



City of Ridgecrest Police Department

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Ronald N. Strand, Chief of Police

Press Release

DATE OF INCIDENT: 06/27/2013
TYPE OF INCIDENT: RESIDENTIAL FIRE – MERITORIOUS/LIFESAVING CONDUCT
LOCATION OCCURED: 236 W. HALOID AVE.

On 06/27/2013, at about 0015 hours, RPD officers were dispatched to the apartment complex located at 236 W. Haloid Ave. regarding a fire. Sergeant Justin Dampier, Officer Aaron Tucker, and Officer Eric Clinton arrived on scene within a few minutes. They discovered the second story apartment was heavily engulfed in flames and the window next to the front door “blew out” in front of them as a result of the blaze. While evacuating the adjoining apartments, the officers suddenly observed an elderly woman exit the rear door of the second story apartment onto the raised balcony. The woman was panicking and her only exit from the apartment was blocked by the growing fire. The sliding glass door behind her was growing black with smoke.

Officer Tucker and Officer Clinton located a ladder in a nearby yard. Officer Tucker secured the ladder while Officer Clinton climbed to the second story balcony. Officer Clinton assisted the woman, who was later determined to be disabled, over the balcony railing and onto the ladder. With the help of Officer Tucker and Sergeant Dampier, the woman was assisted down the ladder and to a safe area.

With little regard for their own safety, the quick and decisive actions by these officers of the Ridgecrest Police Department ensured the safety of a disabled and panicked elderly woman who found herself trapped on an elevated balcony with her only exit route blocked by intense flame.

The Fire Department arrived several minutes later and was able to extinguish the fire. The second story apartment was heavily damaged, but the two lower level apartments were only minimally damaged. The Kern County Fire Department is investigating the cause of the fire.

Several local service organizations assisted the displaced residents with lodging arrangements. Members of PACT (Police and Citizens Together) and CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) assisted with traffic control and scene containment.

Prepared By: Sgt. Justin Dampier

RONALD N. STRAND - Chief of Police
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