



OCFA Monthly Bulletin - February 2023

From the Fire Chief

Dear OCFA Family:

As I shared publicly with the Board of Directors last week, it is difficult not to be affected by the increase in the volume of work our agency is performing. Indeed, according to our recent 2022 Statistical Annual Report, year-over-year, the number of fires we responded to is up 5%, the number of EMS incidents we responded to is up 10%, and the number of OCFA community outreach events is up nearly 100%.

As you all know — some more viscerally than others — this trend does not come without a cost. It's right there in the report; firefighter injuries are up year-over-year, and behavioral health implications may also stem from this widespread uptick in service.

And yet, as I noted to the Board, despite the physical and mental strain that all of you — our firefighters and professional staff — endure to uphold our mission in the face of these increases, you continue to not only do your jobs, but also go above and beyond to live in service of others.

I want to pause here to acknowledge the growing tendency to overuse superlatives like "above and beyond" to the point of dilution; for if we constantly claim that everything and everyone is great, the true meaning of excellence is lost. With that in mind, it is with careful consideration that I use that phrase — above and beyond — to describe our collective work and service.

It is in the actions of Firefighter Paramedic Nick Sibayan who risked his life to help a Fountain Valley Police Officer subdue a violent patient in a crowded Emergency Room this month. It is in the work of EOC Dispatcher Austin Hall who was recently recognized for talking a mother through her son's medical emergency and meeting with the family after the incident. And of course, it is in the now viral story of the crew on Truck 32 who took a little girl to her basketball game after her family car was in a traffic accident.

These stories and others like them are covered in more detail below, but as heartwarming as they are, none are unique or unusual at the OCFA. Case in point, a few days after the Truck 32 story first broke, Matt Olson, our Corporate Communications Director, emailed the captain of the crew, Paul Holiday, to let him know that the coverage already had a reach of 220 million people. This was before it aired on ABC World News Tonight; Captain Holiday deferred any praise or credit, writing back, "This organization is full of crews that do this type of act every day."

With that in mind, I want to reiterate my recent message to the Board with all of you: It's easy to open documents like our Statistical Annual Report and focus exclusively on the impressive figures that reflect the ever-growing scope of our services, but we must look beyond the numbers to see and celebrate our people — the firefighters and professional staff who show up, day in and day out, to not only heal our sick, treat our injured, rescue our flood victims, answer our 911 calls, and protect our homes from fire, but also take the time to serve our community in ways that far transcend their job description.

That is what we mean when we say, "Above and Beyond," and I am honored to serve with all of you — the firefighters and professional staff who breathe life into that phrase — every day, on every call, and in every way possible.

Sincerely,

Brian Fennessy
Fire Chief

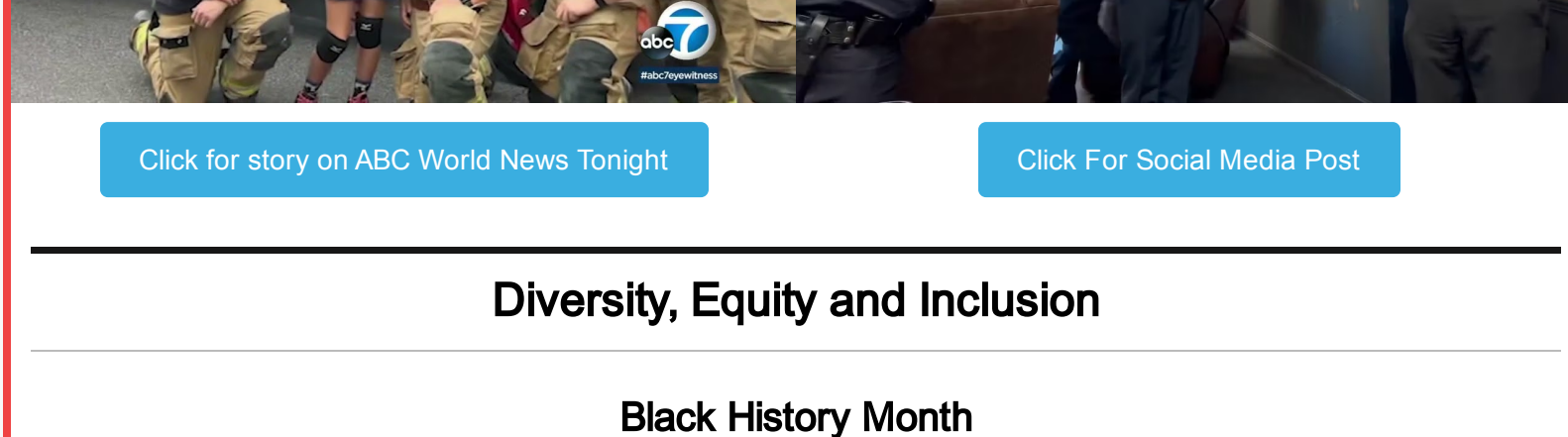
IN THIS ISSUE

- Monthly Spotlight - Excellence in Service
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Updates
- OCFA Social Media
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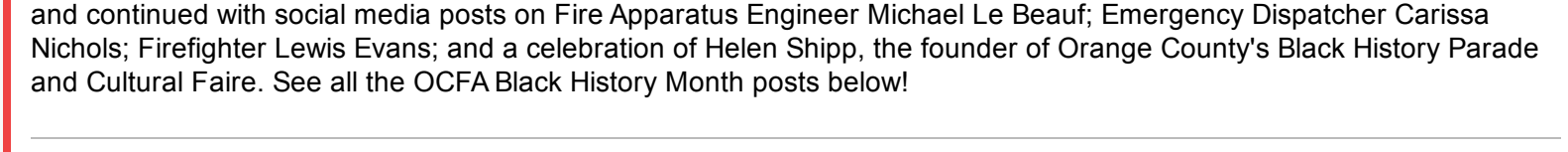
MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT - EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

Join us at OCFA's Annual Open House OCFA on March 4th!



Truck 32 Goes Above & Beyond

FF/PM Nick Sibayan



[Click for story on ABC World News Tonight](#)

[Click For Social Media Post](#)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Black History Month

Throughout Black History Month, we are celebrating the outstanding service and contributions of Black communities, firefighters, and professional staff throughout the agency and region. It began on February 1st with FF/PM Monay Lee, and continued with social media posts on Fire Apparatus Engineer Michael Le Beauf, Emergency Dispatcher Carissa Nichols, Firefighter Lewis Evans, and a collaboration of Helen Shipp, the founder of Orange County's Black History Parade and Cultural Fair. See all the OCFA Black History Month posts below!

Firefighter Paramedic Monay Lee



February 1st marked the start of Black History Month, and we are celebrating how diversity strengthens the OCFA and the communities we serve. As we begin the month, we are proud to recognize Firefighter Paramedic Monay Lee as she shares what Black History Month means to her.

An Orange County original, Monay was a basketball and track standout at El Dorado High School and Edison High School. Later an all-time scoring leader at California State University, Dominguez Hills where she played for four years and earned a bachelor's degree in Kinesiology, Monay now lives in Huntington Beach and is engaged to her high school sweetheart, Samantha.

After working as an EMT and personal trainer, Monay joined the OCFA in 2019 and currently serves on Engine 10 in Yorba Linda. Two of her most special memories at work are passing probation and the first time her niece and nephew visited her at work. "Their excitement, curiosity, and admiration brought me so much joy," she remembered fondly. "It was on a Thanksgiving holiday and highlighted so many things I am thankful for."

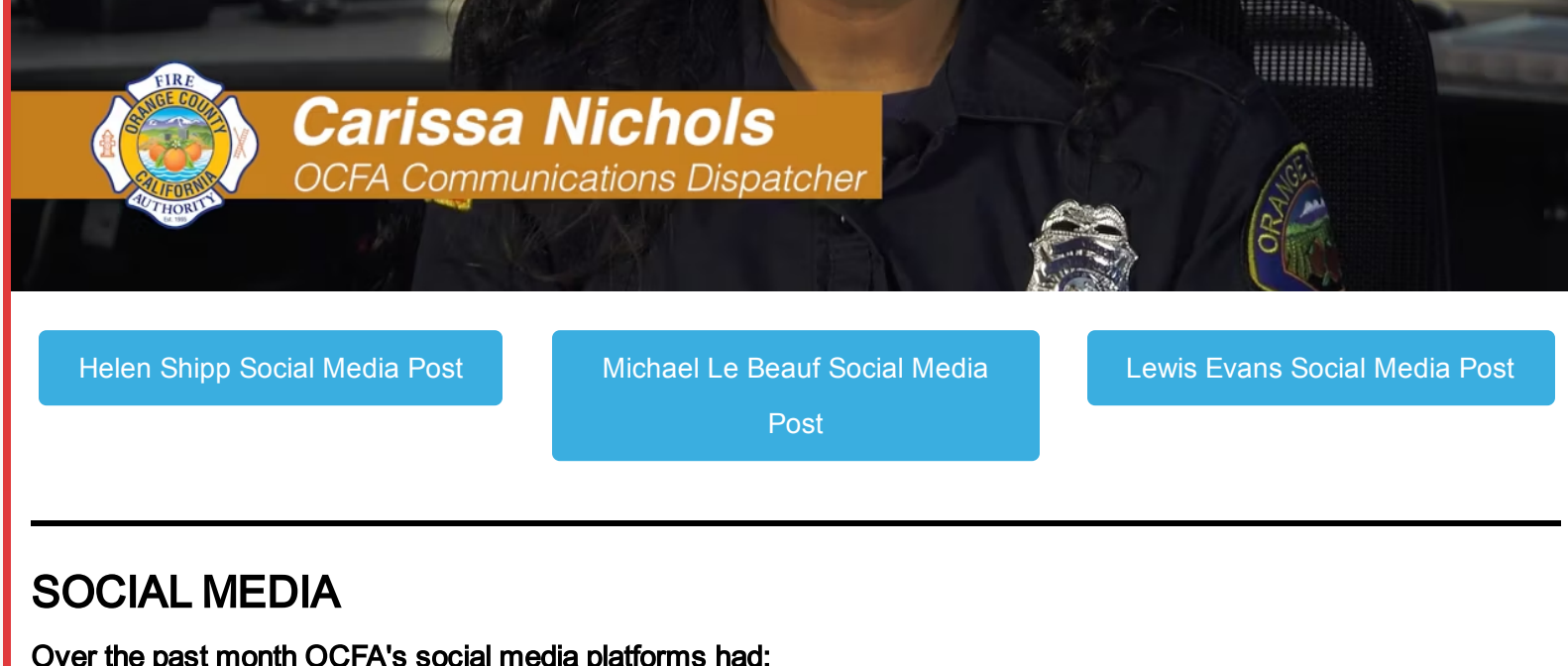
When asked what she loves about the fire service, Monay underscored the same qualities she took from being a scholar athlete. "I love the team environment, camaraderie aspect of the job and that I get to fulfill my purpose every day I show up to work," she said with a smile. As part of fulfilling that purpose, she has been a mentor and instructor at two Girls Empowerment Camps.

Reflecting on what Black History Month means to her, Monay shared that it is "a celebration of so many individuals that fought and paved the way for better days for the African American people. A time to reflect on and recognize the resiliency of African Americans. A month for everyone to be proud of how far we have come as a human race. Lastly, a month to consider how we can continue to make the world a better place."

Monay, we are honored to serve the community alongside you. We know you absolutely do make the world, and the OCFA, a better place.

Emergency Dispatcher Carissa Nichols

Carissa began her career with OCFA in 2020 and is thriving in her position. She's able to effectively navigate the balancing act of helping people on their worst day while sending essential information to the firefighters responding to the emergency. All of our dispatchers play such a vital role in protecting the community, and Carissa is no exception.



[Helen Shipp Social Media Post](#)

[Michael Le Beauf Social Media Post](#)

[Lewis Evans Social Media Post](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Over the past month OCFA's social media platforms had:

- Over 3 million impressions (eyes on our content)
- 180,797 engagements (interaction with our content)
- 1,013 link clicks/redirects
- 1,020 new followers

Despite these numbers and all of our social media success, we are always looking to improve and share information of interest with each other and the communities we serve. To that end, there is now a new area on the HIVE for all OCFA personnel (safety and non-safety) to submit photos, videos, and story ideas for OCFA's social media accounts and other information-sharing platforms.

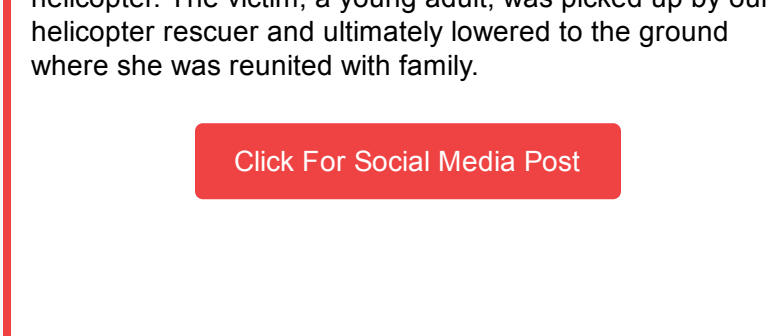
[Click to Submit Photos/Videos](#)

[Click to Read the Memo](#)



Top Social Media Posts

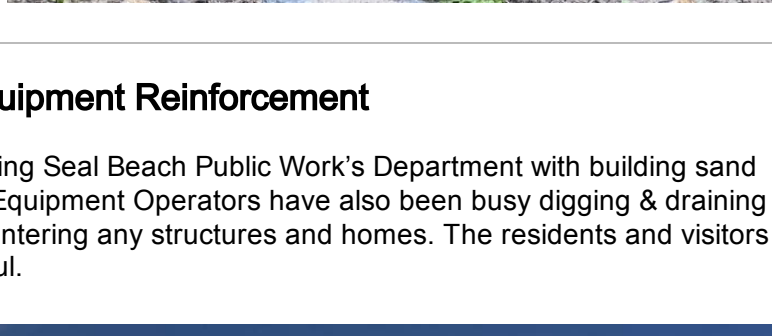
Swift Water Rescue Laguna Hills



Our Laguna Hills command center received a call at 3:28 pm on January 14th for a person hanging on to a tree in a creek with rapid moving water. Multiple swift water rescue teams, including a 15 member team, formed up for the ran at the request of CAL OES.

Crews set up for rescue from ground level and by our helicopter. The victim, a young adult, was picked up by our helicopter rescue and ultimately returned to the ground where she was reunited with family.

[Click For Social Media Post](#)



Seal Beach Heavy Equipment Reinforcement

All day, OCFA Heavy Equipment Operators have been assisting Seal Beach Public Works Department with building sand berms and reinforcing others along the beach. OCFA's Heavy Equipment Operators have also been busy digging & draining water from the pier and sidewalks have been very thankful.



[Click For Social Media Post](#)

Five Adult Technical Rescue in Santa Ana

Five adults were stranded on top of and inside their cars in the middle of the flooded 4th Street off-ramp off the 55 freeway in Tustin last night. OCFA technical rescue truck firefighters brought three to safety in a rescue boat after two walked out on their own. All were assessed by firefighter paramedics and were uninjured. Care Ambulance drove four of them to their nearby home to get dry and warm. Thank you CHP and Caltrans for the assistance. 2023 is only beginning, and we are happy to share our first story about teamwork and dedication to our community.



[Click For Social Media Post](#)

Drone Footage of Irvine Residential Fire

Our OCFA Drone Program captured footage of this well-involved residential garage fire extending into the 2nd-story attic of a home in the 4000 block of Homestead St. in Irvine. After neighbors called 911 at 12:32 a.m. on January 2nd, with reports of someone possibly in the home, firefighters quickly searched and determined nobody was inside. Knockdown occurred in 38 minutes. Most probable cause determined to be electrical failure of lithium-ion batteries.



[Click For Social Media Post](#)

Orange County Fire Authority In The News

RAW, CAL FIRE FIGHTERS RESCUE PEOPLE TRAPPED IN THEIR CARS
The Buffalo News - Jan 1, 2023

California firefighters rescue people trapped in cars as floodwater swamps roads amid historic rainfall
MEAWW - Jan 1, 2023

News | New Year's Eve storm floods streets...
The Orange County Register - Jan 1, 2023

VIDEO | Two-Story Fire Explodes In Home
The Epoch Times - Jan 3, 2023

Missing hiker found dead in California park
The Mercury News - Jan 3, 2023

Crews use diglhy to rescue people of cars on New Year's Eve
Yahoo! News - Jan 3, 2023

Atmospheric river burns deadly as it slams California with flooding, mudslides
New York Post - Jan 4, 2023

Landslide in Dana Point Closes Pacific Coast Highway for 2 Days
The Epoch Times - Jan 4, 2023

OC Firefighters Stop Ammonia Leak in Buena Park Tuesday
Patch.com - Jan 5, 2023

Storm Damages Pier in Seal Beach Friday, Prompts Closure
Patch.com - Jan 6, 2023

18-foot waves pummel piers, chunk out sand and flood parking lots along Southern California coast
The Mercury News - Jan 8, 2023

Seal Beach volunteers, officials provide free sandbags ahead of storm
KABC-TV - Jan 9, 2023

Knife-Wielding Man Fatally Shot By Tustin Police Sunday
Patch.com - Jan 9, 2023

Delta flight deboarding John Wayne airport catches on fire
KTU-TV - Jan 10, 2023

Local News | Firefighters team with brewers for fundraiser
The Orange County Register - Jan 10, 2023

2 Injured in Westminster Mobile Home Blaze Wednesday
Patch.com - Jan 11, 2023

Two Injured after driving into pair of mobile homes in Westminster
Yahoo! News - Jan 11, 2023

OC Girl Gives Back To Firefighters Through Hard Work, Can Collecting
Patch.com - Jan 11, 2023

Tesla Crashes Into Garage In Lake Forest Thursday
Patch.com - Jan 13, 2023

Woman rescued from rushing waters in Orange County (video)
KTU-TV - Jan 14, 2023

Woman airlifted from tree in Laguna Hills
KTTV-TV - Jan 14, 2023

Woman rescued by helicopter from tree above fast-rising water in Laguna Hills
KABC-TV - Jan 15, 2023

Emergency crews rescue man from moving water in Cypress
Yahoo! News - Jan 15, 2023

Orange County firefighters rescue woman trapped in rushing floodwaters
Yahoo! News - Jan 15, 2023

Watch: Woman Airlifted From Laguna Creek
Patch.com - Jan 15, 2023

Emergency crews make swift water rescue of man in Cypress
Head Topics - Jan 15, 2023

LA Sees Record Rainfall, With More On the Way to the Region
KNBC-TV - Jan 15, 2023

Southern California Sees Record Rainfall, Damages Counting
The Epoch Times - Jan 16, 2023

San Juan Capistrano Man, 30, Killed in Assault
The Epoch Times - Jan 16, 2023

Crime and Public Safety | OC's Black Star Canyon Trail closed...
Patch.com - Jan 17, 2023

Flooding Closes Black Star Canyon Trail In Silverado Through Friday
Patch.com - Jan 17, 2023

Man clings to edge of storm channel in rushing floodwaters, California rescuers say
AOL News - Jan 17, 2023

Woman Rescued After Falling Into Creek in South Orange County
MSN.com - Jan 17, 2023

Man wounded in Seal Beach shooting
Long Beach Post - Jan 17, 2023

2 Homes Flood in Surfside After Weekend Rains Breach Berm
Patch.com - Jan 18, 2023

Surveillance camera captures alleged arsonist lighting Mercedes on fire outside Buena Park home
KABC-TV - Jan 18, 2023

2nd Firefighter Killed on Santa Ana Block in 2 Days
The Epoch Times - Jan 19, 2023

Firefighters Rescue Dog From Burning Garden Grove Home
KNBC-TV - Jan 19, 2023

OC firefighters rescue dog from house fire
KTTV-TV - Jan 19, 2023

Dog Rescued, Mess Mopped by OC Firefighters After House Fire
Patch.com - Jan 20, 2023

Woman dies in Garden Grove storm drain
MSN.com - Jan 23, 2023

Woman Dies in Storm Drain At Orange County Park Sunday
Patch.com - Jan 23, 2023

2022 fire season fiercer than feared, but 2023 challenges loom
KVAZ-TV - Jan 23, 2023

Body found near Orange County recreational park
KTU-TV - Jan 26, 2023

Body Found in Embankment Near Orange County Recreational Park
Patch.com - Jan 27, 2023

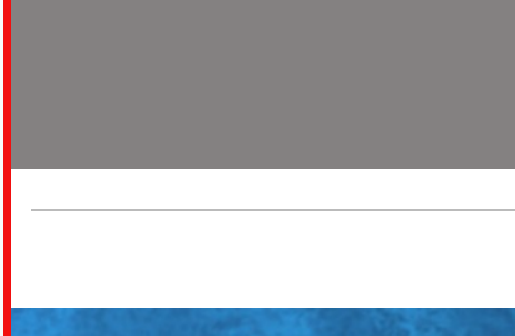
Crime and Public Safety | Garden Grove fire displaces 18 mobile home...
The Orange County Register - Jan 27, 2023

PROMOTIONS



- Kimberly Brown, Assistant Fire Marshal
- John Bowden, Fire Safety Engineer
- Kayla Murrieta, Fire Communications Supervisor
- Francisco Rivera Martinez, Fire Prevention Specialist
- Robert Capobianco, Assistant Chief of EMS

January Retirements



• Nannette Edwards, Fire Prevention Specialist

• James Gabbard, Fire Captain (pictured right)

• William Jursewich, Firefighter (pictured left)

• Vahid Toossi, Fire Safety Engineer

