



# NEWS RELEASE

## Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Spring Mountains National Recreation Area

(Known to locals as Mt. Charleston)  
4701 North Torrey Pines Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130

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### Forest Service Engine a Big Hit at Las Vegas Family Event

**Las Vegas, Nevada...**Last Saturday, an organization called “Family to Family” held its annual event, “Touch a Truck,” where thousands of kids were invited to climb all over every imaginable kind of big rig – dump trucks, garbage trucks, buses, various police and military vehicles, and, of course, fire engines. Family to Family’s mission statement is “Helping good people become better parents.”

The Spring Mountains National Recreation Area provided an engine, a fire prevention trailer, and four of its finest firefighters, Larry Benham, Ted Bernard, John Johanson, and Tony Thaler.



**John Johanson suites up a future wildland firefighter**



**Many captured memorable moments with Smokey.**

Over 5,000 people attended this event at the Orleans’ arena parking lot; participants were lined up 10-to-15 deep all day to check out the engine, take pictures with Smokey, and collect fire prevention goodies.

“Engine Captain John Johanson was a smash with the under-three crowd,” said Larry Benham, a veteran Fire Prevention Officer on the Spring Mountains Recreation Area. “I overheard parents tell their kids that these were ‘the guys’ that protected our National Forests.” Forest Service wildland firefighters are not well known as emergency responders in Las Vegas; their presence is much more familiar to residents in the nearby communities of Kyle and Lee Canyon, and Mountain Springs.

The engine crew spent a good part of the day reminding attendees from local mountain communities about the importance of establishing and maintaining defensible space for the

upcoming fire season. Learn more about fire proofing your home at [www.livingwithfire.info](http://www.livingwithfire.info). To learn more about this release, please contact Larry Benham at 702-493-9413, or Christie Kalkowski, Public Affairs Officer, at 775-355-5311.



**Wildland Fire Engine offered lots of behind-the-wheel experience for tots.**

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