

## Firestorm: 4 Years Later

as posted at [www.scrippsranh.org](http://www.scrippsranh.org)

Just a few days shy of the four-year anniversary of the disastrous Cedar Fire, another horrific firestorm broke out in roughly the same area as in 2003. Through television coverage, the Internet, and email, Scripps Ranch residents kept a close eye on the course of the fire. As you may recall, during the Cedar Fire that hit our community on October 26, 2003, Scripps Ranch lost 312 homes and many others were damaged. This time, many residents were packed and ready to go if necessary.

Scripps Ranch got the word that there was a mandatory evacuation mid-afternoon on Monday, Oct. 22. The Witch Creek Fire was just a few miles from Scripps Ranch and the wind gusts were hurricane strength. The fire had the potential to reach our homes in hours.

Luckily, after spending just one night away from home, residents received word on Tuesday that the fire danger to Scripps Ranch had decreased to the point that they could return. All residents came back to homes that were still standing. Also, no one in Scripps Ranch was hurt.

However, all was not well with our neighbors. Residents of Poway, Rancho Bernardo, and other areas in San Diego County suffered the same heartache Scripps Ranch did four years ago—hundreds of homes were destroyed. Also, there were deaths and injuries.

As soon as Scripps Ranch residents returned home, our fire survivors and other community members started to “pay it forward” and reached out to those who lost everything. Fire survivors used their hard-earned experience to guide folks through the first steps to recovery.

Fire survivor Karen Reimus facilitates the Disaster Recovery Mentor Program for United Policyholders, a nonprofit charity that focuses on supporting those affected by a catastrophic loss. The mentor program matches up past fire survivors with current fire victims. Many Cedar Fire survivors volunteered to help the victims of this firestorm.



Mentors provide emotional support and “real-life” practical advice about dealing with a large-scale loss. When possible, people are matched up by insurance company.

Another way all Scripps Ranch residents can help is to contribute to the “Little Yellow Book” Sponsorship Program. The book guides fire victims through the recovery process. United Policyholders would like to give a book to each fire victim. To support that effort, please send a check payable to: “United Policyholders,” in any amount, to Karen Reimus at 10151 Pinecastle Street, San Diego, CA 92131. For more information or to help, please contact Karen Reimus at [[reimus1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:reimus1@sbcglobal.net)] or 414-9756.

If you would like to donate needed items or find other ways to help the fire victims, please visit the SRCA website at [[www.scrippsranh.org](http://www.scrippsranh.org)].

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