



## Oceanside, firefighters reach tentative contract

By [Aaron Burgin](#), UNION-TRIBUNE

Wednesday, September 1, 2010 at 5:34 p.m.

Oceanside's firefighters would pay a portion of their employee pensions for the first time under a tentative contract agreement between the city and its fire union, but the deal doesn't come without a cost on the city's end.

Firefighters have agreed to pay 4 percent of the 9-percent employee retirement contribution. CalPERS, the state's retirement system sets the percentage that employees contribute. The city had borne the cost of the employee contribution.

The agreement also calls for firefighters to forego two holidays in the current fiscal year and one holiday in the 2012 fiscal year. Firefighters also will receive a 2.5 percent annual raise and also receive some of the step pay increases that were frozen earlier this year.

The City Council will vote on new contract at its Sept. 22 meeting.

Public employee pension reform has become a rallying cry during the election year, especially after the employee pay scandal in the small Los Angeles suburb of Bell.

Carlsbad fire and police employees agreed to lower pension formulas for new employees, and voters will decide Nov. 2 whether they want to control future increases. In Solana Beach, all city employees recently agreed to a two-tiered pension system, which calls for smaller pensions for new hires.

While Oceanside's changes are not nearly as dramatic, several city officials said the city is moving in the direction of shifting the burden of pensions from the taxpayer to the employee.

But according to a city report, the city will have to pay out nearly \$500,000 over the life of the firefighters' two-year contract, largely to satisfy a contractual requirement that each fire station be fully staffed every day. Currently, the city has 31 firefighters on duty at any given time, meaning that it can't fully staff one of its eight stations. The new contract would restore an additional firefighter for each shift at an annual cost of \$414,000.

According to the report, the city will reap \$1.183 million in savings, compared with \$1.668 million in contractual costs.

"I see the fact that they will be paying for a percent of their (retirement) as a step in the right direction,"

City Manager Peter Weiss said. “However, this contract does cost the city money.”

The president of the Oceanside Firefighters Association said union members have mixed feelings about the contract, but said he believed it was “a pretty good agreement.”

“We gave up pay raises and a lot of other things to get that retirement benefit,” said Jess Specht, an Oceanside fire captain. “It doesn’t feel too good because you’re basically paying for it twice, but we understand that it is a reality we have to face, so we are not digging our heels in kicking and screaming.”

The draft agreement, released Wednesday afternoon, is causing friction on the council over the “minimum daily staffing” clause.

Councilwoman Esther Sanchez said the agreement is the first step toward firefighters — and all other city employees — paying for their retirement benefits. In a statement, Sanchez said the cost to fully staff the stations is a city-imposed condition that guarantees all residents have adequate fire service, and should be viewed independent of the contract.

“Neither side got what it wanted, but the new contract gets us about halfway to where we want to be,” Sanchez said.

Councilman Jerry Kern denounced the new agreement as an halfhearted attempt at pension reform, and fully staffing each station gives the city no incentive in the future to work with surrounding cities to share the cost of fire services.

“We’ve gone from \$500,000 in savings to a half-million in expenses per year,” said Kern, a longtime critic of the pensions city employees receive. “This isn’t reform; this is horrible public policy.

“Any savings we can get from cooperating regionally is gone,” Kern said. “This hurts Carlsbad, it hurts Vista, it hurts us all.”

Oceanside Fire Chief Darryl Hebert said he disagrees with Kern’s contention that the new agreement precludes any future consolidation efforts between the cities, pointing to administration, training and prevention divisions as areas that aren’t affected by the staffing requirement where cities could share services.

“And I still believe there could be savings in the firefighting force,” Hebert said. “It is certainly my goal.”

Weiss, the city manager, said he will ask the council Sept. 22 to tap its reserves to pay for what’s needed this year to satisfy the terms of the contract. If budget conditions don’t improve, however, the city might have to make cuts elsewhere to get the money to satisfy the second year of the proposal. Weiss said it is too soon to say what next year’s budget will look like, and additional revenue from the city’s forthcoming contract extension with its waste hauling company and other savings could improve the city’s financial condition.

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/sep/01/oceanside-firefighters-reach-tentative-contract>

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## Head-on Crash Injures Two in Rancho Santa Fe

Last Update: 9/07 7:59 pm

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RANCHO SANTA FE - A head-on collision left two motorists seriously injured and closed a rural Rancho Santa Fe road for several hours Tuesday.

The wreck on Via de la Valle was reported about 11:30 a.m., said Julie Taber, public relations coordinator of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District.

Emergency personnel arrived to find the two female drivers trapped in their crumpled vehicles near the intersection of Calzada del Bosque, Taber said. After freeing the women, crews airlifted them to Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla for trauma care.

The roadway remained closed for investigation and cleanup until about 1:30 p.m., Taber said.



 The North County Times - Californian

## **RANCHO SANTA FE: Injuries reported in Via De La Valle crash**

**SARAH GORDON - [sgordon@nctimes.com](mailto:sgordon@nctimes.com) | Posted: Tuesday, September 7, 2010 12:11 pm**

RANCHO SANTA FE ---- Two separate helicopters took two women to a hospital after a Tuesday head-on collision left them with major injuries, authorities said.

The crash happened on Via Del La Valle near Calzada del Bosque at about 11:30 a.m., said Julie Taber, a spokeswoman with the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District .

Firefighters had to free both drivers from their wrecked vehicles, Taber said.

A Mercy Air ambulance and a San Diego Fire-Rescue Department helicopter took the women to Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla, Taber said.

The road was closed for about two hours. Further details were not available Tuesday.



## North coastal cities praise first year of fire-management pact

By Jeff Ristine

Wednesday, September 8, 2010 at 3:31 p.m.

Battalion chiefs once were paged in from as far away as San Diego and Vista to take command of firefighting in Encinitas, Del Mar and Solana Beach. None of the North Coast cities was large enough to financially justify having that key management position on its own.

Now a battalion chief is just minutes away in Rancho Santa Fe, one of the benefits of an agreement forged last year to share management services among the four jurisdictions.

The move also reduced duplication and costs in the communities, said Fire Chief Mark Muir, and put each jurisdiction's firefighters — already crossing each others' boundaries in emergency response — under more consistent procedures and programs.

“It has really helped strengthen and unify and strengthen the working relationship among the four agencies,” said Rancho Santa Fe Fire Chief Nick Pavone.

The contract among the three cities, along with Rancho Santa Fe in unincorporated San Diego County, went into effect Oct. 15.

Under discussion for years, the consolidation came about in the wake of devastating wildfires in 2003 and 2007 that called attention to the lack of a unified firefighting system in San Diego County, and the failure of a November 2008 ballot measure that would have created a regional fire agency financed by a parcel tax.

Now approaching the midpoint of their two-year contract, all four jurisdictions are pleased with the experience and outcomes.

“By and large, it has done what we wanted it to do,” said Del Mar Mayor Richard Earnest. “The firefighters themselves did a marvelous job of adjusting to the new system.”

Solana Beach City Manager David Ott, a former fire chief, said his community now benefits from a fire marshal, training chief and three battalion chiefs it didn't have before. The city's share of the cost, he noted, is less than that of a single fire chief.

Savings to the three cities are estimated at more than \$164,000 in Year One from reduced personnel costs and economies of scale, Muir said. Encinitas is saving \$89,000 alone from two new management moves, including an agreement from Solana Beach to share costs for one of its deputy chiefs.

Performance and dispatch time was not expected to be an issue since the communities had dropped boundaries on emergency response years ago.

“We have not had one comment from staff or the community that things are different from they were before,” said Solana Beach councilman Joe G. Kellejian. “It’s doing fine.”

Kellejian is one of Solana Beach’s appointees to a committee that will explore possible changes in the governance of the consolidated fire organization.

Muir and others said a joint powers authority is one idea likely to be studied, an approach that could make each city more comfortable with its control over fire management.

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**Find this article at:**

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/sep/08/north-coastal-cities-praise-first-year-of-fire-man>

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## North coastal cities praise first year of fire-management pact

By Jeff Ristine,

Wednesday, September 8, 2010 at 3:31 p.m.



At Encinitas Fire Department Station 1, engineer Jon Peterson has the Engine 2311 cab up so he can access its engine to perform maintenance. CHARLIE NEUMAN / U-T

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# 10News.com

## 2 Injured In Head-On Collision In Rancho Santa Fe

### ***Women Airlifted From Scene; Dog Taken To Vet***

POSTED: 4:33 am PDT September 8, 2010  
UPDATED: 5:31 am PDT September 8, 2010

**RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif.** -- A head-on collision left two motorists seriously injured and closed a rural Rancho Santa Fe road for several hours Tuesday.

The wreck on Via de la Valle was reported about 11:30 a.m., said Julie Taber, public relations coordinator of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District.

Emergency personnel arrived to find the two female drivers trapped in their crumpled vehicles near the intersection of Calzada del Bosque, Taber said. After freeing the women, crews airlifted them to Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla for trauma care.

A dog injured in the crash was taken to a local veterinarian.

The roadway remained closed for investigation and cleanup until about 1:30 p.m., Taber said.

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**Images:** 2 Injured In Head-On Collision In RSF

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## Two Sustain Major Injuries in Head-On Crash in Rancho Santa Fe

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On September 7, 2010, at 11:31 a.m. firefighters from the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District (RSFFPD) responded to a reported head-on traffic collision on Via de la Valle near the intersection of Calzada del Bosque. Upon arrival they found two vehicles with major damage and both drivers trapped. Via de la Valle was shut down in both directions for approximately two hours while crews worked to free the drivers and clear the roadway. The drivers, who were both female, sustained major injuries and were transported to Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla via air ambulance. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is investigating the cause of the collision.

Two fire engines and two battalion chiefs from RSFFPD responded to the incident. They were assisted by two ambulances from San Diego Medical Services, a fire engine from Solana Beach Fire Department, an air ambulance from Mercy Air, and San Diego's Copter 2. Rancho Santa Fe Patrol and CHP assisted with traffic control.

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.

Author:Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection Dist Press Release



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2009 Rancho Days RSF Fire Pancake Breakfast

## Local travel advisors recommend new style of cruising



High style on the high seas recommended by Gayle Gillies Worldview Travel

Known for personal recommendations that make travel a life-enhancing experience, Gayle Gillies Worldview Travel offers a new way to enjoy high style on the high seas aboard Oceania Cruises' new Marina. This vessel debuts in January 2011 and continues the tradition of mid-size ships serving the finest cuisine at sea while adding an array of revolutionary enhancements.

"Today's leisure travelers demand an array of choice and excellent value," observes Gayle Gillies manager Michele Benigno, "a combination that describes Marina perfectly."

sea and private terrace with Jacuzzi, these palatial suites are fit for royalty.

Thoughtful design extends through the full range of suites, verandah staterooms and deluxe ocean view accommodations, all with floor-to-ceiling views through sliding glass doors or panoramic windows all featuring a tub and shower in their spacious bathroom.

Signature "finest cuisine at sea" is served in 10 dining venues, six of which are open-seating, gourmet restaurants, including Jacques, the first

Choices on Oceania Cruises' flagship begin with innovative staterooms for just 1,258 guests that were designed to set a new standard for upper-premium cruising. Owners' Suites offer over 2,000 square feet of luxury and span the entire beam of the ship, completely appointed with acclaimed Ralph Lauren home furnishings. Complete with a music room overlooking the

restaurant at sea for world-renowned Master Chef Jacques Pépin. Each restaurant is available to Marina's guests with no additional charge.

"Marina is a perfect choice for food and wine aficionados," comments Benigno. "I'm particularly enthusiastic about Oceania Cruises' partnership with Wine Spectator Magazine. From the Grand Dining Room to new La Reserve wine-tasting center, my clients will appreciate connoisseur selections plus varietals in the regions where they cruise."

Also noteworthy, the Bon Appétit Culinary Center offers hands-on cooking instruction under the guidance of master chefs. Similarly, artists-in-residence will teach fine arts in Artist Loft, a new enrichment center aboard Marina.

Benigno adds, "Combining the world's most alluring ports, five-star service, and casual elegance, Marina is well suited for discerning travelers."

For a limited time, select inaugural voyages of Marina are available with 2-for-1 cruise fares, free air from San Diego, and exclusive amenities from Gayle Gillies Worldview Travel. Serving Rancho Santa Fe since 1982, Gayle Gillies Worldview Travel is a member of the prestigious Virtuoso travel network and located at 16921 Via de Santa Fe; 858-756-4174.

# Former Torrey Pines student gets one year in jail for bank robberies

By City News Service

An 18-year-old man who robbed four banks and tried to pull off a fifth heist was sentenced Sept. 10 to a year in jail.

Evan McGehee, who authorities dubbed the "Double-Layer Bandit," pleaded guilty in April to four counts of robbery and one count of attempted robbery.

McGehee apologized for his actions, which happened after his parents' home was severely damaged by the 2007 Witch Creek fire and his stepfather was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

The defendant's mother filed for bankruptcy and she told McGehee to move out when he turned 18, friends said.

McGehee was sent to prison in June for a 90-day evaluation, which came back favorable for probation.

Had it not been for that, Judge Theodore Weathers said he would have sent the defendant to prison.

Weathers told McGehee that it was "beyond comprehension" that a young man would rob banks to survive.

"There's no excuse for that," the judge said. "And by rights you should be sent to

state prison."

Weathers suspended a prison sentence of five years and eight months, which he said would only be imposed if McGehee "messed up" during his five-year probation.

Tony and Hortencia Moore told reporters outside court that McGehee — who was best friends with their son — can live with them when he gets out of custody.

The couple said they will make sure the defendant graduates from high school and gets a job.

"He will finish high school, he will go to college, and he'll be a productive member of society like he was meant to be," Hortencia Moore told reporters.

McGehee, now 19, robbed the banks in November, December, January and February.

The former Torrey Pines High School student who admitted in June to robbing four banks may have been pushed to turn himself in after the death of childhood friend Chelsea King, according to a 10News report.

McGehee was an honor student and on the varsity track team when he reconnected with King, a Poway High School runner and childhood friend.

# Two sustain major injuries in head-on crash

On Sept. 7, at 11:31 a.m. firefighters from the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District (RSFFPD) responded to a reported head-on traffic collision on Via de la Valle near the intersection of Calzada del Bosque. Upon arrival they found two vehicles with major damage and both drivers trapped. Via de la Valle was shut down in both directions for approximately two hours while crews worked to free the drivers and clear the roadway. The drivers, who were both female, sustained major injuries and were

transported to Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla via air ambulance. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is investigating cause of the collision.

Two fire engines and two ambulance chiefs from RSFFPD responded to the incident. They were assisted by two ambulances from San Diego Medical Services, an engine from Solana Beach Fire Department, an air ambulance from Mercy Air, and Rancho Santa Fe's Copter 2. Rancho Santa Fe and CHP assisted with traffic control.

# Man tries to lure child in local school area

According to local community members, last week a 5-year-old girl was being lured by a man at the playground in the Solana Santa Fe School fields. He was hiding on the side of the fence behind the shed located in the playground area and was trying to get the girl to approach him by asking her questions and telling her that he had a rabbit he wanted her to see. The girl used excellent instincts and approached some parents on the playground for assistance. The community members looked around the area but the person in question was no longer there. The girl was able to provide a description and the police arrived to take down all the details.

Please contact the Sheriff's Department directly to report any suspicious, unusual activity. Dial 911 if immediate response is needed and cannot wait; the direct non-emergency dispatch number is 858-565-5200.

# Next prescription medication 'take back' event is Sept. 25

Quarterly, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department hosts a prescription medication "take back" event.

The majority of teens cite parents' medicine cabinets and/or medicine cabinets in the homes of friends as major access points.

The next event will be held on Sept. 25 at Scripps Memorial Hospital Encinitas (North Parking Lot) 354 Santa Fe Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

The Sheriff's Department is in the process of installing secure drop-boxes at many of its facilities to facilitate the drop-off of unwanted prescription medications. The sites will be announced when ready, but in the meantime, unwanted medications may be dropped off during business hours at the Sheriff's headquarters office at 9621 Ridgehaven Ct., San Diego, CA 92123.

# ACLU files lawsuit against state over school books/supplies fees

On Sept. 9, the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California (ACLU) filed a class action lawsuit for allowing school districts to charge fees for books and other supplies. The lawsuit names the state of California and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in the suit and claims that the practice violates the California Constitution, which guarantees a free education. According to the ACLU, multiple school districts are requiring students to purchase textbooks, workbooks, and other supplies. The suit contends that this practice discriminates against lower-income children and results in an unfair education system. The lawsuit was filed in the Los Angeles Superior Court.

— School Services of California

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# The emerging county fire department

By [Union-Tribune Editorial Board](#)

Sunday, September 19, 2010 at midnight

A new model for a county fire department seems to be emerging. Not the County Fire Department as in Orange County and one agency. Not the Steamroller Model as in big county government flattens volunteer fire departments.

What is emerging, as evidenced by a 5-0 Board of Supervisors vote last week:

- A model where the county outsources fire functions – suppression, training, purchasing, fuel removal, dispatch and repairs – to the state’s Cal Fire.
- Use of a new stipend program to augment career firefighters with hundreds of better-trained volunteers.
- A simplified interagency command structure so everyone knows who is boss.
- Consolidation first of functions and later of agencies.

Specifically, supervisors approved Howard Windsor, head of regional Cal Fire operations, taking on the title of county fire chief. He will report on outsourced operations to Ray Fernandez, deputy county administrator. (No, Windsor will not get a dime more in pay.) Thirteen existing county fire employees will be aligned with Public Safety, not Land Use.

Efforts to consolidate duplicative functions, identified in a recent study, will proceed. County fire chiefs have put every recommendation in a spreadsheet along with who is pursuing it. Meantime, the great challenge of finding a funding source for changes falls to the county.

Buried in fine print is that there will be an effort soon to form a mini-joint powers agreement between the county, Cal Fire and four small jurisdictions. It will be a mini-laboratory, the one everyone watches to see whether the new model will succeed.

San Miguel’s Augie Ghio, president of the County Fire Chiefs Association, called the vote a “road map to the future, a first for the county since the ‘70s.” Stephen Whitburn, supervisor candidate, told the board it was “moving deck chairs on the Titanic.”

We side with Ghio, a force for bringing agencies together. Still, this county needs kicks in the pants. We

have seen this county abandon the fire business (though it now budgets \$15.5 million a year and has pumped in \$206 million since 2003). We've seen the sheriff and district attorney commandeer almost all of the Proposition 172 sales tax money for public safety. We've seen what can result from having too many fire agencies – five dozen – and two few aircraft for putting out wildfires.

Don't look for volunteer departments to be stomped out, but to be blended in, enticed by strings attached to future county funds. Get on board or go it alone.

Do look for agencies contracting for certain county or Cal Fire services to be the first invitees to that oh-so-important pilot JPA. Say, Pine Valley, Valley Center, Deer Springs and San Diego Rural.

How successful this new model will be, how soon it comes about and where the money comes from are unknowns. But clearly something significant is stirring.

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/sep/19/the-emerging-county-fire-department>

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