

heBay

Former mayor critical of planner

By NEIL FARRELL
THE SUN BULLETIN

Former Morro Bay Mayor Dale Reddell is hopping mad at what he calls an incompetent city planning department and is threatening to sue.

But Public Services Director Greg Fuz defends his embattled department, explaining the city has had to replace everyone over

PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR DEFENDS EMBATTLED DEPARTMENT

the past year and it takes time to learn the nuances of planning in the state's coastal zone. And it may be just Reddell who's having problems. According to a survey Fuz conducted himself, most peo-

ple are satisfied with the planning department.

Meanwhile, Reddell's complaining has caught the ear of one council member who has asked that a management audit be done

to see if there is some proving the department's

Is Reddell just impatient over-reacting, a former mover frustrated at not getting way?

Or is the Planning Department as described in Reddell's against the city - "a negative back stabbers at the junct of the Keystone Corridor. Please see PLANNERS, I



PERSON, above, of Valley of the ... is owner of a ... bearded ... He will be ... celebrating 4-H ... ing Sunday.

OFFICER BEN ... r commander of ... ard Station Morro ... his impressions ... I attack on the ... Center in New

N passes along ... oings-on in Los ... ng news about a ... ar and a new ... in his column, a ... e of the Sun Bul-

NEW YORK TRAGEDY: MORRO BAY MAN'S REPORT



PHOTO BY RICH BRANDT

Michael Bonanno, at the scene of the World Trade Center attack, comes from a family of firefighters in New York. He spent 10 years with the fire department before being forced to retire in 1995 due to a back injury.

Retired firefighter helps at scene

By NEIL FARRELL
THE SUN BULLETIN

The pictures on TV, terrible as they are, don't do justice to the enormity of the World Trade Center disaster, according to Michael Bonanno, a Morro Bay resident and retired New York firefighter.

Bonanno and wife Barbara were in Long Island, New York on Sept. 11, having spent the weekend Christening their niece

'After the second plane hit I thought of terrorism.'

Mike Bonanno, retired firefighter

and playing in the Atlantic Ocean at the Fire Island National Seashore the day before the world changed.

"We were sleeping in the guest bedroom when my sister got this phone call," explained Michael.

She turned on the TV in the room and they all watched in disbelief as fire roared from one of the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

"After the first plane, I thought it was a horrible accident," said Barbara. "After the second plane hit, I thought of terrorism. We were watching the fire and then saw this second plane come by. The TV went black and when it

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AIR POLLUTION

Clean air concern review

By NEIL FARRELL
THE SUN BULLETIN

Editor's note: The Sun last week published the first in an in-depth question-and-answer session with Air Pollution District staff regarding soot and residents' clean-air concerns on Energy's proposed power plant. The final portion of the view follows:

Q: What about the air the plant will use? Is that a concern for air quality?

Willey: "Ammonia was in our analysis but not the transportation and handling of it."

"That's the bigger issue for ammonia for me, the transportation and handling (which will be handled by the state Department of Toxic Substances Control).

"Small amounts of ammonia used to reduce the NOx emissions. It's added to the exhaust and run through a catalyst. The result will be the formation of nitrogen (the most abundant gas in the atmosphere

Please see APCD, Page 8

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TRIDDER >

ck on both towers were

like a remake of 'War of
ds,' said Michael, who
m first-hand experience
ould die.

el, 39, comes from a fam-
fighters in New York. He
in the Bronx and raised
hursht, Long Island.

ent 10 years with the fire
ent before being forced
in 1995 due to a back in-

me to Morro Bay that
ar, attended Cuesta and is
l Poly student. He's since
e back surgeries.

her, Joseph Bonanno Sr.,
fter 30 years with FDNY
ow living in San Diego.

rother, Joe Jr., spent 20
th the department and re-
year. He is somewhat fa-
aving written two cook-
er firefighters.

hile Michael was stuck in
and on Sept. 11, Joe was
house in Manhattan film-
oking segment for a local
v.

as at Ladder Company 3
show, explained Michael,
king with legendary fire-
atrick Brown, one of the
corated firefighters in FD-
ory, when they heard the
losion.

h time to time in Manhat-
re's an explosion," ex-
Michael. "Joe looked at
Brown and said, 'I guess
going to work,' and Paddy
he wanted to come along.
No. And those guys nev-
ned."

ael said he tried to donate
at the Red Cross had all it
handle for now. With the
rs, trains and freeways
there was no way to get to
tan. Like the rest of Amer-
hael and Barbara watched
nts unfold on TV that first

t the buildings would col-
ever entered my mind,"
ichael, who once fought a
ire on the 53rd floor of the
State Building, a fire "that
olutely roaring. It looked
sun."

were able to put that fire
e said, adding that he
t they would be able to do
ne with the World Trade

ey're the best," he said of
ther firefighters.

hen the towers collapsed,
set in.

ever dreamed both build-
ould be lying in a pile of

perfect for there to be a lot of res-
cue personnel in the building.

"It wasn't a matter of 'if,' I just
knew I had friends in there," he
said. "As the day wore on, I knew
basically this was a war and a lot
of my very good friends and
brothers were dead, dying or
missing."

The next morning, Joe called
Michael to say they were calling
in all retirees and off-duty person-
nel to help the rescue effort.

The two set out for Manhattan,
taking the Long Island Railroad,
then various taxis and even a po-
lice car to get to ground zero.

On the train, a woman search-
ing for her missing husband
brought the disaster into per-
spective.

"She gave me a missing poster
of her husband who worked for
Cantor-Fitzgerald, the brokerage
firm in the World Trade Center.

"That's when it hit me, this ran
across all lives, cops, firefighters,
civilians, everybody."

When they arrived on the
scene, reality set in. An avid
World War II history buff,
Michael said the scene looked
like the firebombing of Dresden.

"It was like the History Chan-
nel come to life," he said.

"My brother broke down im-
mediately. He had a really tough
moment when he saw Ladder
Company 3. The transmission
was knocked 30 feet out the back
of the truck."

Later they learned the building
had fallen on the truck, but the
crew that Joe Bonanno had just
been filming and joking with the
day before were inside the build-
ing at the time. They were count-
ed missing.

"My brother is having serious
survivors' guilt," said Michael.
"I'm so glad he didn't get on that
truck."

Michael's old crew, from Lad-
der Company 7, was also missing.
They found the truck under seven
inches of ash, he said. None of the
crew were anywhere to be found.

A firefighter friend of Michael's
was asked to try to get the truck
working again, and just then the
off duty personnel from the fire-
house showed up to take over.

They had the truck up and run-
ning again that evening, said
Michael. The crew is still missing.

The twin towers were reduced
to a seven-story pile of rubble and
there was a tremendous amount
of fire, Michael said.

The World Trade Center cov-
ered about 25 acres and all the ac-
tivity at the scene reminded
Michael of an ant farm.

"There was an incredible effort
from the trade workers - the steel
workers are my heroes - and my
brother firefighters. I've never

them," he said.

"I personally
knew five broth-
ers who were
there digging for
their brothers."

One of those
old friends said
he'd helped pull
a woman alive
from the wreck-
age, one of just a
handful that
would come out
alive. And it was-
n't like digging
through a pile of
dirt.

"They couldn't
dig four inches
without hitting
an obstacle," said
Michael, "and
needing a torch,
a saw or a
crane."

Because of his
back condition,
Michael found
himself in a
mostly supervi-
sory role and try-
ing to comfort the
rescue workers.

"I'm in school
and I want to be-
come a psycholo-
gist and crisis
counselor," he explained. "I lent
support in any way I could."

At the end of the day Wednes-
day, Michael had enough.

"I was just shot. I'm in a lot of
pain on a good day in Morro Bay,"
he said. "I told Joe, let's head
home."

Walking down the empty
streets of Manhattan was strange.

"It was like a nuclear winter,"
said Michael. "All the buildings
were blasted with white ash."

They came upon a fire truck
blocking a street and covered
with ash. Engine 207 from Brook-
lyn had its door open. Michael
walked to the front of the pumper
truck and found a probationary
firefighter (a rookie), covered in
ash, folding a fire hose back into
the bed of the truck - like they do
after every fire.



SUN BULLETIN PHOTO BY NEIL FARRELL

Mike and Barbara Bonanno, back in Morro Bay, were visiting in New York at the time of the attack on the World Trade Center.

"Turned out he was in shock
and was trying to stay busy," said
Michael.

"He told me, 'I lost my whole
company and my best friend on
this truck.' I sat him down and
talked with him a while. I hope I
helped him a little bit."

On the journey home, Michael
said the city opened up its hearts
to the firefighters. "The generosi-
ty of the citizens of New York was
absolutely incredible. Everyone
knew we were emotionally
drained and there was no charge
for anything. The city opened up
its arms and hearts."

Michael took Thursday off but
returned on Friday and Saturday.
Barbara was frantic every time he
left.

"He was leaving me every day,
and I kept hearing about build-

ings collapsing," said
who is a nurse and ne-
emergencies.

As time wore on
stopped finding
Michael said the res-
to get discouraged.
were digging as if the
something any mi-
Michael. On Friday,

"The mission doe-
cause of the weathe-
low because no mo-
were being found. S-
bodies were found i-
condition, the morale
so low.

"George W. (Pres-
came in and really
guys up. He did a he-

On Sunday and M-
bara and Michael w-
her sister's place i-
They went to Manha-
day to visit his old
now missing its entir-

"I felt like I'd seen
like to be in a war,"
"It was like time sto-

Cars, left in park-
blocks away from
were covered in ash-
saw the long faces
fighters and the city
quiet except for the
rescue operation."

Michael said it was
union, the biggest e-
history.

"I never though
greeting someone b-
glad you're alive,"
who hasn't given u-
victims will be found

"I believe in mirac-
body can survive it's
one more person -
fighter or secretary
alive, they'll hear me
way from Morro Ba-

"I've never been r-
be a New Yorker."

Michael Bonanno
booth at this weekend
tival to raise money t-
ilies of the police, fi-
civilians who lost
Sept. 11.

PICTURE PERFECT PAINTING BY LOS OSOS AUTO BODY WINS HIGH PRAISE FROM ARTIST.

Children's book illustrator S.C., of Morro Bay, said she was "happily astonished" by the paint work Los Osos Auto Body did on her Mercedes after they repaired it. "I couldn't tell where the original paint ended and the new began," she said. "Los Osos Auto Body did a picture-perfect job of color matching."

As time goes by, S.C. is destined to become

Body paint job. The DuPont paint
Los Osos Auto Body is admirably
the ravages of rust created by the
ocean air and fog of the Central Coast.

S.C.'s experience exemplifies
more you care about your automobile,
you should call Los Osos Auto Body
of night or day).

LOS OSOS AUTO B

(The Robertsons)

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