



From the Mountain Top

2020 - An Unprecedented Year for Camp



Janet and Daisy

I was so excited at the outset of 2020 to be entering into a banner budget year, with a sold-out camping season and an expectation that 4600 happy campers would be enjoying activities at Camp de Benneville Pines. Who could have foreseen the COVID-19 pandemic and the El Dorado fire crises upon us now? Both have had devastating effects on the business of Camp.

In my 25 years at Camp, I have faced many challenges, and this, by far, is the greatest of them all. With no income from camp rentals and fees, Camp is surviving on donations. And now with the El Dorado fire, comes the threat of mudflows into our site. We have so much to lose if we lose our collective home and heart upon the mountain top!

First the COVID-19 Pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and with due caution, the board of directors elected to cancel all camps for the entire 2020 camping season, with an extension into 2021. This decision, although necessary, resulted in a financial crisis for Camp. Fixed costs run \$50,000 per month, so we determined in March to fundraise \$600,000 to preserve Camp until we could safely reopen. The COVID-19 Emergency Campaign has raised over half its goal—such great news! And now, the El Dorado Fire has burned right to Camp. Talk about a double whammy. Talk about the need to double down on all fundraising efforts!



All is quiet at Camp during the pandemic

Then the El Dorado Fire



San Bernardino County Strike Team 6231 Charlie saved our Camp

Our dedicated Camp volunteers and staff worked hard this summer to get our fire clearance done. During the El Dorado fire, the valiant San Bernadino County fire fighters worked tirelessly to keep our buildings from burning.

rushing down the mountain side into the Camp. At highest risk are the buildings on the high side of Camp—Craig's Cabin, Staff House, Cabin 6, Maintenance House and Cabin 3.

As a result of these two efforts, our Camp looks largely unscathed. Unfortunately, the surrounding forest above and adjacent to Camp burned completely. The critical forest vegetation that holds back water on the mountain-side is now burned to ash. Without it, there is nothing to hold back rock and mud from

9,000 Sandbags and 112 Tons of Sand



First of 8 loads of sand

To safeguard buildings, we have jumped into “sandbagging” mode quickly. With volunteer effort, we have filled an estimated 9000 sandbags to help direct water away from buildings. Contractors will be hired to set straw wattles, silt curtains, and straw bales on the burned mountainside in an effort to protect the water tanks and wellhead from disappearing un-

der mud flows. Winter comes earlier up on the mountain, so we need to get this work done very quickly. With the upcoming rains and winter snows, the Highway 38 corridor will be impacted with rocks and mudslides until some plants grow on the slopes. We must put camper and staff safety first as we make decisions about Camp's reopening date.



Volunteers of all ages help to fill sandbags

2020/2021 Emergency Fund Campaign

We continue our fundraising efforts by moving forward with the 2020/2021 Emergency Fund Campaign, spearheaded by board member Patricia Gordon. This fund will now encompass both the costs of staying in business while camps are furloughed, and the costs of preserving the site with mud flow mitigation efforts. Every dollar donated to date to the COVID-19 Emergency Campaign will be automatically rolled into this new fund with our gratitude for your support. And every donation received between September 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, will be **matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000**. Please donate during this time period to maximize the impact of your gift.

Our 2020/2021 Emergency Fund Campaign will continue until we have met our original goal of \$600,000 plus the additional \$250,000 in remediation funds needed to protect our structures. I know this goal may feel herculean, but we've rolled up our sleeves before, and together, we can do it again. We will not be deterred from our good work: *to bring UUs and kindred spirits together to learn, share, foster growth, ignite creativity, honor nature and build capacity to influence positive change in the world.*

The pandemic, combined with the aftermath of the El Dorado Fire, has put a damper on the possibility of holding any onsite programming in the near future. Camp will remain closed to any type of programming or retreat activity at least through the end of March 2021, and quite possibly beyond. But with your consistent support through donated dollars and volunteer work, I know we can get through this crisis together.

Along with the board of directors, I pledge my hard work to see Camp through this great economic and physical disaster, and I also pledge my personal dollars. Please join with me

in becoming a member of the 12-month Pledge Program, and help me to ensure that Camp de Benneville Pines continues to change lives and uplift spirits for the next 60 years.

With hope in my heart that we shall see each other at Camp once again,



Janet James
Executive Director
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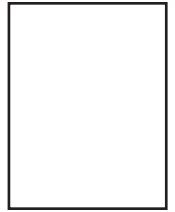
12-month Pledge Program

Please consider joining our 12-month Pledge Program and making an auto payment each month that will assist with preserving Camp through this extreme crisis. It is vital that we have recurring monthly income to manage Camp's expenses during the closure. If you can manage a donation this month, perhaps you can manage a donation each month for one year? If so, your gift will be both impactful and meaningful, and will provide Camp with a base level of ongoing support.

Here's how it works:

- ◆ Donate \$25 one time = \$25 of support. When matched = \$50 of support.
- ◆ **Donate \$25 each month for 12 months = \$300 of support. When matched = \$600 of support.**
- ◆ Donate \$50 one time = \$50 of support. When matched = \$100 of support.
- ◆ **Donate \$50 each month for 12 months = \$600 of support. When matched = \$1,200 of support.**
- ◆ Donate \$100 one time = \$100 of support. When matched = \$200 of support.
- ◆ **Donate \$100 each month for 12 months = \$1,200 of support. When matched = \$2,400 of support.**

Camp de Benneville Pines
41750 Jenks Lake Road W
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305-9789



\$100,000 Match Runs Thru December 31, 2020

Thanks to a very generous donor who loves Camp, every donation or pledge received by December 31, 2020 will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000.

- ◆ Donate early to be sure your support of camp is **DOUBLED!**
- ◆ You can donate securely online at www.uucamp.org/contribute/
- ◆ Or mail your donation to:
Camp de Benneville Pines
Attn: Janet James
41750 Jenks Lake Road West
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305-9789
- ◆ Be sure to enclose your check or include your complete credit card information

Things You Can Do to Support Camp

- ◆ Donate to the 2020/2021 Emergency Fund
- ◆ Volunteer to fill sandbags
- ◆ Lead a Camp Connect virtual camp
- ◆ Lead a mini-fundraiser
 - Birthday/Anniversary Celebrations
 - Social Media Events
 - Skit/Movie Nights/Concerts
- ◆ Spread the Word – ask everyone you know to help support Camp
- ◆ Ask if your Employer has Corporate Match Program
- ◆ Join the fun on Giving Tuesday (12/1/20)
- ◆ Do some holiday shopping at our new online Camp Store. Visit www.uucamp.org