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Today's E-Edition

Today's E-Edition preview showing various news articles and a coupon section.

ValleyVoice: Thanks for the outpouring of love and support

Story Comments

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Posted: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 8:44 am

Lisa Smith Burgess | 0 comments

I would like to thank everyone for their respect of our privacy over the past seventeen days. This allowed me the time I needed to personally notify our friends and family.

My husband, Richard Burgess, is a crew member of the Breckenridge Hotshots based out of Havilah, California. On September 7, 2015 Rich was injured while working in the Converse Basin area of the Rough Fire. His crew was tasked with monitoring the fire line along Hoist Ridge. While working on the line there was a 36" DBH (three feet in diameter) downed tree that was engulfed in flames prior to the crew arriving. After finishing up the line both below and above the tree, Rich went back down to tie in a piece of the line. The downed tree freed and started rolling towards Rich, eventually taking him down, and trapping him underneath.

Rich's crew immediately evaluated the situation and acted. One crew member used his chain saw to start cutting away as much weight from the tree as possible. Due to the size of the tree and the smoke, the crew member had to rely on critical communication with the crew to not cut Rich while he was sawing off portions of the tree. Another crew member was holding Rich's hand for moral support while others did everything they could to get the tree off of Rich and get him out.

Once the tree was light enough, the crew members were able to lift it off of Rich. God provided Rich with the adrenaline he needed to get up from under the tree as they lifted it off of him; and he fell to the ground immediately after getting free. Not only did their immediate actions, critical communication, and timeliness save Rich from continuing to burn, it also prevented the two canisters of gasoline in his pack from catching on fire while he was trapped underneath the tree.

Once Rich was out from under the burning tree, two EMT's on the crew began assessing his injuries, while the rest of the crew started preparing an emergency helispot. The Superintendent of his crew was in communication with Division regarding the Emergency Medivac Plan. After evaluating the smoke and air conditions, it was determined that the helicopter would not be able to land or hoist. The decision was made to carry Rich up the hill utilizing the wheeled stokes provided by the Rapid Extraction Module (REM Team). With the assistance of Palomar Hotshots, CAL FIRE strike team members, and the REM team, Rich was systematically brought up the hill. At that point Rich was placed in the care of the Sequoia Safety Council Ambulance who drove him to the helispot for aerial extraction to the Community Regional Medical Center by Kern County Helicopter 407.

After arriving at Community Regional Medical Center it was determined that Rich had twenty-five percent second-degree burns and seven percent third-degree burns. Rich's lungs were clear and he did not have one broken bone in his body. To date, Rich has had two surgeries. One surgery was an allograft and the other was an autograft; and he endured numerous take-downs before, between, and after each surgery. Rich continues to be in good spirits. He cannot wait to get home and eventually back to work.

I do not think that there could have been a better example of Integrity, Duty, and Respect from Rich's crew and the other First Responders in this situation. "Thank You" will never be enough for saving my husband's life, you are all true heroes, I am beyond thankful that he will eventually be able to come home.

I am very grateful for and wish to say thank you to The Sanders' Family, Jimmy Rocha and Kern County Fire Department, Fulton Hotshots, Horseshoe Meadows Hotshots, Arrowhead Hotshots (thank you for sharing your fire lunch just in case Rich was missing it), The Russ Family, Kern County Burn Survivor's Trust, Bakersfield Fire Fighters Burn Foundation, The Martinez Family, Sequoia National Forest, Sierra National Forest, KVHS CSF, The Burn Unit at Community Regional, Terry's House, Pete Dern and Family (hearing your story and seeing you walk out of the burn unit continues to provide us with hope), and Vicki and Dina from Wildland Firefighter Foundation who have been with me from thirty minutes after receiving the call until Rich is back to work.

To our Family, Friends, Kern River Valley Community, and Fire Family—your outpouring of love, support, and prayers is beyond humbling and we could not be prouder to be connected to you. To my husband Rich—your strength, dignity, and humility makes me proud to be your wife. I am strong because of your example in a time of adversity.

Calendar

Calendar for October 2015 with today's events section.

Cars Jobs

Stocks

Stock market information including a line graph for NYSE ETF and a table of market indices.

To all the churches and everyone who has prayed for us throughout the Country—your prayers are carrying us. We feel it and it has been the most powerful part of this journey. Rich and I both know that God has protected us and will continue to as Rich heals. Rich and I are asking that you please continue to keep us in prayer during this time. I know that we have received a lot of requests asking what people can do for us, your prayers are worth more than gold. However, if you still would like to do something else, we are asking that donations are made to Wildland Firefighter Foundation, Kern County Burn Survivor's Trust, Bakersfield Fire Fighters Burn Foundation, or Terry's House.

↓ 10.05	↓ 0.48%
Russell 2K	1161.86
↓ 3.77	↓ 0.323%
10Yr Bond	2.151
↓ 0.022	↓ 1.01%

Active Markets
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10/30/2015

Again, Thank You and All Glory be to God

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