



# NEWS



## News Headlines 3/27/2018

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## Single-vehicle crash in the Cajon Pass leaves one person dead

Mike Cruz, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: March 26, 2018, 8:48 p.m.



A single-vehicle crash in the Cajon Pass left a person dead Monday evening.

Authorities were alerted to the crash just after 6:40 p.m. at Cajon Boulevard and Applewhite Road, according to the California Highway Patrol.

A person suffered fatal injuries and was pronounced dead at the scene, according to firefighter/paramedic Eric Sherwin, a **San Bernardino County Fire** Department spokesman.

Further information about how the crash happened was not immediately available.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2018/03/26/single-vehicle-crash-in-the-cajon-pass-leaves-one-person-dead/>

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## Fire breaks out in oasis of Mara, a Joshua Tree National Park landmark

Joseph Hong, Desert Sun

Posted: March 27, 2018

The **San Bernardino County Fire** Department and the National Park Service fire staff responded to a blaze Monday night in the Oasis of Mara just behind the Joshua Tree Oasis Visitor Center.

An investigation into the cause of the fire is ongoing. A Joshua Tree National Park spokesperson said the size and extent of the blaze is still unknown.

The fire has been contained and there are no reports of structural damage.

This story will be updated as more information is released

<https://www.desertsun.com/news/>

## Suspicious Fire Burns Oasis of Mara In Twentynine Palms; Suspect in Custody

Staff Writer, z1077news

Posted: March 27, 2018



Courtesy of Steve Raines Photography

A suspicious fire ravaged the historic Oasis of Mara in Twentynine Palms last night; a suspect is in custody. The fire, between the Joshua Tree National Park visitor's center and the 29 Palms Inn, was first called in about 9:15 p.m. by a passer-by. The high winds quickly spread the flames and embers and the blaze burned about five acres in just minutes. Firefighters from the National Park Service, Twentynine Palms, Wonder Valley, the Combat Center, Joshua Tree, and Yucca Valley responded, and additional water tenders were also requested. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Scott Tuttle said wind was a major factor, blowing at about 20 miles per hour with spotting several hundred feet downwind. An additional county fire strike team with five fire engines from throughout the county, an inmate hand crew, and an additional battalion chief were also called in. Tuttle said the main fire was knocked down in about 45 minutes. While no structures were damaged in the blaze, several of the oasis's palm trees went up in flames. Firefighters remained on scene through the night mopping up hot spots. Investigating Sheriff's deputies took a suspect into custody. The name of the suspect has not yet been released. Anyone with information should call 760-366-4175.

<http://z1077fm.com/local-news/todays-full-newscast/>

## Casting herself as people's champion, Gomez now seeks to shape the November election

Shea Johnson, Daily Press

Posted Mar 26, 2018, 5:19 p.m.



City Councilwoman Blanca Gomez, center, takes the microphone from councilman Jim Kennedy, left, as Councilman Eric Nefrete looks on during the State of the City address in 2017. Gomez said last week she will seek to uproot their re-election efforts. [ Daily Press file photo]

VICTORVILLE — Councilwoman Blanca Gomez has cast herself as the people's champion and antithesis to the status quo. Now it appears she has her eyes on helping to shape the November election while she continues to estrange herself from the elected officials she rails against.

It's been the city's well-publicized legal wrangle with the airport business ComAv that Gomez has most recently latched onto as a flash point for toppling a Council she increasingly believes has sought to shush her at every turn and does not fight for the interests of the electorate.

The mounting tension hit an all-time high last week after a closed-session meeting was cut short and city officials say Gomez became highly confrontational. Mayor Gloria Garcia said she felt physically threatened. Gomez did not respond to messages last week or Monday seeking comment, but it's believed the failure to immediately resolve ongoing litigation between the city's airport authority and ComAv has increasingly frustrated her.

During the Council's open meeting last week, she explicitly acknowledged seeking candidates to replace Councilman Eric Negrete and Jim Kennedy in November, signaling what likely has been her most overt disassociation from colleagues to date.

"If November 2018 comes and you can uproot two seats that are coming up for election and not continue litigation," she told a large crowd of ComAv employees who ascended on City Hall to rally behind the company, "that's your opportunity to do it."

Many employees praised Gomez for public efforts to unconditionally stick by the company even as litigation remains unsettled. She was the only Council member to reject appealing a judge's February ruling that sided with ComAv in the use-of-hangar dispute.

She suggested that continuing to tie up the matter in the courts would only add to the \$575,000 the city had already spent in legal fees as of February while also threatening jobs, a sentiment she used to try to galvanize ComAv workers to make their voices heard at the polls.

The stance recalls her similarly public siding with **San Bernardino County Fire** over the city's underway shift to an in-house fire agency. City officials have insisted that these issues, however, should not be viewed as reflective of the city's opinion of either County Fire or ComAv.

To that point, the City Fire relaunch has been characterized as strictly a fiscal matter and interim City Manager Keith Metzler has called ComAv “a valued tenant and business at SCLA, though we have legal differences of opinion.”

Negrete, who strongly rebuked Gomez last week for the reported post-closed session tirade, has already announced he will seek re-election in November. It’s unclear if Kennedy, who could not be reached for comment, will too.

Meanwhile, Gomez has already declared she will run again in 2020. It’s an election that could include Mayor Pro Tem Jim Cox, who she accused last week of holding “reins over everyone else but me,” and Garcia, who believes that Gomez is essentially trying to ruin her reputation and build a case against her in advance of the race.

The fractious dynamic has even raised questions over Garcia’s political future. “I’m at a point, is this worth being part of the City Council,” Garcia said last week, “to get this type of abuse from a crazy person?”

In a Facebook Live video posted to her personal account, Gomez on Monday said she would start broadcasting her thoughts through that medium in lieu of responding to interview requests from the Daily Press, suggesting the newspaper was biased in its reporting.

Gomez also spoke of “intrinsic motivations” occurring within City Hall, claiming the majority Council was protecting city administration including Metzler and City Attorney Andre de Bortnowsky.

In the video, she also criticized what she described as the city hampering her ability to meet with constituents, calling upon residents to get more involved in city business.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180326/casting-herself-as-peoples-champion-gomez-now-seeks-to-shape-november-election>