



## House fire extinguished in Encinitas



By [Onell R. Soto](#), UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Sunday, February 21, 2010 at 11:10 p.m.

ENCINITAS — Firefighters took half an hour to bring a fire on the second story of a house under control Sunday night, a dispatcher said.

Flames at the home on Orpheus Avenue near Leucadia Boulevard were first reported about 8:30 p.m. Fourteen firefighters and two chiefs were dispatched.

We will provide more information as it becomes available.

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/feb/21/house-fire-extinguished-encinitas>

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### CERT TRAINING

From left, Simon Holt of Fruits Encinitas, Josh Gordon of the Encinitas Fire Department and Doug Jones, president and cofounder of the Encinitas Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT, were on hand for a recent event at Encinitas Fire House No. 5. All CERT team members received free smoothies. CERT cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and AED training will be held Feb. 20 at the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Department. For more information, call (760) 633-2815. Academy graduates are registered with FEMA and the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services. For more information or registration check [encinitas.cert-central.com](http://encinitas.cert-central.com). The Encinitas CERT program educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. *Courtesy photo*

## Streaming online movies to television easier than ever

By Consumer Reports

Getting online content on television is easier than ever. A growing number of Internet-capable televisions and Blu-ray players allow consumers to stream video from the Web to the big screen via a broadband connection.

Consumer Reports' latest Ratings of televisions and Blu-ray players that can stream movies online included more than 20 sets from \$1,000 and four players from \$150. Lab tests also revealed that set up and access to online content was easy and picture quality was decent if not quite up to the claimed resolution.

CR's tests also found another dozen or so televisions that can stream other types of content aside from movies; however, Internet browser capabilities on Web-enabled televisions and Blu-ray players are limited. Viewers can watch videos from YouTube; news, sports and more from Yahoo!; digital photos stored on Picasa and

Flickr; and music from Internet radio stations such as Pandora and Slacker. Some of the content is free. Movies and TV episodes are pay-per-view or, with Netflix, included with a subscription. Other online streaming services include Amazon Video on Demand, Blockbuster on Demand and Vudu.

Aside from Web-enabled televisions and Blu-ray players, there are other devices available that offer access to streaming movies and online content, including the TiVo HD DVR, \$250, and two game consoles: Microsoft's Xbox 360, \$200 and up, and Sony's PlayStation 3, \$300, which includes a Blu-ray player and a Web browser. There are also dedicated boxes that connect to an existing broadband service via a wired or wireless (Wi-Fi) hookup. Some of the streaming services, such as Vudu, also offer their own boxes for a fee.

### Things to consider

— Which Net-cable gear? Each hardware brand has partnered with specific services; content may vary for different players or televisions within a brand. CR recommends that consumers who are upgrading from a standard DVD player to a Blu-ray player should consider an Internet-enabled model as it costs much less than upgrading to a television that can receive the Web and gets the same content. Boxes dedicated to streaming video are available from Roku HD, \$80, and MediaPoint, free with \$99

worth of Blockbuster movie rentals. Apple TV, \$229, allows access to the iTunes video library, and Vudu has a box for \$149. Microsoft's Xbox 360 and Sony's PlayStation 3 can stream content from Netflix.

— Which brand? Each hardware brand has partnered with specific services; content may vary for different players or televisions within a brand. Just because a TV or Blu-ray player is Internet-capable, it may not be able to stream content from a desired service. For example, Samsung televisions and Blu-ray players that are Web-enabled can stream content from all the service providers CR looked at; however, Panasonic enabled devices can only stream content from Amazon Video on Demand from among the streaming services CR looked at.

— Which movie services? The major streaming movie services offer immediate access to tens of thousands of titles and most are available on demand. The vast majority of offerings are standard-definition, but there are some HD videos. Vudu's HDX movie format was the only movie stream that looked like real HD but required the high end of most broadband providers' standard service (4.5 to 9Mbps). Most charge per rental except for Netflix, which offers unlimited streaming which is included with monthly plans starting at \$9.

Visit the Consumer Reports Web site at [www.consumerreports.org](http://www.consumerreports.org)

## Stop before you toss those class action settlement notices

We've all gotten them in the mail. Usually it's a postcard with a bunch of small print and confusing instructions. Those notices saying there's a class action settlement and somehow they got your name. My secretary just told me she just tosses them in the garbage!

"What?" I said. "You could be throwing away a lot of money!"

"No, I was just going to get a coupon for a buck off my next purchase of dog food," she said.

I don't blame her. I used to toss them away, too, until I really started to examine them as a consumer attorney. Don't get me wrong: class action lawsuits keep big corporate wrongdoers honest and provide justice to a big group of consumers who each only suffer a little bit of harm. If we had to sue individually for each person who bought a tainted bag of



J. MICHAEL VALLEE

### The Law and You

dog food, for example, no lawyer in America would take the case where, if you win, you get back the cost of the dog food. It allows lawyers to represent a whole group of folks at one time and makes it economically viable to do so. But ...

There's always a "but," and that leads me back to the point of this article. Sometimes, the proposed settlement isn't fair to the consumers who got ripped-off in the first place. Sometimes, the settlement doesn't give each person enough, doesn't make the wrongdoer pay enough, or gives the lead attorneys too

much in fees. If you get one of the notices, have it examined for free by a qualified consumer attorney to look at the specifics of the proposed class action settlement. If you don't agree with the terms, you may be able to object. If your objection is warranted, you may be entitled to extra compensation for helping the class get a better deal!

So, next time you get one of the annoying notices in the mail, have it looked at by a qualified attorney before you toss it. You could not only earn extra money, but you could help out a lot of other folks as well. That's one of the ways that justice works in America.

*Michael Vallee is a practicing trial attorney whose firm focuses on consumer law, personal injury and wrongful death cases. He is a consumer legal contributor for The Coast News. Contact him at [info@valleelaw.com](mailto:info@valleelaw.com).*



**POKER WINNER** Poker pro Annie Duke, right, and George Arsenis, left, the poker room manager at Pala Casino Spa & Resort, present \$8,000 in winning chips to Greg "Grumpy" Heslip of San Diego for his first-place finish in the \$25,000 Annie Duke Free Roll Poker Tournament Jan. 30 at Pala. *Courtesy photo*

## Texas Hold'em tourney winners celebrate

**PALA** — Greg "Grumpy" Heslip's 10-8 topped Shawn Delargy's 6-4 in the final hand and the San Diego quality engineer pocketed the \$8,000 first prize in the \$25,000 Annie Duke Free Roll Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament on Jan. 30 at Pala Casino Spa & Resort.

Heslip beat 66 players, including Duke, for his first tournament victory. Duke, a top poker professional and a

star of "Celebrity Apprentice," hosted Pala's first major tournament in its new 15-table poker room that was part of the casino's \$100 million renovation.

"It was competitive," Heslip said. "There were a lot of good players here today. Annie was terrific as the host and it really feels good to finish first against this field. I play here two or three times a week and will definitely be back."

Delargy, a control operator for a major utility in Rancho Cucamonga, took home \$5,900. He won \$4,900 for second place but also earned a \$1,000 bonus for knocking Duke out of the tournament in the fifth round with pocket jacks over her ace-10 of diamonds.

"I played against Annie in Las Vegas several times," Delargy said. "It always

TURN TO **WINNERS** ON 25

## Garden festival ready to bloom

**ELFIN FOREST** — The Town Council of Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove is wrapping up plans for its 2010 Garden Festival, "Gardens Within Gardens" from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 3.

Tickets and maps to the gardens can be picked up

the day of the event at the Elfin Valley Nursery, 20110 Elfin Forest Lane.

Five outstanding gardens will be presented. Several have never been open to the public and a few have been glimpsed in features in San Diego Home and Garden. All represent

the diversity of artistic flair and style found in Elfin Forest.

The festival will also feature author and America in Bloom judge Evelyn Alemanni, who will be available to sign copies of her

TURN TO **GARDEN** ON 27





Standing by the van purchased with the donated funds are (l-r): John Tanner, RSFFPD board member; Tom Hickerson, RSFFPD board member; Nancy Hillgren, RSFFPD board member; Jim Ashcraft, RSFFPD board chair; Nick Pavone, fire chief; Natalla Ajuba, Red Cross development and communications coordinator; and Randy Malin, RSFFPD board member.

## Van donated to Red Cross in honor of RSF Fire District

At its recent meeting, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District Board of Directors and American Red Cross publically recognized Andrew and Erna Viterbi of Rancho Santa Fe for their generous donation of \$30,000 for the purchase of a Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicle. The Viterbis made this donation in honor of the Rancho Santa Fe firefighters for their courageous work during the 2007 wildfires.

The Red Cross depends on the generosity of community members such as the Viterbis, who are a part of a dynamic group of philanthropists called the Red Rose Society. The Red Rose Society raises funds for the purchase of Red Cross vehicles, which are used to respond to emergencies and assist those affected by disasters. Without these charitable gifts, the Red Cross would be unable to serve its community.

For more information on the Red Rose Society, please contact Chris Marek at (858) 309-1217.

## Open House preview of new Performing Arts Center at RSF is March 10

The Underwriting Committee for the Performing Arts Center at Rancho Santa Fe is holding an Open House on Wednesday, March 10, from 4:30 - 6 p.m., at the site of the new facility on the campus of the R. Roger Rowe School. Join current and potential donors for a tour of the building, currently under construction, and a preview of the completed preliminary stages. Campaign co-chairs, Bibbi Herrmann Conner, Carol Warren and Allison Stratton will be on-site to take questions and review interior plans for the facility.

To-date, sufficient funds have been raised to make this building a reality but additional donations are still needed in order to complete this state-of-the-art venue for all to enjoy.

After the Open House reception guests are invited to join the Community Concert's Series presentation of the Canadian Tenors from 7 - 8:30 p.m. at Fellowship Hall at the Village Church. Tickets start at \$75 and may be purchased in advance by calling Jan Clark at 858-756-4000.

Guests are requested to meet outside the R. Roger Rowe District Office, on the school grounds before 4:30 p.m., to be guided to the Performing Arts Center building by the supervising construction company C.W. Driver. Closed toe shoes and a light jacket are recommended. Parking is available in



Performing Arts Center at RSF aerial view.

front of the school and is accessed from El Fuego, just off of La Granada.

For more information, visit [www.performingartscenter.org](http://www.performingartscenter.org). Other questions or to RSVP please call Sandi Lubenow at 858-756-1141 extension 152 or [slubenow@rsf.k12.ca.us](mailto:slubenow@rsf.k12.ca.us).

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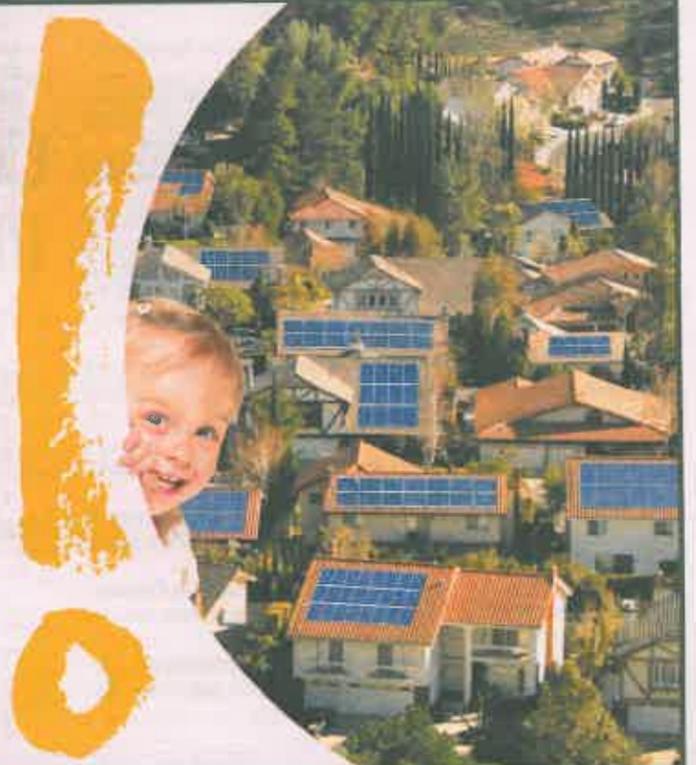
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# Solana Beach OKs traffic calming project

By Bianca Kaplanek

SOLANA BEACH — In response to community concerns about traffic, City Council unanimously approved at the Feb. 10 meeting several projects to address unsafe driving and make city streets more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

"Traffic is an important issue to our community," said City Manager David Ott, who, along with other staff and council members, met with residents. "Over the years there've been numerous issues usually associated with speeding through neighborhoods," he said.

One project on South Cedros Avenue will add 6-foot-wide painted medians on both sides of Marsolan Avenue and a slightly wider center median where the street opens up south of Marsolan. Public Works Director Mo Sammak said that is where motorists tend to increase speed. Narrowing the road should slow them down, he said.

A center turn lane will be added from Cofair Avenue to Via de la Valle. Curb pop-outs will also be painted at the intersection of South Cedros and Via de la Valle. Proposed improvements to the area were rejected by South Cedros residents early last year, pri-



**ROAD DIET** City Council recently approved several traffic calming projects, including one that would reduce Valley Avenue between Stevens Avenue and Via de la Valle down to one lane in each direction. The move is intended to slow motorists on that stretch of the roadway. Plans also call for the addition of bike lanes and a two-way left turn lane. Photo by Bianca Kaplanek

marily because they included angled parking. City staff worked with the community to develop the current plans. For improved safety, another project recom-

mends a "road diet" for Valley Avenue between Stevens Avenue and Via de la Valle. Despite heavy use by pedestrians and bicyclists, that stretch of road-

way currently has no bike lanes and a sidewalk on the west side only. Plans include reducing the street to one lane in each direction and adding bike lanes and a two-

way left turn lane. According to a traffic study, Valley can accommodate current traffic volumes as a two-lane road. In fact, part of it was successfully nar-

rowed to that configuration during construction of the pump station.

Despite requests to lower the speed limit on Las Banderas Drive between San Andres and Lomas Santa Fe drives, the city is unable to do so based on a speed survey.

To encourage motorists to slow down, the road will be restriped with a 10-foot center turn lane. Existing parking lanes will remain, but the road width will narrow.

Several road striping projects will also be implemented throughout the city at areas that were chosen "because of their strategic locations and the specific concerns addressed by members of the community," the staff report states.

Crosswalks at Lomas Santa Fe and the Las Banderas/Via Mil Cumbres intersection will be restriped. The left-turn pocket onto Via Mil Cumbres from eastbound Lomas Santa Fe will also be repainted with a small adjustment to soften the turn.

Midblock crosswalks will be repainted on Las Banderas near the golf course and on South Sierra Avenue at Fletcher Cove Park and near the access to

TURN TO TRAFFIC ON 26

## Van donated to Red Cross in honor of local firefighters

RANCHO SANTA FE — At its recent meeting, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District board of directors and American Red Cross publicly recognized Andrew and Erna Viterbi of Rancho Santa Fe for their generous donation of \$30,000 for the purchase of a Red Cross emergency response vehicle.

The Viterbis made the donation in honor of Rancho Santa Fe firefighters for their courageous work during the 2007 wildfires.

The Viterbis are part of a group of philanthropists called the Red Rose Society. The Red Rose Society raises funds for the purchase of Red Cross vehicles, which are used to

respond to emergencies and assist those affected by disasters. For more information on the Red Rose Society, contact Chris Marek at (858) 309-1217.

The mission of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District is "To protect life, property, and environment through prevention, preparedness, education and

emergency response." Formed in 1946, the Fire District now spans approximately 42-square miles and protects over 29,000 citizens. The Fire District currently operates out of four full-time fire stations and serves the communities within and surrounding Rancho Santa Fe and 4S-Ranch.

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