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## Orange County Supervisor Applauds Local Fire Safe Council

Orange County Supervisor Bill Campbell understands the impact Fire Safe Councils can have on a community. The Supervisor regularly sent his policy advisor to participate in Fire Prevention Town Hall Meetings with the Inter-Canyon League Fire Safe Council (ICL-FSC).

When October's Santiago Fire roared through these rural canyon areas, Supervisor Campbell convened a multi-agency task force to coordinate fire recovery. Immediate action was needed to ready these steep and narrow canyons for the debris flow problems that would arrive with predicted rains.

Approximately 18,000 gravel bags, 7,000 sand bags and 2,000 straw rice bales were placed in strategic locations to minimize mud



**Orange County Supervisor Bill Campbell (right) at Inter-Canyon League Fire Safe Council press event**

flow. In addition to materials, residents were given erosion protection advice and

assistance with the rebuilding process.

Celebrating the announcement of ICL-FSC's successful Grants Clearing-house chipping and dead tree removal proposals, Supervisor Campbell says he looks forward to the continued great works by these active neighbors.

Since 2000, the ICL-FSC has created Fire Plans that were used during the Santiago Fire evacuation operation, partnered with the area's green waste recycler to provide free chipping services to canyon residents, and sponsored canyon emergency preparedness training.

## Phone Tree Software Eases Evacuation

The rural San Diego County neighborhood of Carveacre has a useful product to share. Phone tree software has given them the ability to get a message to all 200+ neighbors within minutes. Since programming in home, work, and cell phone numbers (even one resident's mom's house in town!), Carveacre Fire Safe Council has been able to distribute everything from road closures to evacuation orders. During the 2007 fires, the USFS gave occasional fire updates through the system, and even asked residents to stay off the road to prevent a traffic jam as equipment drove up the dirt road—the only way in or out. The system got a workout during October, but through nothing short of heroic actions on the part of firefighters, the Harris Fire was stopped a mile away from Carveacre.

How does phone tree software work? Carveacre uses a product called "PhoneTree" ([www.phonetree.com](http://www.phonetree.com)) and chose a program that cost approximately \$600 for the software and came with 3500 free calls. Those free calls have seen them through three fires so far!

Does your Fire Safe Council have a useful product to share with your neighboring groups? Send your story to Wende Cornelius at [info@firesafecouncil.org](mailto:info@firesafecouncil.org).

## From the Desk of Bruce Turbeville

Wow! Fifteen years and we are still growing. From its humble beginning in the spring of 1993, the California Fire Safe Council program has become a mainstay in how California works to reduce the occurrence of, and the damage caused by, unwanted wildfire. As the number of damaging wildfires increased at about the same rate as the population, it became very clear that the fire prevention message was not getting to the right audience.

It was recognized that communities were going to have to step up to the plate and become part of the solution. The private sector was asked to become a partner in getting the message to the communities. As the message began to flow through new channels and citizens awareness levels increased, proactive changes were made at the community level.

Partnerships were formed and a united effort began to emerge...the word on the street was proactive, not reactive. As federal funding became available, community Fire Safe Councils began to pop up all over the state, and people actively participated in the efforts to make their communities fire safe.

The amount of fire hazard reduction that has been accomplished and planned for is staggering. Fire Safe Councils have become a force to reckon with in many communities. As we near the end of this decade, efforts are being made to obtain additional funding for fire safe projects. Federal funding continues to flow and state funding is on the horizon. The private sector, especially the insurance industry, is donating significant amounts of prevention and education program funds.

All of you are to be commended for your efforts, as it truly could not have happened without you! Keep up the good work, and please....Be Fire Safe.

*BRUCE*



## Things Heating Up in Southern California

The Southern California region has been experiencing a growth spurt in the number of local Fire Safe Councils during the past year. New groups have been formed in Sand Canyon (Santa Clarita area), La Habra Heights, Rancho Cucamonga, Altadena Foothills/Chaney Trail/Millard Canyon, Big Tujunga Canyon and Malibu West, with a larger, "Fire Safe Alliance" group in the wings in the westernmost part of Los Angeles County. The enthusiasm and motivation of these new FSCs is contagious and they will be assigned

mentors from established FSCs to help ensure a successful launch.

Several new groups (Big Tujunga Canyon, Malibu West and Altadena Foothills) applied for and received grants for the 2009 Clearinghouse cycle. A particularly exciting result of grants to Big Tujunga Canyon, Altadena Foothills, the cities of Bradbury, Duarte and Monrovia, and established local FSCs in Sierra Madre and The Meadows in Altadena is that their fuel reduction projects will begin to create a network of protection in the Los Angeles

County Foothills – the front country of the Angeles National Forest.

We are also delighted to welcome Tom Gillett as the Deputy Forest Supervisor on the San Bernardino National Forest. Tom comes from the Cleveland National Forest, and has long been an ally and resource for local Fire Safe Councils in the San Diego area. We're looking forward to involving Tom with the hardworking FSCs in the mountain areas of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

Cathy Brooke,  
Southern California  
Region Grants Manager



**Southern California's Fire Safe Councils are taking the world by storm!**

# Bidding Farewell to Brenda Rightmyer

Coast Region Grant Manager Brenda Rightmyer retired to pursue other Fire Safe Council opportunities this spring. Those of us who have worked with her will miss her greatly, but we all wish her well on her new ventures.

### The TOP TEN things we'll miss about Brenda:

- 10 She has infectious laughter
- 9 She's down to earth and pleasant
- 8 She's a Networking Queen
- 7 She's willing to go above and beyond to help
- 6 She has a talent for bringing people together
- 5 She has a great spirit

4 She's always responsive to calls for help

3 She has an extraordinary work ethic

2 She's always at the other end of cyberspace or phonespace

1 She's there to help us through confusing times

The next Sierra Region grant manager will have big shoes to fill.

Good-bye and good luck, Brenda!



Brenda Rightmyer moves on to new horizons!

## SAVE THE DATE!

California Fire Safe Council and State Farm Insurance are pleased to present:

### Getting Your Story Told:

#### How to Develop a Public Information Campaign

Friday, June 13 San Diego Monday, June 16 Ventura County

Friday, July 11 Sacramento Monday, July 14 Bay Area

Call (800) 372-2350 to register for these valuable workshops!

## “Lazy” Chipping in Santa Clara County

The residents of Lazy Lane in the Foothills of San Jose, contradict their street name. Brought to action by the Aborn Fire in September 2007, the homeowners on Lazy Lane realized they needed to make drastic changes to protect their homes. Residents worked with the Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council, San Jose Fire Department, and Pacific Gas and Electric to address the needs and coordinate Defensible Space Chipping Days.

“By making this a collaborative effort, we were able to work quickly and efficiently in meeting with the homeowners and assessing each property to ensure the most important work was completed,” says San Jose Fire’s Wildland Officer, Captain Barry Stallard.

Two dozen piles of hazardous fuel were chipped by Newcomb Tree Service which provided the chipper and a two-man crew for each of two 8-hour chipping days. “The crews worked hard and we are very happy with the results,” praised homeowner Tom Ryan. “We hope to have another chipping day in the near future.”

In 2007, SCFSC’s Defensible Space Chipping Programs helped protect over 1,400 homes, 4,250 people, and \$1.4 billion in property values.

“There are tangible results with our fuel reduction projects and these results directly impact lives. We not only assist homeowners in making their homes fire safe, we also empower them to think proactively as a community,” says SCFSC President Jerry Serpa.



Chipping Days helped residents of Lazy Lane



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## Fuelbreak Saves Lake Arrowhead Homes



**Minimal ground fuels treatment  
saved 200 houses near  
Lake Arrowhead**

It only went 150 feet down the hillside, and left behind plenty of fallen logs for habitat. But the fuelbreak project that spanned 200 homes in the Deer Lodge Park neighborhood proved itself on Monday, October 22, 2007. The Grass Valley Fire spared all 200 of the homes above the project. The first house beyond it was lost.

Funded by the US Forest Service through the California Fire Safe Council, the fuelbreak had been something of an experiment in Lake Arrowhead. Fire Chief George Corley summarized the project, "We wanted to use our grant to show that you could do a little work along the edge of the interface and get paid extensive dividends. We trimmed up trees and removed ground fuels."

The experiment worked. Scanning the homes saved by this project, CAL FIRE's San Bernardino Unit Chief Tom O'Keefe commended the work. Although it's not the type of story to be featured on television, the success of Deer Park Lodge's fuelbreak is big news. Arrowhead Fire Safe Council and San Bernardino County Fire "prevented these losses six months ago," Chief O'Keefe stated.