



### From the Fire Chief

Dear OCFA Family:

All of us in the fire service understand and cherish the inseparable bond we share. And while that connection is always palpable, there are moments that magnify its meaning, snapshots in time that transcend whatever differences we have and further heighten our sense of community.

For many of us, this past month has been — and continues to be — such a time. Like any family, the roots that connect us only strengthen when we experience loss and come together to honor the fallen.

This was evident from the podium at John Sahn's Celebration of Life as I looked out at a room full of OCFA firefighters and professional staff who saw John not as a coworker, but as a family member.

It was evident at the 20th Annual California Firefighters Memorial Ceremony in Sacramento at which our OCFA Honor Guard, Pipes & Drums, Local 3631, and several Chief Officers were on hand to honor four of our own who made the ultimate sacrifice to keep our communities safe.

It is evident in the work of Risk Management, Local 3631, and many others who honor Captain Eric Weuve's memory with a robust program of events for our upcoming Suicide Prevention Month.

And of course, it is evident in our love and support of Engineer Bob Embree and his family as they mourn the loss of Robert's beloved wife, Christine.

As heartbreaking as each of these tragedies are, I take solace in knowing that we do not endure them alone. Instead, we come together to not only grieve and heal, but also honor the lives and legacies of those we lost with a greater sense of hope and collaboration for the future.

Sincerely,

Brian Fennessy  
Fire Chief

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### MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT - EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

#### Ask the Chief

In this month's Ask the Chief, Chief Fennessy and PIO Barta kick things off by applauding Emergency Medical Services (EMS) — from Captain Brandon Girasole's recent 2022 Hokey Award to Captain Natalie Nacker's leadership of our Girls Emergency Camp. Other topics include workers' compensation and the recent classification of firefighting to a Group 1 carcinogenic profession. Chief McGovern also joins the show to speak on staffing and the recent escalation of Emergency Conditions. Watch below!



### Fire Apparatus Engineer Promotions

Our efforts to decrease forced hiring include our many ongoing academics, the results of which have led to OCFA being currently oversubscribed for FFPMs and FAS. As we prepare for our third Cadets Academy in a single calendar year for the first time in history, we continue to promote all ranks to build a robust workforce at all levels. To that end, on August 10, Engineer Academy 35 concluded with the promotion of 15 new FAs.



The 15 new FAs are: Benedict Adelman, Jeffery Baca, Jonathan Beloz, Christopher Chang, Justin Chapman, Timothy Fisher, William Gonzales, Donald Hall, Timothy Haney, Aaron Marshall, Rene Santana, Kevin Skinner, Nicolas Sutton, Bryce Wagner, and Gregory Williams.

### California Firefighters Memorial

On July 30, 82 fallen firefighters were honored and memorialized at the 20th Annual California Firefighters Memorial Ceremony in Sacramento. OCFA was well represented with our Honor Guard, Pipes & Drums, Local 3631 leadership, and several Chief Officers standing with the family and friends of those who paid the ultimate price, including four of our own — Jerry Chase Shacklett, Mark Danielson, Brian Coney, and Gary Kuhl.

**JERRY CHASE SHACKLETT**  
Captain, Orange County Fire Authority, February 2, 2018

Jerry Chase Shacklett was passionate about his career in the fire service and served the citizens of Orange County with honor. He was a recipient of the Orange County Fire Authority's Best and Bravest award and was a founding member of California USAF Task Force 5 — deployed to the Oklahoma City Bombing and Hurricane Katrina. Outside of his work he loved traveling the world and sailing. He passed away from the effects of job-related cancer in February 2016.

**MARK DANIELSON**  
Captain, Orange County Fire Authority, February 19, 2019

Mark began his career in the fire service in 1974 with the California Department of Forestry before moving to the Orange County Fire Authority. After working for 16 years as a firefighter, he was promoted to Fire Apparatus Engineer until his promotion to Captain in 2007. During his 40-year career, Mark became one of the founding members of the Orange County Fire Authority Urban Search & Rescue Program and served on the FEMA Incident Support Teams. Outside of work, he enjoyed riding his dirt bike and spending time on couples as well as his family. He passed away from job-related cancer in February 2019.

**BRIAN CONEY**  
Firefighter, Orange County Fire Authority, December 8, 2019

Brian Coney began his career in the fire service with CAL FIRE in 1978. He joined Orange County Fire Authority in 1980, serving with honor and distinction, retiring out of Fire Station 20 in 2018. Brian was a well-loved firefighter in his community and loved his profession. He had a contagious smile and loved to tell great stories. Brian passed away due to a job-related illness in December 2019.

**GARY KUHL**  
Firefighter, Orange County Fire Authority, December 10, 2019

Gary Kuhl knew he wanted to be a firefighter since high school when one of his teachers suggested he do a ride-along at the local fire station. Gary served the citizens of Orange County with honor and distinction for 14 years. He loved spending time with his family, traveling and being outdoors. Gary passed away from a job-related illness in December 2019.

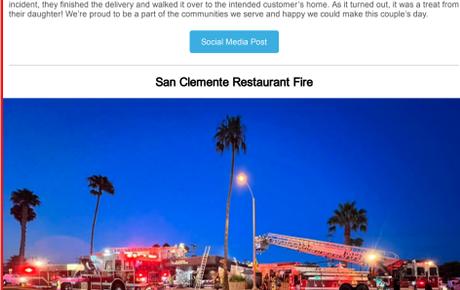
### John Sahn Memorial

Also on July 30, we in the OCFA honored and celebrated the far more recent passing of OCFA Firefighter John Sahn. A 36-year veteran of the fire service, John spent the last 10 years of his career with OCFA, and his memorial service reflected the impact he made as a father, husband, brother, musician, and first responder.



### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The path to a career in the fire service for many of our current firefighters and chief executive officers, including Division Chief Barry Hunter and Assistant Chief TJ McGovern, began in a Cadet or Explorer Program. Designed to build character and leadership skills among the youth in our diverse communities, our Fire Cadet Program recently celebrated the graduates of its 22nd Academy. Moving forward, OCFA plans to better connect the program with our Girls Employment Camp, expanding equitable pipelines for women in the fire service. View the highlights below!



### SOCIAL MEDIA

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

- Over 2.6 million impressions (eyes on our content)
- 21,458 engagements (clicks with our content)
- 993 link clicks/redirects
- 1,071 new followers

Despite that success, we are always looking to improve and share information of interest with each other and the communities we serve. To that end, per Chief Fennessy's June 20, 2022 memo 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

#### Engine 61 Goes Above and Beyond for Community Member



Our firefighters respond to many different kinds of incidents and train regularly to provide this high level of service to our communities. Recently, the crew from Engine 61 responded to a traffic collision that involved a food delivery vehicle. The driver was upset that he couldn't make the delivery, so after firefighter paramedics took care of him and stabilized the incident, they finished the delivery and walked it over to the intended customer's home. As it turned out, it was a treat from their daughter! We're proud to be a part of the communities we serve and happy we could make this couple's day.



#### San Clemente Restaurant Fire



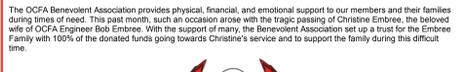
At 4:38 a.m., a citizen reported a fire at La Siesta restaurant at 929 N. El Camino Real in San Clemente. The fire was upgraded to a 2nd alarm with approximately 50 firefighters. Crews forced entry through multiple sides of the building and had knockdown in just 39 minutes. Effective coordination between the firefighters inside, cutting ventilation holes on the roof and ventilating with blowers (large fans) at the doors resulted in solid work and no injuries. Cause under investigation.



#### Laguna Hills Structure Fire - Inspiring the Next Gen!



After working with her crew to successfully battle a structure fire and save a family's belongings, Firefighter Rebecca Wilson took the time to provide some words of inspiration to a young bystander who asked to meet her...



### Upcoming Monthlong Observances

#### Disaster Preparedness Month

One of the unique defenses the Orange County community has against the spread of wildfire is a program known as Fire Watch, which is comprised entirely of community-minded volunteers. Understanding most local fires are started by human activities and most ignitions occur near roads or other points along the wildland urban interface (WUI), it makes sense to have a watchful eye on locations which are at high risk of fire during extreme weather conditions, especially Santa Ana winds.

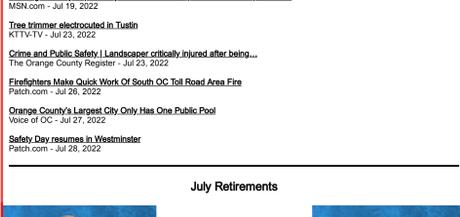


#### Suicide Prevention Month

With Behavioral Health and Suicide Prevention Awareness Month just a week away, OCFA and Local 3631 are hard at work preparing material and planning a robust schedule of events through the lens of the theme, "It's Okay Not to be Okay." The below video provides an introduction to some of what's coming, but be sure to look for the Suicide Prevention memo that will come out from Risk Manager Rhonda Haynes at the beginning of September.



### Pass-Along Podcast



From the Orange County Fire Authority, we're reintroducing the Pass-Along Podcast. Deputy Chief Kennedy Dossey addresses firefighter issues from top to bottom. On the newest episode of the Pass-Along Podcast, Pass-Along Podcast Host Jason Suttler. After their discussion, Chief Dossey answers some questions from the field.



### Benevolent Association Embree Family Trust

The OCFA Benevolent Association provides physical, financial, and emotional support to our members and their families during times of need. This past month, such an occasion arose with the tragic passing of Christine Embree, the beloved wife of OCFA Engineer Bob Embree. With the support of many, the Benevolent Association set up a trust for the Embree Family with 100% of the donated funds going towards Christine's service and to support the family during this difficult time.



### Orange County Fire Authority in the News

- World's largest fire suppression helicopters on standby to fight future SoCal wildfires - KABC-TV - Jul 5, 2022
- Crime and Public Safety | The Mercury News - Jul 5, 2022
- Crime and Public Safety | 12 of world's largest hellankers back on... The Orange County Register - Jul 5, 2022
- Crime and Public Safety | Fireworks suspected in July 4th fires that... The Orange County Register - Jul 5, 2022
- Irving Man Charged With Killing Roommate - KNBC-TV - Jul 5, 2022
- Firefighting helicopter fleet returns to Orange County - Laguna Beach Independent - Jul 5, 2022
- Garage Fire Felled In San Juan Capistrano Tuesday Morning - Patch.com - Jul 5, 2022
- Police arrest man after roommate found shot dead at Irvine apartment - MSN.com - Jul 5, 2022
- Crime and Public Safety | Boat engulfed in flames at Dana Point Harbor - The Orange County Register - Jul 7, 2022
- Flames Erupt on a Boat in the Dana Point Harbor - KNBC-TV - Jul 7, 2022
- Boat Catches Fire in Dana Point Harbor, 1 Man Hospitalized - Patch.com - Jul 8, 2022
- California's firefighting craft CH-47 helicopter - The Daily Californian - Jul 10, 2022
- Yosemite National Park: Wildfires threaten redwood trees - The Limited Times - Jul 11, 2022
- Drone captures scale of raging wildfire at Yosemite - MSN.com - Jul 11, 2022
- 1 Arrested In Gang-Related Shooting In Orange County - Patch.com - Jul 14, 2022
- Former NASCAR driver Bobby East dead after stabbing at California gas station reports - MSN.com - Jul 16, 2022
- Sports/Berry Farm Shoots Down Early Saturday Night After Multiple Fires Break Out - MSN.com - Jul 17, 2022
- Crime and Public Safety | Marin Independent Journal - Jul 17, 2022
- Multiple fights and reports of gunfire forces Knott's Berry Farm theme park in California to close early - Yahoo! News - Jul 17, 2022
- Fire Damages Local Restaurant In San Clemente Monday - MSN.com - Jul 18, 2022
- Power lines are most likely cause of Emerald Fire, investigators say - Laguna Beach Independent - Jul 19, 2022
- Fire authorities believe power lines source of Emerald fire - Marietta Daily Journal - Jul 19, 2022
- 4 Orange County deputies injured when DUI suspect crashes into patrol cars - MSN.com - Jul 19, 2022
- Tree trimmer electrocuted in Tustin - KTTV-TV - Jul 23, 2022
- Crime and Public Safety | Landscaper critically injured after being... The Orange County Register - Jul 23, 2022
- Firefighters Make Quick Work Of South OC Toll Road Area Fire - Patch.com - Jul 25, 2022
- Orange County's Largest City Only Has One Public Pool - Voice of OC - Jul 27, 2022
- Safety Day resumes in Westminster - Patch.com - Jul 28, 2022

### July Retirements



- Dean Johnson, Fire Captain
- John Timoti, Fire Apparatus Engineer

### Years of Service



#### Captain Barry Cupples - 50 Years

In June, we began adding a "Year of Service" section to the Chief's Monthly Bulletin, honoring individuals who reach milestones in their careers. In this issue, it's Okay Not to be Okay.

Beginning at the 5-year mark, these recognitions have been well received, but none have been as well-earned as this one. A few months ago, Captain Barry Cupples celebrated 50 years of service with a special award presentation at Station 43.

Chief Fennessy, Chief Hunter, Local 3631 President Badridge, and many others were on hand to honor Captain Cupples as well as thank him and his family for his service.

Always young at heart (see accompanying photo from around his 30-year OCFA anniversary), Captain Cupples continues to warm hearts, inspire laughter, and most importantly, save lives with an impeccable commitment to his crew and communities.

Thank you, Captain Cupples, for your half-century of service!