

New Life in the Ashes

The summer of 2012 proved to be the worst wildfire season ever in Colorado. Insurance claims from just the Waldo Canyon fire near Colorado Springs were estimated at more than \$352.6 million – making it the most expensive fire in Colorado history, according to gazette.com. By contrast, the Black Forest fire of 2013, which hit a more rural area, generated \$292.8 million in claims.

On June 26, 2012, wildfire rolled over the mountains and into the city of Colorado Springs. Spurred on by 65 miles-per-hour wind gusts and fueled by one of the driest seasons on record, the Waldo Canyon fire crested a ridge and dove into the Mountain Shadows neighborhood. In just a few hours, nearly 350 homes burned to the ground.

Dan, one of 32,000 people evacuated from their homes, watched events unfold on television in a living room across town. Surrounded by his family and closest friends, he waited to see if his home survived.

It did. Many of his neighbors weren't as fortunate. When Dan and his family returned home, only a handful of houses stood on his street. The devastation was shocking. Dan walked his neighborhood, helping those whose homes had been damaged or destroyed. Charred wood and ash coated the area, giving it an ominous, black feeling.

But just a few weeks after the tragedy, Dan saw the greenest grass imaginable growing up through the ashes. Vibrant, hopeful new life peeked through the black destruction.

While it may have been just a few blades of grass, it reminded Dan that God brings beauty from the ashes. Even in the most difficult times, God can create something beautiful and give us hope.



We see it every day in the work of Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home. We serve seniors who struggle with health issues and the aging process in general. And yet, their faith is often remarkable and inspiring. We find beauty in their wisdom and in their example, and joy in the privilege of caring for them.

The lesson for them, and for us – whatever may come our way – is to focus on our Father, and don't ever give up. There is always hope with God.

Do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward (Hebrews 10:35).

– Beecher Hunter