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# Tribune

EAST VALLEY • SCOTTSDALE

June 13, 2007

## Fundraising aids family after fire razes home

By Beth Lucas  
Tribune

Donations and fundraising efforts are helping to get the members from a Gilbert county island family back on their feet, after a fire destroyed their home and all their belongings, including antique furniture.

"You don't really realize what it's like to lose everything, until you actually do," Brad Leckington said. "It's taken me this long to really understand how catastrophic it was for us. This isn't just in the movies, it really happens, and it can be real tough."

Leckington was responding Tuesday to the surprise presentation of a \$1,400 check from Rural/Metro Fire Department's Queen Creek Firefighters Fund.

The fund, and its sister Fountain Hills Firefighters Fund, helps families affected by fire tragedies.

The money was raised by Rural/Metro Fire Department firefighters who tried to put out the flames that destroyed the Leckingtons' mobile home at Higley Road and the Santan Freeway on May 23. Brad Leckington lived there with his wife, Angie, and their 16-year-old daughter.

Also on Tuesday, Direct Buy owners Karen Hansen-Ricketts and Michael Ricketts gave the Leckingtons free membership to the company, which has locations in Scottsdale and Tempe. The gift allows the family to purchase furniture, appliances and other home products at the manufacturer's lower prices.

The family is also getting help from its church, Angie's employer and a local 7-Eleven convenience store, Leckington said. The Leckington Family Assistance Fund through Bank of America was also created by a family friend.

Other funds have been raised by residents concerned about a bill that Rural/Metro could charge the landowner, Linda Fincher, a friend who allowed the Leckingtons to stay on her property after their nearby home and land was seized by the Arizona Department of Transportation during construction of the freeway.

Leckington said his family is now staying at a friend's nearby home, which was empty.


Leckington was asked how he felt about the Gilbert Fire Department showing up at the fire but not fighting it because of the town's policy against responding to fires on county islands. Rural/Metro, which stopped its subscription services to the area Sept. 30, showed up after Gilbert firefighters and fought the fire.

"Yeah, I'm a little bit bitter that they just stood there and watched," Leckington said, adding that his daughter cried for them to help put out the flames. "If they were going to do that, why did they show up?"

To donate to the Leckington Family Assistance Fund, visit any Bank of America or mail to P.O. Box 2385, Gilbert, 85299-2385.

To donate to the Leckington Family, mail c/o Fountain Hills Firefighters Fund, 16426 E. Palisades Blvd., Fountain Hills, 85268.



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