



THE Missionary

April 2021

A publication of Central Union Mission • missiondc.org

No one should live hungry and homeless

Are You Ready for the Summer?

CAMP BENNETT CHRISTIAN MINISTRY CENTER is all set for the 2021 summer season. According to Camp Director Michael Tate, “After an unexpected extra year of preparation, we’re excited about all the updates and renovations we’ve done. This summer is going to be a blast.”

Heads up, thrill seekers: Come test your nerve on Camp Bennett’s new zip line. At 553 feet, it’s now the longest continuous line in Maryland. You can also conquer our new ropes course with challenges at every level—some as high as forty feet in the air! Campers can also enjoy restored hiking trails and camping sites, a renovated outdoor chapel and many other improvements.

Camp Bennett continues its original mission of encouraging children by providing five-day, four-night camp sessions for children from underprivileged families from June 28 to August 13, 2021. For some of these city kids, this will be the first time they’ve slept away from home and in a wooded setting. The summer’s theme is “FORGIVEN!,” exploring the “Prodigal Son”



Campers make lasting memories in the great outdoors.

parable from the book of Luke. For information about registering your child for camp, visit campbennett.org/registration.html.

In addition to our camp program for underprivileged kids, your church group, Christian business, Christian school and others can share in Camp Bennett’s peaceful setting by renting campsites, the obstacle course, cabins and indoor and outdoor facilities for group and family events. Currently, the facility is at 50 percent capacity due to Maryland COVID-19 guidelines, however, we’re optimistic that the summer will bring more opportunities. Visit campbennett.org/facilities.html to see all that Camp Bennett offers. ■

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK • APRIL 18-24, 2021

Spotlight on Our Dedicated Volunteers

By Marc O'Brien

THIS UPCOMING National Volunteer Week, which was established in 1974, presents a special opportunity for us at the Mission to recognize the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers

to help to tackle our greatest challenges. Simply put, volunteers help build stronger communities and are a force that transforms our society for good.

Everyone has weathered a full year of the COVID-19 pandemic, and at the Mission, we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of our volunteers. We recognize and thank those who lend their time, talent and voice to make a difference in the community. This past year has taxed everyone’s creativity, as volunteers have been un-

Continues on page 5



Plus Consulting Career Club makes an awesome donation of enhanced Health&Wellness Kits.

Punctuate Your Life with Peace

WHEN A LOVED ONE DIES, it can be a very emotional time. Feelings of grief, loss, and regret comingle with gratitude, warm memories and celebration of the person's life. In addition to these emotions, the family members left

behind need to handle the delicate and sensitive matters of a person's estate, which can cause stress and conflict.

These heartaches can be avoided. Here's where to start:

Construct a plan. Did you know 60 percent of Americans do not have an estate plan? Creating a will is actually a simple process, but the impact is monumental. An up-to-date will can ensure your loved ones are provided for without additional expense and frustration.

Communicate your heart. Once you've created an estate plan, it's important to explain the decisions you've made. For example, some families experience complicated relationships or situations where receiving an inheritance could actually be detrimental. It's better to be honest than

to leave a lifetime of questions. It can also be a wonderful time to speak from your heart. Share about your personal values and causes or organizations you've cared about or included in your will, like Central Union Mission.

Collect information. Many people create a "love drawer" or "love file" to gather important information their loved ones will need in the future. This could include legal documents, financial account information, insurance policies, passwords, medical wishes or personal letters sharing how much they've meant to you.

Following these steps can help avoid confusion and hurt and may even bring blessing to grieving family members and friends. ■



For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of **Three Ways to Avoid Family Heartache** by contacting Deborah Chambers at 202-827-3078 or dchambers@missiondc.org, or bless your family today with a God-honoring will at christianwill.org/missiondc.

From the President It's Time for Camp



WE'VE BEEN ANTICIPATING Camp Bennett Christian Ministry Center's summer program for two years now, and the wait is over! While there will likely be some reduced capacity, we're expecting children from the city to be hiking in the woods, making s'mores and learning about a God who loves them. See page six for how you can sponsor a camper or honor a loved one with a facility sponsorship.

Plus, Camp Bennett is available for private rental for ministry events and gatherings. Your family, Christian business

or church group can camp at our rustic streamside sites or in our cabins under the trees or test your nerve on our new obstacle course and zip line. Please visit cambennett.org for more information about the facilities.

Also important to me, however, is that we thank all the volunteers that contributed to Central Union Mission during the COVID-19 crisis. You had to get creative, but you certainly came through in supporting our guests and families in need of food, shelter and encouragement. We hope that soon we can see you face to face, but our folks will never forget your generosity and kindness. ■

Joe

Joe Mettimano, President & CEO

The Investment PAYS OFF

AT AGE 32, HE MAY BE YOUNGER than many mayors, but New Castle, PA, Mayor Chris Frye insists he's had plenty of time for developing leadership skills—starting with his work as a summer counselor at Camp Bennett. At age 15, Frye's work at Camp Bennett presented him with the challenge of serving those whose communities are in need while he was at-risk himself. He learned about working as a team and being a good role model for the campers. "The skills I learned as a Camp Bennett counselor effectively influence my leadership today. They're transferable to everyday applications, especially in my role as mayor," he comments.

Navigating the Pandemic

When we last spoke with Mayor Frye in 2019, he was in campaign mode. Now he's had over a year of mayoral experience under his belt—not to mention the challenge of COVID-19. "My initial goal was to hit the ground running to build partnerships and identify resources to boost economic development. I was looking for developers and investors to build residential housing and bring job-creating industry to my area. But I think COVID-19 caused us to reconsider our initial plans and focus more on the needs of the residents, not just the economy. This pivot has opened many doors for us—doors that help change the perception of the city and doors that will help us find our niche," he says.

In fact, New Castle, PA, was noted in the *New York Times* in December for being a "Zoom town," where those working from home can afford to buy their homes and enjoy the stable community. "We won't fully realize COVID-19's impact until later this year, but we're hoping the outcome does prepare us for what's next for our communities." Frye credits his administration team for the city responding swiftly to the pandemic.

Future Gains

Mayor Frye believes that encouraging leadership in young people is critical for our nation's future, and he remembers the significance of his time at Camp Bennett. He advised, "With your investment in Camp Bennett today, you might not realize a financial return like you would if you invest in the stock market, but you're going to make an impact in the world that will yield societal returns that will last a lifetime." ■



Chris Frye, New Castle, PA, mayor and former Camp Bennett counselor

For information about sponsoring children for summer camp or creating a lasting tribute through a naming opportunity, please visit campbennett.org.

There's No Greater Blessing than a Generous Neighbor

That's how the Mission feels about Steve Pupkar of Pupkar Property Services who lives just across the street from Camp Bennett. Pupkar is a licensed arborist who for years has supported Camp Bennett by mowing, removing trees, providing vast quantities of free mulch, repairing and replacing broken equipment, loaning Camp Director Michael Tate heavy equipment and even sharing his staff for volunteer maintenance projects. In the interim before Tate arrived, Pupkar maintained our grounds on his own initiative.

Tate said, "Steve's contributions to running Camp Bennett Christian Ministry Center are incalculable. We're so grateful that he's a friend and supporter of the Mission." Central Union Mission believes it is no accident that a friend with Pupkar's resources and skill set is so close by to Camp Bennett. We thank him for his enthusiastic support toward Camp Bennett's success.



Brookeville, MD • 301-252-5995 • www.PupkarPS.com

Following the Highest Standards

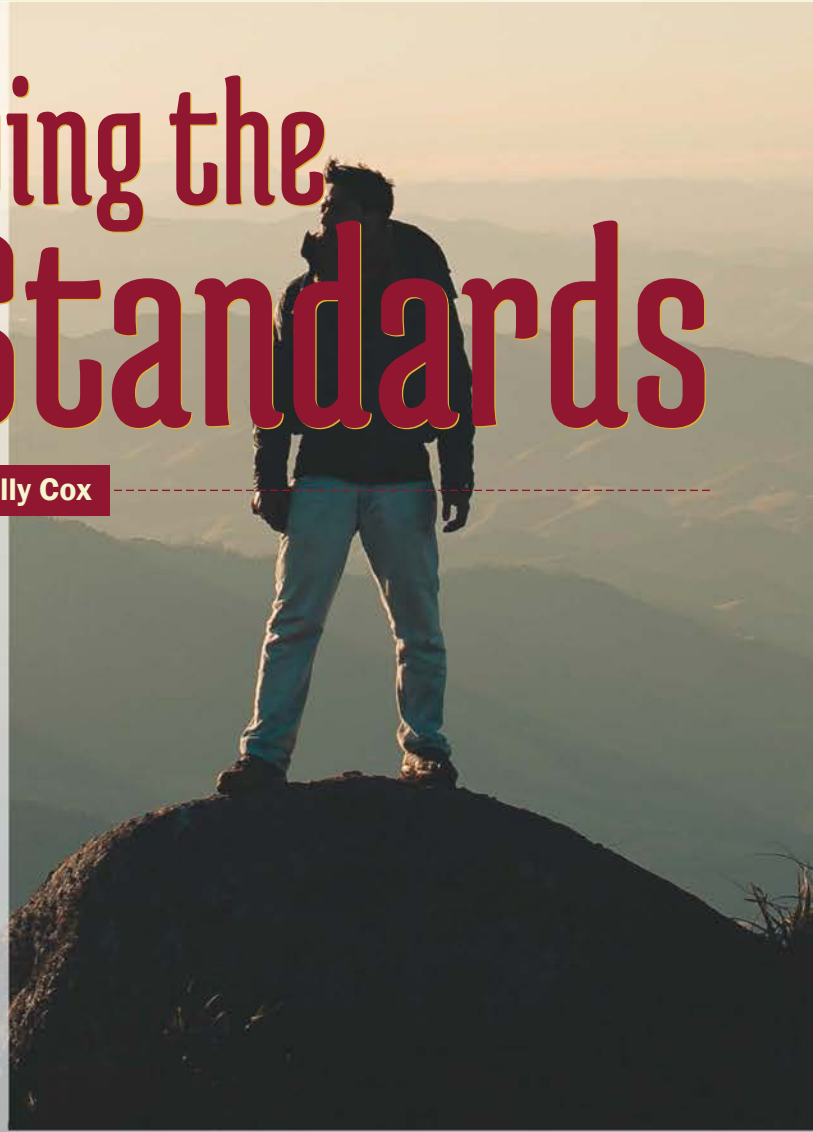
by Sally Cox

WE THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW! **How is the Mission a good steward of your financial contributions?** There is not one single event or activity that makes us good stewards. It takes time, effort, structure and focus. Here are some of the actions we take:

- ▶ We consider every penny donated to us as a sacred trust. We treat your donations carefully and use them efficiently. We take God's call to being wise stewards seriously.
- ▶ Employees acknowledge a Christian commitment, code of conduct and statement of faith. They understand the responsibility for integrity that they accept when they become a part of the Mission family.
- ▶ Our formal financial policies and procedures are designed to create proper controls throughout the organization, and we are constantly evaluating them to ensure they protect the gifts you give us.
- ▶ We are audited annually by a national public accounting firm with nonprofit expertise. We have received a clean opinion from this firm since they began our audits in 2013—and received clean opinions prior to 2013. A clean opinion is an unqualified auditor's report stating that the entity's financial statements fairly present its financial results, financial position and cash flows. It is the best audit opinion a company can receive.
- ▶ Our audited financial statements and our tax return are available for review at [missiondc.org/who we are/financials](https://missiondc.org/who-we-are/financials).
- ▶ The independent auditors make suggestions regarding our operations and controls. The board of directors' audit committee, Mission president and CFO meet with the auditors and then develop or revise existing policies to incorporate their recommendations.
- ▶ Our board of directors' finance committee provides oversight and guidance regarding financial matters.
- ▶ We prepare an annual budget, and our managers are expected to operate within their budget.
- ▶ We are transparent. The Mission financial statements are presented at every board of directors' meeting. We publish our financials on our website for public review.
- ▶ In order to learn rescue mission best practices, we belong to associations like Citygate Network and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. These organizations have membership requirements.
- ▶ Central Union Mission is a three-star rated organization on Charity Navigator, has earned the Guidestar Gold Transparency Award and is a Top-Rated GreatNonprofit.

The Mission strives to operate with accountability and efficiency because we are committed to honoring God—by serving people in need and by honoring the trust you place in us. Thank you for your partnership in these important efforts. ■

Sally Cox is the Mission's chief financial/chief operating officer. Mrs. Cox is a certified public accountant and holds an MBA in finance and investments.



Continued from **page 1**

able to serve on-site at our facilities. But with the institution of our Volunteer in Place program, you, our amazing volunteers, have risen to the occasion in spectacular fashion! Throughout the required masking and social distancing, individual volunteers, as well as groups, have safely participated in:

- Food Drives
- Clothing Drives
- Winter Coats/Gloves Drives
- Shoe Drives
- Linen Drives
- Dessert Drives
- Fresh Soup/Stew/Chili donations
- DonationPAKs/GiftPAKs donations
- Masks/Sanitizing Products donations
- Health&Wellness Kits donations
- Personal Hygiene Kits donations

- Mealtime Inspiration Kits donations
- Praying for the safety, health and well-being of all those involved with the Mission

We look forward to seeing you again at our Men’s Emergency Shelter, the Family Ministry Center, Lambert House and the Camp Bennett Christian Ministry Center. Each of you make up the remarkable army of volunteers here at Central Union Mission. You have an incredibly positive impact on the lives of our guests, staff and administrators. Please watch our website for more information on volunteering opportunities.

We’ll keep everyone posted, but in the meantime, we at the Mission would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers for showing the true Christian spirit and meaning of “Love thy neighbor.” ■

Marc O'Brien is the Mission's volunteer coordinator.



Clockwise from top left: the **Ministry of Motherhood** ensures everyone gets a special Valentine’s Day gift; **Alethia West** and her team at **Kindness Corps** donate over 50 Thanksgiving turkeys and much, much more; thanks to **White House2White House** running team for the sanitation products and water donation; **Scott Berger** and his friends from **Breadcoin** arranged a huge donation of chicken wings for the shelter Super Bowl event.

They Lost a Year. Let's Give Them a Week.

AFTER MORE THAN A YEAR of school shut-downs, isolation and fear of COVID-19, kids need a chance to hike in the woods or gaze at a heaven full of stars—to experience the beautiful world God has created.

Will you help one or more of these children attend camp? It costs only \$75 to sponsor one day of camp for a child or \$375 for a whole week. Your gift could change their lives forever—or even save them from violence, drugs and gangs. Make all the difference today at donate.missiondc.org. ■



*God bless
you for
caring!*

NEW THIS YEAR: Sponsorship Opportunities

Your generous support of Camp Bennett can be a testament to your family or in honor or memory of a loved one. See campbennett.org for a range of historic, scenic and meaningful naming opportunities.

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Unless otherwise noted, photos are from Adobe Stock. A copy of Central Union Mission's current financial report is available upon request by writing to 6811 Kenilworth Ave, 600-B, Riverdale, MD 20737 or by calling 202-745-7118. In Maryland, copies of documents and information submitted by Central Union Mission are available for the cost of copies and postage from the Secretary of State, Statehouse, Annapolis, MD 21410, 401-974-5534. In Virginia, a financial statement for the most recent fiscal year is available upon request from the State Division of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23209, 804-786-1343.



Families Need a Helping Hand

For families experiencing homelessness and hunger in the nation's capital, this year has been especially hard. Your gift today can equip parents and encourage children through the Family Ministry Center and Camp Bennett. Thank you for your compassion.

Please use my donation of:

- \$20.90 to feed and care for 10 guests
- \$52.25 for 25 guests
- \$104.50 for 50 guests
- \$156.75 for 75 guests
- \$ _____ to help as many as possible

Please make checks payable to **“Central Union Mission.”** To donate by credit card, please see our website at missiondc.org, or visit Facebook at **“Central Union Mission, DC.”**

Central Union Mission

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