

# Camp de Benneville Pines

Celebrating 55 years serving UU campers of all ages

# Connection

Spring/Summer/Fall 2016

Your Unitarian Universalist Mountain Retreat

## Looking Back On A Decade of Service

by Tom Thorward, Board Member and Former Board President

Almost a decade ago, I was offered the opportunity to serve on the Camp de Benneville Pines Board of Directors. The offer was made by Dick Cole, a member of our UU Church in Fullerton and then President of the de Benneville Board. Dick had begun his campaign to get me interested in the camp a year or two earlier when my wife, Anne, and I were visiting her sister in Fullerton.

Since Anne and I had been members of a UU Church in Silver Spring, MD for over twenty years, we decided to attend the Fullerton UU church during our visit to Southern California. When I met Dick, who was very outgoing and affable, we began talking about our backgrounds. It turned out that Dick, like me, was a native upstate New Yorker. I told Dick that my wife's family had been trying to convince me to spend my "golden years" in California, but I couldn't see myself happy in the traffic congestion and endless strip malls that comprised LA and its surroundings. I longed for the serenity and beauty of the Adirondacks,



Tom Thorward

where I grew up. Dick looked at me and said: "Have you ever been to de Benneville Pines?" I hadn't, but Anne and I were planning to attend a business conference in San Diego. So Dick suggested we swing by Camp de Benneville Pines, since it was "on the way back from San Diego". While I didn't know too much about California geography, I was pretty sure the San Bernardino Mountains were not really on the path from San Diego to Fullerton. Nevertheless, Anne and I decided to make the detour to see the only landed UU camp on the west coast.

On the way, we passed through some of the most beautiful mountain scenery I could imagine, more majestic and breathtaking than our humble east coast hills. Snow still covered the higher peaks. When we arrived, a busy youth camp was in progress. Though it was early summer, the air was cool, fresh, and fragrant with the smell of pine boughs. The sound of exuberant and happy children's laughter filled the camp. Even though she had her hands full with campers, the Camp Director, Janet James, took time out to greet us. By then it was late in the day, so Janet offered us overnight lodging. The cabins were all filled with campers, but the "artist in residence", Laura Janes, found room in her quarters for us. That night's stay gave us more time to experience the camp, and by the time we left the next morning, I was enchanted.



View of peaks from Jenks Lake overlook

Not only had I become an enthusiastic supporter of Camp de Benneville, but my resistance to Southern California had been seriously eroded. Within a year, Anne and I were Californians.

Given this history, when Dick Cole asked me to join the Camp Board of Directors a few months after I arrived in California for good, it may not be surprising that I readily accepted the invitation. And, now that my nine years on the board are coming to an end, I reflect on my association with this unique and wonderful place and organization with a sense of joy and pride. It has been one of the most meaningful and memorable leadership positions of my long career.

To be sure, there were many challenges along the way. When I came onto the board, the camp was facing a major crisis in that its old and obsolete infrastructure was breaking down and, unless repaired, would soon force camp closure. Raising the over \$500,000 needed to make the repairs seemed almost insurmountable. But, Reverend Rick Hoyt-McDaniels, minister of the UU First Church of LA, stepped forward to help organize the campaign, and many camp supporters contributed to the effort.

Early in the campaign I had the idea that we needed to ramp up our fundraising effort with a promotional film on our website. I built an elaborate "leaky pipe" prop and solicited the two leading actors: our Camp Director, Janet James, and our late camp dog, Dakota. Conveniently, Susan Emshwiller, a 2010 board member, is also a talented film-maker. With Susan's help, we produced the short film: "The Adventures of Janet and Dakota". The film was an instant success and acquainted many campers with the need to replace our underground utilities. It also produced a Dakota fan club which I am sure to this day mourns the loss of a great actor, and a great camp dog. When two long-time camp enthusiasts each offered



Janet, Dakota, and the Leaky Pipe

\$100,000 challenge grants to encourage the generosity of others, what was once improbable became not only possible, but likely. As we were approaching our half million dollar goal, I wanted to be sure we would have enough money to finish the Water Works project, in spite of possible unforeseen obstacles.

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
San Bernardino, CA  
Permit No. 2051

Camp de Benneville Pines

41750 Jenks Lake Road West  
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305

Address Service Requested



# Camp de Benneville Pines

## Calendar of Events 2016

### March

- 4 - 6 Neighborhood UU Church Winter Retreat
- 11 - 13 Girl Scouts of Marina Service Unit (private)
- 18 - 20 Rainbow Family Camp  
For info: [familyservices@lagaycenter.org](mailto:familyservices@lagaycenter.org) (323) 993-7430  
See ad on page 4 for additional information
- 25 - 27 *Camp available for lease (Easter weekend or week)*
- 29 - 31 LREDA Ren Module (Craig's Cabin and Cabin 6)

### April

- 1 - 3 Harbor Camps: A Family Camp
- 8 - 10 San Dieguito UU Church Retreat
- 15 - 17 UU Men's Fellowship Spring Renewal  
For info: [mdorfi@cox.net](mailto:mdorfi@cox.net) (619) 466-5952  
See ad on page 4 for additional information
- 18 - 20 UUCST In-Care (Craig's Cabin and Cabin 6)
- 22 - 24 Rainbow Family Camp 2  
(Craig's Cabin and Cabin 6 NOT AVAILABLE)  
*Please refer to March Rainbow Family Camp for registration*
- 22 - 24 Conejo Valley UU Church Women's Retreat  
(Craig's Cabin and Cabin 6)
- 29 - May 1 Camp Recovery  
See ad on page 4 for more information.

### May

- 5 Pathways Academy (Private)
- 6 - 8 Spring Work Weekend  
For info: [director@uucamp.org](mailto:director@uucamp.org) (909) 794-2928  
See ad on page 22 for additional information
- 13 - 15 UU Women's Spring Retreat  
See ad on page 18 for additional information
- 19 - 22 Scott and Jessica's Wedding
- 27 - 30 Camp Bravo School Camp

### June

- 3 - 5 UU San Diego First Church/Chalice Retreat
- 10 - 12 Pacific Unitarian Church Retreat
- 14 - 18 KIDS NET LA
- 19 - 25 Camp Bravo Theater Arts Camp Week I
- 26 - July 2 Camp Bravo Theater Arts Camp Week II

### July

- 3 - 9 Camp Bravo Theater Arts Camp Week III
- 10 - 16 PSWD Elementary Summer Youth Camp  
See ad on page 20 for more information
- 10 - 16 PSWD Counselor in Training Program  
See ad on page 20 for more information
- 17 - 23 PSWD Junior High Summer Youth Camp  
See ad on page 20 for additional information
- 24 - 30 PSWD Senior High Summer Youth Camp  
See ad on page 20 for additional information
- 31 - Aug 6 PSWD Family Summer Camp  
See page 14 for additional information

### August

- 7 - 11 Camp Bravo Theater Arts Camp Week IV
- 13 - 17 Summer Camp for Adults  
See page 13 for additional information
- 13 - 17 UU Choir Camp: Singing In the Pines  
See page 13 for additional information
- 19 - 24 Art Groove: Summer Art Camp Program  
See page 12 for additional information
- 26 - 28 Neighborhood UU Summer Church Retreat

### September

- 2 - 5 PSWD Young Adults Retreat  
For info: [pswdcmd@gmail.com](mailto:pswdcmd@gmail.com)  
See ad on page 21 for additional information
- 9 - 11 Yoga Camp  
See page 21 for additional information
- 12 - 15 Camp Bravo El Rancho School Camp (private)
- 16 - 18 Santa Monica UU Church Retreat  
For info: (310) 829-5436 [office@uusm.org](mailto:office@uusm.org)
- 23 - 25 ACA of Orange County Fall Mountain Retreat  
For info: [fmrchair@gmail.com](mailto:fmrchair@gmail.com)  
See ad on page 21 for additional information
- 26 - 30 Camp Bravo La Jolla Day School (Private)
- 30 - Oct 2 UU Conejo Valley/Monte Vista Church Retreat  
For info: [shockwavephysics@gmail.com](mailto:shockwavephysics@gmail.com)

### October

- 7 - 9 UU Orange Coast/Tapestry/Laguna Church Retreat  
For info: (949) 646-4652 [uu@ocuuc.org](mailto:uu@ocuuc.org)
- 10 - 13 Homeschool Autumn Retreat (camp sponsored)  
See ad on page 4 for additional information
- 14 - 16 UU LA Valley Cluster Family Retreat  
For info: [clustercamp@ymail.com](mailto:clustercamp@ymail.com)
- 21 - 23 Pine Con Family Gaming Camp
- 27 - 30 Daughters of Diana Gathering  
For info: [www.daughtersofdianagathering.org](http://www.daughtersofdianagathering.org)

### November

- 4 - 6 Folk Music Camp: Music in the Mountains  
See ad on page 22 for additional information
- 11 - 13 Fullerton UU Church Retreat
- 18 - 20 PSWD Junior High Fall Camp  
For info: [registrar@uucamp.org](mailto:registrar@uucamp.org)
- 24 - 27 Thanksgiving Family Celebrations Camp  
See ad on page 22 for additional information

### December

- 1 - 25 *Camp Available For Lease*  
*Special events may be booked*  
For info: [director@uucamp.org](mailto:director@uucamp.org) (909) 794-2928
- 27 - Jan 1 PSWD Senior High Winter Youth Camp  
For info: [registrar@uucamp.org](mailto:registrar@uucamp.org)

### 2016

*Camp Available For Lease mid-week during school year  
Some weekends in December may be available*

continued from page 1

So I wrote a grant proposal to the Congregation at Shelter Rock, who offer a “Large Grant” program to organizations such as Camp de Benneville. Their grant of an additional \$100,000, along with the two challenge grants mentioned earlier, meant that over half the total need was covered, we just had to match it. In the end, over \$621,000 was raised. The utilities were replaced and covered with a paved road throughout the camp which also improved safety and accessibility. As a bonus, we raised enough to increase our water storage, which will help protect the camp from shortages in any dry years to come. For all of this, and the generosity of many hundreds of supporters who gave to “Water Works”.



Paving the road

Another great challenge to the camp’s existence, of entirely a different nature, occurred after I stepped down as president, but during my continued board tenure. That was, of course, the so-named “Lake Fire”. The fire began just a few feet from our water tank. Early efforts to contain the blaze before it spread obliterated any forensic evidence at the origin point, so the exact cause is not known. What is known, is that the fire was caused through human carelessness or malice, but not by anyone from our camp.

I know UUs are supposed to be “rationalists”, but the fact that the fire began so close to our beloved camp, but did not destroy a single tree or building on our campus leads one to believe in “guardian angels”. That is not to say that the fire did our camp no harm. We had to relocate three sessions of Camp Bravo during the fire; and the PSWD Elementary Camp, and other camp sessions were also cancelled due to uncertainty caused by the fire. All of our buildings suffered considerable smoke damage and needed remediation. Up until the first snowfall, we had contractors hard at work to stabilize the hillsides above camp, so that future mud flows will be diminished or diverted. Not all of these losses or additional expenses were covered by insurance, so a “Fire Relief Fund” was initiated by our board and Stewardship Committee. As of this writing, over \$80,000 has been raised for this cause and spent on recovery efforts. Again, we are grateful for the generosity of so many who contributed, and also that our camp remains a stunningly beautiful natural site. We lost over 22,000 acres of wilderness in the Lake Fire, and on the peaks above the camp one can see the outlines of charred trees.



Dousing the Fire

Other notable events during my time on the board include, the “Great Snowfall of 2010”, the 50th Anniversary celebration, the interior remodeling of the Homet Lodge (including the replacement of doors and windows), the construction of the “Ed Law Pavillion”, and much more.



Erosion control efforts after the fire took miles of straw waddles



The Great Snowfall of 2010



Ed Law Pavillion under construction fall 2015

It has been an honor to serve on the board during this time, and to witness how the enthusiasm and generosity of so many volunteers and donors have led to the improvements, successes, and positive experiences enjoyed by so many. There is still much to do, and many challenges lie ahead. We need to greatly improve the staff housing at de Benneville, especially the director’s cabin and permanent staff quarters. Our meeting space needs to be expanded. Some of our cabins are in need of remodeling and renovation. All of this will require funding, of course, and a board dedicated to finding the supporters and donors to make it all possible.

As I contemplate my retirement from the board this coming April, I am reminded of the many friendships I made, of the many days I spent at camp seeking shelter from the bustle of the lowlands, and of how often I found serenity and peace among the pines. I am grateful to have played a part, albeit a small one, in implementing the many improvements the camp has seen in the past decade or so. And I look forward to continue being involved in preserving and nurturing this special place, if only from the sidelines. When my term ends at DA this spring, two other long-term board members, Ross and Karen Quinn will retire with me. And as I write this article we currently have a vacancy on the board.

I hope, if you have an interest in the governance of camp, the necessary experience, as well as time and talent to spare, you will make your interest in board membership known to the current president, Glenn Noreen ([president@uucamp.org](mailto:president@uucamp.org)) or to Janet James ([director@uucamp.org](mailto:director@uucamp.org)). Should you be fortunate enough to serve, you will not find a more rewarding and worthwhile organization with which to work. Take it from one who knows.



## Rainbow Family Camp: Two Weekends for LGBT Families and Their Allies

**March 18 - 20 & April 22 - 24, 2016**

Join us for an exciting fun-filled weekend where families with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender parents/guardians come together to build a better community with other LGBTQ families.

Have an opportunity to enjoy dozens of activities in a beautiful outdoor environment while connecting with family members and new friends! The weekend offers an atmosphere of mutual respect, kindness, and relaxation. Get to know other families just like yours! Price includes all meals, lodging, and activities!

Activities offered include: crafts, hiking, movies, a talent show, costume dance, parent socials, outdoor sports activities, indoor games, community meals, and lots of family fun!

Make sure to pack warm clothes and mittens for you and your family--there may be a chance for snow play!

Rainbow Family Camp is sponsored by the LA Gay & Lesbian Center's Family Services Program and Camp de Benneville Pines.

**Adults \$130**

**Teens (13-19) \$105**

**Kids (3-12) \$85**

**Children 2 and under free!**

**Upgraded accommodations:**

**Cancellation fee: \$50/family**

Register online at [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) click on "Camps & Retreats" or fill out the form on page 23.

For more information, please call (323) 993-7430 or email [familyservices@lagaycenter.org](mailto:familyservices@lagaycenter.org).

## UU Men's Fellowship Spring Renewal "What Matters?"

**Friday, April 15 - Sunday, April 17, 2016**

In today's troubled world, what matters most to you? And what are you going to do about it?

You are invited to join with other men of the Pacific Southwest District to explore our deepest being to make some sense and direction of how we might best navigate these treacherous times. We will take time to enjoy the fresh, wonderful surroundings of our beautiful Camp de Benneville Pines and fellowship with friends new and old. As in the past 25 years, we will sing and dance, hike and drum, sweat and share. We will engage in workshops, laugh a little, be silent together, and consume delightful meals.

But more than anything, we will commune with one another in deep, loving circles. Do consider coming and bringing a friend; these are truly powerful experiences.

For further information please check out the UUMF website, or contact Mike Dorfi (619) 466-5952.

Sponsored by the men of 1st UU Church of San Diego.



**What is Camp  
Recovery**



## 28th Annual Camp Recovery 2016

**A 12-Step Guide to Becoming Your Own Super Hero**

**Friday, April 29 - Sunday, May 1, 2016**

**OUR MISSION:** Camp Recovery 28 is here to bring a new understanding of the personal power that recovery brings to our lives. As we work the steps we learn that we are able to carry out tasks that baffled us in our previous guises, and we begin to step out of imprisoning beliefs. Our higher power gave us the 12 steps and offers a path to guide us in learning the superpowers of, hope, faith, honesty, vigilance, willingness, love and many more.

All persons from ACA, CoDA and similar 12-step programs are invited to attend.

\$160 through March 29, 2016

\$170 thereafter, or at camp

Deduct \$5 each if 3 registration forms are in 1 envelope

\$125 extra per room in Craig's Cabin (separate check)

For more information or to register: [www.camprecovery.org](http://www.camprecovery.org)  
[info@camprecovery.org](mailto:info@camprecovery.org) or call (818) 297-4506

For registration questions: [registration@camprecovery.org](mailto:registration@camprecovery.org) or  
call 818-321-1260

Ride share info: [rideshare@camprecovery.org](mailto:rideshare@camprecovery.org)

## Autumn Rendezvous for Homeschool Families

**Monday, October 10 - Thursday, October 13, 2016**

**Deans: Rhonda Blue and Christy Bruner**

Come join other like-minded families for an exciting time exploring nature, relaxing and having fun! Bask in a boat at the lake, frolic in the woods, carve a pumpkin, or hike to the peak! Each fall, homeschooling families with kids (and grandparents) of all ages come together to share experiences and enjoy a hassle-free outing. Each family is encouraged to lead an activity based on their interest: hiking and scavenger hunting, games and sports, educational and environmental programs, arts and crafts. Enjoy "family time" while the camp staff handles kitchen duty! Autumn is a great time to come to camp. Enjoy the smell and tastes of pumpkin pie, hot apple cider, and fresh baked bread.

Each family is assigned their own room with bunk beds. Some double beds are available.

Visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on "Camps and Retreats" to view all of the details and pricing.  
This camp is limited to 80 participants. Camp fees include lodging, meals and most camp activities.

# Looking Back and Stepping Forward: a spotlight on Birdie Reed

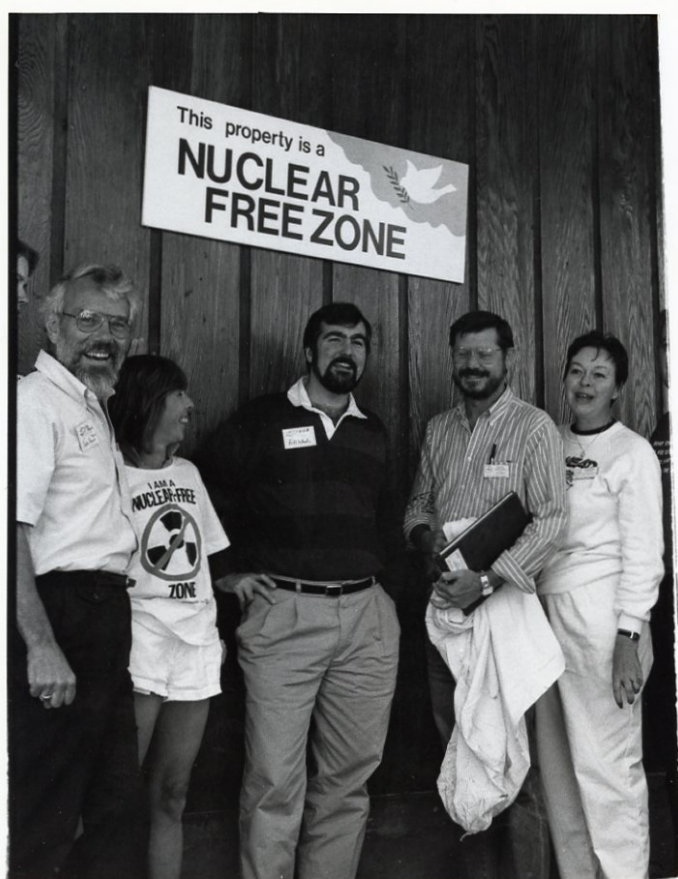
by Clarissa Delatorre, camp staff

It's not often we come across people in this world who do what they say and say what they mean... in other words, they walk their walk, and talk their talk. I am fortunate enough to meet with a woman today who has remained focused on Camp de Benneville Pines for over half a century, along with many other social justice issues and UU projects. On the agenda, pivotal moments in camp history: where we are now, and the future of camping ministries in the PSWD.

It is a bright and cool morning, and I am on my way to Huntington Beach to interview a woman who has been an integral part of Camp de Benneville Pines for over 50 years. I've never met her, but her name has significant resonance for many at camp. Her name is Roberta Reed, known to most as simply "Birdie"—a name befitting such an active woman with many interests. Just the day before our meeting she celebrated her 80th birthday! Aside from recovering from knee surgery, she is steadily ambitious and engaging. Her home is decorated as you would expect a well-travelled, educated woman's home to be. On her table is sprawled current New York Times newspapers, the walls adorned with ceramic tiles from her journeys, and Bach playing lightly in the background.

Birdie's first experience at de Benneville was during the summer of 1966, a time when the Watt's Riots fueled movement and sparked discussions regarding economic and social relations between blacks and whites. The Unitarian Society of Whittier was politically active in the 1960's when she, along with her husband, Charlie, and their daughter, Carolyn, arrived with Throop Church members to discuss the issues plaguing human rights and socio-economic discrimination occurring in Los Angeles and in the country. "I had probably been a Unitarian Universalist all my life, but didn't know it."

At the time when "over-protective" parenting was a widely practiced style, Camp de Benneville Pines attracted the more liberal families; offering children a place where they could be respected and have the freedom to explore, engage, and connect with 'limited hovering'. Birdie recounts, "Back then, de Benneville was seen as Sin City by the more conservative in our society, who were scandalized by the suits-optional policy at the pool." She describes the youth at the time, "a little unruly", but eventually she and the Board helped formulate some camp rules that were set in place to protect both the camp and its campers. She looks to the side and shakes her head dreamily, as if to revel fondly in her memories. When the Board enforced a strict no-alcohol policy, Birdie tells me the story of Milli Ferman, the camp nurse who dispensed martinis in the infirmary to any adult who stopped by for "medical aid".



Camp supporters with Director Joan Lewis-Archibald circa 1990

This was the infancy of de Benneville Pines, and the camp was considered a rather open and free-spirited place at the time. It was the 60's, a time when communing with nature and "making love, not war" were the main focuses for many, and running the "business of camp" was definitely a challenge for the board. And while "Flower Power, PEACE, and Nuclear-Free Zones" were the chants of the day, other factors, including two orders to close the camp—one from the county and one from the USFS regarding water and sewage treatment—weighed heavily upon the minds of camp board members. Reed describes this time in the camp's history as "harrowing years". Camp de Benneville Pines was in a financial slump, and she and Charlie felt there was little support coming from PSWIRL, a group that was instrumental in developing and funding the camp. She recalls it was necessary to convince PSWIRL members that they, too, needed to play an active role in correcting the camp's challenges. "They created the camp, and therefore should want to become involved with its operations and financial stability, versus merely sitting back and leaving the Board to handle everything." The committees at the time did not have well-spelled out duties, and therefore made honest choices, but ones that were not necessarily good for the overall camp. She describes some committees as having "similar goals, but very different styles" in executing those goals. It was a chaotic time during the camp's early development.

During their years as Board President and Treasurers, both Birdie and Charlie worked to ensure that the camp stayed afloat while balancing the "myriad struggles" that are ever-present in running a year-round camp. Their daughter, Carolyn, reveals how Charlie helped keep de Benneville out of bankruptcy. "He avoided the camp's implosion by keeping accurate and consistent records of every personal loan the camp took out. He held the Board accountable from regime to regime by tracking the notes and the interest due on the notes." She recalls that "when the Board took loans, my dad would chase down and retire the notes so that the camp could climb out of debt, with nothing hanging over them. He worked hard to get the original loans paid off." In terms of financial solubility, "my dad kept it on the up

and up. He kept the books straight, manually typing everything from correspondence, to meeting minutes, to memos, so that the camp could never be taken away from the PSWD in a legal action."

Carolyn saw Birdie and Charlie as the balancing force behind de Benneville during its most difficult times. "I saw my parents as a unit, sharing a philosophical approach to things. He (Charlie) was a literalist and a realist, while my mother was more empathic and optimistic." Together, they helped to raise funds for capital campaigns that would keep de Benneville up to code with the USFS, county codes, and water safety regulations. "They were concerned community members with eyes on the future, and they were consistent and generous donors to all annual and capital campaigns." Carolyn describes de Benneville as their second home, saying, "We never had a vacation home, because de Benneville was that place for us. We treated it like our home, and my parents got to do what they loved best while at camp—read! As an only child from parents who were only children, I had two siblings: my parents' business and the camp." Her peers appreciated how Birdie and Charlie would stop and listen, "and acknowledge the young people at face-value. They wouldn't let the little things go. They were the ears for the board, and respected the staff, and campers, as equally as the board members."

In the early 1990's, a desperate search was underway for a camp director that could handle the challenges of a camp on the brink of bankruptcy, and build a viable business that could pay for itself. Long gone were the days of people willing to extend a personal loan to float the camp "just one more month". The board members could no longer keep up with the pace and demands of a camp whose equipment and buildings were wearing out before the business ever got on solid footing, and the PSWD board had strong reservations about the district's continued support of the youth camps. It wasn't until 1995 when Birdie, who was Board President at the time, was referred by a friend, to reach out to an "enthusiastic young business woman" named Janet James, that she had any hope of finding a way out of the black hole. Birdie smiles and tells me that as her last act as president, she appointed James as Director of Camp de Benneville Pines. She describes Janet as having everything a director should have—"organizational camp training, experience with operations, and a vision to carry the camp forward." A successful realtor in her hometown of Redlands, James was not looking for a career in camp management, but a call was made to her, and a door was opened. James agreed to meet with the camp board to see if she might be of some "temporary" help. "She came to the board interview at Throop Church and boldly presented her vision for the camp". Apparently, James had attended an event at the camp several years earlier and was very opinionated about what needed to be done to save the declining business.

# Roosevelt and Muir: “The Camping Trip that Changed America”

by Chris Epting, award winning travel journalist and de Benneville facilitator

*Inspired by his visit to Yosemite and his camping trip with John Muir, President Teddy Roosevelt worked doggedly to persuade Congress to pass laws that would eventually help spur the formation of the National Park Service.*

In the spring of 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt embarked on what would become one of the most important presidential journeys in history. While he was certainly looking to explain his legislative agenda to all of the Western states he had never visited before (while also shoring up votes for the 1904 election), the trip also came to represent an epiphany for the environment-conscious Roosevelt.



Over the course of the ambitious nine-week trip, Roosevelt would visit almost 150 towns and deliver 200 speeches. His train, *The Pacific Coast Special*, included a baggage car, a dining car, a car for reporters and photographers, a sleeping car for the president and his staff, and even a complete barbershop. He visited Yellowstone National Park, among many other “outdoor wonderments” throughout the West. But, it was when he reached California that the trip took on its most profound significance. Several months earlier, President Roosevelt had penned the following letter to the well-known naturalist John Muir:

*“My dear Mr. Muir:*

*Through the courtesy of Pres. Wheeler I have already been in communication with you, but I wish to write you personally to express the hope that you will be able to take me through the Yosemite. I do not want anyone with me but you, and I want to drop politics absolutely for four days and just be out in the open with you. John Burroughs is probably going through the Yellowstone Park with me, and I want to go with you through the Yosemite.*

*Sincerely yours, Theodore Roosevelt.”*

Muir responded:

*“Dear Mr. Roosevelt:*

*I sincerely thank you for the honor you do me in hoping I may be able to take you through the Yosemite. An engagement to go abroad with Prof. Sargent at first stood in the way; but a few small changes have brought our trip into harmony with yours. Of course I shall go with you gladly.*

*Faithfully yours, John Muir.”*

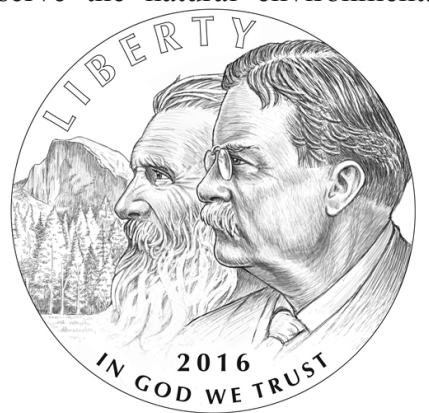


Little did either man know what the ramifications of this date with destiny would be. The bulk of Roosevelt’s tour was spent in the grand state of California. He arrived in Barstow on May 7 and, over the course of the next several days, received a hero’s welcome all over the Southland. In Victorville, Redlands, San Bernardino, Riverside, Pomona, Pasadena, Los Angeles and then up toward Oxnard, and Santa Barbara, thousands poured out to hear Roosevelt rave about California, and they basked in his warm words. Then it was on up through San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Watsonville, and Santa Cruz.

Upon visiting a coastal redwood grove just outside Santa Cruz, Roosevelt became angry when he saw advertising posters pinned upon the soft, cinnamon-colored behemoths. “Those cards pinned up on that tree give an air of the ridiculous to this majestic grove,” he bellowed. “Do keep these trees, keep all the wonderful scenery of this wonderful state unmarred by vandalism or the folly of man.” While he wandered off alone into the grove to cool off, the cards were quickly removed by locals, never to be replaced again. Already, he was making a positive difference. And then, soon after, it would be time for what came to be called by some “The camping trip that changed America”.

May 14 through the 16th, Roosevelt and Muir were inseparable, alone but for two support guides. The bond had begun years earlier after Roosevelt read Muir’s book on the Sierra Nevada, which culminated in a plea for the government to help save the vanishing forests. Then together, the two men set off alone into the backcountry, hiking mountains, wandering among the giant sequoia trees, and sleeping out under the stars. Along the trails, in the snow and against the red-orange glow of their campfires, Muir made his compelling case to the rugged president as to why it was so important to protect and preserve the natural environment.

Soon after his return to Washington, Roosevelt worked to pass laws that created national parks and forests as well as wildlife sanctuaries. While president, he would go on to sign legislation to create five national parks (including Yosemite), 18 national monuments, 150 national forests, and 55 national bird sanctuaries and wildlife refuges –in large part due to the California camping trip which obviously changed Roosevelt’s life and dramatically altered the future of this country’s great outdoors.



As he described shortly after visiting Yosemite, “It was like lying in a great solemn cathedral, far vaster and more beautiful than any built by the hand of man.” And of course, Roosevelt’s passion carried across the entire National Parks system. “There can be nothing in the world more beautiful than the Yosemite, the groves of the giant sequoias and redwoods, the Canyon of the Colorado, the Canyon of the Yellowstone, the Three Tetons; and our people should see to it that they are preserved for their children and their children’s children forever, with their majestic beauty all unmarred.”



Retracing Roosevelt’s footsteps through California today, one can still find bits and pieces from this monumental trek. There are trees he planted and plaques that were placed in his honor. There are signs marking his presence and photographs of him delivering his powerful words all over the state. But, the most lasting impact of this great environmentalist’s journey are the glorious open spaces that we find protected today. The “solemn cathedrals” Roosevelt loved so much. Or as Muir described it, “A place of rest, a refuge from the roar and dust and weary, nervous, wasting work of the lowlands, in which one gains the advantages of both solitude and society.”

**Chris Epting is an award-winning travel journalist and the author of 25 books, including “Teddy Roosevelt in California: The Whistle Stop Tour That Changed America” (featured on page 7).**

**Epting will be a presenter at camp in August at the Summer Break for Adults: Into the Woods with John Muir, Saturday, August 13 – Wednesday, August 17, 2016. More information available on page 13.**

# Teddy Roosevelt in California: The Whistle Stop Tour That Changed America

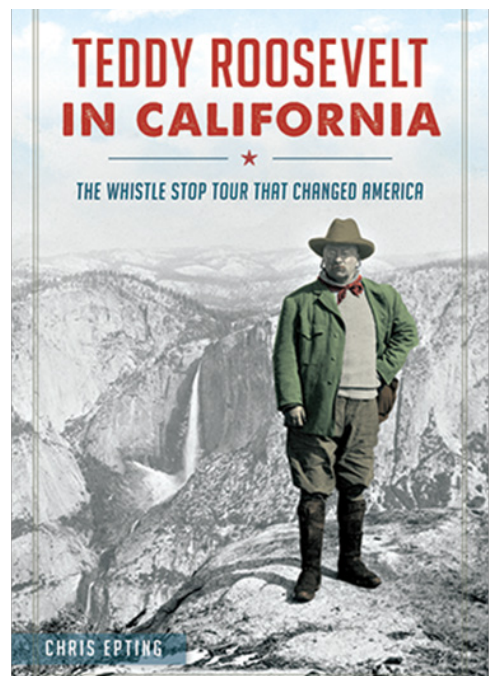
continued from page 6

During his whirlwind 1903 tour of the western states, President Theodore Roosevelt paid his first visit to California. In between the appearances and pageantry, he embarked on three days of epic adventure in the wilderness of Yosemite with the famous and influential naturalist John Muir. A lover of the rugged outdoors, Roosevelt was humbled and impressed by the camping trip, which proved to be one of the most important sojourns in presidential history. Through firsthand accounts, speeches and rare photographs, author Chris Epting tells the story of a great and profound journey that had a lasting effect on conservation history and the National Park System.



About the author: Known across Orange County for his newspaper column in the Huntington Beach Independent, Chris Epting is an award-winning and widely published author of pop culture and history books, including such titles as *Led Zeppelin Crashed Here: The Locations of America's Rock and Roll Landmarks*, *Roadside Baseball*, *James Dean Died Here* and many more. Originally from New York, Chris now lives in Huntington Beach, California, with his wife and their two children.

Check out this book! <https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/Products/9781626198012>



## From the Theme Speaker for the Annual Women's Retreat "The Seasons of My Life"

by Rev. Sian Wiltshire, Orange Coast UU Church

I look forward to being the keynote speaker at the annual UU Women's Retreat in May, and sharing my story with others. Prior to my ministry, I worked in the world of business. I was one of those high-powered business women who ran multimillion dollar offices and flew around the world. My life looked pretty good: I owned a house near Seattle, I made a great salary, I was respected enough in the company that I could work from home, take the work that I liked to do, and was called upon by others for my advice and acumen. Sounds good, right? But I wasn't happy. I was doing the job, and doing it well, so I felt like I "should" be happy with all that I had accomplished. I didn't even know why I was unhappy. One day, feeling a kind of despair, I remarked to a friend, "I feel as if I'm going upstream, wading against a great river." He thought for a moment and asked, "What would happen if you stopped fighting and just went with the river?"

It was like a revelation! I had assumed I would drown, but in asking myself that question, the image that came into my mind was one of peace and relaxation as I rode the gently undulating waves on my back. I knew then that I had to go with the flow of the river. And so I floated downstream with the current.

Looking back, before I changed my course, I know I was fighting that busy and demanding time in my life. Much of my life with that company had been spent in a kind of "Summer": I worked hard and I played hard. It was go-go-go-go-go! I had been enjoying the harvest time, too, having worked to a point where people came to ask me for advice and used my influence to help others--my "Autumn". But, my "Winter" was calling me. My life was calling me to go into a time of rest, relaxation, and introspection. It took me another two years after that initial conversation with my friend, but I finally gave in to my "Winter". I took an entire year off, and out of that year came a new "Spring": My call to ministry.

I believe that the toughest times in our lives come when we don't recognize what season we are in, or we ignore the coming of a new season. When we assume we should have always that productive Summer or the growth of Spring, we deny ourselves the opportunity to recharge, regroup, and redirect. We are people of the earth, and the earth turns in cycles and seasons. When we fight our season, ignore it or "wade against the river," we are ignoring the natural cycles of our lives, whatever season we are in. And it seems that each season, when we are in it, seems to be the "best". I didn't want to leave my "Winter" and go back to work, but in the end, a new "Spring" was calling me to move forward and bloom again.

Just as I found the courage to open my mind and my heart to the next season of my life, I want you to trust that the next season will bring whatever it is that you need in your life. Trust the cycles of your life, and you will find yourself in a much richer and more fulfilled state of being. Please join me May 13 – 15, 2016 at the UU Women's Retreat where we will explore whatever season you are in and embrace the gifts that season has to bring!



## PSWD Women's Retreat

### "Spiraling Up! Life Transitions in Every Season" Friday, May 13 - Sunday, May 15, 2016

*We each experience life transitions--a seemingly never ending trial which weaves through days, years, decades, and within our lifetime. When these transitions follow the natural cycles and existing energies of the four seasons...our life is in balance.* Join us for an extraordinary weekend of laughter and love. Enjoy a chance to be free and let your hair down, unplug and reflect. Connect with old and new friends. Find out how downward dog and yoga can relieve those tired muscles or come tie-dye that favorite old shirt! Join others in a nature hike or lose your inhibitions with belly dancing or tai chi! Explore your creative side with painting, expressive journaling, or join a sing-a-long.

Come enjoy yourself as you spiral up to your next transformation and reflect on all your journeys through the past season and those yet to come!

**Pat Humphries & Sandy O. of Emma's Revolution will perform a live concert and offer a special music workshop while serving as musicians-in-residence for this retreat. A dynamic duo of award-winning activist musicians, Pat & Sandy have been called "Inspiring, gutsy, and rockin'." Their song 'Peace, Salaam, Shalom' is featured in the new hymnal of a worldwide denomination. For more information visit [www.emmasrevolution.com](http://www.emmasrevolution.com)**

\$185 per person if registered by April, 2016/ \$205 thereafter

Craig's Cabin or Cabin 6 + additional \$30 per person

Thursday Arrival + additional \$20 per person (lodging only, no meals)

Visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on "Camps & Retreats" or mail in the form on page 23.

*This year's planning team are members of Tapestry UU Church.*

# Our Camp de Benneville Pines And The PSWIRL Legacy

by Ross Quinn, board member

My friends,

I have been privileged to have personally witnessed the creation of our precious Camp de Benneville Pines, created 55 years ago. Additionally, and perhaps more remarkably, as a child I was privileged to have experienced much of the behind-the-scenes organizational work that was required to nurture our camp, loving it into existence. There are few of us still remaining who have had that experience and can still tell the tale. On this 55th anniversary, I have been asked to do so. It is an honor to be able to write this article, publicly recording this proud bit of deeply interconnected history, and describe the legacy of the Pacific Southwest Institute of Religious Liberals, PSWIRL, one of our camp's founding organizations.

Let me begin by telling a bit about myself. I was born in 1949 and raised a Unitarian Universalist. In the winter of 1956 - 1957, our family moved to the small and relatively sleepy town of Ventura, California. My parents were founding members of the Ventura Unitarian Church. Initially, we went to the Santa Paula Universalist Church, but the members from Ventura split off and decided to form their own congregation. Incidentally, the Unitarian headquarters in Boston advised against starting the Ventura Church, feeling that there was insufficient population and support there. (This letter is still found in the Ventura Church's historical documents.) It is important to note that this occurred before the merger of the Unitarians and Universalists into one denomination in 1961.

During those early Ventura years, I vividly remember the church meetings in various rented halls each Sunday. I believe setting up and taking down folded chairs in these various places and feeling like guests in our own services caused a deep yearning in the congregation to have a place of its own. This dream was finally realized years later with the purchase of the Terry House, nestled in the hills above Ventura's Foothill Road, with its expansive



December 1960 Scout lodge after fire

views and its beautiful (relatively-wild) setting. In the formative years from 1958-1960, I remember attending PSWIRL Family Camps at Camp Radford in the San Bernardino Mountains, for a week each summer. This was a group of religious liberals of every kind. There were, of course, many Unitarians and Universalists, but there were also agnostic Jews, Ethical Culturalists, Humanists, a sprinkling of Christians, Atheists, and probably others I wasn't aware of at the tender (if precocious) age of 10. PSWIRL's main function was to hold seminars and workshops to promote community, understanding, and dialogue. The annual PSWIRL Family Camp seemed to me, as a kid, to be the group's highlight function of the year. One of PSWIRL's regrets was that Camp Radford, owned by the city of Los Angeles, did not have any other place in which PSWIRL could come back again and again over the year; a place they could call home, and where they could celebrate their community more frequently. Back in the Ventura Church, my father, John Quinn, was the first President of its Board and became quite active in the Unitarian Regional District, which had frequent contact with their counterparts in the Universalist Regional District. Dad had graduated from Redlands University and knew the San Bernardino Mountains from his college days after World War II. Going "up the hill" from Ventura through Redlands and Mentone to Camp Radford was special for him, as was our obligatory stop at the Mentone A&W root beer stand! His enthusiasm was contagious. Other early Ventura families, including the English family, (Dave later become President of Camp de Benneville Pines Board of Directors) also came to PSWIRL summer week at Camp Radford, and wanted more.

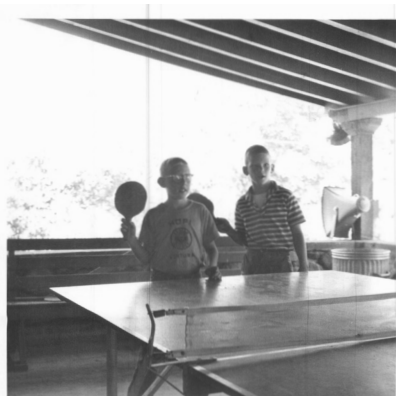
The Universalists who came to PSWIRL's Camp Radford week also shared the general desire for more camp retreats. Universalist minister, Rev. Ray Manker's congregation in Riverside, was the closest to the San Bernardino Mountains where they held regular campground church and youth retreats for years. On one of those occasions his youth group, which had the temerity to include some black youths in their gathering, were threatened at gunpoint by local white supremacists and told to, "Get off our mountain!"

This incident galvanized the Universalists to also look for a safe retreat they could call their own in the mountains. In the midst of all these currents, Barton Flats Boy Scout Camp Arataba suffered a catastrophic fire in 1960, in which their main building, the lodge, burned to the ground. After that loss, the Scouts decided to sell their burned camp, which they had owned since the 1920's, as a much larger tract of land in Running Springs, had been donated to them. I believe Rev. Manker was likely the first to hear of this, and to wonder if this burned-out camp might become "a place of our own".

I personally came to visit Camp Arataba with my father in 1960 to 'scout' it out. I remember being so impressed with the forest, especially by the size of the trees. I remember the concrete slab where the lodge once stood. There was nothing else left there, just a temporary tented cook shed on the east side, and an old fireplace and chimney. There was also a large ponderosa tree at the edge of the slab, burned halfway up its hundred foot height on the side facing the lodge. I marveled that this tree, and the forest, had not completely burned up. There were only four buildings: the caretaker's cabin, a building used primarily to eat inside during bad weather (now the Coffee House), the nurse's infirmary, and a dressing room by the pool. There were no cabins, only tent platforms. Water was available to wash hands in an outdoor drain-less metal "sink"—a 6 footlong piece of galvanized metal with 6 garden hose spigots, three to a side from a single cold water pipe. But the pool was the best: big, blue, and snug in the forest.

I was not privy to any of the discussions that followed, but I remember both Dad and I liked the camp. In 1961, my father became the first Board President of the Pacific Southwest District of the newly united Unitarian Universalist Association. Shortly afterward, the PSWD bought Camp Arataba, in the name of the members of the 50-odd PSWD Unitarian and Universalist churches. The Universalists contributed the legacy funds needed to seal the deal. I was told it was a fire sale price. CHEAP—the deal of the century! Camp Arataba was then re-named, in a nod to the Universalists, after the 18th century French Universalist, George de Benneville, who, like our camp, awoke to a long and fruitful life after a near-death experience.

In the early years that followed, the Ventura Church, along with many others, came together to develop Camp de Benneville Pines. Our cabins were actually World War II era surplus troop barracks from local military bases: George AFB in Victorville, and March AFB near Riverside. I remember innumerable "work weekends" doing hard, physical work, which we actually came to relish. This communal labor



Taking a break for ping-pong

melded those who participated into close-knit working groups. Flat roofs were torn off and rebuilt with peaks to withstand the snow load. We gutted the interiors and put them back together, replacing all the wall boards, as they had been sawn in half to fit onto large flatbed trucks for the trip to camp. There was all the prep work, laying foundations and utility stubs; work done with volunteer, untrained, amateur labor. And then there was the rocky mountain soil, a formidable barrier to the trenches, dug entirely by hand, with pick axes, shovels, sledge hammers, and wheelbarrows, all to protect the pipes from freezing.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of building up the camp was that there seemed to be no doubt that all this could be done, physically and financially.



Camp Arataba Boy Scouts 1955



1962 Dining on the cement slab that eventually became Homet Lodge



Ross Quinn at crafts circa 1958

continued on page 9

# Legacy

Continued from page 8

People just stood up, went to work, and became believers: believers in our community, and believers that nothing, not even intractable boulders, could stop them. We just had to work, to keep at it, and it would become reality.

As a group, we celebrated every 50 feet of trenching as another victory—another sign this could, and would be done together. And the more we worked, the more we learned to love the place, and respect and love each other. I, personally, am unaware how much the PSWIRL people directly participated in all this building, for as a young teenager, I worked primarily with those from my Ventura Church. Yet, I am sure many PSWIRL members also came with their churches and must have helped mightily in work groups of their own. For the folks from Ventura Church, I suspect the need to do this labor was, in part, a visceral response to the lack of its own permanent home in those years. Camp de Benneville Pines became a sort of substitute church home, a place where the congregation could work and come together with other UU's from all over Southern California, in a place of permanence and substance, and to have a focal point of our community. I'm sure the same was true for PSWIRL. It is hard now, to believe that a gang of amateurs with essentially no independent financial resources or professional workers, could have built Camp de Benneville Pines up from scratch. But that is exactly what happened. And PSWIRL, both as an organization and as individual members, must have greatly contributed, for only PSWIRL, Throop, Neighborhood, and First Church San Diego have their names on cabins. Mrs. Homet Patterson, of course, has her family name on the Lodge.

After I graduated from high school in 1966, I was away from camp for nearly 40 years, and cannot say with any accuracy what went on during those times. But the life of our camp continued on, if precariously so at times. There were the multitude of camps, workshops, and gatherings. The camp was spun off by the PSWD and became an independent corporate body, owned by the members of the UU Churches in the Pacific Southwest District. In the late 90's, de Benneville entered into a co-venture agreement with the PSWD to coordinate the program arm of the six annual youth camps while PSWIRL sponsored a week-long adult summer camp. Eventually, the family camp programming responsibilities moved under the PSWD Camping Ministries Program, making it the 8th co-ventured camp with the PSWD.

Almost 40 years later, in 2005, my wife, Karen, and I moved back to Southern California and became deeply involved in the life of our camp. For me, returning to the camp filled a hole in my heart that I did not know existed. Two years later, in 2007, we were elected to its Board of Directors. It wasn't until the next summer, in 2008, that I attended my first PSWIRL camp, and got to know PSWIRL as an adult. Who were those PSWIRLers? They were a distinguished and varied, free-thinking lot: crusaders and reformers, authors and a world famous architect, professors and a woman who programmed airplane automatic pilot systems, dreamers and therapists, social workers and physicians, poets and artists, lawyers and builders. They loved each other and loved their Camp de Benneville Pines fiercely, with decade-long memories and experiences together at camp.

Unfortunately, when they aged, their numbers and attendance dropped. Without families and kids in their midst, it was hard to attract new members. Despite scheduling both Art and Photography Camps during the PSWIRL week, attendance continued to decline, making it financially impossible to continue. The summer of 2015 was the last PSWIRL adult camp. Fittingly, the week's theme speaker was the excellent Reverend Tom Owen-Towle, whose theme was "The Art of Finishing Life Well". At the end of that camp, PSWIRL, this proud organization with history, did indeed end well. In a vote to dissolve itself, their final act was to donate all their remaining financial resources, almost \$4,000, as a legacy donation to Camp de Benneville Pines. They also selected a favorite UU quote to be set in bronze and mounted on a large rock near the fire circle, a place which holds special meaning to so many members: *"A church...is nothing more than its people and what they bring to it: their faith, their vision, their collective hopes and dreams, their memories and their customs, their history, their prayers, their good words, and their values."* Patrick T. O'Neill, Unitarian Universalist minister.

I want to return to the subject implied by the title of this article: the Legacy of PSWIRL and of our Camp de Benneville Pines. In no small way, the legacy of PSWIRL is the very existence of our camp. I'm not sure that either the impetus to find our camp, purchase it, and then spend years building it up by hand, would have ever come to fruition had PSWIRL not existed. This is a huge legacy, and there is more.

It is hard to recall now, 55 years later, that in those founding days not only did we not have our 7 Principles, but also back then, Unitarians and Universalists in many places had an uneasy alliance, and often embodied two separate cultures. I believe that another legacy of PSWIRL is our united Unitarian Universalist denomination. The PSWIRL family camps of the 1950's and 1960's were one of the main Southern California venues for those disparate families to get to know each other, and to live together for a week during the U-U courtship of the 1950's, before our actual 1961 marriage of faiths.

I believe that there is still more we owe to PSWIRL, another legacy they have left for us: our theology. It's hard to remember that when our camp was founded, our theology was completely unclear. Had the 7 Principles been in existence then, I'm certain that at camp, we would have talked endlessly about the ties that bind us together in an inextricable web of all existence. There was certainly talk about spirit and community, but that wider vocabulary of our Unitarian Universalist understanding did not yet exist. I believe PSWIRL helped us to be in a precious place: our camp, where our deepest theology is self-evident, and where it could develop and mature within us. I am convinced that in this experience of coming together to build and maintain the camp in a primeval forest setting, on the edge of wilderness, that the 7 Principles were somehow intuited before they were formally written. Working hard together generates inherent, mutual respect, acceptance, and compassion in those human relationships. The camp was specifically set up as a place of safety and peace for all, where we could freely pursue our personal truths. Yet, somehow, in this wild setting, the then unknown principles of ecology and environmental interdependence seemed to suffuse us unconsciously. I believe the wilderness was teaching us something. That came to fruition with the creation of the San Geronio Wilderness in 1964, on the border of which our camp sits, so that it can be protected, and preserved for generations to come. We were listening, here in Southern California, and we learned. The existence of our camp, a legacy of PSWIRL, equally leaves another living legacy: both the creation of, and deepening our understanding of our sources, and of our 7 Principles. These precious gifts help to define us personally, to head our denomination on a more enlightened path, and to be keepers of a rare and precious wilderness.

Friends, this is also the deepest legacy of PSWIRL. Truthfully, all those who know and love Camp de Benneville Pines are equally the legacy of PSWIRL. I was blessed to have known and been nurtured by them for about 60 years.

Namaste PSWIRL, and farewell: the holiness in you brought out the holiness in me, here in de Benneville, and there in Radford. Your legacy yet lives in the wind in the pines, and in the hearts of our campers, now and into the future.



de Benneville Pines PSWIRL August 1962



# Camp de Benneville Pines Dedication Address from September 9, 1962

As read by Dr. Walton E. Cole

A year ago last June, Ben Lundberg, then chairman of the candidating committee of the Unitarian Society of Pomona Valley, took us up here to see de Benneville Pines. What I saw in prospect—and under way—was a factor in my deciding to accept the invitation of the Society to become its minister.

I am amazed at what has happened here in so short a time—less than 2 years—when Ray Manker was authorized to proceed with the purchase of this camp from the Boy Scouts; the help of Teresa Homet Patterson (Patty to her Pasadena friends at Throop); Ben Lundberg, vice-president Ide Keeler, Bob Hartley, and board members and volunteers without number!

Since 1928, when I was ordained as a Unitarian minister in Chicago, I had come to appreciate the value of the summer conference center Star Island. I spent many weeks in the ensuing years on the island. It instilled the feeling of family, of church—cohesive, inspiring. It was a barren island, often enshrouded in fog. The chapel on the hill had whitewashed walls and a parlor organ. It was a rustic building to which the campers walked in a silent candlelight procession at the end of each day for the candlelight service.

Star Island was a place of many intangibles, where friendships were made and kept. A person felt at one with Nature, as at de Benneville Pines where one feels in harmony with the stars and the ponderosa pines, not feeling that Man must conquer Nature but rather to live in harmony with it, knowing that man is in nature and nature is in man.

The wife of our Hopi Indian friend said: “The white Christian seeks peace—the Hopis have found it.” They feel a oneness with the world of Nature.

It was Whittier who said that the groves were the first temples. And there are some words of insight, once uttered by a man who had acquired a wisdom-about-living, who learned from Nature: “Consider the lilies of the field,” and “Behold the birds of the air,” and who had more than once urged his followers “to come apart into a secluded place and rest awhile.” So they would not fall apart! He said: “Others have labored and you have entered into their labors...”

Labor, many people—young and old—have been doing hard work; working at the not always inspiring tasks. We celebrate the progress, incredible in spite of obstacles, made thus far. We have entered into the fruits of the labors of many. But, more than that, “we have entered into their labor”. There is a job still to be done, visions yet to be fulfilled.

The Navajo tribe of American Indians who have lived close to nature, have created out of human experience and association with the Great Earth Mother, what has well been called a “House of Wonder”.

The intangible culture which they created, and into which I was privileged to enter for a while this summer, matches the splendor of Monument Valley. In terms of life, not of worldly goods, it is we who are poor, not the Navajo.

I have come to love the words of the Night Chant as it is sung in the ceremonial Hogan, translated into English by the scholar Dr. Washington Mathews:

“House made of dawn  
House made of evening light  
Happily may I walk...  
May it be beautiful before me,  
May it be beautiful behind me,  
May it be beautiful below me,  
May it be beautiful above me,  
May it be beautiful all around me.  
In beauty it is finished.”

In a deep sense, de Benneville Pines Conference Center is such a house of wonder; a house of the spirit of man, when he is in harmony with his universe, with himself, with his fellow man.

It is not too much to think that Homet Lodge, which we hope will stand on this very spot—next summer—will become for us all the beloved symbol of our own:

“House made of dawn,  
House made of starlight  
House made of the resplendent beauty of the ponderosa pines  
House of the splendor of this mountain height  
Our house of the strength of cohesive fellowship dedicated to the unfettered pursuit and meaningful actualization of the highest religious and ethical ideals.”

You and I, friends of de Benneville Pines Conference Center, are not only dedicating this site—we are dedicating ourselves. We are “entering into their labors...”

De Benneville Pines is far from being completed, even in its first stage this September afternoon. But on this mountaintop of vision we can see our way through and beyond our problems, sustained by the reasonable confidence that “In beauty it shall be finished!”



Reverend Walton Cole at Dedication



Choir singing at dedication



Rev Ray Manker of the Riverside Universalist Church at the dedication ceremony



Dr Ben Lundberg and Mrs Theresa Homet Patterson at dedication



Homet Lodge in Summer 1965

# Society for Creative Anachronism: A Unique Retreat at de Benneville Pines

by Clarissa Delatorre, camp staff

Known for hosting a variety of eclectic groups, Camp de Benneville Pines has seen its fair share of curious and interesting camps. The Society for Creative Anachronism, otherwise known as the SCA, certainly sets the bar for its liveliness and creatively archaic activities in their four-day retreat here at camp. They are a group as unique as their name, a community of pre-17th century enthusiasts who have used Camp de Benneville every winter for the past 23 years.

The lodge is transformed with large, colorful banners and 17th century arts and crafts stationed at every table. It's only eight in the morning, but the fireplace has been burning for hours.

The SCA kitchen crew has prepared a delicious breakfast of marinated (and then baked!) french toast topped with a savory caramel sauce. It is moist and has a perfectly crunchy layer of cinnamon. They serve a generous portion of mouthwatering spiced chicken sausage, and finish the course with undoubtedly the best apple sauce I have ever tasted. It is ill-advised to count calories at an SCA weekend!

There is a musky, warm, and fruity smell as you enter the open space with folks playing medieval card games, women weaving, and collections



of goblets arranged atop beautifully adorned tables. The morning is welcomed with gentle music played on classical instruments, like a concertina made of rosewood and ivory. The SCA group is comprised of mostly adults, but children are also welcome as this mountain festival is a family-centered event. Each individual has their own customized garb, suited to preference, personal style, and rank. The women are stunningly gorgeous in their dresses and gowns, of which the majority make themselves.

Even the children are decked out in costume. Woolen robes, draped to the floor, help to keep campers warm in the winter snow. They wear no modern Thinsulate or polyfill coats at this retreat!

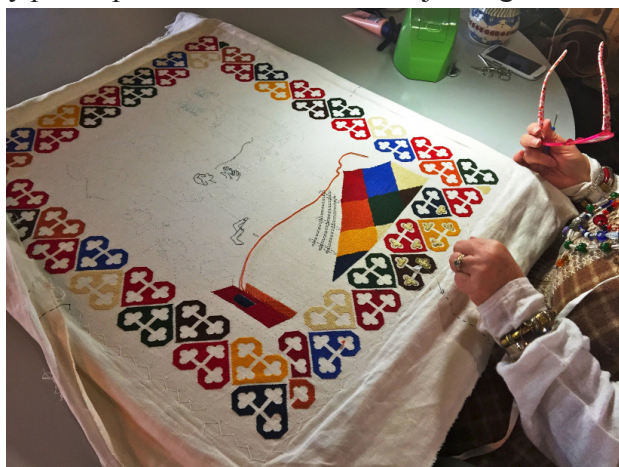
I meet with Robear Du'Bois (Robert Wood), and Amadea (Jeanne Walsh), who are both eager to share their experiences since joining the SCA in the early 1970's. Robear, dressed in a fashionably blue justaucorp, invites me to his table and welcomes my inquiries with enthusiasm and patience.

Since its inception in 1966 in Berkeley, CA, the Society for Creative Anachronism has expanded its "Known World" to 20 kingdoms and over 30,000 members. Its representatives come from a variety of backgrounds and it seems clear everyone has their own reason for joining. For Robear, the "romanticism of knights and armor, especially the thrill of combat" has always intrigued him. As an architect, his love of castles has been incorporated into his own life, as he continues working on building permits to transform his home in the San Fernando Valley into an actual castle.

Robear explains that he thinks the cutoff period (1600-1650) seems just right for him, but that the SCA can also include members from the Viking and Carolingian periods. Because the society is far-reaching and widespread, he stresses the importance that "members, or those interested in becoming a member, actively participate." Amadea adds that joining the SCA

can "foster important skills and trades in this learning environment" and that both "adults and youth develop deep value in their work".

The SCA hosts a number of activities within their kingdoms, but while up at camp, they are offered a more relaxed and informal space



to hone their crafts. There are women with drop spindles spinning real wool from a sheep that Du'Bois cares for in his backyard. In the Coffee House, the entire room is converted into a place where artisans make jewelry, craft metal work and castings, and a quiet, meditative area is reserved for those who work on calligraphy styles from this period.

These medievalists, or SCAdians as they are known,

each have their own particular talent or skill to contribute.

As staff, it is really a fascinating experience to witness their bliss up at camp.

During our chat, Amadea proudly displays photos from the 70's off her iPad, which gives an even clearer look into the community that she describes as having a "village-raised mentality".



The table roars with laughter as she delicately scrolls through images of families in fields, kings in tights, flawless maidens, and jousting battles—naming individuals with ease and warmth. Du'Bois explains how names tend to have pun-intentions, having much to do with their individual personality and interests. Like how he designated a camper as Luke the Lean, a tall, skinny teenage boy with a growing interest in medieval history.

Regarding gender roles in the society, Du'Bois replies, "All the laws of the nation regarding gender discrimination apply to the SCA. If a fighter refuses to do combat with a woman, he forfeits his fight and/or title." On the subject of LGBTQ members, both

Robear and Amadea shake their heads. "Never been an issue."



The SCA camp arrived at de Benneville 23 years ago when their original facility, Camp Radford, was damaged in the 1992 Big Bear Earthquake. While scouting camps in the Barton Flats area that could accommodate a group who cooked their own food, created

their own programming, and had ample space for combat archery, Du'Bois' wife reached out to the staff at de Benneville Pines, who welcomed the SCAdians with complete use of the facility. When asked about the changes in de Benneville over

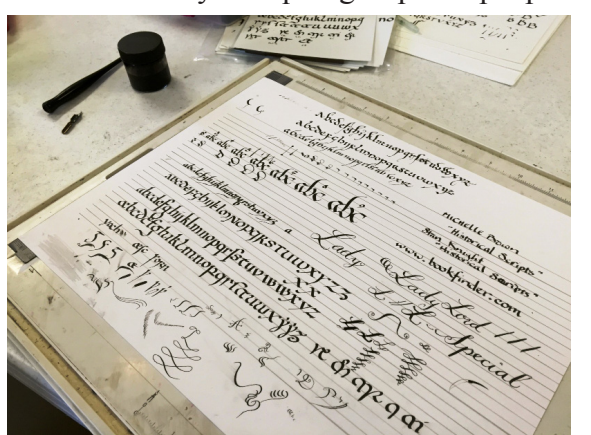


the course of 23 years years, Du'Bois immediately responds, "There are so many improvements...in the individual cabins, halls, lodge. I mean, look at this! There has been steady improvement the whole time we've come here." Amadea adds, "Nobody has anything like this. This is an incredibly unique facility."

Space at the annual SCA Winter Retreat has been known to sell out rather quickly. This winter, de Benneville accommodated 92 SCA members, many of whom return

to the retreat year after year. Du'Bois encourages those who are interested in learning more about the SCA to do some research and refer to their website at [www.sca-caid.org](http://www.sca-caid.org) for a list of upcoming events. On the website can be found more information about what makes the Society for Creative Anachronism a truly unique group of people.

As for the camp staff, we truly enjoy having the SCA group here with us each winter. We look forward to seeing the woven rugs and banners draped around the lodge, the artisans and crafters working on their projects, and the ornate costumes with intricate beading and hand knitted scarves and mittens. But, above all,



we delight in the delicious food—from herbed buttered salmon to roasted leg of lamb, to marinated salads and homemade marmalades and breads.

This weekend is a treat for the eyes and the tummy! Good food and good friends— SCA is really a delight for campers and staff alike!

# Professional Artists Lead “Art Groove” Adult Summer Workshops

## Friday, August 19 - Wednesday 24, 2016



The Art Groove experience is customizable to each camper's preference. Attendees may even blend art instruction with classic summertime pleasures like hiking, swimming, yoga, and relaxation under the pines.

Dinner in the lodge gives time to reflect the day's activities, while evening “Art Jams” feature movies, discussion groups, and other outlets for artistic expression.

In the spirit of sharing and learning, student art will be displayed throughout the six days of retreating, culminating in a special exhibit on the final morning, August 24th.



UU artists from all over the western region will enjoy a summer week of artistic enrichment at Art Groove 2016. Our 10th anniversary summer is sure to attract those seeking an opportunity to improve their skills in a particular area of art, and those wanting to try something new. Five main tracks will be offered: life drawing, watercolor painting, photography, mixed media (printmaking/book arts), and acrylic painting. Each camper will choose a field of study and receive expert instruction from highly recognized artists within that field. Materials are provided, and teaching will accommodate all levels--from beginner to advanced. To ensure the instructors can give individual attention to every student, class size is limited to 16 (12 for life drawing and mixed media).

The first class will begin August 19th at 2:00 pm. Thereafter, the main track will take place from 9:00 am - noon. Following the morning sessions and lunch in the lodge, campers are free to experience a variety of afternoon workshops. These sessions include: acrylic/portrait painting, photography, watercolor painting, journaling, torn-paper collage, and others.

Each evening, an instructor from one of the five class disciplines will speak on the subject, “My Life as an Artist.”



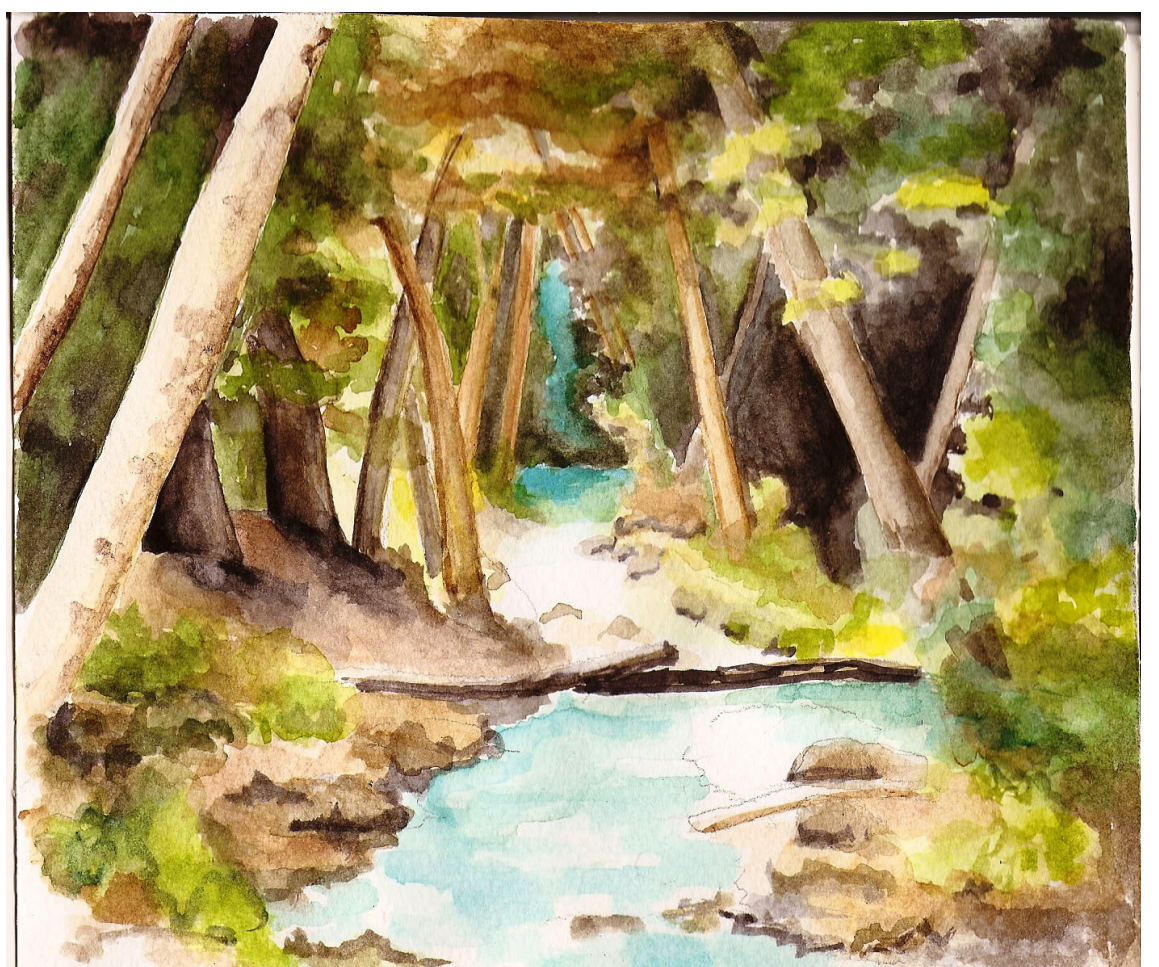
Early registration is recommended to reserve a space in this popular, adults-only learning vacation. \$690 per person until June 30, 2016 (\$765 thereafter) includes instruction, workshops, materials, lodging, and all activities at de Benneville Pines.

There are a limited number of double-beds available to spouses/partners of artists who want to come for a relaxing week in the mountains without participating in the art programs.

The cost for spouses/partners is \$595 (\$670 after June 30).

Recruit a new art camper and receive a \$50 rebate.

To register, please visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on “Camps & Retreats”. For registration questions, please call (909) 794-1252 (message line only) or e-mail [registrar@uucamp.org](mailto:registrar@uucamp.org).



**All artwork pictured was produced by students at Art Groove Camps.**

**Registration opens March 10th**

# Singing In the Pines - UU Choir Camp

## Saturday, August 13 - Wednesday, August 17, 2016

If you enjoy choir music old and new, and if you like to gather with other UU's from across the district to sing, sing, sing...then choir camp at de Benneville Pines is for you! Sessions will focus on music suitable for use in UU worship. Participants are encouraged to bring their favorite songs to share with the group (original music is encouraged). Team up with others to create new music, and perform in concert on the final evening of camp!

If you are a director looking for repertoire for your church, a choir member looking to dedicate four days to singing, or perhaps a songwriter/musician looking to become more deeply involved in UU music, then this camp is for you. Pool, hot tub, hiking, good food and fellowship are all included in the price.

Facilitator Scott Roewe began playing music around the time he could sit up straight, playing the bongos while his mother played piano. He went on to write music for the hit television show *Rescue 911*, and helped with the production of music for the top ranked television show *C.S.I.* Scott was a recording artist signed to Geffen records with the band *Wild Colonial*s, and he has edited music videos for artists such as Lenny Kravitz, Maxi Priest, and Celine Dion. His mother also took him to Sunday school at the UU church in Wilmington, Delaware, and now he works as music director at the UU Church in Santa Clarita, California. Scott teaches high school music at New Roads High School in Santa Monica, California. and he brings his passion for music, people, and community to Singing in the Pines by helping to organize the event, singing with the choir, playing various instruments, and leading salsa dance classes.



Choir Director Rev. Kellie Walker Hart embraces the divine in herself, and in doing so, she illuminates the divine in those who come in contact with her. She does this through the gift of sharing music. Nearly 25 years ago, Kellie began working at Valley UU Congregation in Chandler, Arizona. She started as a volunteer and was ultimately ordained as Minister of Music by the congregation in 2011. In this role, Kelli oversees all music for Sunday worship services and directs a 45-voice choir. Kellie works to continually expand VUU's music outreach program, which includes the Voices Lifted singers and activities such as toddler music classes for parents and children. Kellie says helping people find the courage to sing is one of the most rewarding parts of her job.

If you yearn to connect with the divine, open your heart to music, and commune with others, come add your voice at camp "Singing in the Pines". For more information about pricing or to register, please visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org), and click on Camps & Retreats, and click on Adult Camps. Register by June 30th and save \$30! Registration opens March 10th.

Be sure to also check out "Camp Summer Break": A Walk in the Woods with John Muir—a camp for adults taking place at the same time as Singing in the Pines; and invite a friend to join you at camp! There is something for everyone August 13 – 17 at Camp de Benneville Pines.

## Camp "Summer Break": A Walk in the Woods with John Muir - A Retreat Designed for Adults

Saturday, August 13 through Wednesday, August 17, 2016

Deans: Barbara Shields-Leigh and Cyndy Leigh

Ministers in Residence: Rev. Tom Owen-Towle and Rev. Carolyn Owen-Towle

De Benneville Pines launches a new camp for adults needing to break away from the city and retreat to the beauty of the mountains with UU's and like-minded friends. This year, we will be capturing the spirit of John Muir with a special and rare performance by actor Lee Stetson, a renowned theatrical Muir interpreter. Stetson will be in camp to present 3 different plays based on Muir's true-life adventures. John Muir was a naturalist, author, and early advocate of wilderness preservation. He was instrumental in protecting Yosemite and other national parks, and founded the Sierra Club in 1892. Stetson's presentations have toured worldwide since 1983 to museums, universities, parks, and environmental organizations, and he "focuses on the theme of land use, environmental ethics, and the concept of engaging wilderness". This is HUGE! Please also join us for swimming, hiking, crafting, dancing, canoeing, stargazing, socializing, learning, and more! It is all happening during your "Summer Break"!



Lee Stetson

### 7 Reasons to Come to Camp "Summer Break" 2016

**Discovery** - "*The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.*" Come see a re-enactment of crucial conversations between John Muir and US President Teddy Roosevelt that led to preservation of the most valuable wilderness on the planet. Take a field trip to The Wildlands Conservancy project at BearPaw Reserve. Hear the story of what wilderness conservationists have accomplished in the San Geronio Wilderness. Join the many activities and workshops on the agenda, including Singing in the Pines, an afternoon choir rehearsal for those who love to sing. Scott Roewe will lead "songs of meaning and songs for worship", with an all-camp performance on the final night.

**Refresh** - "*Keep close to Nature's heart...and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean.*" Join UU Ministers, Tom and Carolyn Owen-Towle, who will be leading workshops that are sure to refresh your soul. As a gifted speaker, Tom will share inspirational stories and experiences to motivate you to keep reaching and living a meaningful life. Come participate in their raucous happy-hour sing-a-longs on the deck!

**Relax** - "*How glorious greeting the sun gives the mountains.*" Camp de Benneville Pines is a world apart. A friendly staff welcomes you and creates delicious meals. A far cry from rugged, the campground has plenty of amenities to enrich your break! Float in the heated pool, surrounded by a sublime forest, or sit with a book by the flickering fire in the stone fireplace, go canoeing, make a craft, or simply revel in nature.

**Reflect** - "*When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.*" Walk along the paths and contemplate nature's gifts. Find metaphors for your life among its boulders and streams. Write a poem, tell a story, draw a picture, capture images, or study the clear constellations. Enjoy a history workshop led by Chris Epting, author of *Teddy Roosevelt in California: The Whistle Stop Tour That Changed America*.

**Heal** - "*Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to lay in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.*" Let the glory of nature bring you peace, healing your soul as you put your concerns in perspective against the backdrop of majestic skies and magnificent trees. Participate in Owen-Towle's intimate writing group. This is a venue for introspection, where you can reconnect with an extremely important person-yourself. Create an art piece that represents your inner soul and artistic self at a creativity workshop.

**Make Lasting Friendships** - "*Between every two pine trees there is a door leading to a new way of life.*" Campers come from around the country to share meals, engage in new conversations, swap stories, and exchange ideas. Isn't that what UU's do best?

**Create Memories** - "*One touch of nature makes all the world kin.*" In your darkest hours, close your eyes and recall the mountain spires, the creaks of trees talking in the forest, and revel in the summer scent of pine needles warmed by sunshine. Your memories here will carry you through another year of city life...

Please visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org), and click on Retreats & Camps, click on Adult Camps. Registration opens March 10th.

*Be an early-bird and register by June 30 to save \$30 off the base rate!*

Base price includes meals, lodging, and programming: \$480 per person

**Double bottom bed in Craig's Cabin: \$60 per person upgrade fee**

**Single bottom bed in Cabin #6: \$40 per person upgrade fee**

**Single upper bed in Craig's Cabin: \$50 per person upgrade fee**

**Double bed in Cabins 5, 7, 8: \$40 per person upgrade fee**

# PSWD Family Summer Camp: "Active Hope"

Sunday, July 31 - Saturday, August 6, 2016

Deans: Rev. Matthew Crary and Stephanie Crary



*"By refreshing our sense of belonging in the world we widen the web of relationships that nourishes us and protects us." - Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone*

Come for an interactive week of refreshing and renewing your deepest sense of belonging - with the woods, your families, and your own hearts. The news and events in our world seem to be piling up, which can leave us in despair for our environment, society, families, and our lives.

Diving into our family-centered community, learning, laughing, and living together, will send you home nourished, focused, and actively hopeful for our shared future.

Some favorite family camp activities include: swimming, hiking, canoeing at Jenks Lake, talent show, crafting, relaxing, singing, dancing, and worshipping. Don't miss the learning and laughing of PSWD Summer Family Camp: "Active Hope".

And remember to register early! This camp sells out fast!

Costs: \$395 per adult

\$365 per teen (13- 18)

\$345 per child (3 - 12)

\$100 baby/toddler (0 - 2)

Cabin 6 upgrade: \$60 per adult

Double bed in Cabins 5, 7, 8: \$50 per room

\*Craig's Cabin is reserved for PSWD volunteer staff only during this camp. We apologize for any disappointment.

\$75 non refundable deposit per person required.

Monthly payment plans available.

To register, visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on "Camps & Retreats" and click on "Family Camps" or fill out the form on page 23 and mail in with a check.

**\*THIS WEEK OF SUMMER FUN REQUIRES ADULTS BRING CHILDREN/YOUTH WITH THEM TO CAMP\***

## Camp Means Big Family

by Reverend Matthew Crary

Comedian Jim Gaffigan's joke, "Big families are like waterbeds; they used to be everywhere, and now they're just weird," makes us laugh. As a big family, some of us recall waterbeds and we can see the similarities: we are large, hard to fit in many places, and awkward to people who are not used to us. However, this has never been true at Camp deBenneville Pines, where we've never been weird. At camp, we're just the Funke Crary family--all seven of us.

Camp de Benneville Pines has been a significant part of our lives for nearly 10 years. Stephanie, my wife, and our five sons, Wes, Elliot, Grayson, Robin, and Magnus, have grown and grown up with camp. In that time, we've attended almost every form of camp our Pacific Southwest District offers in summer and winter (Young Adult Camp being the only exception). Grateful that we've been given so much from camp, we chose to give back with our time, leading and supporting as many camp programs as we can.

Being a big family is not odd at camp because its a place where everyone is welcomed as family. We are connected to the dedicated camp staff as well as the campers we know and meet for the first time. Camp is a "big family" where we can laugh and cry, celebrate and seek support, and learn and grow with a family that we only see for a week at camp once a year - and it's never weird.

Leading camp programing, we look for themes that will sustain our family for the other fifty one weeks of the year. That's what inspired the theme "Creating Joy" for last year's summer Family Camp and what moved us to choose "Active Hope" for this year. We know without a doubt that, with the many families coming to camp, we will find among the activities, worship, food, and fun, an insight and wisdom that none of us can find anywhere else. And we know that this is what will carry us through until we gather again.

When we pack up our minivan, drive the miles, make that climb into the mountains, and look for the Jenk's Lake turnoff, we know that there's a big family just waiting for all of us and each of us. It's a place with enough space to fit not only our big family's needs, but to meet your family's needs, too.

See you at Camp,

Rev. Matthew Funke Crary



Revered Matthew Crary and Stephanie Crary with baby Magnus.

# Celebrate! Support! Sustain!

Camp de Benneville Pines is a sacred space where relationships are born, nurtured and sustained. A few of my grandchildren say they want to live at camp all the time! Although we almost lost it all in the Lake Fire last year, we are back on the path to upgrades and improvements. Stewardship is the “job of protecting, taking care of and being responsible for something important,” per Webster. Stewardship is supporting our beloved camp as one spot on Earth that is right and safe, now and into the future. Stewardship celebrates all who sustain our precious UU camp with their financial gifts. As a camp lover, as well as chair of Stewardship for Camp de Benneville Pines, I feel obligated to write about how you can make a significant impact during 2016. In this election year, you probably receive almost daily appeals for \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50 or more because your name is on some list. At Camp de Benneville we want *you* on our mailing list to keep in touch with events at our beloved camp. We only ask for your financial support periodically throughout the year.

## WHAT’S NEEDED NOW? Two decks, windows, and doors.

Do you enjoy the ambiance of sitting on the deck of Homet Lodge with friends and family? Perhaps you relish singing, painting, meeting new folks, making crafts, or just lying in the sun there? Well, *not for long*. Our deck is pulling away from the lodge and needs to be completely rebuilt. The large deck estimate is about \$38,000, plus another \$17,000 for deck replacement on Cabin 5. To ensure the safety and enjoyment of all our campers, *we cannot wait much longer*.

Do you love the new lodge windows and doors? They *are not finished yet*. New high windows with dual glaze and permanent commercial-grade doors all around Homet Lodge remain 2016 essentials.

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT? Help all Camp Owners to give.

Do you know that more than 8,000 Unitarian Universalists are owners of our beautiful Camp de Benneville Pines?

If each owner donated \$20, our 2016 goal of \$125,000+ would be easily met. You and I both know that not every owner is able to make a financial gift. Yet, some folks are able to give a lot more.

Imagine that you donate \$20 each on behalf of some number of camp owners. For example:

- If you contribute \$20 on behalf of 25 people, your gift now becomes \$500.
- If you contribute \$20 on behalf of 50 UUs, then your gift becomes \$1,000.
- If you contribute \$20 on behalf of 100 UUs, your gift becomes \$2,000.
- If you contribute \$20 on behalf of 500 UUs, your gift becomes \$5,000, and so on.



You make a difference. You maintain Camp de Benneville Pines as an environmentally proper, safe, and comfortable outdoor retreat center. You continue to *Celebrate, Support, and Sustain* our revered camp with your financial gifts for 2016’s required repairs. You preserve our sacred space where relationships are created and then flourish. When many give on behalf of others, we can succeed. Please give now. Many thanks.

Your support will soon become very evident. See you at camp!

With warm regards, Anne Thorward, Stewardship Team Chair

There are many ways to make contributions to camp. Visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) or call camp office 909-794-2928.

# 2015: The Summer The Mountain Was On Fire

## Our sincere thanks to all those camp supporters who contributed, and continue to contribute, to the Fire Relief Fund.

Thousands of acres of wilderness above the camp burned in July 2015, leaving only 300 feet of living trees between the camp and the burned area. To date, we have spent over \$80,000 on erosion control measures, and we expect to spend more once the winter snows have melted. Thankfully, no one was hurt during the fire, and no camp structures were burned. The camp sustained over \$130,000 in smoke damage to its buildings, of which a large portion was covered by insurance. We lost 5 weeks of summer camp, and refunded approximately \$140,000 in camper fees. \$3,000 in food had to be discarded due to spoilage.

Our deepest concerns go out to Camp Ta Ta Pochon, our neighboring camp, which suffered such catastrophic loss of the woodlands surrounding their camp that they have been closed indefinitely by the USFS.



Firefighters marching through camp



Daisy thanks a fireman



Forest above camp



The fire burned over 22,000 acres above the camp



Fire by the water tank

# The Junior High Camp Trilogy: Three Years of Magic and Adventure

by Emmalinda MacLean, DRE Emerson UU Church

De Benneville Pines is a place where magic can happen. I'm sure a lot of you already know that; maybe you've even had the great honor of being offered a leadership role that let you hold the magic wand and bring something incredible to life. For me, that offer turned into a three-year adventure that I consider some of the proudest work of my career, with some of the most amazing people I've ever known, filled with moments that I truly believe changed lives.

Three years ago, when I was asked to step into the role of dean for junior high winter camp—a weekend camp for 6th - 8th graders usually held in November—I didn't really know what the job entailed. Fortunately, the first great gift of this process came when Mary Carter-Vail, Director of Religious Exploration at Summit UU Fellowship in Santee, said yes to being my co-dean. She had never done this either, and so it was with no preconceived notions and only a loose sense of what we were doing that we started to dream big. Absurdly big, we would realize later. But, my mother has always said that anything worth doing is worth over-doing.

## CAMP MUUGGLE (2013)

Camp MUUGgle was Mary's idea. She had led a Harry Potter themed summer RE class at her congregation, so lots of the activities were already planned and she had an impressive collection of leftover materials. The name was a play on "MUUGs", a thriving program in Northern California UU churches that we're still hoping to see take root in our end of the state: "Middle School Unitarian Universalist Gatherings". Our denomination offers so many programs and opportunities for high-school aged teens, but far fewer for middle schoolers—a missed opportunity to support youth through some of the most awkward, emotional, and challenging years of their lives. Mary and I didn't want to miss this chance to give them an unforgettable adventure.

All three of the camps Mary and I ran together were magical, but turning de Benneville into Hogwarts was a fantasy come true. We set up four rows of long tables across the lodge and decorated with red, yellow, green, and blue streamers to turn it into the Great Hall. All the staff dressed up as Hogwarts professors with capes, robes, and peaked hats. Mary and I introduced ourselves as the Headmistresses. During check-in, the lodge was Diagon Alley, and the tables were Gringotts, Flourish and Blotts, Ollivander's, and the Leaky Cauldron. At Ollivander's, the wand shop, campers chose—or rather, were chosen by—one of the unique sanded-and-shaped sticks I'd collected from the ground at camp a month before. Everyone made Fimo-clay handles for their wands, with a little strand of unicorn hair, dragon heartstring, or phoenix tailfeather tucked in. We baked them in the Craig's Cabin oven that night, so they would be ready for immediate use by all the young witches and wizards enrolled in our pop-up Hogwarts's extension program.

Most UUs are pretty tuned-in to what might feel "exclusive" or unwelcoming, and as much as Mary and I and the rest of the staff loved the Hogwarts-theme, we recognized early on the importance of connecting with those campers who might not be such enthusiastic Potter fans. Our camp opening on Friday night talked about a wide range of fandoms—Star Wars, anime, Doctor Who, My Little Pony, Minecraft, the list just kept going—and the camp covenant included the agreement to respect what other people love, even if it's not your passion. Junior high youth are so susceptible to the message



from their insecure peers that "the thing you love is dumb and you're weird for liking it." We wanted to make it clear that camp is a place to love what you love, unashamedly, out loud—and that this kind of fearless love gives us great strength and power.

Their magical education in Saturday morning workshops was a smashing success: campers learned how to read cards and tea-leaves in "Divination"; they practiced writing secret codes with a real quill pen and ink, for "Magical Languages"; they took apart kitchen appliances with screwdrivers for "Muggle Studies"; they mixed up smelly liquids that changed color in "Potions", and they took turns with some pretty intense trust falls for "Levitation". By mid-afternoon, everyone attended the QUUidditch match—where extra points were awarded for conduct that reflected UU values—and the most perfect, ethereal, storybook-picturesque fog rolled in just as the first game was about to start. "MUUGgle QUUidditch" requires everyone on the field to waddle around with a 3-foot-broom between their thighs, trying to throw and



The MUUGle QUUidditch match

catch the Quaffle (the red ball) in order to score, while avoiding being hit by a Bludger (one of the green balls), which would mean they've been "knocked off their broom" and must run in a circle around the opposing goal posts (three hula hoops duct-taped to a PVC pipe frame) in order to be put back in play. It was both completely absurd and one of the most enjoyable spectator sports ever invented. Campers signed up to be on a team, or crowded the sidelines along the "pitch", between the lodge and the amphitheater, bundled up in scarves and coats, many wearing long black capes. We had encouraged everyone to bring costume pieces, just for fun, but the number of campers who had literally invested in head-to-toe in costuming was priceless.

The fog continued to linger in the trees as the sun went down, camp had dinner, and we prepared for the Night Hunt. This game was inspired by "Night Crossing", a popular junior and senior high camp game where players try to make it from the lodge to the library and back without being caught by staff with flashlights, hiding in the dark. With the Night Hunt, though, campers were trying to collect all 12 magical beasts from the "nests" hidden across camp, without being caught by Death Eaters—who could take up to half of the tokens a youth had collected so far. The competitive edge came out in some; others teamed up to share info about which nests they'd found, and where the adults were hiding. One group of boys had brought walkie-talkies, and made an elaborate plan to divide and conquer. Shadows darted among the trees, glowsticks winked clues to where treasure was hidden, and shrieks of laughter seemed to imply that even those campers getting caught were having a good time. Campers shouted spells at each other—which was fine, as long as no one broke the "no unforgivable curses" rule—some decided that their Potter-esque wands suited them better as Whovian Sonic Screwdrivers, also fine—everyone played along. That was the magic: everyone said YES. We were all there to play together. My personal favorite moment of the whole weekend came when I was standing in the lodge sorting some camper papers, held up my wand and shouted "accio stapler!" and within seconds it had flown to my hand, because someone on the other side of the lodge heard me, saw it, and said "Yes" to playing along.

So on Sunday morning, when it seemed as though our magical weekend had vanished in the blink of an eye, we asked the campers what theme we should build next year's camp around. There was no shame or insecurity as they shouted out their favorite geeky obsessions (which I trust you know by now, I say with the highest respect for geeks and their obsessions). The two main themes that emerged were Star Wars/Star Trek/outer-space-sci-fi, and Lord of the Rings/Dungeons and Dragons/medieval fantasy. And thus the Junior High Camp Trilogy was born.

continued on page 17

# The Junior High Camp Trilogy

continued from 16

## MUUGS IN SPAAACE! (2014)

A year later, Mary and I, and many of the same members of the Camp MUUGgle team, were back on the mountain for “MUUGS IN SPAAACE!”, locked and loaded for an out-of-this-world adventure. I was dressed as Princess Leia, Mary was Dr. Beverly Crusher. A few other staff members were Jedi, a few were Browncoats. We had rehearsed our opening scene—when our “ship”, a.k.a. the Coffee House, crash-lands on Planet de Benneville Pines. Of course, the campers didn’t know that. After they boarded the shuttle, my welcome to camp began with, “Help me, PSWD. You’re my only hope.” We explained that the refugee crisis in the galaxy was reaching a breaking point; some planets were threatening war if any more of their resources were diverted to help these displaced people whose home planets were destroyed. Our mission was to collect soil samples from the resource-rich Planet de Benneville, which could be used to terraform a new planet for the refugees, and restore peace to the galaxy. Simple enough, since we had our Galactic-Alliance-Approved Resource Collection Robots. Our pilot announced that we were clear for takeoff, and called out for the crew to “engage the shields”. Every window shutter in the Coffee House simultaneously swung shut, and campers jumped. The video projection put together by Rev. Matthew Crary showed us lifting off, speeding up, flying through a starfield. The “crew” bounced and shook and leaned this way and that as we took sharp turns; some of the kids joined in. But then we started to shake more—a star exploded in front of us—the pilot shouted, “the boosters are malfunctioning! We’re losing pressure!” The ground was shaking, because someone had the brilliant idea to turn the bass way up on the speakers and then lay them flat on the floor, so that we all felt the ship vibrating. As the sound and the video showed a final crash, all the staff members jolted out of their seats—I might’ve screamed—and fell to the ground. A lot of the kids did, too. People who decide to jump in and play along are my favorite people.

Fortunately, no one was hurt in our make believe crash landing, but our Galactic-Alliance-Approved Resource Collection Robots were all destroyed in the crash, which meant that we’d have to collect those soil and water samples on our own. The “new plan” to handle this totally unforeseen circumstance would be for teams to build their own transports to navigate the terrain, and negotiate with the de Benneville natives for the resources we’d come for. These natural resources were handfuls of dirt, sand, rocks, or water in plastic bottles—I think we made over a hundred—and the “negotiations” would consist of mini-games and challenges at various stations across camp, with resource bottles as the prize. For teams to build their transports, we had all the cardboard and duct tape you can imagine, and a furniture dolly for each, so that they could bring their mini-spaceships with them to each challenge and use them to carry the resources they collected.

Saturday morning, right after breakfast, the lodge was turned into a loud, chaotic spaceship workshop. Each team submitted a design concept in order to get access to the cardboard and duct tape, and then, of course, everyone’s design changed six or seven times during building. Lots of campers were surprised to be allowed to use box-cutters—staff talked about this for a LONG time, believe me—but ultimately we all felt that trusting young people with real responsibility is the only way to teach it. We also had a meticulous system in place to ensure that no knife was ever in a camper’s hand unless an adult’s eyes were on it, too. No one was injured, and every team finished their (amazing, brilliant, unique, I-never-would-have-thought-of-that) cardboard spaceship in time to wheel them down to the volleyball court to be featured in our camp photo.

After lunch, teams took their personalized itinerary and began rolling their ships up the road, down to the Coffee House, to the spider tree, the basketball court—the farthest reaches of (camp) space. Staff members met them with crazy stories about why we needed their help, and how they could earn this planet’s natural resources: one station had team challenges that included a frisbee and a hula hoop; another required the team to create a flag for their ship, showcasing their “seven principles of diplomacy”. In the Coffee House, participants had to “use the force” by learning a Tai Chi form, and on the basketball court they participated in the “ancient rituals” of this planet by competing in Minute-to-Win-It challenges. Going “Into the Black Hole” up by Cabin 6 meant that every member of the team but one was blindfolded, and that player had to verbally guide the rest of the group to steer their spaceship safely into port. And in the woods near the spider tree, we set up a campsite for teams to find and face a moral dilemma—the “trader” who met them there gave each team the opportunity to steal from the settlers whose camp they’d found. The Grain Job, as we called it, in a nod to Firefly, was entirely the brainchild of Brett Lynam, who played the double-crossing grain trader so convincingly that many campers never realized

the ethical question they were struggling with was the whole point of that station’s challenge. One did—as his teammates were about to plunder the settler’s campsite, he shouted, “it’s a UU trap!” and the adults on staff couldn’t stop laughing about it all weekend.

The team that collected the most resources earned immunity necklaces for the Night Hunt—it had been so popular at Camp MUUGgle we knew we had to do it again, so this year campers collected plastic glow stars, “fuel tokens” to power our ship for the return to earth. The necklace—a key on a cord—could be traded in if caught, and the player would be allowed to go free without giving up any tokens. I overheard campers explaining to each other about the difference between Night Crossing, which we do at summer camp, and the Night Hunt, which in their eyes seemed to be an official and permanent part of winter camp now, although this was only the second time we’d done it. But then again, we’re UUs, and often twice is plenty for us to call something a “tradition”. The next morning, we had collected all the resources we needed to terraform a new planet for the refugees, and enough glow-star-fuel-tokens to make the return trip to earth, knowing the galaxy was safe again. The throne room music from Star Wars began to play as we presented each camper with a medal for their service, all handmade by craft-queen Mary Carter-Vail. Then the liftoff video-sequence started, and with no rehearsal whatsoever, the entire camp community bounced and shook and leaned into the turns, playing along as we flew through stars, dodged asteroids, and finally came into view of our own beautiful blue-green planet earth.



Emmalinda as Princess Leia and Mary as Star Trek’s Dr. Crusher



Building spaceships out of cardboard

## CAMPEPIC QUUEST! (2015)

Taking middle-schoolers across the galaxy and back was quite a trip. Mary and I spent months wondering how we were going to top it, and all we knew for sure was: dragons. We talked about all the ways that fantasy literature embodies ideas of good and evil, and where those intersect with our UU values, and I kept hearing the G. K. Chesterton line: “Fairy tales are more than true, not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.” We wanted to give this team of young people the chance to defeat a dragon of their own.

If Camp MUUGgle was mostly Mary’s artistry, and the storyline of MUUGS in Spaaace was mostly mine, credit for the narrative of Camp Epic QUuest goes primarily to Brett Lynam. It was all collaboration—my favorite way to work—but we couldn’t have done it without him. Brett named our dragon: Ignorantia, an ancient and terrible monster of ignorance and injustice. It was Brett’s idea to build a light-box that looked like a giant pair of glowing eyes, and have her or him—you never can tell with dragons—appear, staring in through the windows of the lodge during camp opening on Friday night. During our opening, Mary and I introduced ourselves as the High Priestesses of the Pines, and thanked all those assembled who had traveled from far and wide to defeat the great dragon who had settled on this mountain. The dragon’s power was magically linked to the Flame of Hate, we explained, and could only be extinguished by the living waters poured forth from the Chalice of Light. But the chalice had been broken and the pieces scattered, many years ago—only the very brave, truthful, compassionate, creative, curious, and pure of heart could hope to find them and reclaim them in order to put an end to the dragon’s reign of terror. (Spoiler alert: we did it.) That was when all the lights went out, a booming voice came through the speakers, and menacing yellow eyes appeared in the darkness outside. The dragon warned campers to run, to flee—to leave the work of justice and peace to someone else, after all, it wasn’t their job. Of course, that pitch-black room of UU youth screamed a defiant “no!” at the dragon, with a ferocity that gives me hope for the future of our country.

Continued on page 19

## Spotlight on Birdie Reed

continued from page 5

“After the interview, I literally had to chase Janet to the parking lot and ask her to come to work for us! We had let her leave the building with a thank you and handshake, and after she was gone, we all said, let’s offer her the job!” Since that decision, “under Janet’s supervision, the camp board has managed to take care of decades of deferred maintenance.” And paid off the remaining old notes. It hasn’t been easy, as the director’s struggle is constant and involves balancing the four major bosses of the camp: the camp board, the membership of the PSWD, the USFS, and State regulators. “Janet has done an incredible job and has exceeded my, and many other’s expectations.” She dug this camp right out of the dark abyss, and stayed long enough (20 years now) to move forward with a vision.”

When asked about the current state of camp, she tells me how proud she is to see all of the changes that have taken place over the last twenty years. “Many people are thrilled at the things they can see. I’m thrilled with the things we can’t see. Because I know what it was like at camp before we had someone with a vision and good follow through at the helm.” Birdie sees Camp de Benneville Pines as a place where unreal bonds are created, where connections are bridged, and as a place of outreach to collectively create solutions. “Part of what I’d like to see is a greater awareness that the camp exists among the members of our congregations. They all need to use and enjoy the camp. The camp is our collective enterprise, and as owners, we have a responsibility to see that it is successful—now and into the future.” When asked about what she finds most important moving forward, she emphasizes the youth. By involving them with camp, and the PSWD camping ministries program, “it keeps them in the denomination, or at least very friendly to it. The contact with the wilderness, forming lifetime friendships, and maintaining their own individual experiences long after they’ve left senior high camp, are all integral parts of what makes Camp de Benneville Pines so special to the youth.”

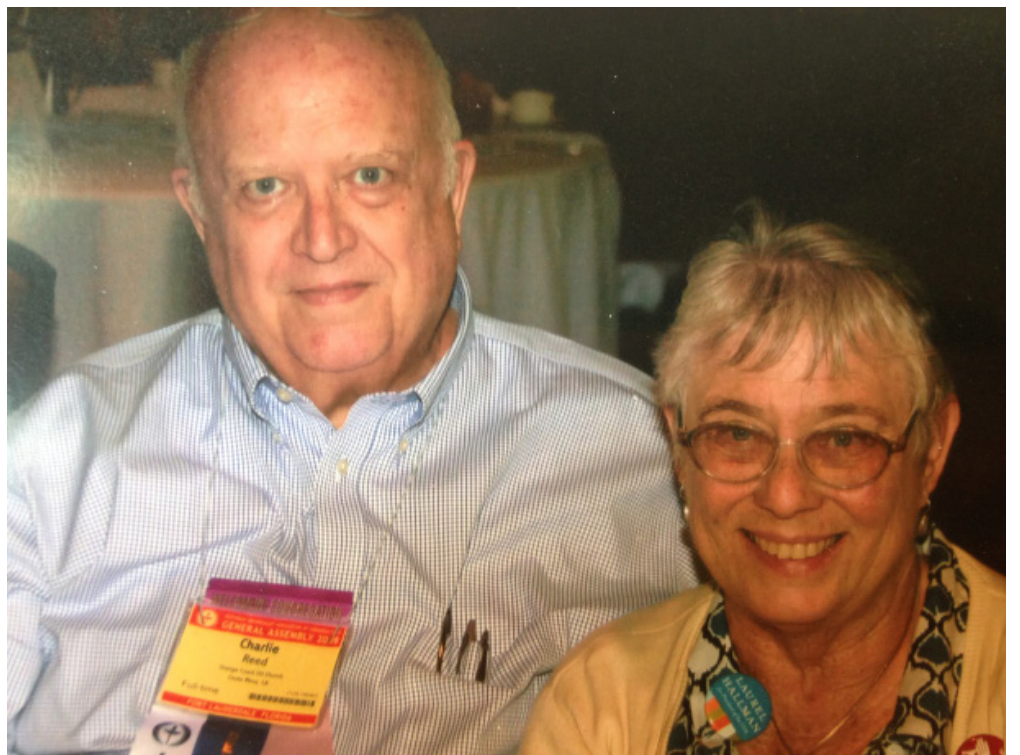
There is a saying Birdie heard at a camp conference, she recalls, “Tomorrow’s Leaders are at Camp Today.” And how true that statement is. Many of our youth have gone on to serve as camp counselors and deans, church board members, social justice leaders, DRE’s and ministers. Many others are now parents bringing their own children to camp.

Birdie looks at her watch and cuts our interview a bit short, “Time to go.” For the next few hours we make a trip to visit an inmate at the Santa Ana Jail, a place where Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has been heavily present, keeping a substantially high number of detainees. Every week for one hour Birdie meets with Daysi Bonilla, a 38 year-old mother with four children, who is facing deportation proceedings to Honduras, a country she has no memory of. “I don’t even speak Spanish well—I left when I was three years old.” Daysi tells me how much she looks forward to these visits from Birdie and that it “helps keep me sane, feeling positive, and motivated. I am so grateful for her.” They talk a little about everything from camp, politics, books, sports teams, to the status on Bonilla’s case. Through the glass, I am witnessing a beautiful exchange between two people, from completely different backgrounds and experiences, connecting purely out of love, respect, and support for one another.

“We should consider it a duty to take on the work that needs to be done—whether it is fulfilling our roles at camp to the best of our ability, engaging with our community or church affiliation, being attentive to social and environmental justice, or lending strength to a society in need of strong leadership.”

Birdie and Charlie Reed—two people who are a testament to “walking the walk”—without their commitment to the importance of the outdoor ministries program for the youth and families of the PSWD, de Benneville Pines would not be here today. Indeed, our district and the campers of today owe a lot to the dedicated work and perseverance of Birdie and Charlie Reed.

**(Dedicated to the memory of Charlie Reed,  
who passed away on April 19, 2015)**



## Craig Block Memorial Scholarship Fund

**The greater camp community mourns the loss of an outstanding camp supporter and champion of youth, Craig Block.**

**In 2000, Craig began attending Camp de Benneville Pines and fell in love with youth programming and the UU campers. After several years serving on program staff, Craig took on the challenge of being Dean of the senior high camps. He looked forward to these semi-annual “vacations” in the mountains with great pleasure, and provided solid guidance for youth—as well as had a lot of fun! Craig served as Dean for both the winter and summer senior high camps for seven years, stating that he got great joy encouraging youth to develop their confidence and leadership skills by engaging and inspiring them to be the best that they can be.**



**Craig passed away on January 8, 2016, of complications from non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. His was a life well lived, and he will be missed by the many campers whose lives he touched. A memorial fund has been started in his name to honor Craig’s work with district youth. Your help in underwriting the Craig Block Memorial Scholarship Fund is greatly appreciated.**

**Log on to the camp’s website, [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org),  
and click the DONATE NOW button,  
or mail a check to Camp de Benneville Pines,  
41750 W. Jenks Lake Rd,  
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305.  
Memo line: Craig Block.**

**Be a part of Craig’s legacy.  
Help send a youth to camp by donating to the  
Craig Block Memorial Scholarship Fund.**

## Jr. High Trilogy continued from page 17

When the lights came back on and the dragon vanished, we asked each camper to decorate a teardrop-shape with symbols of the power that they personally stand against: whatever evil, injustice, insecurity, or negativity they wished to overcome. Then we took these down to the Coffee House and added them to the paper dragon taped on the wall: a reminder that powers and structures of evil are never a monolith—they are made up of many different decisions, insecurities, fears, and poor choices, and different



people working together have the power to dismantle them.

In the morning, our team of adventurers, heroes, and champions (who only looked like 6th, 7th, and 8th graders to the untrained eye) got to choose their challenges. Each workshop was a chance to earn a few more pieces of the chalice's light—glass “gems” handed out for things like participation, creativity, perseverance, teamwork, UU principles in action, and remembering to wear one's nametag. Campers could make their own cardboard armor, create

and decorate their own chalice, work as a team to get across a chasm, play a mini-Dungeons-and-Dragons game, shoot a bow-and-arrow, talk about real-world justice issues, and hike to Jenks Lake to follow the clues and find the cache of gems hidden there (by one of the boy's cabin counselors, Brendan McLaughlin, who had hiked out the day before, bless him.)

Every camper had a muslin pouch to keep their gems in throughout the day, and when night fell we had the chance to take back the pieces that had been stolen and hoarded by the dragon in various “nests” across the camp . . . unless, of course, the gem-wraiths caught you and made you surrender up to half the gems you'd found so far. For this year's Night Hunt we put marbles inside plastic Easter eggs, and added glow-tape to each, and there were LED lights inside balloons hanging from the trees to offer clues that a nest (but also, potentially, a wraith) was nearby. Not everybody was into the Night Hunt; many campers chose to spend the evening in the warmth and comfort of the lodge instead. Some expressed concern at the idea of fighting or killing the dragon—wasn't there a way we could bring her (or him) to reason? Was this camp theme going to send the message that violence is justified?

These youth were ahead of the curve, although they didn't know it yet. When the Night Hunt ended, the camp gathered in the lodge and filed down to the Coffee House, where Mary and I had prepared for the epic-boss-battle of a camp-dean-lifetime. Our dragon was there in 3D flesh: a seven-foot-tall, inflated, glowing beast with LED eyes and a hissing, threatening voice coming through the microphone. In the center of the room stood the chalice of light, a glass bowl on a tall pedestal, filled with water, surrounded by glowing red candles—the flame of hate. We explained that every gem of light they'd collected would be necessary to defeat the dragon: one by one, campers stepped into the circle, emptied their pouch into the chalice, and raised the water level just a bit—but in the end, just enough. When everyone's collected gems had been added to the bowl, the water spilled over, hit the dry ice concealed at the base of the pedestal, and produced fog that spread across the flames of hate, extinguishing them (via remote control—they were electronic). When the flames went out, the dragon Ignorantia began to collapse as though being deflated, stripped of his or her wicked power. A.K.A. unplugged. But not killed, just disempowered—we produced a mini-dragon, “cut down to size”, ready to re-learn all about living in a caring community and working as a team. The campers who had ethical concerns about “defeating the dragon” were satisfied, and the campers who really wanted their hard-earned gems back got to take a handful from the chalice the next morning. And during closing, when everyone had the opportunity to take some gems and say a few words about what they were taking down the mountain with them, multiple middle-schoolers said, out loud—I am not making this up—that this weekend made them feel like they have the power to make a difference in the world.



Adding gems to the chalice of light to extinguish the flames of hate

All I want in life is to help young people realize that they have the ability to make the world a better place. That, and to be a part of ridiculous costumed events where everyone agrees to play the same kind of “pretend” together and we all become friends. Camp de Benneville Pines let me do both—not just once, not even twice, but three years in a row.

As grand and glorious an adventure as it's been, Mary and I have both decided, after three years of hard volunteer work, to step down from this camp. This means we need a successor—and those of you doing the math may have realized that none of the 6th, 7th, or 8th graders who will be eligible for this camp next November would have been at Camp MUUGgle, meaning that we can re-play this camp trilogy indefinitely. Hypothetically, I mean. I'm just saying. But more broadly, I encourage you to consider the limitless potential for imaginative, outrageous, fantastical group experiences that de Benneville can play host to. At every turn, Mary and I found ourselves asking “Can we do that?” and consistently heard Janet, Curtis, Randy, Chris, Steve, and everyone else on the site-staff team say “Yes. What else do you need?” Like magic.

And, if it's not too bold for me to hope, dear reader, that you might be asking the same question—wondering what else we need to keep making magical, transformative, coming-of-age adventures for youth—I have one very clear answer: help kids get there. My biggest regret of all three years is that we didn't sell out; there was space for kids who never got to be a part of the magic. I believe religiously that a de Benneville experience should be accessible to every UU kid who wants to go—I refuse to allow profound religious experiences to be doled out based on privilege. Congregations can make this possible with a camp scholarship fund; adults can offer to drive, or loan a car with more seatbelts; I've even seen camp registration fees paid out of the Minister's Discretionary Fund. Camp is where young people claim their own faith identity, and become lifelong Unitarian Universalists. It's a rite of passage, a voyage into the unknown, a seed with the power to grow into a life's work. I believe that everyone deserves the chance to experience that magic, and we all have the power to make it happen for our youth. So, pick up your wand, volunteer time at youth camp or sponsor a youth from your church to go to camp. Anything is possible up on the mountain, and I hope to see all of the district youth at camp one day.

*I cannot tell the story of these three amazing camps without giving credit to all of the amazing staff who jumped in blindly with an enthusiastic “yes, and.” Mary and I are profoundly grateful to you all: Danielle Bell, Uri Plumlee, Shenoa Carroll-Bradd, Brendan McLaughlin, Nick Mirandon-Hunter, Anya Vail, Rev. Matthew Crary, Stephanie Crary, Kim Santiago-Kalmanson, Nalani Santiago-Kalmanson, Nancy Fisk, Ashlei Tave, Brett Lynam, Eric Rosloff, Claire Johnson, Eric Einem, Laura Janes, Geoff Anderla, Bibi Van Der Heiden, Daniel Martin, Olivia Calvi, Griffin Morgan, Morgan Riddle, Devon Swafford, Sarah Hoodbhoys, Alan Worley, and Elizabeth Assenza.*

**Help PSWD youth experience the magic of camp!**  
**DONATE TO THE CRAIG BLOCK**  
**MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**  
**See page 18 for more information**

## PSWD Summer YoUUtH Camps 2016

Cost \$575

\$495 if registered by 5/31/16

Submit registration with a \$75 non-refundable deposit,  
full balance due one week before start of camp.

No refunds after check-in.

**Elementary Camp:** Campers completing grades 2 – 5  
**Junior High Camp:** Campers completing grades 6 – 8  
**Senior High Camp:** Campers completing grades 9 – 12

Registration Form on Page 23

Or visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click “Camps & Retreats”

### Elementary Summer Camp “Our World is One World”

Sunday, July 10 – Saturday, July 16, 2016

Dean: Celeste Plumlee

The world needs you. It needs people who have compassion, who listen, who think, and who want to make things better. You have the ability to change things in small ways, in big ways, in important ways; and the truth is...you have already changed the world just by being you. All over the world, people are working to make things better, and at PSWD Elementary Summer Camp we will come together to be part of that adventure. And... we will also have SO MUCH FUN! At camp, you will make new friends, try new things, and discover the many reasons why the world needs you to be exactly who you are—a caring and loving human being. You will enjoy hiking, music, crafts, swimming, singing, tie dyeing, fort building...and tons of other activities.

All campers are well cared for by trained counselors guided by Unitarian Universalist principles and who work to build a loving and inclusive camp community. The new and rich experiences at elementary summer camp can be genuinely life-changing for kids. Don't miss this opportunity for your child to have a fabulous week in the forest with a loving UU community of friends!

This event is for campers completing grades 2nd – 5th.

### Junior High Summer Camp “Camp Journeys”

Sunday, July 17 – Saturday, July 23, 2016

Deans: Kathleen Moscato and Marianne Swift Gifford

Being a Unitarian Universalist means acting in a way that reflects our beliefs and our principles. Because ours is a creedless faith, defining what it means to be a UU can be challenging. We often welcome such a challenge — indeed, a questioning spirit is part of our faith. Come explore how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. Your journey is like no other. Your talents are unique to you. Your gifts can make a difference in ways others can't! Your journey brings you many opportunities to make a difference...just by being YOU! We are already on a journey...the journey called ‘life’! We are called to realize our full potential, and to become a force for good in the world. If we respond to the call, we're in for an adventure. Life is certainly not going to be boring! Treasure every moment you have and remember that time waits for no one!

Campers will have the opportunity to participate in swimming, hiking, team building, game playing, canoeing, music, arts and crafts, variety show, making friends for a lifetime, and more!

Take a journey with us at PSWD Junior High Summer Youth Camp!

This event is for campers completing grades 6th - 8th.



### Senior High Summer Camp “Camp Star Wars - The YoUUtH Awaken”

Sunday, July 24 – Saturday, July 30, 2016

Youth Co-Deans: Marie-Catherine Smith & Wes Crary    Adult Deans: Lauren Worley & Kathe Larick

Greetings, young Padawans! Come join us for Jedi training this summer at Camp Star Wars: The YoUUtH Awaken. This camp is more than just about the Force. It's also about something stronger: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT. We will discuss the contrast between the light and dark side, youth stereotypes and how to grow out of them. Discover some significant pioneers who broke the typical “teenage stereotypes”. Take a break from the hot deserts of Tatooine to come enjoy the cool mountain breezes of Camp de Benneville Pines with all its nature. We will enjoy the beautiful scenery of Jenks Lake, become more informed and powerful individuals, and come closer to becoming Jedis, all in a week! Senior high camp offers all the usual camp fun—like hiking, swimming, service project, night crossing, raps, dancing, and singing, as well as an assortment of well planned and thought-provoking workshops. So come share this week with us as we enjoy team building games, Star Wars-themed activities, good food, and so much more. **Don't forget: UUse the FoUUrce, YoUUtH!**

This event is for campers completing grades 9th – 12th.

## PSWD's Counselor-in-Training Program

Sunday, July 10 - Saturday, July 16, 2016

CIT Coordinators: Emmalinda MacLean and Mary Carter Vail

Do you want to give an amazing camp experience to the next generation of campers? Ready for a summer of hard work and serious responsibility, mixed with outrageous fun and friendship? Then train to be a cabin counselor with the CIT program!

Delve into a week of intensive learning as you discover the behind-the-scenes side of camp! We'll explore leadership styles and conflict management, build skills for working with children, practice handling emergency situations, learn how to lead age-appropriate workshops and games, and so much more. In addition to learning how to be top-notch counselors, CITs build connections with each other and become an integral part of the Elementary Camp community. Training takes place in the first half of the day; in the afternoon, CITs will gain

practical experience by assisting cabin counselors and program staff.

Space is limited to 8 participants, with the goal that all CITs will complete the program and be recommended to serve as counselors for future camps—although this is not guaranteed. Please be mindful that we are hoping for a multi-year counseling commitment from applicants (dependent on their successful completion of the program). All applicants must be between the ages of 15 and 18; a formal CIT application will be sent upon receipt of deposit and registration. All applications, including letters of recommendation, must be in by May 19 to qualify for consideration. Final acceptance notification will be made by June 1, 2016.

**Cost: \$425 (no discounts available for this program)**



## PSWD Young Adult Camp 'Stretching our Faith – Justice as Spiritual Practice' A Retreat for Unitarian Universalists age 18 - 35

Friday, September 2 – Monday, September 5, 2016

Deans: Buudha Quant & Robin Darling

Spend Labor Day Weekend with other UU Young Adults to learn with one another, share stories, and strengthen your faith community. Young UU's will be stretching their faith by exploring spiritual practice with deepening and reflective worship, engaging in a call to justice with informative workshops and identity ministry work. Round off the weekend experience with fun, arts and crafts, relaxation, fresh mountain air, and of course, pool time! Bridging Senior High Campers are encouraged to join this very special camp community, and new leaders and workshop facilitators are always welcome! Come discover a special group of people in a special place. If you are between the ages of 18 and 35, then PSWD Young Adult Camp awaits you!

For more information, please email [yacampregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:yacampregistrar@gmail.com).

To register for this awesome event, visit [www.connectuu.com](http://www.connectuu.com).

## "Return to the Playground"

Friday, September 9 – Sunday, September 11, 2016

Deans: Lisa Harris and Kathy Bolte

Our daily lives are packed full of activities, responsibilities, "to do" lists, and myriad other things that keep us busy, focused, and serious. With all of this busyness, have you forgotten the importance of making time for play? Many of us have probably forgotten how to step out of our serious mode and into our childlike, light-hearted, playful mode. Does this sound like you?

Yoga Camp 2016 will be devoted to reminding us all how to incorporate that sense of fun into our daily lives. Some of the playful activities offered will include: AIReal Yoga™, Playful Yoga Tune Up®, Partner Yoga, Playtime with Nick the Music Man and Jen the Fairy Dancer, Fun with Cooking, playing with Balls (self-massage balls, that is!), Slow Stretch Yoga Slumber Party, Crystal Bowl Chakra Attunement, and so much more.

All skill levels from beginners to advanced yoga practitioners welcome!

Sign up early to assure your place in this weekend of playful fun. Join us and remember what it's like to feel like a kid again!

\$195 per person if registered by July 30

\$220 per person standard rate thereafter

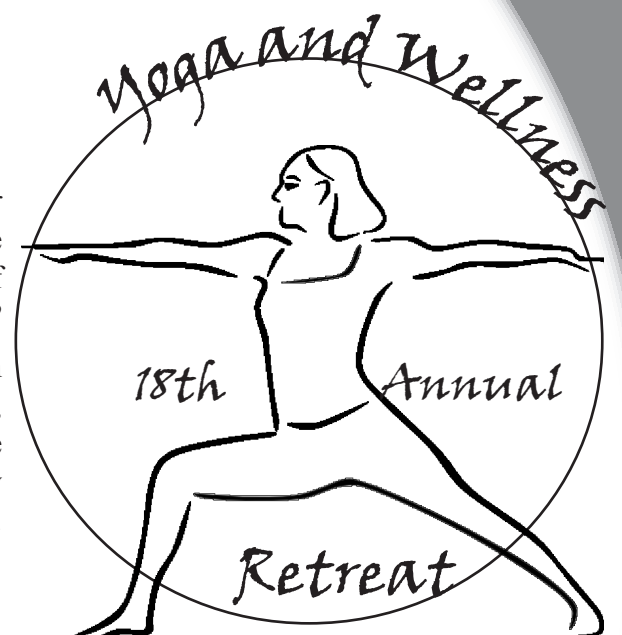
Price includes food, lodging, classes, and activities

(Additional fees apply for massage, acupuncture, and individual instruction)

Upgrades: + \$30 per person for Craig's Cabin and Cabin 6

Thursday arrival: + \$20 per person

(Lodging only, bring picnic food. First meal is dinner on Friday.)



To register, visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click "Camps & Retreats" click on Adult Camps to register for Yoga Camp.

Non-refundable deposit of \$75 per person must accompany reservation.

Registration opens March 10th.



## 12-Step Fall Mountain Retreat

Friday, September 23 – Sunday, September 25, 2016

Enjoy a weekend of self-care where you and your "inner child" can grow, heal, play, discover, reflect and work on yourself. We will journey deeper into our recovery with enthusiasm through workshops, 12-step meetings, crafts, music, drumming, hiking, body movement, dancing and fellowship. We invite all persons from ACA, CODA and similar 12-step programs to come participate in this event.

For information and pricing, visit [acafallmountainretreat@gmail.com](mailto:acafallmountainretreat@gmail.com) or call 562-367-4325

# Save These Dates for Winter Fun 2015 – 2016

PSWD Jr. High Winter Camp  
November 18 – 20, 2016

PSWD Sr. High Winter Camp  
December 27, 2016 – January 1, 2017

PSWD Elementary/Family Winter Camp  
February 18 – 20, 2017

Watch our website for details – [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org)



## Music in the Mountains

Friday, November 4 – Sunday, November 6, 2016



There is something truly inspiring about a creative weekend of music-making together. Join us to elevate and celebrate the traditions of acoustic folk music at a memorable weekend of toe-tapping music. All levels of fiddlers, guitar and banjo players, percussionists, other instrumentalists and singers will attend scheduled workshops and jam in spontaneous groups throughout the weekend. Those who wish to perform may do so at the Saturday night Hoot. This amazing weekend is so reasonably priced that you can hardly justify staying home! Lodging, meals, workshops are all included in the price.

For details and pricing: go to [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on “Camps & Retreats”

Registration opens April 1st

## Thanksgiving Celebration: A Family Tradition

Thursday, November 24 – Sunday, November 27, 2016

Our intergenerational camp offered over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend has become a tradition for many families. Enjoy the best, most hassle-free Thanksgiving you have ever experienced! Relax by the roaring lodge fire or take an energizing hike in the crisp autumn air. The talented camp staff will take care of the shopping, meal planning, cooking and dishes...and you get to enjoy your family and friends.

Attendees are asked to volunteer their services and talents by presenting a program or workshop over the weekend.

Adults: \$195      Youth (3 to 17): \$155      Children 2 & under: Free

Wednesday arrival: add \$20 per person (no food service offered until Thursday dinner)

Friday arrival: subtract \$20 per person      Craig’s Cabin/Cabin 6: add \$35 per adult

Double bed in cabins 5, 7, 8 (two people required): add \$35 per room

Non-refundable deposit of \$75 per person due at time of registration. Mail in the form on page 23, or go to [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on “Camps & Retreats”.



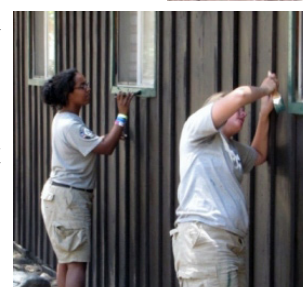
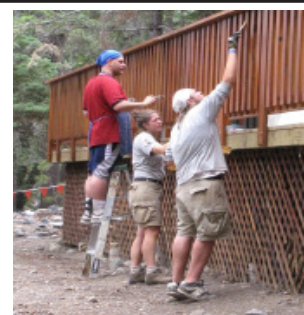
Registration opens April 1st

## Work Weekend 2016

Spring Work Camp: Friday, May 6 – Sunday, May 8, 2016

Get out in the great outdoors and give yourself a little workout! Each year, the camp hosts work camps, and we invite anyone age 11 or older to join in. Both skilled and unskilled labor are welcome. Rake leaves, paint buildings, clean rain gutters, split wood, dust out the cobwebs, ready the camp for winter or spiff up the place for summer. Delicious food and comfortable accommodations are provided to you in exchange for the sweat of your brow! Camp de Benneville Pines was built by the loving hands of volunteers, and the tradition lives on with those who choose to help take care of her. We have room for 50 energetic souls, but space goes quickly, so be sure to register early. Registration opens March 10th.

Visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org) and click on “Camps & Retreats”



Register online with a credit card and guarantee your reservation immediately  
Visit [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org), then click on “Camps & Retreats”.  
Or use the mail-in form below.  
All events require a \$75 per person non-refundable deposit.  
Your payment in full will be required prior to the event.

Adult & Family Event Registration Form								
Event Name:				Event Dates:				
Attendee Name	Special Diet, Allergies or Medical Needs	Adult=A or Child's DOB	Fee	Upgrade	Extra Day	Early Reg Discount	Donation	Total Due
								\$
								\$
								\$
								\$
Total enclosed/to be charged								\$
Address				Home Phone				
City & State				Cell Phone				
Zip	If you would like to receive confirmation that we have received your registration or if you would like to charge your fees, please include an e-mail address.			E-Mail				
Circle Requests:	Craig's Cabin	Cabin 6	Double Bed (upgrade may apply)		Bottom Bunk		Carpool (if available)	
Cabinmates:				Additional Information:				
UU Congregation								
To use a credit card, complete the following:				Expiration Date		Security Code (3 digits MC/VISA/DISC; 4 digits AMEX)		
Card #/Type (VISA/MC/DISC/AMEX)								



**UUACCC**  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ALLIANCE  
OF CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTERS

To pay by mail, return your registration form with a check to:

Camp de Benneville Pines  
41750 Jenks Lake Rd West  
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305

To pay via credit card,  
Call (909) 794-1252

Or scan and email registration form to [registrar@uucamp.org](mailto:registrar@uucamp.org)



**UUACCC**  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ALLIANCE  
OF CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTERS

PSWD YoUUth Camp Registration Form										
Camp Name:						Camp Dates:				
Attendee Name	Special Diet, Allergies or Medical Needs	Birth Date	Grade in Fall	M/F	Fee	Early Reg Discount	Sibling Disc (1 per family)	T-shirt \$12 Sweatshirt \$25	Scholarship Fund Donation	Total Due
										\$
										\$
										\$
If you have a special or high-needs child, please let us know. We will have someone contact you to determine the best way to support your child and the family.							Total enclosed/to be charged		\$	
Parent's Name(s)										
Address						Home Phone				
City & State						Cell Phone				
Zip	If you would like to receive confirmation that we have received your registration or if you would like to charge your fees, please include an e-mail address.					E-Mail				
First Time Camper?	Yes	/	No	Do you need a PSWD Scholarship? Yes / No		Scholarships are awarded on the basis of need and a camper's willingness to raise money for him/herself. Please send scholarship requests to Tera Little at <a href="mailto:teral@att.net">teral@att.net</a> or (626) 840-5412				
Cabinmates:						Additional Information: (shirt size, etc.)				
UU Congregation										
To use a credit card, complete the following:						Expiration Date		Security Code (3 digits MC/VISA/DISC; 4 digits AMEX)		
Card #/Type (VISA/MC/DISC/AMEX)										

Camp de Benneville Pines  
Board of Directors  
2015 – 2016

**President**  
Glenn Noreen

**Vice President**  
Betsy Gilpin

**Secretary**  
Louise Klatt

**Treasurer**  
Andy Kissner

**Members at Large**  
Randy McDaniel  
Tom Thorward  
Ross Quinn  
Karen Quinn

**Executive Director**  
*Janet James*

**Camp Staff**  
Ed Bagdon  
Reed Blanton  
Daniel Caple  
Randy Carroll-Bradd  
Clarissa Delatorre  
Curtis Duffie  
Fenay Ellis  
Jackie Emery  
Marty Farquhar  
Niki Giberson  
Steve Johnston  
Jill Lummus  
Teresa Lupian  
Trudy Mann  
Sandra Olson  
Elvia Prieto  
Rhonda Reeves  
Chrisandra Sveen

## Our Mission:

The mission of Camp de Benneville Pines is to provide a mountain retreat where Unitarian Universalist principles and values are lived and celebrated in community.

## Camp Purpose

- To provide a place to relax and recreate in life-affirming ways
- To provide a central gathering place for the Pacific Southwest District
- To provide a place for promoting life-long spiritual growth
- To develop leaders through volunteer opportunities/experiences
- To conserve a wilderness setting
- To extend UU influence in the larger community
- To encourage the expression of diverse ideas in a safe atmosphere of mutual respect
- To facilitate the ongoing process of community building within and among UU societies



This facility is operated under a Special Use permit on land under the jurisdiction of the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.

## Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teaching which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

## New Camp Logo Contest Winner!

### *A Brand New Design to Help Celebrate Camp's 55th Anniversary*

Your Board of Directors first wish to thank all those who entered the contest to select a new camp logo. Our finalists:

Caroline Clark  
Kathy Dolin  
Maddy Gordon  
Laura Janes  
Jay Kay  
Linda Luisi  
Mia Norberg-Sanchez  
Wendall Pasqual  
and Miles Presley

We also wish to thank all those who took time to look at the candidate entries and fill out a ballot indicating their favorite design. Your participation made this endeavor a success!

The Winning entry was inspired by Laura Janes, Congratulations! This entry was a clear favorite, having had 50% more votes than the second most popular. The next step will be to send the design to a graphic artist who will interpret the concept of the design to be used on camp t-shirts, mugs, postcards, letterheads, and other items at de Benneville!



## How to Contact Us

Camp de Benneville Pines  
41750 Jenks Lake Road West  
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305  
Office & Group Reservations  
909-794-2928 (phone)  
909-794-2418 (fax)  
[director@uucamp.org](mailto:director@uucamp.org)

Lodge/Kitchen  
909-794-8712

Registration  
909-794-1252 (Mssg. phone)  
[registrar@uucamp.org](mailto:registrar@uucamp.org)

Camp Website  
[www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org)