



The SCFSC

# Fireplug

July 2012



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*Mobilizing the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities and environment from wildfires.*

## Wildfire Protection and Prevention in Paradise:

### The South County FSC provides free Defensible Space chipping for residents in Morgan Hill

A peaceful paradise is often how residents of Woodland Acres. Unfortunately, paradise comes at a cost – Woodland Acres, like all of the WUI areas of Morgan Hill, is considered “very high” risk for wildfire as a SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Woodland Acres has been a community of concern for the FireSafe Council and fire agencies in the area and, in the past, the remote location and private nature of the residents has made it a challenge to engage the community in wildfire prevention.

Since the first chipping project in Woodland Acres in 2010, the South County FireSafe Council has

been working on strengthening stakeholder partnerships and increasing homeowner participation for more effective projects.

As a result, this year’s project provided free chipping for 8 homes, which helped protect 40 homes, 120 people and \$40M in Property Values. In addition, the City of Morgan Hill completed clearing along the roads and Pacific Gas and Electric Company trimmed and removed eucalyptus trees, which helped protect 32 more homes, 96 people and \$32 M in Property Values.

“We are extremely happy with the progress the South County FireSafe Council has made in Woodland

Acres,” states Dave Bozzo, South County FireSafe Council lead volunteer and retired Chief for Gilroy Fire Department. “We expect more participation with upcoming projects, which will lead to greater progress and success in fire prevention in our area.”



*Homeowners stack piles of limbs, brush and other fuel to be chipped for free by the FireSafe Council.*

#### General Inquiries

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#### Chipping Projects

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#### Lexington Hills Area Managers

LHProjects@SCCFireSafe.org

#### South County Area Managers

SoCoAM@SCCFireSafe.org

#### Community Outreach and Events

Education@SCCFireSafe.org



## Carla Ruigh At-a-glance

- Trained in wildland fire suppression as a Park Ranger for the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County
- Married with 7 kids, all of whom have four legs and fur.
- She and her husband are true "Desert Rats" having made more than a dozen trips to Death Valley in the last 20 years.
- Carla has a Master's Degree in Engineering Science from UC Berkley (go Bears).

Connect with Carla  
[SoCoAM@SCCFireSafe.org](mailto:SoCoAM@SCCFireSafe.org)  
(408) 975-9591



## Welcome Carla Ruigh South County Area Manager

The FireSafe Council is pleased to welcome Carla Ruigh to the team as the South County Area Manager, responsible for our program planning and implementation in South Santa Clara County.

An avid lover of the outdoors, accomplished project manager, and (nearly) Bay Area native, Carla's career spans years of experience in park planning and management, leading staff in stewardship, maintenance, and facility programs.

Carla has spent the majority of her life in the Bay Area, and has lived in Gilroy for over 20 years.

She had a rewarding career in the public sector, working for both the City of San Jose and the City of Gilroy. She was most recently responsible for the City of Gilroy's public works maintenance program

including parks and landscaping, streets, sewers, and the City's potable water supply.

Her previous positions include Park Planning Manager and Park Manager for the City of San Jose.

She started her career as a seasonal maintenance worker at Villa Montalvo Arboretum and also worked as a Park Ranger and Senior Park Ranger.

She has a Bachelors degree in Management from St. Mary's, and a Masters Degree in Engineering Science from CAL. She has also studied at the National Park and Recreation Society, Rocky Mountain Revenue and Management Institute.

Her hobbies include bicycling, tennis, camping, hiking, photography, gardening, and baking artisan breads in her wood fired brick bread oven.

**Loma Prieta, June 3, 2012** – A mountain community tradition, Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue hosted their annual BBQ.

A family fun event, the BBQ attracted supporters from the area and outside the area, offering a dunk tank and games, an auto extrication and helicopter demonstration from Alma Helitack 106.

The FireSafe Council hosted a booth with free information and resources for all residents.

“It was encouraging to have those ‘new to the community’ stop by and ask questions about Defensible Space,” stated June Salsbury, SCFSC Area Manager. “Kevin Tanaka, Loma Prieta Fire

and Rescue Treasurer and Assistant Chief Jaci Viskochil were delighted to accept our donation of \$500,” Salsbury added.

The FireSafe Council is proud to support the efforts of Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue and offers congratulations on another successful fundraiser!

*June presents a \$500 donation to support Loma Prieta VFR*



## Upcoming Events

- 8/2 South County FireSafe Council Monthly Meeting
- 8/14 Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Monthly Board of Directors meeting and General meeting
- 8/16 Smokey Story time at YSI Summer Camp in Vasona Park
- 8/18 REI Scout Night 2012 at Fremont REI store

Connect with us for more Information:

[www.SCCFireSafe.org](http://www.SCCFireSafe.org)  
[Education@SCCFireSafe.org](mailto:Education@SCCFireSafe.org)

Facebook  
 SCCFireSafeCouncil

Twitter  
 @SCCSmokeyBear



*Photos taken in 2008 of the haunting remains of a home and car burned in the 1985 Lexington Hills Fire.*

[www.MTBguru.com](http://www.MTBguru.com)

## The Lexington Hills Fire July 1985

27 years ago, the Lexington Hills Fire tore through the Santa Cruz Mountains burning 13,000 acres and destroying 42 homes. Every firefighter on that blaze remembers the challenges and the losses. And every resident of Los Gatos recalls how their luck changed as the winds blew away from their town.

Thank you to the brave firefighters who risked their lives to save others. Thank you to the men and women who work everyday to prevent, protect from and prepare for future wildfires.

Were you affected by the Lexington Hills Fire in 1985?  
 Share your story and photos with us on our Facebook page.  
[www.Facebook.com/SCCFireSafeCouncil](http://www.Facebook.com/SCCFireSafeCouncil)

## Recent Supporters

Thank you to the following companies and organizations for support of programs and projects.

- Santa Clara County, \$9,753 (In-Kind Services)
- Redwood Estates Services Association, \$4,000
- Aldercroft Heights County Water District, \$2,500
- North Aldercroft Association, \$2,500
- Las Cumbres Conservation Corporation for \$1,200
- Chemeketa Park Mutual Water Company, \$1,000
- Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens, \$80

## Matching Gifts

Your donation to the FireSafe Council may be matched up to 100% or more by your company! Maybe you give because you've benefited from a chipping project, you love Smokey Bear, or simply believe in our good work. Ask your employer if they match charitable contributions to help make more out of your financial support.

**You + Your Company = Double Impact on Wildfire Prevention!**



Smokey greets SJ Giants fans with a warm hello and reminder that "Only YOU can Prevent Wildfires"

EVENT PHOTOS



Lexington Hills Area Manager Kim Gardner presenting info at the LPVFR BBQ

Area Coordinator Brian Turner poses with a volunteer and Smokey Bear at the SJ Water Awareness Night

