



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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September 8 began just like any other Sunday. It was a bright, sunny day with a breeze blowing from the south - a normal early fall day in Fillmore. As we left church, the wind had picked up considerably. Again, very normal. Not long afterward, I glanced out my kitchen window to see an odd colored cloud and soon realized the “cloud” was, in reality, a huge plume of smoke. Looking to the south, it seemed that everything in that direction was on fire.

My first concern was for the people in Meadow, as that appeared to be about where the fire was burning. I could just imagine how they were feeling. Then, realizing once again the direction of the wind, my concern turned to the people at the south end of Fillmore. The space between the flames and them was covered mostly with tall, dry grass.



My memory quickly turned to just a year ago when the Pole Canyon and Bald Mountain Fires burned above our daughter’s home in Woodland Hills. I will never forget as we stood in the driveway being rained down upon with ash, the loudspeakers telling us it was a mandatory evacuation, to get out immediately.

That fire ended on a positive note after “being homeless” for a time and being comforted by the loving concern of countless people. I was hoping at that moment that the fire I was watching would have a positive outcome, as well.

We saw that Sunday afternoon, several fire departments from surrounding communities come to action in record time. The forest service and BLM also attacked the fire with a vengeance. The skies were filled with small planes that dropped retardant on the blaze as well as huge ones that left a long trail of pink to bring the flames to a stop. Helicopters spent hours in the skies in conditions I didn't think they could fly in. At the height of the fire, over 300 firefighters were working day and night. The attack on Sunday and the days that followed brought some amazing results and slowed down the threat considerably.



Our thanks goes out to all those who fought this fire, for their courage and determination to get the job done quickly and with great results.

At times like these, "Thanks" doesn't seem like a big enough word.