

Fire Station 3 back in business

On April 26, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire District celebrated the re-opening of Station 3 in Fairbanks Ranch with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The district has plans for an open house during which the community will be able to tour the station and learn about the services provided. www.rsffire.org/ PHOTOS: JON CLARK



RSF fire Chaplain Ray Ramage and fire Chief Tony Michel



(Above) RSF Fire District board members Randy Malin, Jim Ashcraft, Nancy Hillgren and Tom Hickerson cut the ribbon at the new Station 3.



(Left) The kitchen



Station 3 in Fairbanks Ranch.

Great news



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Wildfire in Rancho Santa Fe: Are you prepared?

— Submitted by the RSF Fire District

Wildfires are a constant threat for those of living in Southern California, especially in wildland-urban interface areas such as those inside and surrounding Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District's (RSFFPD) communities. The RSFFPD employs a hazard abatement inspector who surveys properties for fire hazards and mails violation notices to property owners not in compliance with District Ordinance 2004-02 and 2011-01, which can be found on its website at www.rsffire.org.

The RSF Fire District is currently in the process of sending letters out to all residents within the RSFFPD service area reminding them of the local hazard abatement requirements. Here are some ways you can safeguard not only your home, but your entire community. These requirements can also be found in their entirety on the RSF Fire District web site.

New Hazards are Increasing the Threat

There are a number of plant and tree species that have been infected by insect infestation, disease, and lack of maintenance. Some of this vegetation has gone from being decorative to becoming a potential fire hazard. Over the last few years, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District has seen an increase in the amount of tree mortality especially with Eucalyptus and California Pepper Trees, Oleanders, Myoporum and certain Acacia species. Property owners should survey their properties for dead or dying trees and remove them as necessary in order to reduce the fire hazard. Replacement trees should be approved by the Fire District and your local Homeowner's Association.

Create and Maintain Defensible Space

"Defensible space" is a term used to describe a 100-foot "buffer zone" around all structures on your property and 30-foot zone along either side of roadways and driveways in which dead and dying vegetation is removed and excess growth is thinned. Defensible space will not only give firefighters a safe place to make a stand against threatening flames, but it has been proven to save homes and minimize property damage.

Creating a defensible space around your home can be as simple as removing combustible vegetation and flammable materials and replanting with drought-tolerant, fire resistive trees, shrubs and plants. Keep vegetation well-maintained and remove any dead foliage throughout the year. Weeds and grasses must be cut below six-inches in height. Trees and native vegetation should not come into direct contact with structures or parts thereof. Tree limbs and foliage must be trimmed 10 feet from rooftops, chimneys, and outdoor barbecues. Mature trees must be pruned back at least four to six feet from structures and branches trimmed six feet off the ground.

Roofs and Rooftops

Most homes with wood-shake roofs do not survive wildfires. During a fire storm, these homes burn from the outside-in. If you own a home with a wood roof, there is no more time to delay; retro-fit your home with a roof made of non-combustible materials. Many newer roofing materials now resemble wood-shake so homeowners can experience the aesthetic qualities they desire while making their home a defensible one.

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Local delegates to the 2012 Democratic National Convention include: K. Thomas Bose, Carol Waldman, Francine Busby, Maureen Sweeney, Willie Little, Michael Gelfand. Not pictured: Kyle Krahe.

RSF residents elected as delegates to the Democratic National Convention

Rancho Santa Fe residents were among delegates recently elected to represent the 49th Congressional District at the 2012 Democratic National Convention. The convention will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina from Sept. 3-6.

Carol Waldman and Michael Gelfand of Rancho Santa Fe, along with Francine Busby of Cardiff, Maureen Sweeney of Solana Beach, Kyle Krahe and Willie Little of Oceanside, and K. Thomas Bose of Carlsbad won at the district-level delegate caucus held April 29. The 49th Congressional District includes most of the northern coastal area in San Diego, as well as the southern tip of Orange County.

Convention delegates will travel to North Carolina this fall to cast their votes to officially nominate President Barack Obama for a second term and to approve the Democratic National Party platform.

"I am beyond thrilled to be among the over 5,500 delegates nation-wide who will nominate the President for re-election at the convention and it will be an honor to represent my district," said Carol Waldman, a full-time mother.

California is awarded a total of 547 delegates and 46 alternates to the Democratic National Convention. The California Delegation has traditionally been one of the most diverse delegations in years past, and expects the 2012 delegation to reflect the multitude of California Democrats united for victory in 2012.

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BOND

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North Research to conduct the poll.

McLarney said the 17-minute telephone survey conducted between April 20 and April 27 reached about 500 people whose profiles represented a sampling of the district's demographic make-up. The margin of error was 4.4 percent.

Participants were asked if they would support increased property taxes to repair and upgrade aging schools, improve science labs, classrooms and libraries with modern technology, and boost student safety and security.

Additionally, they were told that the bond money, although required by law to be used only for capital improvements and school facilities upgrades and repair, would free up general fund money which could then be used to hire and retain qualified teachers and save academic programs.

The district's proposed General Obligation bond measure, for \$448 million, would include independent citizen oversight and would need 55 percent to pass. With survey results indicating 64 percent of voter support, the recommendation by the district's consultants was positive to move forward.

SDUHSD superintendent Ken Noah said he would bring the item to the next school board meeting on May 24 for discussion. At that time, board members

can ask questions and share their thoughts, he said, as well as hear from community members on the issue.

Eric Dill, SDUHSD's associate superintendent of business services, said exact wording for the bond measure must be decided by the July 26 school board meeting, which is when trustees will vote whether to place the bond levy on the November ballot. Wording must be officially submitted in final form to the county Registrar of Voters by August 10.

Dill said the exact amount and terms have not yet been determined. The district has been using the figure of \$25 per \$100,000 of assessed property value, for 30 years, as a starting point. For property valued at \$600,000, this would cost property owners \$150 per year. This amount, he said, would raise the needed \$448 million.

The maximum taxation allowed under law for this bond is \$30 for every \$100,000 for 40 years, Dill said.

The Dolinka contract for financial advisory services related to the GO bond is for \$85,000, to be funded by campaign donations and future bond issues.

The polling work will be paid to Dolinka by the district and is costing \$18,000 when the poll is complete, \$2,000 per month for March through July, \$1,500 for August 1 to 15, and other expenses related to authorized work.

The poll findings
Benjamin Dolinka of

the Dolinka Group said the poll indicates that voters are aware of the district, know its geographic areas, and are favorably impressed, with more than 67 percent of respondents saying the quality of education in the district was good or excellent.

"This is amazing," he said. "We don't see this in the state of California. For a high school district to have this type of rating needs to be recognized."

McLarney said the category of "don't know" about the district can be as high as 20 to 25 percent in other polls. "But that didn't happen, so it indicates they know the district," he said, telling board members that San Dieguito has "more visibility than they might expect."

When given a choice of options, the poll revealed that 84 percent of respondents were most concerned with maintaining the quality of education in local schools.

The main reason for supporting the measure was that all the money would stay in the district and be used to support local students. A close second was that good schools help protect and improve local property values.

The main reason for not supporting the measure, according to the 27 percent who said they would vote against it, was that there is too much wasteful spending in government.

After hearing negative arguments, McLarney said the one that most resonated was that now is not the right time to be raising taxes.

Yet even after hearing the arguments against the measure, McLarney said most respondents continued to back it. "Support is quite resilient," he said.

Conclusions of the report were that the bond measure is feasible, there is a high opinion of the district's performance, the quality of education is important, and the district's facilities needs are well-aligned with voters' priorities.

The district has "a very good chance [that] if you move forward you will be successful," McLarney said.

Newsman and district parent Graham Ledger, speaking from the audience, identified himself as a member of the Tea Party and addressed the group, saying, "I see a lot of backslapping."

He asked McLarney how many of those surveyed were homeowners and how many renters, saying this matters because renters don't pay property taxes and would not be affected by passage of the bond. McLarney said about 65 percent were homeowners and 35 percent renters.

Ledger also said the pollsters were "asking questions in a vacuum" since they did not inform respondents of other local bond measures that might appear on the same ballot.

Competing bond measures

MiraCosta College is considering a possible \$500 million bond measure this fall, and the Del Mar Union School District's Board of Trustees at its April 25 meeting voted 3-2 to authorize a

bond feasibility study, to be conducted by Dolinka.

San Dieguito trustee John Salazar asked how these measures might affect support for SDUHSD's bond.

McLarney said competing initiatives are common and that 94 percent of the time the bonds pass if polling indicates that success is feasible.

Nevertheless, Ken Noah said he had concerns about passage if voters are faced with three GO bonds on the November ballot that all ask for increases in property taxes.

"I worry if we are competing," he said. "When I heard about Del Mar, it caused me to pause a bit."

After the meeting, Noah said he anticipated state tax initiatives on the ballot, but that troubled him less than the unknown impact of local school tax proposals.

"This is high stakes in terms of what we're asking our communities to support," he said.

Pointing out that SDUHSD has been working on the issue of facility needs and planning since December 2008, he said the community expects due diligence and that the district would be prepared with a list of needs and projects that is the result of a "lengthy, exhaustive and involved process" that is "defensible and consistent with ... the community's priorities."

Noah said he was aware of MiraCosta's proposed bond to improve aging facilities at the college's three campuses, which was based on a 20-year comprehensive

master plan. MiraCosta's boundaries include Solana Beach, Rancho Santa Fe, Del Mar and Carmel Valley.

But Del Mar's sudden interest in a bond measure last month came as a surprise, Noah said. "I know this was not on anybody's radar," he said.

The issue is further complicated, Noah said, by already existing taxes on property owners for school facilities in Encinitas, Cardiff and Rancho Santa Fe.

Noah said he would recommend proceeding with the bond measure, but if board members have "overwhelming concerns" about competing bonds, "then that would certainly cause me to rethink this."

His other concern is full board support for the initiative. "If I have wavering support, then I think that would cause us to pause," he said. The GO bond requires a super-majority - 4-1 or 5-0 - for a governing board to place the measure on the ballot.

"It's important for me to know whether we have sufficient support at this point to move forward," he said. "I believe we do, but I want to hear that."

The San Dieguito Union High School District serves more than 12,000 students in grades 7 through 12 and encompasses North County's coastal region from Carmel Valley and Del Mar in the south, east to Pacific Highlands Ranch and Rancho Santa Fe, and north to the southern edge of Carlsbad.

WILDFIRE

continued from page 2

However, a non-combustible roof can become a combustible roof quite easily if leaf litter and debris accumulate on your roof. To safeguard your roof, regularly maintain your roof and rain gutters free from any debris.

Roadways and Driveways

Keep roadways and driveways clear from overhanging vegetation, which may hinder both evacuation efforts and access of incoming fire engines. From the edge of driveways and roadways, measure 13-foot, 6-inches straight up from the ground. Any overhanging bushes or branches in this area must be pruned back or removed to create vertical tree clearance.

Other important items:

- Remove dead palm fronds on palm trees within 100 feet from a structure or 30 feet from a roadway/driveway.

- Trim combustible vegetation 10-feet away from propane (LPG) tanks, and keep wood piles at least 30-feet away from any structure on your property.

Wildfire: Are You Prepared?

- Stack and store firewood 30 feet from all structures. All flammable vegetation and combustible materials must be cleared or removed within 30 feet of firewood stacks.

- Maintain a visible address. Whether it's a wildfire or an every-day emergency, firefighters need to be able to read your address. Your address number should be visible from the street, with numerals at least 4 inches in height, mounted on a contrasting background.

- If you own a private gate, it must be equipped with an approved fire district gate access switch and/or strobe sensor to allow firefighters to access your property during emergencies. Additionally, during wildfires, many firefighters arrive from out of the area and won't be able to access your gated property. During a wildfire, disconnect the manual override motor on your electric gate, or if you have a manual gate, leave the gate open. Otherwise, firefighters may have to use blunt force on your gate, causing significant damage.

If you have questions regarding vegetation management, please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at 858-756-5971. More wildfire prevention tips are available on our web site at www.rsfire.org.

Bond project cost estimates

Twenty-eight members of a San Dieguito Union High School District long-range facilities planning task force, created in 2008, met regularly to review student demographics, economic trends, housing development and other factors to determine district facilities needs for the next 50 years.

In addition to technology, task force recommendations of proposed projects include modernization, capital improvements, demolition, expansion of existing facilities and new school construction.

The district is considering a General Obligation bond to raise about \$448 million to fund the projects listed here. In the southern portion of the district the total comes to about \$167.3 million, and in the northern portion the total is about \$168.4 million - not including new construction and district-wide costs.

Following are cost estimates for projects the bond money would fund:

Middle Schools (\$94.9 million):

- Carmel Valley -- \$8.9 million
- Earl Warren -- \$35.1 million
- Diegueno -- \$30 million
- Oak Crest -- \$20.9 million

High Schools (\$260.8 million):

- Canyon Crest Academy -- \$35.2 million
- Torrey Pines -- \$88.1 million
- San Dieguito Academy -- \$76.2 million
- La Costa Canyon -- \$41.3 million

New Construction:

- middle school in La Costa Valley -- \$15.5 million
- middle school in Pacific Highlands Ranch -- \$71.1 million (includes land purchase)

Other:

- Sunset/North Coast alternative schools -- \$10.5 million
- District-wide technology -- \$18 million

4S RANCH: Fire officials to host spaghetti dinner

1 HOUR AGO • BY TERI FIGUEROA TFIGUEROA@NCTIMES.COM

The Rancho Santa Fe Firefighters Association Local 4349, in conjunction with the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District, will host a spaghetti dinner June 9, a district official announced.

The event will include displays as well as demonstrations of rescue techniques, including a simulated vehicle fire, removal of a trapped victim from a vehicle, and rescue from the window of a four-story building, according to a press release from district spokeswoman Julie Taber.

The dinner will run from 4 to 7 p.m. June 9, at the district's Station 2, at 16930 Four Gee Road in 4S Ranch, Taber said.

Tickets cost \$7 for adults, \$4 for children, and will be available at the door, she said.

Formed in 1946, the Fire District covers about 38 square miles and serves about 29,000 area residents.

The district has four full-time fire stations and serves the communities and environs of Rancho Santa Fe, Fairbanks Ranch and 4S Ranch.

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Fire Damages Home In Rancho Santa Fe

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1 Dog Killed, Cat Rescued From Burning Home

POSTED: 7:53 am PDT May 31, 2012
UPDATED: 12:16 pm PDT May 31, 2012

RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif. -- Four people awakened by a two-alarm fire in their Rancho Santa Fe home Thursday morning escaped unharmed, but their dog perished in the smoke-filled residence.



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The blaze in the 16000 block of Mimosa Place was reported shortly after 6:30 a.m., said Julie Taber, a spokeswoman for Rancho Santa Fire Fire Protection District.

It took crews from four North County emergency-services agencies about 45 minutes to fully douse the flames, which were confined to the attic of the 4,500-square-foot Spanish-style house, Taber said.

The personnel were able to rescue a pet cat from the single-story residence but found the canine dead inside, she said.

The cause of the fire was under investigation.

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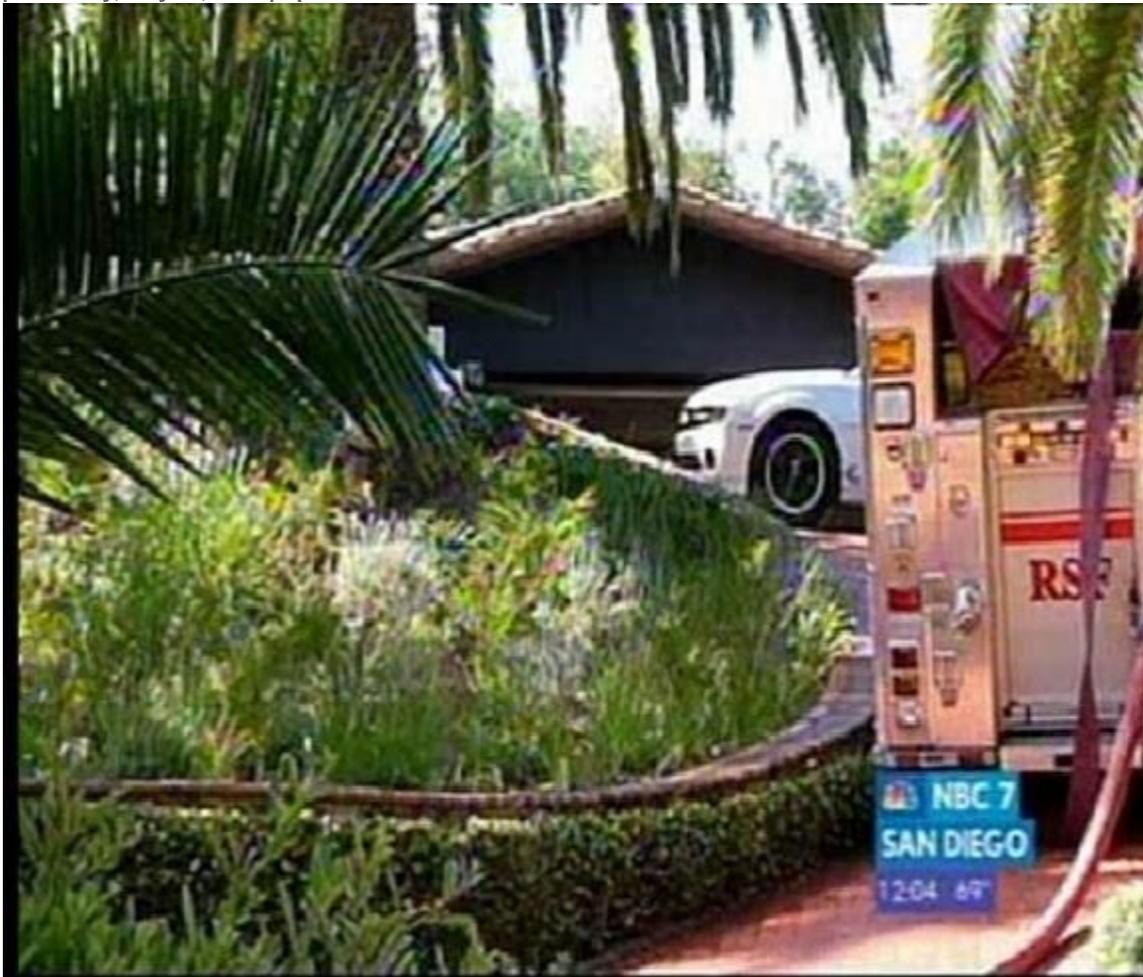
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Attic Fire Burns Rancho Santa Fe Home

Firefighters responded to a 2-alarm fire

By Lauren Steussy

| Thursday, May 31, 2012 | Updated 2:10 PM PDT



Firefighters responded Thursday morning to a two-alarm fire in Rancho Santa Fe. Brandi Powell spoke to one resident of the home about the damage.

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Rancho Santa Fe Attic Fire



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Firefighters responded Thursday morning to a two-alarm fire in Rancho Santa Fe.

The fire, in a home on the 16000 block of Mimosa Place, started in the home's garage and spread to the attic just before 7 a.m., authorities with the North Comm Fire Department.

The home's four residents were evacuating the home as firefighters arrived to the scene. At that point, the fire was classified as a "working fire."

Heavy smoke was visible from the roof of the large home, surrounded by palm trees. Aerial images showed firefighters sawing holes in the roof to let smoke out. Neighbors

A fire official said this fire was particularly difficult to fight due to the home's heavy timber roof.

None of the home's four residents were injured in the fire, but their pet dog did not survive.

California Highway Patrol authorities closed down Mimosa Place from Linea Del Cielo to La Granada, according to Rancho Santa Fe Fire officials.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Check back for more information.

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Find this article at:

<http://www.nbcсандiego.com/news/local/Attic-Fire-Burns-Rancho-Santa-Fe-Home-155926785.html>



Four escape Rancho Santa Fe fire, but dog dies

By Pauline Repard

Originally published May 31, 2012 at 10:06 a.m., updated May 31, 2012 at 10:15 a.m.

RANCHO SANTA FE — Firefighters woke four young people and got them out of a burning house in Rancho Santa Fe Thursday morning, but a dog died in the fire.

A resident on Mimosa Place, near Linea del Cielo, reported seeing smoke from a neighbor's house about 6:35 a.m., said Julie Taber, spokeswoman for the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District.

Firefighters found heavy smoke roaring from the garage and called in a second alarm for more engines.

They discovered the fire was burning through the attic of the 4,500-square-foot house. They went indoors and found the four occupants, in their teens or early 20s, asleep, Taber said.

"Firefighters entering the house is what woke them up," she said. "It was very fortunate they were able to arrive quickly."

Taber said the residents got a cat out safely, but a dog was later found dead in the home.

Most of the blaze was doused by 7:25 a.m. Fire damage was limited to the attic, but the rest of the house sustained considerable smoke and water damage, Taber said.

The cause of the fire was under investigation.

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