

COVID-19 has changed our lives in so many ways. Who knows when things will return to normal?

Returning to Camp one day may mean wearing masks and following social distancing practices. It may mean smaller camps so that people are not sleeping so closely together. It will look different, that is certain. And at least for now, many people are still reticent about venturing out from home and are committed to socially distancing to protect themselves and others from the COVID virus.

Our challenge going forward will be to hold onto a place that is so dear to so many. One day when we can return to “normalcy” we will hunger to be at our camp in community—to hug, to laugh, to share, and to care together. When the day arrives when we can come out from behind our masks, we do not want to find that de Benneville Pines does not exist for us, for our children and grandchildren. What a great loss that would be on top of so many other losses.



The camp’s fixed costs are running about \$50,000 a month, and that is with reduced staffing. We expect those costs to drop once we have finished refurbishing the cabins, but it is important to maintain baseline staff, so we don’t lose our operational memory. The process of reopening to full camps may take some time. People will need to find their way back into society and to camp, and it could take a few years before we can generate enough income to break even again.

To this end, our stewardship committee will soon launch a campaign to raise \$600,000 to support camp operations. This money will enable the camp to limp along for upwards of 18 months, by which time we should know what the new normal is going to be. Gulp, \$600,000! This goal might seem utterly ridiculous to some, but in my view, it is critical to weathering the COVID storm. Whether you believe we should all hold up in our homes until there is a vaccine or believe we need to re-enter cautiously back into society, both scenarios impact Camp. And the bottom line for de Benneville Pines is this: *without a vigorous and continual revenue stream from camp rentals, we must fundraise to survive.*



It will take churches, campers, non-campers, lease groups, grants, gifts, Facebook asks, Faithify asks, and creative thinking and doing to reach \$600,000...but we are called to try and try we must. A major push to find lead gifts is going on right now. If you have the capacity to be a lead contributor, please contact Pat Gordon at pgordon@sduc.edu or Janet James at director@uucamp.org. We need to hear from you. And please watch your mailbox for our appeal letter with a return envelope. Your participation on any level will be critical

to the success of the camp’s emergency campaign. You can also find a DONATE NOW button in this newsletter.

Together we can ensure that our beloved camp continues its legacy of building community, preserving our environment, encouraging life-long growth, and changing the world for the better for generations to come. From the mountain top to your house, I wish you well.

Janet James
Executive Director