

More than 30 people dead in numerous California fires

The Associated Press

As wildfires raged at both ends of the state, officials released another grim statistic: six more bodies discovered in the burned-over town of Paradise and outlying areas, bringing the death toll there to 29 and matching the record for the deadliest single blaze in California history.

Statewide the death toll stood at 31, including two dead in Southern California, with authorities still searching for bodies and 228 people unaccounted for.

Ten search teams were working in Paradise — a town of 27,000 that was largely incinerated Thursday — and in surrounding communities in Northern California's Sierra Nevada foothills. Authorities called in a DNA lab and anthropologists to help identify what in some cases were only bones or bone fragments.

All told, more than 8,000

firefighters battled wildfires that scorched at least 400 square miles of the state, with the flames feeding on dry brush and driven by winds that had a blowtorch effect.

"This is truly a tragedy that all Californians can understand and respond to," Gov. Jerry Brown said Sunday. "It's a time to pull together and work through these tragedies."

California is requesting emergency aid from the Trump administration. President Donald Trump has blamed what he called poor forest management for the fires.

The governor said the federal and state governments must do more forest management but that climate change is the greater source of the problem.

"And those who deny that are definitely contributing to the tragedies that we're now witnessing and will continue to witness in the coming

years," Brown said.

Drought and warmer weather attributed to climate change, and the building of homes deeper into forests have led to longer and more destructive wildfire seasons in California. While California officially emerged from a five-year drought last year, much of the northern two-thirds of the state is abnormally dry.

In Southern California, firefighters beat back a new round of winds Sunday and the fire's growth was believed to have been largely stopped, though extremely low humidity and gusty Santa Ana winds are in the forecast through at least Tuesday.

Some of the thousands of people forced from their homes were allowed to return, and authorities reopened U.S. 101, a major freeway through the fire zone in Los Angeles and Ventura counties.

Malibu celebrities and mobile-home dwellers in

nearby mountains were slowly learning whether their homes had been spared or reduced to ash. Two people

were killed in Malibu, and the fire destroyed at least 180 structures.

As of Sunday night, the

fire had grown to more than 133 square miles and was 15 percent contained, authorities said.

JOSEPH

Continued from Page 1A
park, public library, licensed day care center, community recreation facility attended primarily by minors, sports facility attended primarily by minors or another marijuana dispensary.

With Joseph's relatively small size — an area of .88 square miles — the ordinance limits where a dispensary could go. As The Observer previously reported in an Oct. 10 article, within areas in Joseph zoned for commercial use, there are only three blocks on Main Street where a dispensary could be opened: along East Maple, Poplar and Daggett streets.

Former Mayor Dennis Sands said the point of the ordinance was to make sure

Joseph wasn't overrun by dispensaries.

"It was an effort, if (marijuana was eventually) legalized, to minimize the number of outlets," Sands told The Observer.

Flanagan, who hopes to open a dispensary, isn't necessarily opposed to the ordinance limiting its location.

"It's great that we could be the only one," he said. "So we're not like Portland where there's a dispensary practically every other block."

Flanagan said although the marijuana industry has such a large presence in Oregon, Joseph probably has the demand for only one dispensary.

When it comes to the divisiveness of the issue, Flanagan isn't too worried.

"I don't really care," he said about people being angry

about recreational marijuana dispensaries. "Everybody has their own opinion, but the majority of the city wants it."

Joseph wasn't the only city in Northeast Oregon with a ballot measure related to marijuana.

In Ontario, voters repealed the ban of the sale of recreational marijuana, with a 1,904-1,450 vote in favor of repealing the ban.

In Imbler, residents proved they weren't keen on marijuana, as they passed Measure 31-9737, which creates an ordinance prohibiting the sale, production and processing of marijuana for medical or recreational purposes within Imbler's city limits.

In the small Baker County town of Sumpter, voters chose not to ban marijuana businesses by one vote — 73-72.

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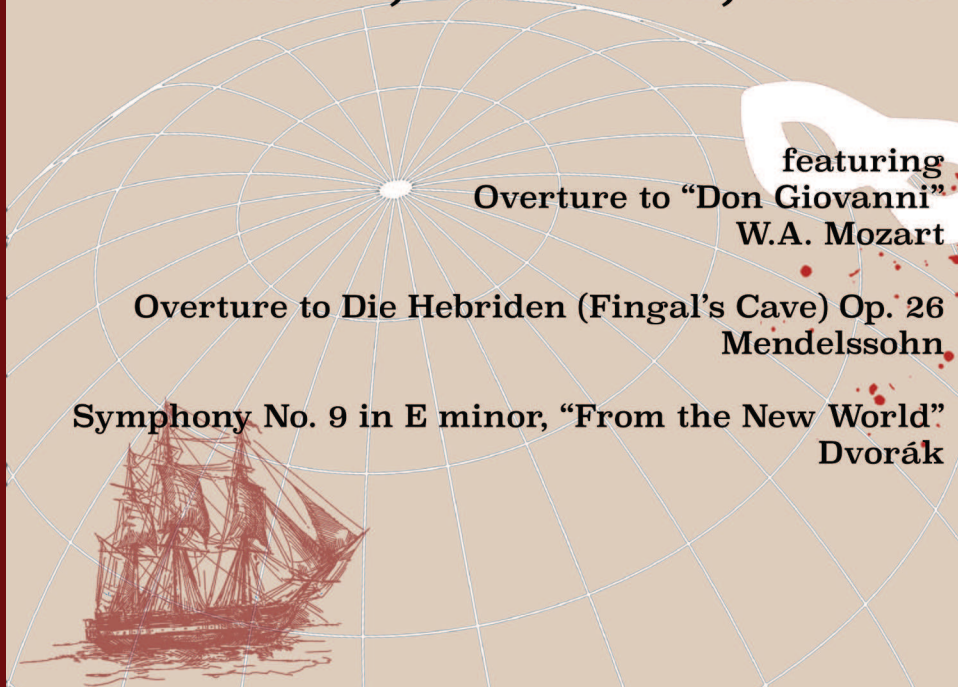
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