

WESTWOOD NEWS FLASH

Words cannot begin to express the shock and grief we all feel over the cataclysmic wildfire that ravaged our community. Our heartfelt sympathies go out to those of you who have lost your homes or have been displaced by damage. While many of us in the community returned to unscathed homes, we have been deeply touched by the overwhelming loss of those around us. We all want to help in any way we can! This bulletin is designed to inform you about our community's efforts to help our neighbors deal with the implications of this wildfire.

Community Resources Convene to Coordinate Response Efforts

On Friday evening, a group of community organizations held a conference call to open the dialog on how we can best coordinate efforts to meet our community's needs. On short notice, we were able to convene: Mike Mosgrove, Westwood Elementary's Principal; Fran Hjalmarson, head of PUSD's Crisis Response Team; Diane White, PTA President; Alan Gieseke, Westwood Foundation Board President; Steve Fluss, Westwood Club Manager; Nancy Canfield, Westwood Board Member and RB's Honorary Mayor; Debbie Neyhouse, Service Unit Leader for Girl Scouts RB; and other members of the organizations' boards.*

Based on our discussions, here are some immediate steps that community organizations are taking to help:

- **Hosting the Army Military Police:** The Army is using the Westwood Club as its command post for our neighborhood for the next couple of weeks. Their mission is to patrol for looters and to help with neighborhood security in general.
- **Opening the Club on Sunday:** The Girl Scouts distributed a flyer about the Club reopening and the event on Sunday designed to bring our community together. Hopefully you could attend this and take a little time to decompress and connect with the community. Remember – the Club has showers, an adult lounge, and other resources available, and more will be mobilized quickly now that the Club has been cleared to re-open. Check the Club's Web site (www.rbwestwoodclub.com) regularly for updates, and we will try to keep you posted through future bulletins too.
- **Opening the School on Monday:** Westwood Elementary will open on Monday morning to try to establish a sense of normalcy back into our kids' lives. This week will be full days for students every day: the Parent-Teacher conferences are being canceled.
- **Providing Crisis Counseling Support:** So far, we have identified 80 children and 3 teachers whose homes were destroyed in the fire – more than 10% of our student and teaching population. There will be 8 to 10 members of the PUSD Crisis Response Team on campus for the next two weeks or so to provide counseling and crisis support to our community.

*While the group was far from all-inclusive, it included the groups we could engage given the timing to pull the call together and the logistical issues associated with organizing a call with intermittent phone and Internet service through much of our neighborhood. If you are on the Board of a local organization that would like to be included in any future initiatives or dialog, please let Valerie Gieseke know at vgieseke@san_rr.com.