

ARIZONA

A publication of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns | Winter 2012

# CITY & TOWN



# FIRE

**ON THE MOUNTAIN**



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# EMERGENCY



This edition of *Arizona City & Town* focuses on a situation that none of us wants to experience but that all of us need to be prepared for: **an emergency that threatens life and property in our community.**

**F**ortunately, being aware and prepared to deal with an emergency is something that municipal leaders take seriously. Citizens can be comforted with the knowledge that contingency plans, emergency alternatives and disaster preparations are part of the baseline of service that cities and towns provide.

The past summer saw an unprecedented outbreak of wildfires across the state. Some were frighteningly close to incorporated communities and, for a time, threatened to spread devastation within city or town boundaries. The last year has also seen flash flooding; dust storms; severe thunderstorms; and unusually large, damaging hail — all in a day's work for local officials who have the responsibility to ensure that basic services will continue to be delivered, even if extraordinary measures have to be taken for a time.

By their very nature, disasters cannot be precisely predicted, nor can their effects be defined in advance. They are beyond the scope of normal expectations. Each situation is different and has to be responded to as conditions demand.

Cities and towns in Arizona have created networks of mutual aid arrangements and can call on the resources of the county and state in cases of emergency. There are protocols in place that guide the deployment of first responders and follow-up resources. But there is no substitute for the reassuring leadership shown by mayors in emergency situations. People want to know that their elected officials are on the job and are making sure that every resource is being used to get through times of trouble.

Disasters are a part of natural law and always have the potential to occur. It is up to us to be prepared for them and deal with them calmly and efficiently when they do happen. That is yet another dimension of the exceptional value that cities and towns perform for their citizens. It goes with the territory, and local leaders in Arizona are up to the task.

Ken Strobeck  
Executive Director



## WELCOME THE NEW LEAGUE PRESIDENT: DOUG VON GAUSIG, MAYOR OF CLARKDALE

Mayor Von Gausig was born in Safford, Arizona, in 1948. His family moved to Prescott in 1958, and, as a teenager, he spent summers with his grandparents in their home in Cottonwood, Arizona, where his grandfather built and ran a Western Auto Store. During this time, he grew to love the Verde Valley, its small-town atmosphere and its values.

In 1966, he graduated from Prescott High School, and in 1970, he graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in biology. After college, the mayor served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War and spent six years as a captain and pilot flying C-130s. Following his service in the military, Von Gausig lived briefly in Arkansas before settling back in the Verde Valley. Once back, he worked with his father in his insurance and real estate agency, eventually buying it and operating it for eight years. In 1988, he sold the agency

and began manufacturing copper, steel and ceramic items for the tourist trade. The mayor is currently a professional photographer, specializing in industrial, nature and portrait photography.

Mr. Von Gausig became mayor of Clarkdale in 2004. When asked why he decided to serve in local government, he explained, "I believe that the most direct form of democracy is what we see in our small-town councils, school boards and rural county boards." He continued, "I wanted to make a difference in my community and make a positive contribution to my neighbors and friends in Clarkdale, and being on the town council was the best way to make that contribution."

Outside of his work in Clarkdale, the mayor has been actively involved in the League of Arizona Cities and Towns for more than three years and clearly sees the many benefits to member municipalities.

"I can't imagine operating a small town without the guidance, education and services provided by the League," he said. "I am tremendously proud to be among the members of the Executive Committee — some of the most thoughtful, experienced and dedicated leaders in Arizona today — as we make decisions to collectively protect and nurture our cities and towns. Our legislative agenda and defense of municipal self-governance is some of the most important work we do, and I, as well as all the members of the committee, take that job very seriously."

League members and the staff welcome Mayor Doug Von Gausig as president and look forward to his leadership and service. ■



President Von Gausig and Gov. Brewer





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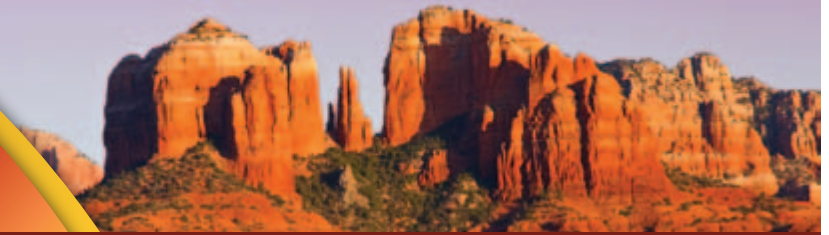
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# Fire on the Mountain

## Two Mayors Share Their Perspective on Re

### The Wallow Fire:

#### Mayor Kim Holaway, Eagar

The Wallow Fire started on May 29, 2011, and was declared 100 percent contained on July 8, 2011. The size of the fire was reported as 538,049 acres, the largest in recorded Arizona history. A number of fire teams from across the United States assisted with suppression efforts side by side with local, county, state, federal and volunteer efforts.

During the fire, the communities of Eagar and Springerville had to evacuate. Mayor Kim Holaway of Eagar shared her experience on leading during an emergency of this magnitude.

#### Were you, as mayor, prepared for an event of the magnitude of the Wallow Fire?

I do feel that our town staff and I were prepared in general for an emergency event. Town staff members have been trained in emergency preparedness with employees from other regional government entities. They have forged strong relationships with colleagues in neighboring cities, towns and the county. Emergency disaster roles were clearly delineated in our plan, and this was very important during

the fire. I am fortunate to have emergency preparedness experience and training in my career as an educator. This was very beneficial to me as mayor, although I am not sure that I will ever feel prepared for a particular disaster, because there is no way to know what will happen in the future and the possibilities are unlimited.

The Wallow Fire was a long and complicated event. The fire was not contained for more than 30 days. This put a strain on local resources in our rural area. Luckily, numerous resources were brought in to assist local emergency management officials, and they worked well together.

#### What was the most important lesson that you learned as the mayor dealing with this fire and evacuation of residents?

As you can imagine, the lessons were numerous. The most important lesson involved relationships and communication. It is paramount that elected officials foster professional and positive relationships with neighboring government entities, as well as businesses. When an emergency occurs, the mayor will need to



Eagar police helping to evacuate residents from town  
Photo courtesy of AP



Wallow Fire plume darkening the sky  
Photo courtesy of AP



# sponding to Fires in Their Communities

call on colleagues for assistance. We were very fortunate that our neighboring communities reached out to us right from the beginning. An emergency is not the time for petty differences or competition; it is the time for sharing of resources. It is also the time for the mayor to provide a strong presence and positive leadership. The mayor of Springerville and I wrote a letter to citizens describing evacuation preparation and letting them know that both towns had things under control. We tried to alleviate the fears that were permeating the thoughts of our citizens. Because our towns share a common border, it was important that the letter come from both of us to show our unity as a community.

## **After this experience, do you have any recommendations or tips for other mayors or elected officials on how to handle emergency situations of this scope?**

There are two things that I found our public wanted: strong, positive leadership and factual, frequent communication. It is important that factual information be distributed to citizens in a frequent and consistent fashion. They want to hear from those in charge. The Forest Service and Emergency Management officials provided daily informational meetings for the community to attend. Many people were afraid that they would lose their home or property, and as the fire grew in size, these were very legitimate concerns. It is important that the town manager, mayor and elected officials attend these meetings to respond to questions from the public. Citizens had a need to hear what the town was doing to mitigate the danger. They needed to hear that we were confident the firefighters would save our community from danger, and they needed to hear that things were going to be OK. As evacuation became imminent, we prepared information about what to pack. This was distributed through businesses and on our website.

As mayor, it was important for me to step aside and allow the professionals to perform their assigned emergency management roles. I had to recognize that there were many individuals who had experience and knowledge about emergencies that I did not have. This was not the time for me to try to control things. I attended all of the meetings and signed the emergency proclamation that

allowed our police chief authority during the emergency, but when it was time to evacuate, I went with all of the citizens. Emergencies are not the time for egos. As a leader, there is a need to take care of yourself. Things happen fast and furiously, and it is difficult to process the barrage of information. Take time each day for yourself. It is important to be at the top of your game each day.

Our small community was inundated with various media personnel. In the heat of the moment, it is critically important that you choose your words carefully. I tried to focus on the positive aspects of the situation as the fire edged closer and closer. It was important to not allow the media to spin this event into a huge catastrophe. That would not have served anyone, except maybe the TV ratings. This event brought out the best in the vast majority of people. We had citizens assisting neighbors and people they had never met. It was truly amazing.



## **WALLOW FIRE FACTS**

Location: Apache, Navajo, Graham and Greenlee counties, Arizona; Catron County, New Mexico

Date Started: May 29, 2011

Date Contained: July 8, 2011

Size: 538,049 acres

Cause: Human

Residences: 32 destroyed; five damaged

Commercial Properties: Four destroyed

Outbuildings: 36 destroyed; one damaged



### How has the aftermath of the fire affected your community?

This event has brought the towns of Eagar and Springerville together to work on economic development activities. Elected officials have spent many hours discussing how to market our area and assist local businesses. All of us were able to put aside our differences and come together for the benefit of all. Council members have met with state and national elected and appointed officials to explain our situation to them and elicit assistance. The Wallow Fire has provided elected officials the opportunity to identify our strengths and needs and plan for our future economic development needs. There have been many positives as a result of this event.

The town of Eagar has completed several flood mitigation projects since the fire, as flooding is now the issue that we will deal with for the next five years. As with any disaster, there are long-term effects that must be managed. Our citizens have appreciated the staff's quick response to the engineers' flooding predictions.

There is no question that our businesses have suffered from diminished tourism in the summer months. We have made efforts to get the word out that the entire forest is not scorched. There are many areas that were not affected by the Wallow Fire. Many campgrounds and roads are open. Approximately 29 percent of the forest was badly burned. The balance of the forest is either untouched by the fire or minimally damaged. Our chamber's "shop local" campaign has taken on a new meaning as we plan ways to assist our already-fragile business sector.

### The Monument Fire: Mayor Rick Mueller, Sierra Vista

In June 2011, the greater Sierra Vista community was faced with something it had never experienced — a wildland fire that threatened the lives and properties of thousands of area residents. The fire started many miles away, over a mountain ridge near the Arizona/Mexico border. But the windy, dry conditions at the time, combined with a high fire load of combustible materials in the Coronado National Forest and surrounding area, fueled the fire into one that ravaged the mountain and beyond. At the end of an intense two-week period, 30,000 acres were burned, along with 60 homes and five businesses.

Having only served as Sierra Vista's mayor since the beginning of 2011, I never anticipated that our community would be tested during my tenure as it was by the Monument Fire. And while I've always felt great pride in our community and was aware of the great people here, I did not anticipate feeling the level of emotion and pride that I felt during those few weeks. Each day, as the crisis grew, I became more humbled by the generosity and commitment of our local businesses, countless volunteers, and, of course, the firefighters and government officials assigned to respond to this emergency. Every person involved, at every level, showed great courage and commitment to the welfare of his or her fellow citizens as we faced this crisis together.

But, in spite of the challenges, I believe the Monument Fire also brought out the best in our community, and certainly in the Sierra Vista city government. It gave our community and city organization an opportunity to reflect back on the leadership of the previous mayors and City Councils and the city management in supporting efforts over the years to provide training, equipment, facilities and other resources geared specifically toward emergency preparedness.

City employees at every level have been very active in getting trained in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This system was developed largely after the 9/11 tragedy to ensure that all levels of government had a solid understanding of how an emergency would be handled, regardless of size or location. The incident management system taught in the NIMS training was crucial to a smooth and efficient response, and I can tell you that city employees were well prepared for the city's role in supporting the Monument Fire operations. Emergency training is one of those time-consuming efforts that is sometimes regarded as simply taking people away from their "real jobs," especially since it's always difficult to imagine that your own community will ever face a crisis of the magnitude of the Monument Fire. But we did, and our employees were trained and ready to handle it, which made all the days of training more than worthwhile.

The role of Sierra Vista in the Monument Fire was one of support. Since the fire was a county incident, largely contained on U.S. Forest Service land, the incident was managed by a Type I federal team. The city did provide firefighters and equipment that worked with the fire district in the county to respond largely to the fire's threat to adjacent property. We also were the primary refueling point for the countless





1. Wallow Fire on the outskirts of Eagar  
*Photo courtesy of AP*
2. Massive plume of smoke from Wallow Fire  
*Photo courtesy of AP*
3. Helicopter dropping water on Monument Fire  
*Photo courtesy of Jim Herrewig*
4. Sierra Vista city staff assisting with emergency shelter  
*Photo courtesy of city of Sierra Vista*
5. Mayor Rick Mueller responding to reporters during emergency  
*Photo courtesy of city of Sierra Vista*
6. Monument Fire outside of Sierra Vista  
*Photo courtesy of Jim Herrewig*

aircraft assigned to support the fire. But the city also served a critical role in assisting with evacuations, including notifications, setting up shelters and keeping information on the fire as updated as possible.

Without exception, I saw employees at all levels jump in to do whatever was needed. At the shelters, the comfort and care of the evacuees and victims was paramount. Making sure pets were accommodated, bathrooms were cleaned, food was provided, games and events for kids were made available, and other stress-relieving activities were planned became a top priority for employees involved in those efforts. You could see the personal and professional involvement of city employees every day, no matter how exhausted they were or whether they were able to go home at night. The city had never run shelters before, and by all accounts, it did an outstanding job. At the peak of the fire, an estimated 8,000 residents from the surrounding area were evacuated. The shelters provided a welcome respite for hundreds of those families affected by this emergency.

It took the city several years to secure a grant for our current reverse-911 system. But because of the work and foresight that went into obtaining that system, it was here when we needed it most to help notify residents of their evacuation status. The county sheriff relied on that system to help get the word out about evacuations. It was the first time the system had been used to such a great extent.

Several facilities also played an important role in our emergency management efforts, and the planning that went into the funding and building of those facilities greatly paid off for our community. The recent expansion of the police station included an official emergency operations center (EOC). This was a significant improvement from the old police conference room — and it was completed just in time to support the coordination of communitywide emergency operations. In addition to the EOC, Fire Station #3, which opened in 2009, provided crews and equipment that were important resources in fighting the Monument Fire. And it certainly wasn't just the traditional public safety functions of the city that were involved. Equipment secured through grants by our Public Works Department played a big role in our emergency efforts — everything from emergency lighting and generators, to roadside signs were used to help those fighting the fire and dealing with the impact of evacuations.

Communicating with area residents was one of the most important tasks the city assisted with during the fire. The Type I team asked the city to host and set up a Joint Information Center (JIC) to ensure that complete and accurate information was shared and distributed both internally and externally. This included establishing four 800-number lines and contributing staff members nearly around the clock to help answer those lines. In addition, once information was appropriately vetted, the city used its website, Facebook, Twitter and our government access channel to keep it constantly updated.

While the city stepped up during this crisis, there are some things we learned we could improve upon. One key area was shelter and donation management. We learned that the Red Cross had not yet built up the capacity in our area to be able to immediately take over shelters. They provided cots and other support early on, but the management and coordination remained with the city for more than a week. We were unprepared for the incredible generosity of members of the community, who dropped off thousands of pounds of food, water, toiletries, bedding, pet carriers and other necessities that helped make the lives of those forced to use the shelters that much more comfortable. Improvements are already underway, and I am confident that, should the need for shelters arise again, we will perform even better.

I sincerely hope we never see a crisis of this magnitude in our community again. While I will always look back on this time with sadness for what we lost, I will also remember what we gained through the strength and courage demonstrated by everyone in our area who helped and continue to make the great place we know as Sierra Vista our hometown. ■



## MONUMENT FIRE FACTS

- Location: Cochise County
- Date Started: June 13, 2011
- Date Contained: July 4, 2011
- Size: 30,526 acres
- Residences: 62 destroyed; five damaged
- Commercial Properties: Four destroyed

# CITY OF FLAGSTAFF

## The Destination for All Seasons

**F**lagstaff is a special place, surrounded by natural wonders and combining a modern sense of discovery with a strong Western legacy echoing the days of the region's pioneer ranchers, railroad builders and lumbermen. Rich with excitement and alive with cultural diversity, beauty and history, visitors from all over the world are attracted to the clean mountain air, the year-round outdoor recreation, the lively festivals and the historic downtown charm.

Flagstaff offers a multitude of hotel and motel accommodations; conference and meeting venues; bed-and-breakfasts; more than 200 restaurants and night spots; and a wide variety of cultural, historic and scientific attractions. Visitors from all over the world are attracted to the city's clean mountain air; its year-round outdoor recreation opportunities; its historic downtown charm; and its Western legacy of pioneer ranchers, railroad builders and lumbermen.

Flagstaff proudly boasts Lowell Observatory, the Museum of Northern Arizona, Riordan Mansion State Historic Park, the Arboretum at Flagstaff and authentic Route 66 nostalgia.

Located near the center of northern Arizona, Flagstaff is situated in the pines at an elevation of approximately 7,000 feet, near the base of the San Francisco Peaks. Some of the West's most beautiful country surrounds this city, from the Coconino National Forest and the San Francisco Peaks (12,633 feet/3,851 meters) to the Red Rocks of Sedona and the rugged des-



by Jacki Lenner  
Marketing and Public Relations Manager  
Flagstaff Convention and Visitors Bureau

erts of neighboring Native American nations. Grand Canyon National Park, Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, Wupatki National Monument and Meteor Crater are all within easy driving distance, as are many more archaeological treasures and attractions. Flagstaff is also home to both the

### FLAGSTAFF: BY THE NUMBERS

**Population for 2000:** 52,894  
**Population for 2010:** 65,870

#### Age Breakdown of Residents

Under 18: 13,555  
18 and Over: 52,315  
20-24: 11,495  
25-34: 10,262  
35-49: 10,902  
50-64: 9,675  
65 and Over: 4,233

#### Ethnic Makeup

Population by Ethnicity  
Hispanic or Latino: 12,094  
Non-Hispanic or Latino: 53,776

#### Population by Race

White – 48,348  
African-American – 1,278  
Asian – 1,227  
American Indian and Alaska Native – 7,704  
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander – 115  
Other – 4,823  
Identified by Two or More – 2,375

#### Three Largest Private Employers

1. WL Gore  
2. SCA Tissue  
3. Nestlé Purina

**Square Miles of Incorporated Land:** 63.9

#### Square Miles of Protected Land or Forest

Public Lands – 469.53 square acres  
Public Lands Forested – 10,945.76  
Public Lands Established – 2,468.81  
Approximate total – 13,884 square acres  
(which is approximately 26.9 square miles)







world's largest contiguous ponderosa pine forest and the Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS), which encompasses approximately 33 miles of trails throughout the city and includes areas on all sides of town.

At the junction of two major U.S. interstates and served by a regional airport with direct flights to Phoenix as well as a busy train depot, Flagstaff is a key destination for people seeking the adventure, natural beauty, charm and wide-open spaces of the American West. ■

1. Peaks and wildflowers
2. Babbitt Building
3. Lowell Observatory
4. Snowplay
5. Sunset Crater Volcano
6. Wupatki Ancient Pueblo
7. Snowbowl chairlift

*All photos courtesy of Flagstaff Convention and Visitors Bureau*

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- › What 4G is and what 4G means to your towns and cities

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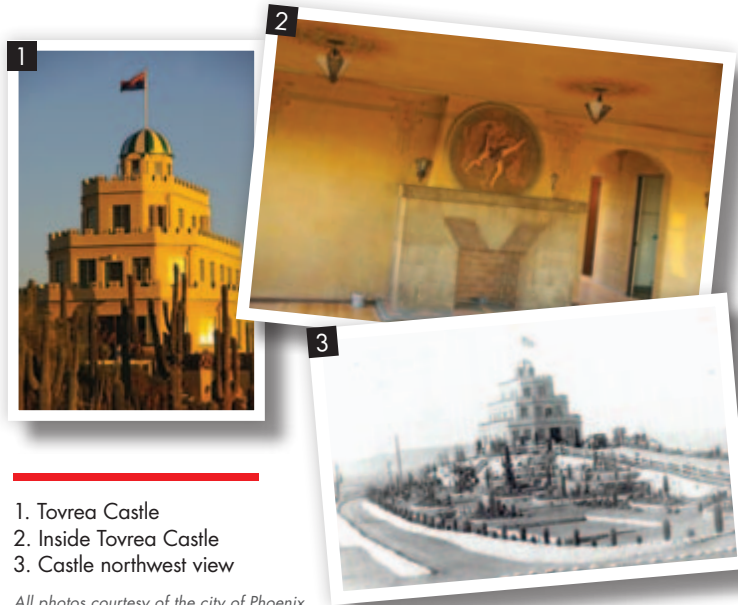
# WINDOW TO THE PAST:

## Tovrea Castle and Carraro Cactus Garden

In 1928, Italian immigrant Alessio Carraro sold his sheet-metal business in San Francisco and moved to Arizona. Carraro purchased 277 acres of desert land just outside of the Phoenix city limits with a dream of building a hotel. From 1928 to 1930, Carraro's son, Leo, and a crew of about 20 workers shaped the landscape into a spectacular desert paradise. Crowning this landscape was the magnificent wedding-cake-shaped "castle" reminiscent of his Italian homeland. Carraro also hired Moktachev, a talented Russian gardener, to develop dense and vibrant gardens around the castle.

After Carraro Heights was complete, Carraro became discouraged with his dream when neighboring property owners began constructing sheep and cattle pens to supply a nearby meat-packing plant owned by the Tovrea family. Then, in 1931, Carraro sold his castle and its land to Della Tovrea. Della lived in the castle until her death in 1969, and soon

after, the castle and garden quickly deteriorated due to lack of maintenance. However, from 1993 to 2003, the city of Phoenix began purchasing the castle and its surrounding acres to restore the property to its original splendor. The city of Phoenix has gone through hard work, using historic preservation and parks bond funds to restore the castle to its former glory. As a piece of Arizona history, the Tovrea Castle and the Carraro Cactus Garden became part of the Arizona Centennial Legacy Projects in 2007. When Arizona celebrates 100 years of statehood, Tovrea Castle and Carraro Cactus Garden will become a tourist attraction that will offer public tours, historical exhibits, trail systems and a special-event venue. Likewise, Carraro's vision of a vibrant garden will bloom again with an array of plant life of more than 5,000 cacti in more than 100 varieties. ■



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