Just a quick note ...

My home was put on a Mandatory Evacuation order earlier today so I've been busy relocating but I've found a computer that works so, for what it is worth, I'll give you a brief update. Forgive me if this is information you already know.

As Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and because the Board declared an emergency which the Gov accepted, the Board Chair is given special powers.

I have the ability – without consulting with the other members of the Board – to act unilaterally in some areas. Accordingly, earlier this evening I have requested that the Gov send us some AZ National Guard units. We would anticipate they will help in securing areas that have been evacuated. We simply don't have the manpower to patrol what is becoming a fairly large area. As of this writing, I don't know if she will accept the request, how many troops she will send or how long it will take to get them here. I'll know more tomorrow.

After the fire information meeting this evening I was able to get out to the area of today's fire. It was already dark so I could not see far off the road. The Ricardo's complex to include Nick's and the Café is, indeed, gone. As I drove by, a few pieces of wall from Ricardo's still stood reflecting the flickering light from a single large tongue of flame that was still burning hard and higher than the burned walls in the middle of the building. There was no attention being paid to it by anyone; there was no need. The building was gone; the single flame was going nowhere and there were other more pressing concerns.

The post office is untouched; the general store is untouched and the new building being built is untouched as is the Lone Star. Maybe tomorrow will bring an explanation as to why some burned and others did not –but it made no sense in the dark of this night.

I went up Miller Canyon into the Foot Hills Ranch subdivision. Twenty-five or thirty vehicles were everywhere, people in yellow jackets, blue uniforms and green border patrol garb moved in and out of the red and blue emergency lights that strobed the dark. A lot of grim, dirty and streaked faces moving about. And I saw no fire damage. Maybe one house on the northeast corner area may have had damage. The garage was open and officials were going in and out. My impression was that there may have been some damage on the back of the house that faced the large grassy area. The rest of the community appeared absolutely undamaged. But the backdrop to that community this evening was a thousand flickering points of orange/red dancing spots of light. Upper Miller Canyon was glowing.
As I came back past the Mesquite Tree Restaurant, it was absolutely unscathed. There was a line of headlights stretching back up Carr Canyon coming down to 92 and a lot of vehicles appeared staged in the Tree's parking lot. A great deal of effort was obviously being poured into Carr this evening.

It was hard to tell in the dark, but the caboose in the Westside of 92 appeared ok but glowing embers seemed to be all around it.

North of the Mesquite Tree it appears the fire jumped 92. A great many emergency vehicles were lined up on the east side – but it was too dark to see anything. I don't want to speculate but my sense was that the fire made it to Ramsey Road on the east side of 92 but I have no idea of any damage as of this evening. I'll get out there when it gets light tomorrow.

This is the first chance I have had to get on the computer since this afternoon so I don't know if I'm telling you anything new. But I'm at that point that I'm so tired I can't go to sleep - so thought I would send this out – for what it is worth.

As I think I said earlier ... a lot of people around here are going to remember this Father's Day for a long time to come.

Pat.

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A quick note …

Below is a picture from a few minutes ago. It appears that Ricardos, Nick's Place and the German café have been lost.

I'm also hearing – at the moment – that only spot fires are getting across Hwy 92 and but they are being put out quickly.

Right now, the fire is somewhere near the Mesquite Tree. No information as to its fate. Too much smoke to see.

Again, this is as of this writing.

Pat.

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Just a quick note ...

I just received this email below from Mike Evans - County Emergency Service Coordinator.

Pat.

"... Am sitting on 92 just down from mesquite near white lilly. Fire is past Hereford and the caboose here has almost burned at least twice. Can't see it now due to smoke. I know structures were lost in the nicks/ricardos area but don't know which ones or how many.

Report of a bevy on a propane tank near nicks place.

Spot fires only are being reported on the east side of 92 which are being picked up quickly.

Air assets cannot get off the ground due to the normal winds and the winds at/in the fire are horrific.

Getting ready to do burnout ops from white lilly back to fire to try and stop the fire there."

Pat.

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From: "Call, Pat" <PCall@cochise.az.gov>
Date: Sun, 19 Jun 2011 13:11:31 -0700
To: Call, Pat<PCall@cochise.az.gov>

Subject: new evacuation orders

Just a quick note ...

As of this email ... Ramsey Canyon north to Yaqui and Ramsey Road north to Yaqui down to Campobella are now under mandatory evacuation orders.

The Fire has not crossed Hwy 92 but it is heating up according to incident command ... obviously.

I am now in the mandatory evacuation area. Information from me may become a bit more sketchy ... we'll see.

Thanks.

Pat.

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Just a quick note …

The public notice below was just sent to me.

Pat.

… Upon the advice of Monument Fire Command, Southwest Gas has shut off natural gas service to an additional 200 customers in the area bordered by Ramsey Road on the north, East Calle de la Palmera on the south, South Mesquite Tree Lane on the west, and Calle Lima on the east. Additionally, gas has been shut off to an undeveloped and unoccupied subdivision immediately to the west of that area, bordered by Ramsey Road on the north, East Calle de la Palmera on the south, Highway 92 on the west, and South Wild Rose Road on the east.

57 customers were shut off Thursday, June 16, in the area immediately south of this, and service to these customers’ remains off. Service has been RESTORED to 2100 customers who were temporarily shut off on Friday in response to the Antelope fire on Ft. Huachuca.

This action is part of a plan Southwest Gas developed to isolate natural gas facilities in stages, in order to protect public safety as the fire progresses.

A map of the affected area may be viewed on the Southwest Gas web site, www.swgas.com. Once the fire has been contained and it is safe to restore service, details will be available on the map as well.

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Just a quick note ...

I just received a call from the County’s Emergency Services Coordinator, Mike Evans – he’s at the very top of the Vista Grande Area. He reports that everything is clear there. Same for the Foothills Ranch area off of Miller Canyon Road. The fire is still back up in the canyon. The church just to the north of Stan Greer on Hwy 92 has been a staging area for fire fighters for the last several days. Mike reports that there are very many responders and equipment staged there at the moment …waiting.

Good news – as of right now anyway.

I had a question as to whether the fire meeting tonight will be televised again. As of now, the meeting on the fire at 6pm will be televised again on channel 12 – thanks to Tim Cervantes and Cox.

For those who have been asking to be put on the email list … I’m going to try to spend the next few hours this morning working on that, bear with me.

One more thing … thanks to all of you who sent me a Happy Father’s Day note! I appreciate it. This will be a Father’s Day few of us will ever forget.

I’ll stay in touch.

Pat.

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Just a quick note ...

There will be another public fire meeting tonight at Buena –6pm.

Joint Information Center (JIC) phone number: 1-800-288-3861

I know that many people are anxious to get home but given current fire conditions, it is highly unlikely that any evacuation orders will be changed today. I can tell you that getting people back to their homes is a high priority. Plans to do so in a safe, orderly and fast way are being developed, if not in place already – ready to pull the trigger when it is safe. Just to be clear, though, current evac orders are still in place.

The concern at the moment, and frankly the only focus of everyone, is to keep the fire from blowing down the Miller Canyon area – which could include the Vista Grande area as well, and jumping Hwy 92. If it jumps Hwy 92 in that area, it could be bad. It could move very fast down the Ramsey Road to Hereford Road area. If you live in those areas under the Mandatory Evacuation Order and have chosen to stay in your home – please stay alert, or better ... leave. This is a very dynamic situation at the moment.

I just received word that there will be no aviation resources available to fight the fire today– the wind is too high.

As expected, unfortunately, by Incident Command last evening– this is going to be a long, tough day of fire fighting.

Pat.

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