



NCC's Redwood Camp Meeting Held in Person



More than 900 people attended Northern California Conference's (NCC) Redwood Camp Meeting, which was divided into two six-day sessions between July 19-31. Compared with previous years, the event was very simple. The grocery store, cafeteria, ministry booths, and other amenities were closed.

Gary Venden, senior pastor of the Glendale church in Arizona, and Lee Venden, Arizona Conference revivalist, presented a series on the Book of John in an open-air pavilion with plenty of space for social distancing.

"We were really blessed by the Vendens' powerful presentations," said Redwood Camp Meeting Director Harry Salvini. "Children and teens also received a blessing thanks to the top-notch, creative programs led by dedicated laypeople and pastors. In addition, many volunteers made this year's camp meeting an inspiration and encouragement for all who attended."

Stay connected with the news and learn about plans for next year's camp meeting at redwoodareacamp.com.

Redwood Volunteers Have Servant Hearts!

NCC leaders who attended this year's camp meeting brought back stories of Redwood volunteers with servant hearts.



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Basil Oilar - security

I had the privilege of working with an amazing gentleman whom I now call friend, Basil Oilar, a Eureka church member. We worked together for two weeks handling safety and security assignments.

Basil surrendered his life to Jesus back in 2016 after receiving an impression that he would die if he didn't change his life. He began his quest to follow the Lord by first attending an independent Sabbath-keeping church, but he eventually backslid into the world of drugs. Not long after this, the Holy Spirit led him to the Eureka church, where he met Pastor Roger Williams. Later he was invited to camp meeting, and he eventually began working with Williams, doing what he's still doing—helping to provide safety and security.

Brother Basil is an excellent pastry chef! (I sampled his pumpkin spice bread and his root beer cake.) He provides cake of some sort every week for the Eureka church potluck. "Preparing food for my church gives me another purpose for service in my Christian walk," he told me.

Redwood Camp Meeting is a little safer with Basil around because he is committed and passionate about caring for the people of God.

By Willie Johnson, African American ministries coordinator/urban ministries director



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Elena Blum - children's division

Everyone who saw the gate leading to the children's division for ages 5-9 was immediately drawn to the elaborate sets behind it. The division's theme was "The Christian Journey," focusing on the story of The Pilgrim's Progress. The sets included Doubting Castle, Vanity Fair, the Celestial City, and more. Each day, the kids acted out part of the story and also learned about the armor of God.



High school sophomore Elena Blum served as the division's assistant director. (Her mom, Coreena, was the director.) Elena worked on all aspects of the program, including planning, setting up, and teaching. "Seeing it all come together was pretty cool," she said. She enjoyed creating the "Bible Museum," which featured likenesses of David's slingshot, the forbidden fruit, the jawbone of a donkey, and other items from familiar stories.

Every day, the children spent four and a half hours in the division, rotating through various stations. I am sure they won't forget how much fun they had learning about Jesus.

"I want the kids to have good memories of camp meeting," said Elena, a member of the Manteca church. "I loved it here when I was little. Camp meeting was my favorite part of the summer."

By Jim Lorenz, ministerial director



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Ken Eastburn - pumper truck

At this year's camp meeting, I had the opportunity to talk with Ken Eastburn, who drives the pumper truck. Although he is not a member of the Adventist Church, he has been doing this work at camp meeting for six years. He told me that Redwood is a sanctuary for him. "Every time I come, I am changed," said Ken (pictured on left with Camino/Camino Spanish district Pastor Avi Mendoza).

Although we usually think of camp meeting as a time of spiritual refreshment for church members, it can also serve a missional purpose. I think about the many grandparents—whose children are no longer church members—who bring their grandkids. I think about the people who have drifted away from God who come to Redwood to see old friends. I think about people, like Ken, who find it easier to go camping than to go to church. God is using Redwood to draw all these people to Himself.

By Jose Marin, executive secretary

Richard and Duane Dederer - heavy equipment

I appreciate Richard (pictured in red) and Duane Dederer—members of the Redding church. Each summer, they arrive a week before camp meeting starts and stay until a week after. They drive the backhoe, tractor, forklift, and cherry picker. They've built bridges, repaired buildings, dug trenches, trimmed trees, and more! They are willing to do whatever the camp requires—always with a smile. These men have a strong desire to serve the Lord, and they love people.





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The brothers were raised in a farming family in Canada, and their father taught them to drive tractors and all kinds of agricultural equipment. Nearly 40 years ago, after they had moved to the Redding area, they heard that Redwood had a lot of energetic elderly volunteers but needed younger workers. They offered to help in any way they could, and they have not missed a camp meeting since 1983. They now serve on the Redwood board of directors.

"We are very passionate every year to have the campground ready for the campers," said Richard, who is 80 years old.

"We don't mind driving 200-plus miles from home to serve the community that comes to the meetings," said Duane, who is 79. "We enjoy helping people."

By Sal Alvarado, ABC Manager