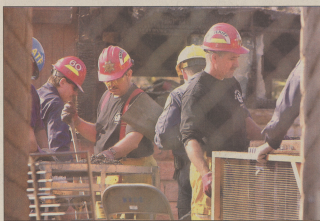


NORTH COAST

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Members of several police and fire agencies sifted through debris yesterday at the Escondido Humane Society, searching for clues to Saturday's disastrous fire. Scott Lissner / Union-Tribune photo

On-scene fire investigation ends

Samples from Humane Society debris to go to labs

By Jonathan Heller
STAFF WRITER

ESCONDIDO — Local and federal investigators yesterday wrapped up their on-scene investigation of the fire that destroyed the Escondido Humane Society, and sent dozens of small samples of rubble and debris for laboratory analysis.

Fire officials hope the samples hold the answer to what caused the blaze, which killed as many as 140 animals Saturday, said Carol Ross, an Escondido Fire Department spokeswoman.

A bulldozer was brought in to help remove huge piles of rubble that were preventing workers from reaching dozens of dead animals.

The exact number of dead animals was still unknown yesterday, because shelter officials have not been allowed in the building and all the shelter's records were destroyed in the fire.



A ship loader pulled apart small sections of the burned Escondido Humane Society yesterday.

An estimated 200 to 225 animals were in the El Canon Park shelter at the time of the fire, and about 85 were rescued. Of that number, several died from their injuries in the past two days. From 125 to 140 animals, mostly cats and dogs, are dead or unaccounted for, said Phil Morgan, the society's executive director.

"This was an especially devastating fire. So we are crossing our t's and dotting our i's to make sure everything is properly done."

CAROL REA, an Escondido Fire Department spokeswoman

The society will hold a memorial service at 10 a.m. Friday at the El Canon Park Amphitheater for the animals that died. Workers from other animal shelters from around the county are expected to attend to share their support.

"This will help us manage the grieving and put some closure to this tragic story," Morgan said.

Meanwhile, society officials

SEE FIRE, PAGE 2

Carlsbad tree cutters face city's wrath

Restitution, criminal charges eyed for all parties involved

By Agnes Raeliti
STAFF WRITER

CARLSBAD — The city will seek full monetary restitution and pursue possible criminal charges and fines against three property owners and the tree trimmers they hired to cut 68 eucalyptus trees at a city park to improve their scenic views.

Following through on vows to deal sternly with the matter, the City Council last night decided in a closed-door meeting to exercise all three of its options to go after the homeowners and the tree trimmers.

"We wanted to take every avenue we had because the damage that was done to those trees was done to public property," said Mayor David Lewis. "We are the stewards of the city, and it is our responsibility to protect public property for the interests of all the citizens."

Richard Bohn, one of the Verde Avenue homeowners who pooled their money to have the trees at La Costa Canyon Park cut last month, told the Union-Tribune last night. "We're all very saddened by what has happened, and we're working with the city to make things right. We've been upfront with them from the beginning, and we've had no intent to cause harm to anyone, and we look forward to reaching a positive resolution quickly."

Bohn, who called Lewis yesterday "to express my sadness," declined to comment further at advice of his attorney.

The 45- to 60-foot trees were hacked at the tops and some shored at the trunks, causing an estimated \$24,500 in damage.

The city has determined it will have to remove the trees because, as the chopped branches grow back, the trees will be unbalanced and dangerous. The city estimates it will cost at least \$120,000 to remove the trees and replace them with 2- to 3-foot eucalyptus saplings.

The city has forwarded its criminal investigation to the District Attorney's Office. The homeowners and the two tree-trimming companies could be charged with up to three misdemeanors: cutting down or destroying wood on another person's land, cutting or destroying trees on public property and destroying civic improvements. Misdemeanor convictions typically result in a jail sentence, a fine or both.

The city plans to file a lawsuit next week seeking full damages from the property owners, said City Attorney Ron Ball.

The city has held off publicly identifying the homeowners or the tree trimmers, saying they have not been arrested or charged with a crime or had a legal claim filed against them. Once the city files its lawsuit, however, the names all will be made public, Ball said.

The city also will take administrative action against the homeowners and tree trimmers, seeking fines and penalties according to municipal code, Ball said.

SEE FIRE, PAGE 2

Rancho Santa Fe school chief will leave bold mark

Retiring superintendent a gifted, versatile executive

By Sherry Permet
STAFF WRITER

RANCHO SANTA FE — This spring will mark the retirement of the Rancho Santa Fe School District superintendent.

The perennial director, the purchasing manager, and the curriculum coordinator. That's because Superintendent Ronald Roger Bauer has held all those jobs at the two-school, kindergarten-through-eighth-grade district. He has worked in one of San Diego's most affluent neighborhoods. He led an academic powerhouse where students' test scores are among the best in the state.

Rose, 71, announced this week his decision to leave on June 30. He has served as superintendent since 1964.

His leadership was uniquely personal. He attended schools. His chemistry was noted at high school graduations. His support was seen at weddings. His compassion was visible at funerals.

"I remember as a fifth-grader I was struggling with decimals, and I went to Dr. Bauer's office, and he was the one who explained them to me," said Henry Scott, student body president at Turrey Pines High School and a former Rancho Santa Fe student. "He'd talk to us about core values. And later, I remember he'd take the students out to breakfast and lunch. His presence gave us a sense of security — that everything was going to be all

SEE ROWS, PAGE 2

Boys & Girls Club gets \$20,000 city loan

It's enough to operate for at least a month

By Dwight Daniels
STAFF WRITER

VISTA — A much-needed cash infusion will keep the Boys & Girls Club of Vista running for at least one more month, but the money isn't exactly what club leaders asked for.

Many people hoped the City

Council would come through as requested with a \$20,000 grant for the fiscally beleaguered club, which runs popular after-school and out-of-school activities to keep children occupied and out of trouble.

But two new councilmen, Steve Gonskie and Paul Casano, and veteran Councilman Ed Estes Jr. pushed to make it a loan, not a grant, and the council voted 3-1 for it.

The loan was Gonskie's idea. He

complained that the club has

History of asking elected officials for funds — once for a roofing emergency and another time during a previous fiscal crisis.

"It is appropriate at this time to send a message that this city does not have deep pockets," said Gonskie, a teacher.

Details of the loan will be worked out by the city staff.

The club's emergency request yesterday came with an unexpected blessing. Joe Galabian, a Carlsbad community relations representative, announced that Cox was providing a \$10,000 grant to the club to help it through the crisis.

That news came as the club's interim director, Dave Reiving, said the nonprofit organization had run out of money because of the unexpected loss of a private grant.

He said some unpaid bills surfaced recently and the club had only \$10,000 left, enough to operate for about two weeks.

SEE CLUB, PAGE 2

DNA matches that of defendant in slaying, experts testify

Victim's struggle during '85 attack in Del Mar described

By Onell R. Soto
STAFF WRITER

VISTA — Two DNA experts testified yesterday that a Northern California man was the source of blood and skin cells recovered from the fragments and clothes of a strangled Del Mar slay victim.

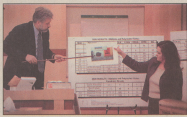
Prosecutors say the DNA evidence in the slaying is their case against David Pendast, 46, who is facing life in prison without the possibility of parole in the Aug. 22, 1985, slaying of Darlene

Helen Greenwood.

He is accused of murdering Greenwood, 35, to prevent her from testifying that he looked like the man who sexually assaulted her when she lived in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1984.

Pendast's lawyer, David Barick, said at the beginning of the trial that he would present witnesses challenging the probability of the DNA tests used in this case.

James yesterday also heard a crime-scene reconstruction expert testify that Greenwood fought fiercely for her life, scratching her attacker as he choked and beat her head



Gary Harner of the Serological Research Institute in Richmond pointed to a photo of panythens taken from the scene of the slaying in Del Mar. Prosecutor Valerie Summers assisted. Howard Upton / Union-Tribune photo

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