



NEWS



News Headlines 7/11/2018

- Firefighters halt Valley fire growth, increase containment to 24%
- Thanks to firefighters for job well done on Valley Fire
- Hesperia Councilman Paul Russ announces re-election bid
- Firefighters raise over \$14K during annual 'Fill the Boot' event

Firefighters halt Valley fire growth, increase containment to 24%

Beatriz E. Valenzuela, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: July 11, 2018, 7:35 a.m.



One of the two helicopters drop water over San Bernardino National Forest above Forest Falls on Saturday, July 7, 2018. Below a few spot fires, several feet away, can't gain momentum. Fire fighters secure the edges along Valley of the Falls near Hwy. 38. (Photo by Cindy Yamanaka, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

Firefighters successfully halted the growth of the Valley fire burning near Forest Falls and increased containment of the wildfire to 24 percent, the San Bernardino National Forest Service reported Wednesday morning.

Authorities estimate they will have full containment by July 21.

Since the wildfire ignited Friday, July 6, it's burned 1,348 acres, officials said.

The once-fast-moving blaze forced the evacuation of dozens of homes in the mountain community and the closure of Highway 38 north of Bryant Road. Residents were allowed to return to their Mountain Home Village, Forest Falls and Angelus Oaks homes Sunday with proof of residency.

However, Highway 38, from Lake Williams Boulevard to Sugar Pines Circle south of Angelus Oaks, is open to residents and campers.

Public campgrounds and organizational camps are open, including the Barton Flats area.

Non-residents looking for access to Angelus Oaks must use Highway 38 from the Big Bear side via highways 330 and 18.

About 650 firefighters were battling the wildfire.

<https://www.pe.com/2018/07/11/firefighters-halt-valley-fire-growth-increase-containment-to-24-percent/>

Thanks to firefighters for job well done on Valley Fire

Staff Writer, Big Bear Grizzly

Posted: July 11, 2018

Living in the middle of a national forest has its perks. It also has its dangers. It only took the latest fire — the Valley Fire near Forest Falls — to bring the danger to our attention.

While the Valley Fire is still far from being contained at press time for The Big Bear Grizzly this week, it is never too early to say thanks to emergency responders for their efforts. In this instance, firefighters from **San Bernardino County Fire**, Cal Fire and the San Bernardino National Forest were not only quick to respond, they worked nonstop in arduous conditions over steep terrain.

Even when thunderstorms crashed down around them and mudslides tumbled down to cover State Route 38, these men and women did not waiver.

They battled relentlessly under high temperatures reaching triple digits, through chaparral and timber that hasn't had significant fire history. They continue to battle through thunderstorms and high winds and the threat of flash floods.

Our firefighters battle the Valley Fire as resources are stretched to cover other fires in the San Bernardino National Forest — the Box Fire, which is 90 percent contained as of July 10, and the Creek Fire, off Highway 330 that as of July 10 is now 100 percent contained.

Other agencies — the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans and a host of Hot Shot crews — are doing their part, too. By the end of the weekend, residents in Forest Falls and Mountain Home were able to go home again. No structures have been lost in the Valley Fire. We suspect that will be the case when all is said and done.

Firefighting is a dangerous job, but a necessary one for the safety of the Big Bear community. Over and over again, Big Bear residents have been able to sleep well at night knowing that its fire department and the other fire departments that cover the community, will do their best to keep us safe.

They did their jobs during the Old Fire in 2003, when the entire mountaintop had to evacuate. They did their jobs during the Butler fires, the Slide fires, the Lake Fire, the Holcomb Fire and the Summit Fire.

So, thank you, firefighters, for once again proving that Big Bear has the best firefighting teams in the state. We all appreciate what you do day in and day out to keep us safe.

http://www.bigbeargrizzly.net/opinion/editorials/thanks-to-firefighters-for-job-well-done-on-valley-fire/article_f20cfa6-8518-11e8-b8d7-c7a3c4358e50.html

Hesperia Councilman Paul Russ announces re-election bid

Rene Ray De La Cruz, Daily Press

Posted: July 10, 2018, 2:18 p.m.



Hesperia Councilman Paul Russ has announced he'll seek re-election in November, making him the first Council candidate in the city to officially make a verbal commitment. [Daily Press file photo]

HESPERIA — Councilman Paul Russ has announced he'll seek re-election in November, making him the first Council candidate in the city to officially make a verbal commitment.

After serving on the Hesperia City Council over the last four years, Russ told the Daily Press he's ready for another round and will run his platform on pro-business, pro-development and pro-family.

The 58-year old Russ, who will seek re-election as a candidate in District 3 in the city's first by-district election, will host a campaign fundraiser on Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at Juliano's Italian Restaurant in Hesperia. The candidate filing window in San Bernardino County for the November election begins Monday and runs through Aug. 10.

"After speaking to my wife, I decided to make a run for a second term on the Council," Russ said. "The city's budget was recently approved and we're in a better position than we were in 2014."

The city's success over the last four years in drawing business, home development and improving its infrastructure came from "a unified Council" who worked together to determine the "future of Hesperia."

"I'm proud to say that I was part of a team that helped this city grow into what it is today and to set its course for years to come," said Russ, who credited former members of the Council like Thurston "Smitty" Smith, Mike Leonard, Val Shearer and Percy Bakker for their knowledge, wisdom and insight in "building and guiding the city."

"I'm pro-development because I believe that every family deserves the dignity of owning their own home," Russ said. "If that makes me a bad person — then so be it — I'm a bad person."

With a degree in economics and finances and over 30 years in the banking industry, Russ said he understands how business growth affects the city and the region.

"Once those businesses are established, employees can begin to buy homes, settle down, raise their family and start educating their children," Russ said. "Hesperia is in a great position to make those things happen right now, but we can improve that."

Future and current challenges for the city of Hesperia include “public safety,” “keeping the budget balanced” and “executing projects carefully,” Russ said.

Hesperia began its new fiscal year in July with an operating budget of just over \$74 million and some \$30 million Capital Improvement Program infrastructure projects, the Daily Press previously reported.

At nearly \$16 million, the contract with the San Bernardino Sheriff’s Department takes up a quarter of the city’s yearly budget.

The Hesperia Fire Protection District, which is currently being annexed into **San Bernardino County Fire**, has a budget of \$12 million.

“We already got our pensions under control and our overall pension obligations are coming down,” Russ said. “We don’t have any major issues with our budget, but we really need to continue to be conservative in our spending.”

Russ will continue to stand behind the Council’s vote in March to join an amicus brief with the Trump administration’s lawsuit against California.

“I’m not anti-immigrant, but immigrants should work within the framework of the law,” Russ said. “I’m anti-criminal and I’m for keeping the criminal element out of our community no matter who they are or where they’re from.”

Other Council seats that will be up for grabs in November are that of former Mayor Russ Blewett, who resided in what has been designated as District 4, and current Mayor Bill Holland, who resides in District 2. The new by-district system will see Council candidates living within their district elected only by voters of that district.

“There’ll always be those detractors who live in glass house and throw rocks because they didn’t get elected or they have an ax to grind,” said Russ, regarding fundraising activities . “I tell people don’t vote for me because you think you’re going to get something from me. Donate because I’m pro-business, pro-development and pro-family.”

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180710/hesperia-councilman-paul-russ-announces-re-election-bid>

Firefighters raise over \$14K during annual ‘Fill the Boot’ event

Staff Writer, Daily Press

Posted: July 10 2018, 4:54 p.m.



San Bernardino County Fire Department personnel pose for a picture during the annual ‘Fill the Boot’ fundraiser on June 30. [Photos courtesy of Terri Nielson]

VICTORVILLE — Local firefighters raised over \$14,000 in one weekend during their “Fill the Boot” event this year.

On-duty and off-duty **San Bernardino County Fire** Department members, joined by local fire explorers, took to the streets throughout Victorville to raise funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) on the weekend of June 30 to July 1, according to the local firefighters’ union IAFF Local 935.

“The city of Victorville has many registered families through the MDA, and your IAFF Local 935 member firefighters were there for them,” the union said. “The success of this event is a direct result of the community support we received.”

Donations from “Fill the Boot” events go directly to MDA and are used to fund family support groups, educational seminars and assistance with medical equipment. Over 100,000 firefighters participated in similar events nationwide last year.

Additionally, the donations also help fund the MDA summer camp for kids. Last year, 3,000 children were able to experience the camp at no charge to their families thanks to the support from the fundraisers, officials said.

“Your County firefighters respond to over 20,000 emergencies in Victorville annually and we thank each one of our citizens for making the event a success in this city,” the union said.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180710/firefighters-raise-over-14k-during-annual-fill-boot-event>