



## News Headlines 6/14/2017

- San Bernardino County firefighters to pedal cross country to help their brothers with cancer
- \$5 billion San Bernardino County budget to be filled in after July 1

## San Bernardino County firefighters to pedal cross country to help their brothers with cancer

Michel Nolan, The Sun

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From left, members of Team Fire Velo Norton Strong are: Tim Goforth, Ricky Arnold, Travis Grapes and Sean Jackson. (Courtesy photo)



San Bernardino County Fire Department Engineer Cory Norton, of Big Bear Lake, and his family. Diagnosed with cancer in 2015, Cory is undergoing treatment now. (Courtesy photo)

Heroism ascends to new levels when four **San Bernardino County firefighters** ride bicycles across America to help their brothers with cancer.

The firefighters begin their non-stop 3,000-mile ride Saturday — at sea level from the Oceanside Pier — crossing the Continental Divide at 10,865 feet through Wolf Creek Pass in Colorado before arriving at sea level again in Annapolis, Maryland.

In seven days.

Composed of local firefighters, “Team Fire Velo Norton Strong,” has entered the Race Across America Bicycle Event to raise funds and awareness of cancer diagnoses in the fire service.

They ride for fellow firefighters fighting an even bigger battle.

These are the guys who go into harm’s way to protect us from devastating fire and injury, sometimes sacrificing their own lives.

They will be pedaling for awareness of a cause that’s close to their hearts.

Several studies have found that firefighters may face cancer diagnoses at higher rates than the general population, despite advances in protective equipment and clothing.

From 102 percent greater risk for testicular cancer down to 21 percent greater for colon cancer, the increased risks from toxic substances are startling.

“We’re not dealing with legacy materials anymore such as wood and cotton,” said fire Captain Tim Goforth, of Station 91 in Lake Arrowhead, a member of the racing team.

“Everything these days is synthetic — plastic, nylon, foam rubber, veneers over particle board,” he added.

“This race gives me a chance to give back while doing something I love.”

The team of San Bernardino County Professional Firefighters Local 935, competing against 84 other teams from around the world, will pedal their way across 14 states in one week — technically, they have nine days but our team is aiming at seven to finish.

The Race Across America is one of the world’s toughest endurance events — 30 percent longer than the Tour de France, with zero rest days — completed in about half the time.

The racing concept for the team is a leap-frog across the country.

They will be racing in the four-person category, two teams of two.

Racers will be accompanied by a crew of 15, along with two chase vehicles and two RVs.

There will be one racer on the road at a time for five or six hours before the rider is relieved by his teammate.

After 24 hours, the next team of two takes over — there is no stopping — except for gas.

There are certain cut-off times along the route. The first is Durango, Colorado, which they must reach within 61 hours.

The cut-off time to cross the finish line is 3 p.m. Monday, June 26, according to Capt. Goforth.

- “We go from 100 feet below sea level in Brawley, California to that 10,865-elevation pass in Colorado,” said Capt. Goforth, who is considered an “instigator” of this huge adventure and admits he has been riding bicycles for 49 years (turns out, he’s counting back to his first bike at age 3).

In addition to Tim, who lives in Apple Valley, team members include:

- Engineer/paramedic Travis Grapes, of Station 232 in San Bernardino, who lives in Hesperia. Travis' previous competitions have included the grueling Ironman triathlon, as well as other Ironman events.
- Firefighter/paramedic Sean Jackson, who also works out of Station 91 in Lake Arrowhead, lives in Yucaipa. Riding for "32 years," with competitions over the last 15, Sean says "Cycling brings me sanity — that's why racing across the country isn't crazy."
- Engineer/paramedic Ricky Arnold, with Fire Station 312 in Victorville, lives in Apple Valley and has competed in numerous triathlons, including several Ironman events. He said "I'm riding to raise awareness of the high probability of getting cancer in the fire service unless proactive measures are taken through a properly developed health and wellness program."

Engineer/paramedic Travis Grapes said the journey will cover 172,000 feet of climbing.

"The mental aspect will be grueling," he said. "We'll be pushing through."

The heroes are our families, Travis added. "All of us racers have families who have sacrificed because of the time we've committed to this race."

Funding raised for the team will go to the Fire Family Foundation, which will help the families of two of their San Bernardino County firefighter brothers — Engineer Cory Norton of Big Bear Lake, and Firefighter Jose Cruz of Victorville, both diagnosed with cancer and undergoing treatment.

Although the team is focused on firefighters in their department, they are also riding for firefighters overall.

Donations for the racers' superhuman efforts are much appreciated.

Those wishing to help support the team with donations are asked to go to the [YouCaring](#) page and search for Team Fire Velo Norton Strong.

For more information, go to [www.facebook.com/TeamFireVeloNortonStrong/](http://www.facebook.com/TeamFireVeloNortonStrong/) or [twitter.com/SBCoFFLocal935](https://twitter.com/SBCoFFLocal935).

Sponsors include San Bernardino County Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 935; San Bernardino County Professional Firefighters Association; 911 Biocare; Don's Bike Shop; Regal Mortgage; and Victorville Motors.

As Travis said, "I can suffer a bit on this ride because I'm inspired by friends I know are fighting a bigger battle."

<http://www.sbsun.com/sports/20170613/san-bernardino-county-firefighters-to-pedal-cross-country-to-help-their-brothers-with-cancer>

## **\$5 billion San Bernardino County budget to be filled in after July 1**

**Ryan Hagen, The Sun**

Posted: June 13, 2017, 6:11 PM

SAN BERNARDINO >> The board of supervisors on Tuesday voted unanimously for a \$5 billion budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, but they plan to amend it after that.

That includes general fund spending of \$3 billion, which avoids laying off any of the 21,227 county positions, according to the budget report.

The final adoption is scheduled for June 27, but the county held off on developing specifics until officials saw how the state budget would affect funding.

The board will meet again July 11 or Aug. 8 to consider new spending, said Dena Smith, the county's interim CEO.

"At that time we would be now recommending to the board your consideration of several new or expanded service recommendations," Smith told the board.

The board voted unanimously in favor of the budgets for the county overall as well as special districts. The budget maintains a general purpose reserve of 15.1 percent of the locally funded appropriation, shy of the county's goal of 20 percent.

It also maintains several expenditures that staff had recommended cutting for budgetary reasons.

The **San Bernardino County Fire Protection District's** inmate hand crew and staffing for the Wonder Valley fire station will be maintained for now, with the money taken out of the newly funded reserve for a memorandum of understanding with the California University of Science and Medicine in Colton, based on a unanimous board vote.

The board also voted 3-2 — Chairman Robert Lovingood proposing and Supervisors James Ramos and Josie Gonzales supporting — to set aside a \$1 million reserve for use on law enforcement sweeps in Lovingood's district, which represents the High Desert.

But Gonzales' request for an additional medic squad to serve the city of San Bernardino, which has been represented by county fire since July 2016, went nowhere — for now.

"The city of San Bernardino is producing a (emergency) call volume on or about 40,000 calls a year. The city of Fontana is producing on or about 20,000 calls per year," Gonzales said. "San Bernardino has the same staffing that Fontana has, minus one. ... There could be liability on down the line."

Supervisor Janice Rutherford said she would consider the addition once she could put it in the context of other department's budget requests, at the meeting in July or August, and Gonzales withdrew her motion until then.

<http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20170613/5-billion-san-bernardino-county-budget-to-be-filled-in-after-july-1>