

 The North County Times - Californian

## PFINGSTEN: Teenage guitar-makers hone their craft in Encinitas

By TOM PFINGSTEN For the North County Times | Posted: Sunday, December 4, 2011 9:00 am

The six teenage boys in **Sean Hauze's** class at the [Grauer School](#) in Encinitas may be learning science, technology, engineering and math, but they're doing it in a way that most kids would never dream of: They're building their own guitars.

Along with physics teacher **Morgan Brown**, Hauze is instructing the class in the art of assembling and finishing guitars ---- a branch of fine woodworking that relies upon laws of science as much as the ear to produce a playable instrument.

"By the end, they will have fully functional electric guitars," Hauze said Friday.

The project began this fall and will wrap up in late spring. It was prompted by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

Hauze, who runs a middle school music club and teaches guitar on the side, said he and Brown built their first guitar over the summer so they would know what to expect.

They now understand that making a guitar is far more complicated than playing one.

"(You're) looking at the proportions of the neck and frequencies of pitch, as well as the hands-on stuff like soldering and grounding the electrical components. Hence, the coordination between physics and technology," Hauze said. "There's a lot of fine-tuning that goes into it. For example, if you set the neck wrong, you'll never get it."

Last week, Hauze and Brown's students mounted rosewood onto the necks of their guitars to make fret boards. The two teachers are also working on another guitar that will be painted by Grauer art teacher **Christy Goodson**, then auctioned off at the school's May 5 fundraising gala.

"It's kind of going to be a collaborative faculty guitar," said Hauze, adding that the teenagers in his class have learned to respect the craftsmanship required to finish a project like this. "Before, they were just chunks of wood, but now they're really careful with them, wanting to make them perfect."

**Hang a star:** Longtime [San Diego Padres](#) announcer **Jerry Coleman** will visit the [Escondido Public Library](#) on Tuesday for a discussion of his new autobiography, "American Journey," city librarian **Jo Ann Greenberg** told me on Friday.

"When I mention his name, everybody starts quoting him," Greenberg said with a laugh.

In the past, she said, "The library has hosted Ray Bradbury, we've had Cloris Leachman, we've had John Dean ---- pretty famous people," but Tuesday night is likely to draw a large crowd to hear from the unofficial voice of the Padres, Mr. "Oh Doctor!" himself.

According to a brief biography distributed by the library, Coleman played for the New York Yankees in what was arguably that team's midcentury heyday, pausing to serve in two wars ---- World War II and Korea ---- on his way to becoming a lieutenant colonel in the Marine Corps.

"This man has everything, he appeals to everybody, because of his military service and his career in sports," Greenberg said. "We expect a big crowd."

She said the visit was arranged by the Escondido Library Endowment Foundation and library board member **Diane Yerkes**, a friend of the Colemans.

The free event is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. Tuesday at 239 S. Kalmia St. If the promise of hearing Coleman's voice in person is not enough to entice you, Greenberg said the library has also arranged to have a Cub Scout color guard start the evening with perhaps the cutest Pledge of Allegiance you have ever heard.

**Lifesavers honored:** When a 13-year-old boy went into cardiac arrest in **Brian Hudson's** physical education class at Rincon Middle School in December 2010, the next few minutes could have been tragic.

Instead, they were defined by heroism ---- and a little luck.

Following his training, Hudson started CPR until the school's nurse, **Debbie Moore**, arrived with the \$1,500 automated external defibrillator that Hudson had suggested the school have on hand in case of just such an emergency.

Together, the pair kept **Ian Quinones** alive until the paramedics took over, and they are being honored as heroes this week by the [California Emergency Medical Services Authority](#): Hudson will receive the authority's Civilian Award, and Moore has been named the winner of this year's Inter-Service EMS Recognition Award.

Fellow North County emergency services standout **Mary Murphy** is also receiving an award from the Sacramento-based organization for her work as the EMS coordinator for the five fire agencies in the Rancho Santa Fe Fire District.

The ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday in San Francisco, and while Hudson and Moore may not make the trip, the legacy of their lifesaving actions last December lives on.

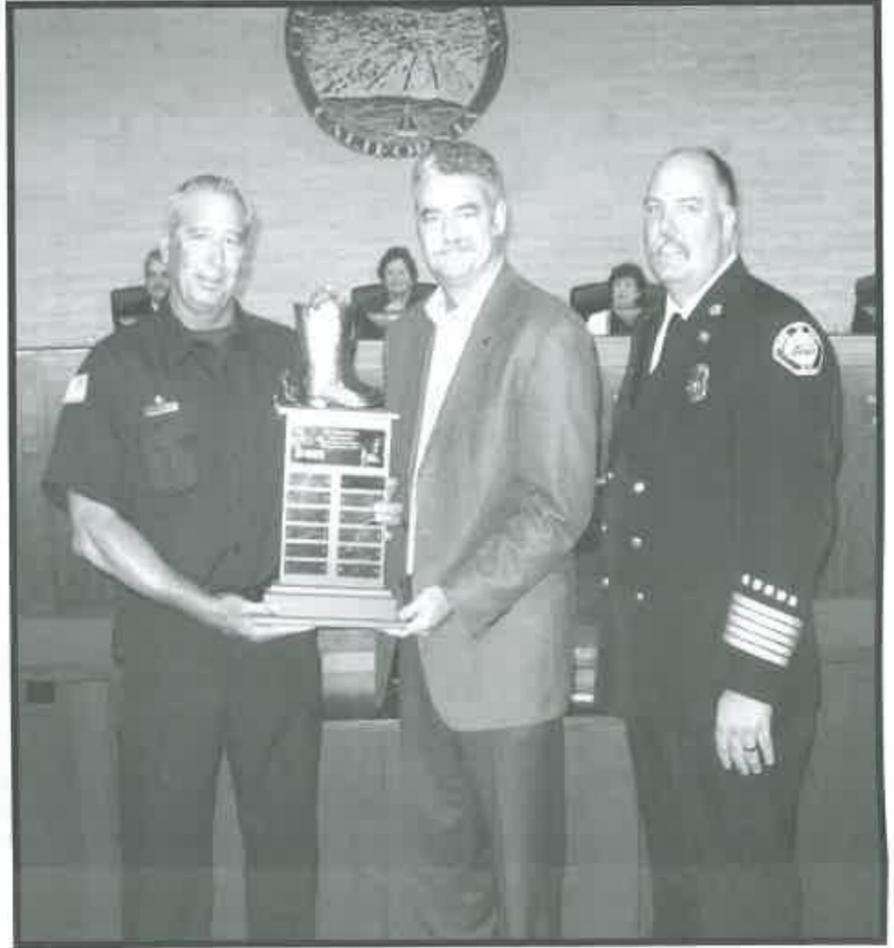
In February, after Quinones spent two months recovering in the hospital, the North County Times reported that the incident persuaded the Escondido Union School District to spend about \$40,000 to outfit every campus with a defibrillator.

## 2011 Firefighter Boot Drive: They are the Champions

Trophies were awarded recently to the best of the best in each region of the county for their fundraising efforts during last spring's Give Burns the Boot Drive. Congratulations to the winners! ♦



Colonel Amaroso accepting on behalf of Camp Pendleton Fire Dept, winners for the Northern Region along with James Floros, Burn Institute



V.P. Marc McDonald, Chula Vista Firefighters Local 2180, James Floros and Chief Dave Hanneman, Chula Vista Fire Dept.



Chief Tony Michel, "01 Chiefs Challenge" winner from Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and James Floros



City of San Diego Fire-Rescue winners for the San Diego Region from Station 33/B Shift, James Floros, Chief Javier Mainer and S.D. Coordinator, Oscar Rodriguez



Viejias & Alpine Fire Departments, winners of the Eastern Region along with BI Assistant Executive Director/COO, Diane Sutherland

\$450 will send one burn-injured child to winter *Camp Beyond The Scars.*

# \$450

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## REGION: Backcountry fire protection gets boost from 9 new vehicles

By CHRIS NICHOLS [cnichols@nctimes.com](mailto:cnichols@nctimes.com) | Posted: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 8:00 pm

Backcountry fire protection got a boost from more than just Mother Nature's drenching storm this week.

Nine new firefighting vehicles went into service across San Diego County's rural communities, a result of three grants totaling \$2.2 million, the county said in a news release.

Six new water tenders, two wildland fire engines and one patrol vehicle were purchased with the money, the county said.

They will serve remote, fire-prone towns such as Ranchita and Warner Springs in the county's far northeast and also spots farther south such as Dulzura, Jacumba and Lake Morena.

"We have had a huge addition of new fire equipment just this year," [San Diego County Fire Authority Chief Howard Windsor](#) said in the news release. "The apparatus are assigned to fire stations in the east and south county and bolster our fire and emergency services for over 1 million acres of unincorporated area."

In the last four years, the county has purchased 20 fire engines and 17 water tenders, the release said.

Reached by phone Tuesday, Ramona-based Battalion Chief Randy Scales of the [California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection](#) said the new engines and water tenders will be of use right away, not just when the weather and fire danger heat back up.

"They're being used every day," Scales said of the new grant-purchased vehicles at the Warner Springs and nearby stations.

San Diego County contracts with the state fire agency, also known as CalFire, for much of its rural fire protection.

The new \$464,000 engines are used to respond to vehicle accidents and structure fires that don't cease during cool weather. And the \$200,000 water tenders are used throughout the backcountry year-round to ensure firefighters have a supply of water in remote spots.

There's not always a hydrant nearby when a brush fire breaks out, Scales noted.

The money for the vehicles comes from the 2009 federal stimulus, or American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; federal Community Development Block Grants and from California's Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee.



**RSF Rotary Club is here!**

RSF Rotary Club members recently placed a sign at one of the entrances to the RSF Village. The club is hoping to soon be able to place two more signs at community entrance points. L-R: Tony Michel, Fire Chief; Alan Balfour, Rotary President; Patrick Galvin, Past Rotary President; Matt Wellhouser, Rotary President Elect; Chris Galindo fire captain, and Jason Rehkopf, fire service assistant. Photo/Brad Britton

**Five abandoned kittens ready for adoption**

Just two days before Thanksgiving, John Mevi awoke to find five hungry, flea-ridden kittens abandoned in a urine soaked box in his yard in Lakeside. Mevi who had adopted pets from Helen Woodward Animal Center in the past, called the Center for help. The kittens, who are now about 10 weeks old, have recovered from their ordeal and are ready to find their forever families. In honor of Mevi and his good deed, the kittens have been named after the virtues of the holiday season – Faith, Hope, Joy, Love (or charity) and Peace.



These abandoned kittens are now available for adoption at the Helen Woodward Animal Center.

"First, I was shocked," said Mevi of finding five kittens in a raty box at the end of his long driveway. "Second, I thought how cute they were and third, I knew that if my daughter saw them, she would think Santa had come a little early and would want to keep them, so I took them to Helen Woodward Animal Center where I knew they would be able to find homes."

Mevi doesn't hold it against the people who abandoned the kittens, "In this economy, people just don't know what to do. I am glad they left the kittens at my house and we were able to do the right thing." Four of the kittens, three males and one female, are grey with big green eyes, while one lone female is black with green eyes and a white tuft of fur on its chin. They are sweet and playful and ready to find their forever homes this holiday season.

The kittens will be part of the Iams Home for the Holidays campaign which has found homes for 6 million pets since it began at Helen Woodward Animal Center in 1999. This year 3,800 animal organizations are participating worldwide and the goal is to find homes for 1.5 million pets this holiday season.

For more information or to adopt these kittens, visit [www.animalcenter.org](http://www.animalcenter.org), call 858-756-4117 or stop by at 6461 El Apajo Road in Rancho Santa Fe.

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# 10News.com

Family Of 5 Displaced After Fire Destroys Home

## ***House Is Located In 1800 Block Of Crest Drive***

POSTED: 7:18 am PST December 20, 2011  
UPDATED: 7:38 pm PST December 20, 2011

**ENCINITIAS, Calif.** -- Two adults and their three children narrowly escaped injury early Tuesday as flames consumed their large home in an upscale Encinitas neighborhood, authorities said.

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**Images:** Family Of 5 Displaced After Fire Destroys Home In Encinitas

The fire at 1820 Crest Drive near Birmingham Drive broke out around 6:30 a.m., according to the Encinitas Fire Department. The blaze, still raging at 9 a.m., sent huge plumes of black smoke hundreds of feet into the air.

"The family basically got out with the clothes on their backs," said Encinitas Fire Marshal Bob Scott, noting that the American Red Cross was assisting the victims with temporary housing.

"With the fire burning so much, it was not safe for us to make entry into the house," said Scott, who explained firefighters took a "defensive stance," pouring water on the flames from the outside, rather than taking their hoses into the inferno. Firefighters let the fire die down naturally and waited for the second story to collapse on its own.

Foul play was not suspected, according to Scott, and the exact cause of the blaze is under investigation.

No neighbors were evacuated.

Regarding an earlier report that the fire started in the laundry room, Scott told 10News that there was no way to tell whether it is even a possibility.

Because of the instability of the home, investigators have not yet been able to go inside to figure out what caused the fire.

At one point, the roof caved in. Later, part of a blackened wall was seen falling to the ground as the family who lived there and their neighbors watched in horror.

The two-story home, which had an ocean view, was declared a total loss. Scott estimated the loss at between \$400,000 and \$700,000.

"I think they were just overwhelmed, overcome and glad to have their children out, and I think it's just hitting them, what's happened," said neighbor Michael Folb.

Folb said he was awakened by what sounded like an explosion. When he went outside, he heard his neighbor, Willie Dent shouting for his three children and his wife, Virginia, to get out.

"Under the circumstances, I think they're doing remarkably well," Virginia Dent's longtime friend, Denise Plante, told 10News. "They really are counting their blessings, knowing that this could have been a horrific tragedy."

Plante and other friends of the family have set up a relief fund through the Encinitas branch of Wells Fargo Bank. In the meantime, they dropped off toiletries, clothing and other items to help the family get through this tough time.

"It's amazing what people will do to help, especially during Christmas," said Virginia Dent's daughter, Emily McCartney, who was at her father's house nearby when the fire started.

Emily pointed out the room she sleeps in when she's with her mom, noting there's nothing left.

"Everyone's fine so I'm happy," said Emily. "That's all that really matters, as long as everyone got out OK."

Emily said the three children inside the house were 9, 10, and 21 years old.

Plante called the Dents a remarkable family and told 10News they will celebrate Christmas this weekend.

"And knowing Virginia and Willie, I know it will be a good Christmas for those kids, they'll make sure that those children are happy," said Plante.

The fund "Dent Family Fire Relief Fund" was set up through Wells Fargo (277 N. El Camino Real, Encinitas) and those interested in donating can call the bank at 760-634-6400.

***Do you have more information about this story? [Click here to contact us](#)***

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# Dad Saves Family From Raging Fire

Smoke could be seen for miles

By Michelle Wayland

| Tuesday, Dec 20, 2011 | Updated 5:51 PM PST



A mother of eight children, whose house was devoured by flames Tuesday, credits her husband for saving her and three of their children who were home at the time.

## Dad Saves Family from Raging Fire

A mother of eight children, whose house was devoured by flames Tuesday, credits her husband for saving her and three of their children who were home at the time.

Virginia and Willy Dent and three of their eight children, aged eight, nine and 21, were at home when Willy Dent smelled smoke.

He rushed his family downstairs, according to his wife.

The fire started on the first floor of the house in the 1800 block of Crest Drive near Birmingham Drive at about 6.30 a.m. on Tuesday.

As the second story of the house started to collapse around 8 a.m., firefighters went from attack mode to defense mode as water from the firefighting efforts started gushing downhill towards other home.

Dozens of firefighters were on scene Tuesday morning, many of them working to secure nearby homes.

The smoke could be seen for at least ten miles.

The family escaped without injury, according to firefighters.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Firefighters originally estimated the damage at \$400,000, but later increased their estimation to \$600,000 to \$800,000.

A neighbor has set up a fund for the family at the Wells Fargo in Encinitas on 277 N El Camino Real.

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## ENCINITAS: Family barely escapes house fire; home is 'a total loss'

By **BRANDON LOWREY** [blowrey@nctimes.com](mailto:blowrey@nctimes.com) | Posted: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 7:40 am

An Encinitas family narrowly escaped its burning home Tuesday morning, but the flames ravaged the two-story house and kept firefighters on the defensive for hours.

After the fire began about 6:30 a.m., officials blocked streets and shut down power to much of the surrounding neighborhood in the 1800 block of Crest Drive. Crews remained on-scene until 5:45 p.m., NorthComm officials said.

Firefighters kept the fire from spreading to other homes, but could not save the burning house, said Encinitas Fire Marshall Robert Scott. Between the structure and its contents, he estimated the damage at \$700,000.

"They got out of the house with what they're wearing," Scott said. "That's how close this was for them getting out safely and not getting injured. I'm looking at their house, and it's a total loss."

The Red Cross provided shelter and clothing to the family ---- a husband and wife and their three children.

Scott said all of the rest of their possessions were probably gone.

Just before 10 a.m., more than three hours after the fire began, Scott said he could still see flames inside the house. But the fire was too deep inside the house to reach from outside, and firefighters wouldn't go inside for fear the house would collapse at any moment.

The cause of the fire remained under investigation, but Scott said it did not appear suspicious. The San Diego County Sheriff's Department's bomb and arson unit was summoned to the scene to investigate, which is typical for a major fire.

A witness tweeted this photo

**Patrice Malloy**

@PatriceMalloy

Encinitas house fire [twitter.com/PatriceMalloy/...](https://twitter.com/PatriceMalloy/)

December 20, 2011



## Fire destroys Encinitas house; family escapes

By Debbi Baker

Originally published December 20, 2011 at 6:54 a.m., updated December 20, 2011 at 3:24 p.m.



ENCINITAS — Five family members escaped from their burning two-story house in Cardiff early Tuesday, minutes before it was engulfed in flames.

The two-alarm fire on the large lot on Crest Drive at the corner of Birmingham Drive was reported at 6:30 a.m., Encinitas Fire Marshal Bob Scott said.

Several hours later, it was still smoldering.

Firefighters heading toward the house could see a huge tower of black smoke from a distance and immediately called the second alarm, Scott said. Flames were raging on the second floor when they arrived.

Firefighters made a quick search inside the house to make sure no one was still inside and then backed out as the roof was beginning to collapse, Scott said.

Neighbor Dana Barré said he was already awake when he heard the sirens.

“When the engines started pulling up, the house was already engulfed in fire,” Barré said. “The windows were popping out.”

Michael Folb, who lives across the street from the burning house, said he heard what sounded like a large explosion. He looked out his window and saw the flames.

“I heard someone yelling, ‘Get out, get out,’” he said. He saw the family members, a husband, wife and three boys, in their pajamas with no shoes. Folb’s wife got them robes and boots.

Jennifer Hewitson, a friend of the wife for more than 30 years, said her friend’s husband woke up and smelled smoke.

“She said she hasn’t even cried yet,” Hewitson said. Her friend’s eyes teared up, though, when she gave her a hug, Hewitson said.

The woman told her that she thought the fire may have started in a laundry room.

Two hours after the fire began, the flames continued to burn. Scott said a ladder truck had been used to send a huge stream of water onto the house, but firefighters had to back off on the water flow because there was concern that a house behind the home would be flooded.

He said the more than 3,000-square-foot house was a total loss.

About 45 firefighters from Encinitas, Carlsbad, Del Mar, Solana Beach, Vista and Rancho Santa Fe contained the fire to the one house.

Two huge pine trees in the front yard stood unburned. Christmas decorations were in the yard. A large green wreath sat outside on the porch as flames coming from inside a window danced around it. Several cars in the driveway appeared to be undamaged.

By about 11 a.m., all of the active flames were out but hot spots remained and continued to smolder, Scott said. Investigators will not enter the home until Wednesday for safety reasons, he said.

Sheriff’s bomb-arson unit detectives were called in to try to determine the cause of the fire, which was not considered to be suspicious, Scott said. Damage was estimated at \$700,000, he said.

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## REGION: County's top fire chief retiring, sees improved readiness

By CHRIS NICHOLS [cnichols@nctimes.com](mailto:cnichols@nctimes.com) | Posted: Monday, December 26, 2011 4:00 am

Howard Windsor can put down the BlackBerry starting this week.

San Diego County's top fire chief, whose roots run deep in Escondido and Temecula, is retiring Thursday after nearly three decades in fire service.

Windsor, 50, said he's proud of his work protecting San Diego County's backcountry from wildfires.

He has led that effort since 2008 as the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's chief for San Diego County.

Windsor took on the added role of chief for the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority in 2010.

He said the pressure of protecting a region scarred by [the 2003 and 2007 firestorms](#), combined with [Sacramento's constant budget uncertainty](#), has left him ready to "decompress."

"It just kind of wears you down," Windsor said by phone last week. "I haven't been able to put the BlackBerry (work cellphone) down. It's kind of a seven-day-a-week job."

Although the work has been exhausting, it has resulted in a region that's better prepared for the next inferno, Windsor said.

Fire preparedness "certainly has gotten better," the chief said.

### Working together

Windsor cited gains in public education and strengthened bonds between fire agencies and the communities they serve as his greatest successes in San Diego County.

Those education gains are the result of countless public meetings, Windsor said. They've resulted in greater brush clearance around homes and more detailed evacuation plans, to name two accomplishments.

"Public education is the critical piece," said Windsor, who lives in Temecula and graduated from Escondido's San Pasqual High School. "People need to be involved. We can't be successful without them."

As chief, Windsor has led the effort to bring some of the backcountry's volunteer fire departments under the county fire authority's umbrella.

That assignment was handed down by [the county Board of Supervisors in September 2010](#) to better coordinate, train and equip firefighting forces across the rural areas.

It was expected to speed up decision-making in emergencies in what has been a "highly dedicated but fragmented" set of fire districts across the county, a high-ranking CalFire official said at the time.

Windsor said everything from communication to training to the safety of the area's firefighters has improved as a result, the last part due to new medical clearance checks for volunteer firefighters.

He added that CalFire has also worked diligently with area law enforcement and health agencies to better prepare for the next firestorm.

"When disasters happen in this county, we're all going to have to work as one," Windsor said. "And we do a good job of that."

### Incoming chief

Despite preparedness gains, Windsor said there's room for greater education and stronger bonds within the region's fire ranks.

Windsor had high praise for Thom Porter, the CalFire official who will succeed him and take on those challenges.

"He's a good manager, a good leader; he's already well-respected by the troops," Windsor said.

Porter, who starts in January, could not be reached for comment last week.

The incoming chief began his CalFire career in 1999 in Riverside County as a forester ---- a resource management position, according to a biography provided by the agency.

Two years later, Porter transferred to the San Diego County unit where he assumed forester leadership posts.

He was promoted after the 2003 firestorms to a forester assignment responsible for the area's resource management, pre-fire engineering and fire prevention.

For the past three years, Porter has served as an administrator for CalFire's Southern Operations Center in Riverside, the agency said.

#### **'Bucket list'**

Windsor will have a new title, "coach," starting next year.

He'll coach the varsity boys soccer team at Temecula's Chaparral High School, he said.

Soccer is passion in the Windsor family: The chief's two adult daughters played four years of soccer for their respective colleges, Windsor said.

Along with the new role, the chief said he'd like to cross a few other items off on his "bucket list." They include learning Spanish, taking music classes and maybe a political science course at a local college.

He said he wants to stay away from fire service for six months or a year. But he's keeping an open mind about working later as a consultant or interim chief if the opportunity arises, Windsor said.

In that case, he'll have to keep the BlackBerry handy.