



NEWS



News Headlines 9/1/2017

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Cause of house fire near Redlands yet to be determined

Stephen Ramirez, Redlands Daily Facts

Posted: August 30, 2017, 4:31 PM

The cause of an Aug. 13 fire at a house in Redlands has still not be determined, a San Bernardino County Fire Department official said Wednesday.

The fire in the 11300 block of Opal Avenue in Mentone took firefighters 25 minutes to contain, said **San Bernardino County Fire** spokesman Eric Sherwin.

The official also said they have yet to put a damage estimate on the home.

<http://www.redlandsdailyfacts.com/2017/08/30/cause-of-redlands-house-fire-yet-to-be-determined/>

Heat, lightning, rain hit Inland area, and might not be over

San Bernardino Sun

Posted: August 31, 2017, 9:55 AM



A morning commuter makes their way through heavy rain and flooded streets on Cedar Ave. in Rialto Thursday, Aug. 31, 2017. (Eric Vilchis, The Sun/SCNG)

Thunderstorms and heat combined to make for miserable weather in the Inland area Thursday, Aug. 31.

Though flash flood and thunderstorm warnings expired by the evening, the National Weather Service has an excessive heat warning in place through 10 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 2 in the Inland valleys. The Weather Service is also predicting a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms for Friday morning.

“Temperatures will lower a few degrees next week, but will remain above average,” the heat warning reads.

Despite the rain Chino tied desert community Thermal for the hottest spot in the nation Thursday— both topping out at a blistering 115 degrees, three degrees above Death Valley’s high.

The rainy weather began Thursday morning as a fast-moving storm cell dropped rain on areas such as Colton, Redlands, Corona, portions of San Bernardino and some mountain communities before 7 a.m.

The shower bursts led to flooding in some areas, including Redlands and Rialto, as well as Highway 18 and Green Lake Valley Road near Arrowhead, according to California Highway Patrol reports. Overnight and this morning, lightning could be seen across the region.

By early afternoon, storms had made their way to other portions of the Inland Empire.

Radar from the National Weather Service showed a large storm system hovering over the southwest portion of Riverside County on Thursday afternoon. The system was bringing everything from light drizzle and thunder in Temecula to heavy rain and hail in Wildomar.

A severe thunderstorm warning was in effect for Riverside County and locations such as Lake Elsinore, Temescal Valley, Lake Mathews were being advised to anticipate 60 mph wind gusts and penny-sized hail. The warning indicated that damage to roofs, siding and trees was possible.

The theory became fact.

At the Meadows Mobile Home Park in Riverside, Judie Kemp said she heard a large boom, and when she went outside, saw that metal roofs had been ripped from a couple of homes.

A weather service spokesman said it was not a tornado, but more likely a microburst, in which air moving quickly down to the surface causes damage.

Fire departments throughout the Inland Empire chased fires on utility poles and palm trees in the late afternoon that were touched off by lightning.

The storm had the effect of cooling the air; Riverside, which had been near 100 degrees, was down to 74 at 4 p.m. because of what the weather service described as evaporative cooling — the physical basis of sweating.

In Lake Elsinore, a microburst brought rain, thunder and lightning, closing the city's lake.

The burst also downed power lines and closed roads, in Lake Elsinore and neighboring Wildomar, including:

Corydon Road between Grand Avenue and Palomar Street. Multiple power lines remain down and the closure may last two to three days, according to a Wildomar news release;

Mission Trail between Olive Street and Cordyon Road, again due to multiple power lines down; and Sumner Avenue at Scrivner Street because of downed power lines.

In **San Bernardino County, the fire department** was also responding to downed poles, as well as tree fires and lightning strikes.

Temperatures are expected to remain above normal, with some reaching as high as 106 degrees in Riverside, Redlands and Ontario.

<http://www.sbsun.com/2017/08/31/heat-rain-thunder-and-lightning-hit-riverside-and-san-bernardino-counties/>

Bicycle Arsonist Suspected of Igniting Eight Fires

Heidi Fron, Mountain News

Posted: August 31, 2017, 10:56 AM



Peter Joe Granados

A suspect believed to be the “bicycle arsonist” was arrested Aug. 23 in connection with at least eight fires in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains.

San Bernardino County Fire investigators, with the assistance of the San Bernardino Police Department, executed a search warrant last Wednesday and, subsequently, arrested a suspect whom they have been tracking for more than a year.

Peter Joe Granados, 38, is a San Bernardino resident who allegedly used a bicycle for access to remote locations. Detectives determined that Granados probably used an open-flame device to light combustibles on fire. After starting a fire, the bicycle arsonist would quickly escape.

License plate readers were not of assistance to investigators, who had to rely upon witness statements and descriptions, as well as footage from security cameras, to identify the suspect.

A year was spent studying security cameras from local businesses, such as the Highland Avenue WalMart, and other cameras that fire officials placed strategically to capture evidence of the arsonist’s arrivals and departures from several fire areas. Video — supposedly of Granados — also shows him allegedly starting a dumpster fire. Further evidence was discovered at Granados’ home when he was arrested, according to law enforcement.

Five fires broke out in the foothills above Sterling Avenue, Highland Avenue and East Foothill Boulevard, dating back to July 3, 2016. Those fires and two others were extinguished quickly, due to the quick response and actions of firefighters, who limited the burn areas between one and eight acres.

However, the Mart Fire that erupted on June 27, 2017, quickly spread up the mountainside. It was ignited in the drainage area east of the WalMart store at Highland Avenue and Frontage Road. Winds quickly carried embers across State Highway 330 into the dry vegetation, endangering nearby homes and burning 670 acres. No one was injured as a result of the fires, according to fire department authorities.

Nevertheless, San Bernardino City Police Chief Jarrod Burguan pointed out at a press conference on Aug. 24 that, by starting these fires, Granados endangered the lives and homes of thousands of people living in the mountains and thousands more living in the foothills. County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig added that the fires also endangered the lives of the men and women who get up everyday, sworn to protect the public from the devastation of fires.

Upon questioning, Granados admitted that he ignited all eight fires, including the Mart Fire. Granados was booked into the West Valley Detention Center in Rancho Cucamonga. He was charged for Penal Code §451(d), arson. His bail was set at \$275,000.

Despite admitting his role in setting the fires, Granados pleaded not guilty at his arraignment on Aug. 24. His bail was increased to \$500,000, and his pre-preliminary hearing was scheduled for Sept. 5, to be followed by a preliminary hearing on Sept. 7. He could serve six to 15 years if convicted.

According to San Bernardino County Fire Marshal Mike Horton, investigators knew early in the process that they were looking for more than one arsonist. The arrest of Granados occurred just a few weeks after officials arrested Jarrod Anthony Samra, 23, of Yucaipa, who is connected to eight other fires.

Apprehending Granados was a cooperative effort among the partnering agencies of county fire, city police, U.S. Forest Service and the district attorney's office. At the press conference, District Attorney Michael Ramos described Granados as a "fire criminal" and a "dangerous man," who previously served 10 years in prison and has robbery and a kidnapping on his record.

The identification and arrest of Granados as the "bicycle arsonist" depended heavily upon information volunteered by public witnesses who have been given credit for their bravery in coming forward and providing information to investigators. Their awareness and diligence led authorities to Granados.

The concept of "See Something, Say Something" saves lives and protects property, according to law enforcement officials. Report suspicious activity to fire and law enforcement or to We-Tip at (800) 47-ARSON (800) 472-7766.

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_adeceb5a-8e75-11e7-b7e0-076faae08135.html

Trained to Put Community First

Ananda Foerch, Mountain News

Posted: August 31, 2017, 11:31 AM



The CERT trailer holds emergency and training supplies. Courtesy Mountain CERT Website



If a large-scale disaster event hits the mountain, there is a team that can respond and help those in need. The volunteer team is Mountain Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

David Hobbs, the volunteer coordinator for Mountain CERT, said that CERT's goal "is to do the greatest good for the greatest amount of people in the least amount of time." The volunteers are trained by the fire department, and are "the second eyes, ears and hands for them when something happens up here."

Having people trained for a disaster is important, Hobbs acknowledged, because it "gets them prepared. We teach everybody how to get yourself ready because you never know when something is going to happen."

CERT is not limited to the mountain, but it is especially important to have the volunteer organization on the mountain. Hobbs explained, "If there's a big earthquake up here, we've been told by the Red Cross that we'll be on our own for a minimum for two weeks." Don't panic, though. Hobbs said that, between Lake Arrowhead, Crestline, Running Springs and Green Valley Lake, there are 150 registered members and that "a fair amount of them show up to monthly meetings."

At these meetings, Hobbs went on to say, the CERT volunteers refresh themselves on emergency situations. If the situation calls for someone to be carried out of a building, certified personnel show them how it's done. That means that there are individuals on the mountain outside of the fire department who stay up-to-date on emergency procedures and can help in the event of a disaster.

In an emergency, Hobbs said that the team is ‘activated’ by the fire department. From there, the team goes to the designated central staging areas. They go out in teams of five and “relieve the fire department from sending their people over for rescue.”

Hobbs noted that CERT is equipped with a trailer that was purchased through a grant. “It’s got a lot of the first aid supplies that we need, and a lot of training supplies.” In case of an emergency, it will be the “essential staging area. The trailer will be a hub for us to work out of,” Hobbs further explained.

To become a CERT volunteer, Hobbs said that a 20-hour class must be taken, as well as two online FEMA courses. The 20-hour course includes teamwork, Search and Rescue, basic first aid, triage, removing victims, and light fire suppression, according to Hobbs.

The classes occur twice a year and normally are located in Lake Arrowhead. Hobbs emphasized that no one is left out of the class, no matter their age. “We take everybody into the class because you can still sit at the fire station and just take notes.”

Before the class is over, CERT volunteers are given backpacks, helmets and vests, and do a final simulation.

Hobbs said that he encourages people to join CERT so that they can be prepared when something happens. “It alerts people to have a food and water supply set up, or get ‘grab and go’ kits ready or, if you have pets, set up an emergency kit for them. It opens up your eyes a little bit.”

As specified by Hobbs, Mountain CERT was formed in 2007 after the Grass Valley Fire. Cheryl Nagy, now with the **Office of Emergency Services** (OES), and Dave Stewart from Hearts and Lives, saw that people had a need to do something after the fire, so they formed Mountain CERT. After Nagy left a few years later, she put Hobbs in charge.

The program is for people 18 and older. For those interested in joining, Hobbs recommended checking their website, www.mtncert.org, for classes. He concluded, “My goal is to get half this mountain to be CERT members. I think the more who are CERT-trained, the more the mountain will survive.”

http://www.mountain-news.com/mountain_living/features/article_8c0aeaaa-8e7a-11e7-8b49-47f160a94995.html

Kitchen Fire Briefly Closes Twentynine Restaurant

Z107.7 News

Posted: September 1, 2017

A popular eatery in Twentynine Palms was closed briefly Thursday due to a kitchen fire. Twentynine Palms and Joshua Tree firefighters were called to Andrea's Restaurant in the 73700 block of 29 Palms Highway just before 9 a.m. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Mike Snow said the fire started behind a stove due to debris behind the stove. There was no damage to the structure from the fire, although firefighters did remove some drywall behind the stove to make sure the fire hadn't spread inside the wall. The County Health Department was also called out to make an inspection before the restaurant was allowed to re-open.

<http://z1077fm.com/kitchen-fire-briefly-closes-twentynine-restaurant/>

Labor Day Weekend Fireworks, Food And Fun In Landers Tomorrow

Z107.7 News

Posted: September 1, 2017

The Morongo Basin's only Labor Day celebration is tomorrow, September 2, at Homestead Valley Park in Landers. Celebrate American labor and the end of summer with food, fun, fireworks, and family entertainment. Gates open at 4 p.m. The Z107.7 Mobile DJ will get things warmed up, and the U.S. Marine Corps Color Guard will open the ceremonies 6 p.m. The big fireworks show will be synchronized to music, beginning after dark. Admission is free, but you are encouraged to bring school supplies for Landers Elementary School. There will be fun for kids; beer and margaritas for adults. Tour emergency equipment from Morongo Basin Ambulance and **San Bernardino County Fire**. Proceeds benefit Homestead Valley Park, Landers Elementary, and area non-profits. Entry and street parking is free; VIP parking will be available for a \$5 donation. Homestead Valley Park is at 1501 Belfield Blvd. in Landers. Backpacks, outside food and beverages, coolers and tailgating are prohibited.

<http://z1077fm.com/labor-day-weekend-fireworks-food-and-fun-in-landers-tomorrow/>