



Monthly Bulletin - May 2023

From the Fire Chief

Dear OCFA Family:

In addition to reporting on our excellence in responding to the more than 18,000 calls for service we received this month alone, this Chief's Bulletin takes a unique look at our recognition of the many themes associated with May, beginning with Military Appreciation Month.

Resilience, leadership, and courage are an asset in every profession, but in the fire service, where lives and communities depend on those traits being upheld at the highest level, they are essential. That is why our collective efforts to recruit military veterans — from the military-focused section of our newly formed Outreach and Recruitment Team to our consistent attendance at the Transitioning Assistance Program at Camp Pendleton — have resulted in 19 veterans being hired over the past year alone. Together, we will continue to strengthen our agency with the leadership and courage our veterans bring with them, and this Military Appreciation Month, we were proud to share that intention via the music video and news story below.

Meanwhile, as we kicked off our annual Drowning Prevention Campaign with a press conference and mock drowning (see below), Wildfire Preparedness Month launched with our hand crews successfully meeting the criteria to serve as ICS Type-1 All-Risk Local Government Hand Crews. The list of personnel we are indebted to for this success is both long and impressive, but none deserve our gratitude more than Dylan Van Iwaarden and Phi Le, as their strength and leadership continue to drive us toward our goal to be a national model for hand crew excellence.

Mental Health Awareness Month was also recognized throughout the agency with multiple screenings of PTSD 911, a variety of coping mechanism tips, and a video (see below) that launched a year-long tour of all our fire stations by our new peer support dog, Pax, and his Canine Peer Support Specialist, Firefighter Wade Munson.

And finally, we celebrated Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month with a series of social media posts highlighting AAPI firefighters and professional staff, including two 2022 Best & Bravest honorees — Penny Wu (Accountant/Cost Recovery) and Joe Park (Firefighter/Paramedic). With their success (and the excellence of all Best & Bravest honorees in mind), I encourage those unable to attend this year's awards ceremony to enjoy the full live stream below.

Yes, it has been a busy month of recognition and reflection, further illustrating that our work transcends our region's borders and stretches deep into the heart of our state and nation. That is who we are, and as we face the potential threats of the warmer summer months ahead, I am proud to stand with all of you in further elevating our impact and highlighting the people who make it possible.

Sincerely,

Brian Fennessy
Fire Chief

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT - EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

Ask the Chief

In this month's *Ask the Chief*, Chief Fennessy and Captain/PIO Thanh Nguyen discuss the off-duty heroism of two of our Best & Bravest honorees, the agency's five-year plan to hire and promote, mental and behavioral health, hand crew updates, and much more!



Want to ask the Fire Chief an anonymous question? Click the thumbs up below!



"American Soldier" Military Appreciation Song



Best and Bravest 2023 - Full Live Stream Video



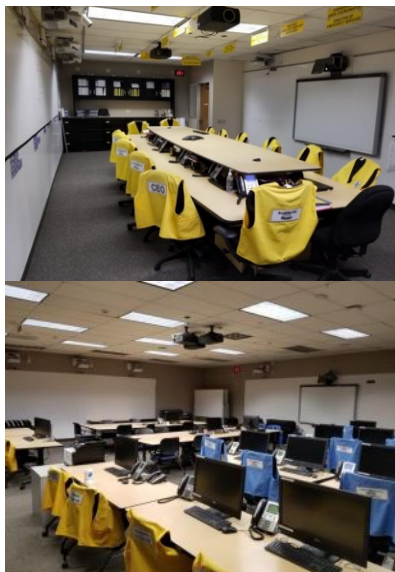
Pass-Along Podcast

On this episode of the Pass-Along Podcast, Deputy Chief McGovern chats with Assistant Chiefs Sherwood and Perkins about Operational Readiness Review, the Wildland Refresher, and the Best and Bravest Awards Ceremony.



[Click to Listen!](#)

Orange County Emergency Operations Center Training Exercise



On May 17th, several members from the OCFA participated in the annual EOC exercise, working closely with all sections, groups, and units within the Center.

Chief Wiedensohler seamlessly transitioned into the Ops Chief role halfway through the exercise, leading the team to the finish line.

The following OCFA personnel participated in the exercise:

Ryan Bishop: OCFA Policy Group Rep / Craig Covey: USAR Group Supervisor
Brian Roberts: Controller & Evaluator / Scott Wiedensohler: Deputy Ops Chief
Mike Summers: Fire Branch Director / Sean Doran: PIO Support
Steve Concialdi: PIO Support / Thanh Nguyen: PIO Support
Mike Sheehan: Hazmat Group Supervisor / Sophia Champieux: PIO Support

Drowning Prevention Press Conference & Mock Drowning



Pax & Wade Launch Station Tour for Mental Health Awareness Month



Santiago/El Toro Now Type 1 ICS Type-1 All-Risk Local Government Hand Crews



The firefighters of the Santiago and El Toro hand crews had a special visit from Fire Chief Fennessy, Deputy Chief McGovern, and Assistant Chief Capobianco today to congratulate them on moving up to a Type I Local Government hand crew. Additionally, they will be made available as a statewide resource.

Over the last year, Chief Arellano, Superintendents Scott Gorman and Branden Davis have been preparing our hand crew firefighters to operate at the highest level as an All-Risk Local Government hand crew. Both Superintendents continue the process of developing leadership teams with our Assistant Superintendents and Squad Bosses. The hand crews have been busy responding to local initial attack fires, prescribed burns and assisting San Bernardino County for the unprecedented storm incident.

The twenty-five (25) person hand crew is led by a Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents and Squad Bosses all meeting NCWG qualifications. It is important to note that moving from a Type II status to a Type I is a tribute to work ethic of our hand crew firefighters and hand crew leadership.





EQUITY & INCLUSION

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

For Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, we were proud to celebrate just a handful of our outstanding AAPI firefighters and professional staff members on all OCFA social media outlets.





SOCIAL MEDIA

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

- Over 2.1 million impressions (eyes on our content)
- 99.4K engagements (interaction with our content)
- 1,078 link clicks/redirects
- 256 new followers

Despite this 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

Santa Ana Commercial Structure Fire



On April 23rd, a fire broke out in the City of Santa Ana. OCFA Firefighters received a call for a commercial structure fire in the 1000 block of E 4th Street at 12:54 p.m. Crews found an exterior fire adjacent to a building on their arrival. It took firefighters about 10 minutes to knock down the blaze. Due to the rapid knock down, firefighters prevented the fire from extending into nearby structures. No injuries were reported and fire investigators are determining the cause.

[Click For Social Media Post](#)







Station 77 Crew Goes Above and Beyond



Neighbors taking care of neighbors! When a vehicle crashed into the yard of a home directly in front of OCFA Fire Station #77 in Santa Ana, firefighters rushed next door to render aid. The next morning, the same firefighters returned to the home to help in a different way. Knowing this resident takes pride in tending to their yard, the firefighters started off their morning by walking across the street with shovels in hand to clean up and re-plant the plants. We take the word "community" to heart.

Mock DUI Crash San Juan Hills High School

Impactful. Realistic. Moving. Three words that describe today's Mock DUI Crash presentation at San Juan Hills High School. OCFA, Friends Against Drinking and Driving (FADD), and our many community partners were proud to join together to deliver a powerful message of safety for our community.





[Click for Social Media Post](#)

Anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing

28 years ago, 168 lives were lost in the Oklahoma City bombing. Today, and everyday we remember those who died, their loved ones, and the brave first responders who risked their lives to save others.



[Click For Social Media Post](#)



John Wayne Airport Training Exercise

The Orange County Fire Authority provides all-hazard public safety services to nearly 2 million people 24/7/365. Yesterday, we partnered with staff from John Wayne Airport operations, Orange County Sheriff Department, Irvine Police Department and cooperating agencies simulating an aircraft incident with multiple patients. The exercise tested the expertise of everyone involved, including our Airport Rescue and Firefighting units, to effectively respond, mitigate hazards, and provide paramedic care and transport to those needing it. We are grateful for our partnership with outstanding agencies to provide the residents and visitors of Orange County with exceptional service.

[Click For Social Media Post](#)



Irvine Severe Car Crash Survivor Reunites With Firefighters

Firefighters reunited with a woman who survived a severe car crash in Irvine on the 405 freeway last month after she was rescued by our technical rescue firefighters and treated by our firefighter paramedics. The crews, the citizens who rushed to her aid, and the woman were grateful for the opportunity to truly connect. The time together was impactful and assists all involved in processing what took place and the positive outcome.



[Click For Social Media Post](#)

Orange County Fire Authority In the News

Crime and Public Safety | 4 injured after vehicle veers onto OC sidewalk

The Orange County Register - Apr 2, 2023

Child killed, 2 adults injured after DUI suspect jumps curb in Orange County crash, authorities say

MSN.com - Apr 2, 2023

Car Plows Into Family, Killing Infant In Rancho Santa Margarita

MSN.com - Apr 3, 2023

Active Shooter Training To Take Place At Seal Beach Elementary School

Patch.com - Apr 4, 2023

Buena Park apartment fire displaces up to 20 residents

CBS News - Apr 5, 2023

Seal Beach Pier To Close Thursday For Simulated Fire Training

Patch.com - Apr 5, 2023

Crime and Public Safety | 15 displaced after fire rips through Buena Park...

The Orange County Register - Apr 5, 2023

Buena Park apartment fire displaces 11

KTLA-TV - Apr 5, 2023

Fire Destroys OC Apartment Building, 11 People Displaced Wednesday

Patch.com - Apr 5, 2023

Red-Tagged Homes Safe + Catal Restaurant Closes + CA Wine Festival

Patch.com - Apr 6, 2023

Watch Birds At Fairhaven + New Homes In Tustin + Bias In Santa Ana

Patch.com - Apr 7, 2023

Letters to the Editor: Retardant drops are our best defense against wildfires. Reducing them would be disastrous

Los Angeles Times - Apr 10, 2023

Crime and Public Safety | E-bikes have joined the Southern California...

The Orange County Register - Apr 10, 2023

OCFA therapy K9 helps firefighters relieve stress, improve mental health

KABC-TV - Apr 11, 2023

OC Fire Welcomes Peer Support K-9 Pax Into Fold

Patch.com - Apr 11, 2023

Orange County Fire Authority Adds New K9 to Its Ranks

The Epoch Times - Apr 11, 2023

Local News | OCFA's newest dog ready to support...

The Orange County Register - Apr 11, 2023

Aspiring welder reunites with firefighters who saved her life during near-fatal crash on 405 Freeway

KABC-TV - Apr 12, 2023

Local Lens: Learning the Ropes

Voice of OC - Apr 15, 2023

Man Charged With Setting Holy Fire Threatened To 'Murder' Neighbor

Patch.com - Apr 18, 2023

Knott's Berry Farm Reinstating "Chaperone Policy" For Teens – Update

Deadline Hollywood - Apr 21, 2023

Ladera Stabbing Update + Sprinkles Cupcakes Closed + OrangewoodFEST

Patch.com - Apr 21, 2023

3 hospitalized following multi-vehicle crash in Garden Grove

CBS News - Apr 22, 2023

Local News | Housing developments could be delayed amid...

The Orange County Register - Apr 22, 2023

Crime and Public Safety | Shooting investigated in Laguna Hills

The Orange County Register - Apr 23, 2023

Disneyland California animatronic dragon fire reportedly prompts park to suspend similar effects globally

Fox Business Network - Apr 24, 2023

21-year-old man arrested for Laguna Hills quinceañera shooting

KTLA-TV - Apr 24, 2023

Fatal hit-and-run incident in Santa Ana leaves 1 dead

KTLA-TV - Apr 24, 2023

Local News | \$20,000 helps starts Community Emergency...

The Orange County Register - Apr 24, 2023

Man Arrested After 2 Teens Injured at Laguna Hills Community Center Shooting

The Epoch Times - Apr 25, 2023

Behind-the-scenes training with the OCFA

Yahoo! News - Apr 26, 2023

Behind-the-scenes training with the Orange County Fire Authority

KTTV-TV - Apr 26, 2023

Cabo Wabo Beach Club Opens + Crack Near Casa Romantica + UCI Ranked

Patch.com - Apr 26, 2023

Land Under 'Casa Romantica' in San Clemente Begins Crumbling

MSN.com - Apr 28, 2023

More land sliding in Southern California; residents evacuated, trains halted

The Mercury News - Apr 28, 2023

Crime and Public Safety | Fire at Barnes & Noble in Orange disrupts...

The Orange County Register - Apr 30, 2023

City Of San Clemente: Casa Romantica Slope Failure Updated Press Release

Patch.com - Apr 30, 2023

Landslide in San Clemente Continues to Interrupt Train Service

The Epoch Times - Apr 30, 2023

PROMOTIONS



- Israel Cortes, Sr Equipment Parts Specialist
- Bryan Dodson, Fire Captain
- Trevor Lazar, Fire Captain
- Jason Rolston, Fire Captain

- Matthew Wallace, Fire Captain

Years of Service

20

YEARS OF SERVICE



Andrew Guenat, Fire Prevention Trainee

April Retirements



- Nathan Brown, Firefighter
- Kenneth Buchanan, Fire Apparatus Engineer
- Vincent Carpino, Fire Division Chief
- James Cass, Fire Captain - Investigations
- Todd Correll, Fire Captain/Paramedic
- Mark Eide, Fire Captain
- Mathew Grant, Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic
- William Hencke, Fire Captain/Paramedic
- Eddie Medrano, Fire Apparatus Engineer
- Juan Osorio, Firefighter

- Paul Robertson, Firefighter
- Michael Tooley, Fire Apparatus Engineer





