

SANTA BARBARA TEA FIRE RESPONSE FUND

For Immediate Release **Media Contact: Mickey Nelson/Juliana Minsky, (805) 687-3322**

Tea Fire Response Fund, United Way of Santa Barbara County, Announces Third Disbursement of Tea Fire Checks

**Assistance still available, outreach campaign launches to educate community
about application criteria**

Santa Barbara, CA, June 15, 2009 – The Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response Fund, a collaborative community partnership begun by United Way of Santa Barbara County in the days following the devastating Tea Fire of November 2008, is disbursing the third of four installments of the funds donated by individuals and organizations. To date, the funds donated total \$434,447.15. The last distribution of \$148,870.40 was announced in April. The current distribution totals \$62,086.16. The majority of these funds will go toward “self-sufficiency” (53%) and housing needs (45%). Funds for self-sufficiency will be given to those members of the community who are self-employed and whose businesses have been affected by the fire, including tools lost and materials destroyed. The remaining funds (2%) will go toward medical needs for those affected.

The Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response Fund is still actively seeking applications for the remaining unreimbursed funds. Categories of assistance could include items such as: school supplies, home business, transportation, furniture, clothing, medical, counseling, living expenses, and housing. Regardless of an applicant’s situation, community members may qualify for assistance from the Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response Fund. **For those individuals and families who have been affected by the Tea Fire, please contact Joel Goforth at United Way to set up a confidential interview to determine your needs, (805) 965-8791 or for more information visit www.unitedwaysb.org.**

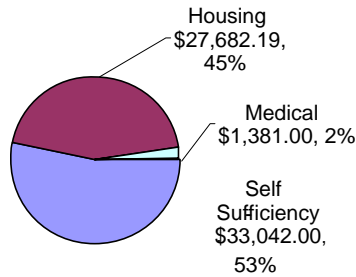
“We are pleased to announce we are continuing to provide support for those affected in a timely manner,” said George Leis, President & CEO of Santa Barbara Bank & Trust and volunteer spokesperson for the Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response Fund. “We are still looking for those whose lives have been displaced during this disaster. If you or someone you know has been affected by the fire, we can still help with unreimbursed expenses.”

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**Tea Fire Fund, 3rd Distribution:
Categories of Assistance**



Tea Fire Fund Statistics as of June 11, 2009

Total Raised	\$434,447.15
1st Disbursement.....	-\$77,203.87
2nd Disbursement	-\$148,870.40
3 rd Disbursement.....	-\$62,086.16
Remaining Balance	\$146,286.72

Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response funds are being distributed based on a three-tiered screening and oversight system. Initially, a professional case manager -- experienced in disaster recovery, working closely with those affected by the Tea Fire to identify needs -- recommends to the Screening Sub-Committee which is made up of the following thirteen volunteer public and private organizations: Brian Clark, Catholic Charities; Joel Goforth, United Way of Santa Barbara County; Justin Haagen, ServiceMaster; Gracie Huerta, City OES/SBFD; Louise Kolbert, Director of Emergency Services, American Red Cross, Santa Barbara County Chapter; Ed Lamb, First Southern Baptist Church; Jay McAmis, County Office of Emergency Services; Tom Reed, Unity Shoppe; Jim Rivera, Santa Barbara Foundation; Geri Ventura, MERRAG/Montecito Fire Department; Brett Williams, Direct Relief International; Michael Williams, Wildland Residents Association; Joe Woodruff, Lions Club.

Upon that group’s additional review, recommendations are made to the Oversight Committee of local community leaders who provide direction and assurance that all monies are used appropriately. The Oversight Committee members are: George Leis, Volunteer Spokesperson for the Santa Barbara Tea Fire Fund, and President & CEO, Santa Barbara Bank & Trust; Marty Blum, Mayor, City of Santa Barbara; Salud Carbajal, Supervisor 1st District, County of Santa Barbara; Les Carroll, General Manager, KZSB AM 1290; G. Paul Didier, President & CEO, United Way of Santa Barbara County; Ron Gallo, President & CEO, Santa Barbara Foundation; Michael Granados, CEO Smith Media, KEYT3 Santa Barbara; Janet Stanley, CEO, American Red Cross, Santa Barbara County Chapter.

The Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response Fund would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations that gave generously of both time and money to create a fund where all the money donated could go directly to services to meet Tea Fire Survivor’s needs: The Orfalea Foundation, Santa Barbara Bank & Trust, The Santa Barbara Foundation, The Mosher Foundation and United Way of Santa Barbara County. The Tea Fire Response Fund also thanks our gracious media partners who were instrumental in getting and keeping the word out about how to help those affected by the fire: KEYT3 TV, Cumulus Media, Rincon Broadcasting, and KZSB AM 1290. Thanks and recognition also goes to the volunteer Oversight Committee and the volunteer Screening Sub-Committee.

United Way of Santa Barbara County leveraged its proven experience in developing community partnerships to meet community needs when it helped launch the Santa Barbara Tea Fire Response Fund. United Way of Santa Barbara County is committed to the long term recovery of the community. As such,



the remaining disbursements will continue to be made throughout the 2009 year as unmet needs of fire survivors continue to be identified. United Way of Santa Barbara County is acting as the organizing fiscal agent, handling the monies for the fund. United Way is not charging for this service and 100% of all donations will go for services to Tea Fire Survivors. Disbursements will be made throughout the year until all funds are disbursed, no later than December 31, 2009.

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