



Whispering Winds

Whispering Winds ~ 8186 Commercial Street ~ La Mesa, CA 91942
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Mama Ghio's Kitchen

Benefit Dinner Raises \$61,000 To Rebuild Mama Ghio's Kitchen

On February 3rd, the Ghio, Weber & Mascari families hosted a Benefit Dinner which raised over \$61,000 to rebuild Mama Ghio's Kitchen. Held at San Diego's renown Star of the Sea restaurant, 104 attendees filled the venue to enjoy the culinary wonders of Executive Chef Paul McCabe.

"Mama Ghio's passion, caring for people, love of fine food and dogged determination to let nothing hold her back was the spark that led to the creation of the original Mama Ghio's Kitchen at Whispering Winds

Catholic Conference Center," said Rick Ghio.

Since the Cedar Fires struck the Camp last October, supporters of Whispering Winds have been coming up with all sorts of fundraising ideas to help rebuild structures lost in the fires. Executive Director Don Kojis called the event a "home-run". "Mama Ghio's Benefit Dinner was one of the largest fundraisers we've had in our 25-year history. We can't thank the Ghio, Weber and Mascari families enough for their support of our Catholic ministry."



(left to right) Craig Ghio, Rick Ghio, Beverly Mascari, Glenn Wilhite, Don Kojis, John Sperrazzo and Emmett Durnan

The entire evening was underwritten so that 100 percent of each attendee's \$500/plate donation would go directly to the Mama Ghio's Kitchen rebuilding

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Rebuilding Whispering Winds

In January, the Whispering Winds' Board of Directors approved a plan to get the camp up and running in time for a "Back to the Mountain" Cursillo weekend to be held the first week of May, 2004. We are really excited about

resuming operations ASAP! We are also working with an architect to draw up a Whispering Winds' Master Plan, which will help keep everyone focused on the ultimate vision for the camp as well as help

us with raising funds to complete this Master Plan.

Over the next few months, these are the things we have committed to focus on for our May re-opening.

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22nd Annual Benefit Dinner Dance



Fr. Jim Poulsen named Person of the Year

Father Jim Poulsen was ordained December 20, 1968 in St. Peter's Basilica. After completing his studies at Gregorian University he returned to San Diego in August, 1969 to take up his first assignment as associate pastor at Our Mother

of Confidence Parish in University City. Other assignments include four years as associate pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish (1971-75), doctoral studies at Catholic University in Washington, DC

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Family Camps 2004 - Are you ready for Summer?

We have assessed the fire damage and the camp will be fully operational by this summer. This is excellent news and we feel extremely blessed to have witnessed so many miracles in the face of what seemed to be the worst of all tragedies. Our priority is Family Camp and we are doing everything in our power to restore and rebuild Whispering Winds to be even more beautiful than ever. With the support of all the parishes with whom we have contracts for this year, we know that we will achieve our goal. I'd like to send my deepest thanks to all the parishes that have kept their commitment this year. You shall join the great company of our founding families as Whispering Winds' **re-founding** families and we honor you for your tremendous generosity and faith. We believe that this year is bound to be the most powerful and miraculous Family Camp ever.

The gospel accounts of the *Call of Peter* and the *Miraculous Catch of Fish* so appropriately set the stage for this year's theme. Jesus called his disciples to go out and be fishers of men and as we rebuild our beloved camp, we also must be fishers of men, women, and children. We need families to come to camp this year to carry on the vision of those who began this great mission of love, and to continue preaching the Good News of Christ! We often learn the most about our faith in the wake of a tragedy and through the miracles that shine in the darkness. We would like to share our miracles with you and your family this summer.

Camp itself is a true sign of both life and death. There are many trees that are black and burnt, there are buildings missing, and remnants of buildings, but the meadow is greener

than ever, and the living trees are all the more stunning against a blackened back drop, and no fire can ever burn or destroy the memories of so many that have shared their faith and their lives. And last but not least, there remains the gentle whisper of the wind and God in its midst. How great thou art!

Please pray for us and the parish teams as we begin our planning for this summer. The parishes that are on board for this summer are: St. Pius X, Chula Vista, St. Francis, Vista, Santa Sophia, Sacred Heart, Coronado, Ascension Parish, Our Lady of Grace, and St. Gabriel's. We still have weekends available if you would like to sign your parish up for a weekend. Please contact Jen at 619-977-4576.

God Bless.

Jen Bedison

Family Camp Program Director

Mama Ghio's Kitchen

fund. Another \$10,000 was sent in by donors unable to attend the event.

"The outpouring of generosity this evening has been overwhelming," said Craig Ghio. "Even the restaurant staff and waiters voted to donate their pay towards helping us rebuild Mama Ghio's Kitchen."

"It is the desire of the Ghio, Weber and Mascari families to rebuild this kitchen bigger and better than ever to help nourish the bodies and souls of the faithful while at Whispering Winds," said Beverly Mascari. "Thanks to everyone's generous contributions, Mama Ghio's spirit will continue to live on."

Mama Ghio's love of family and love of Christ will surely live on at Whispering Winds for many years to come.

Catherine "Mama" Ghio is known and loved by San Diegans as one of the founders of the Anthony's family of seafood restaurants. Working with her sons Tod and Anthony, and her son-in-law, Roy Weber, she opened the first Anthony's Fish Grotto, an 18-seat diner, in 1946. Today, the company has grown to include seven restaurants, a seafood product division and wholesale operations.



Catherine "Mama" Ghio

Rebuilding Whispering Winds

We plan to purchase temporary, weather-resistant tents placed on floors. All these temporary facilities will be paid for by the generosity of people who continue to respond to our need after the Cedar Fire last October. The temporary buildings include:

- 40' x 60' Meeting tent
- 40' x 40' Recreation tent
- 54' x 70' Dining tent
- 24' x 17' Mobile kitchen

We are in the process of cleaning up the aftermath of the Cedar Fire. The burned building debris is being placed in 40 yard dumpsters supplied by the County of San Diego Disaster Relief. As we fill up one bin, it is picked up and replaced by another empty bin. The debris has to be separated into four categories of dumpster bins including metal/appliance, masonry, mixed debris and wood. Metal cutting torches and chop saws are being used to cut the metal beams after they are

pulled away from the buildings with our bulldozer and strong chain. Our skiploader then picks up the metal beams which can be 20' long and lifts them into the dumpster bin. This is hard, dangerous and dirty work being done by a few hand-picked volunteers along with the Mennonites Disaster Service Team.

We are aware that many Whispering Winds supporters want to volunteer to help. That time will come, but not at this moment because of safety considerations. Large amounts of ash are being removed and require special breathing masks for those workers. Once the original debris is removed in the bins, we will then need help to build the wood bases for the tent structures. Please bear with us right now until the campgrounds are deemed safe.

Anyone wishing to volunteer to help with the construction of the wood bases and reconstruction of tipis,

please email the Whispering Winds office at WWCCC@aol.com or Don Kojis at dkojis@cox.net or call the office at 619-464-1479.

As expected, the insurance companies are continually asking for additional information and the settlement will take some time. We plan to use that money from the insurance to build a wing of the Major Conference Center Building. That wing is expected to be the Kitchen and Dining Room depending upon how much the settlement will be. It will probably take two years to draw up plans, get county permits and construct this Kitchen/Dining Hall because the county is giving priority to the 2500-3000 homeowners who need to rebuild after their homes were lost.

We sincerely thank everyone for their prayers, inspiring cards, letters, emails, telephone calls and generosity at this time of need.



22nd Annual Benefit Dinner Dance



Mary Griffin - Chairperson

As we celebrate the 26th Anniversary of Whispering Winds, we can truly proclaim our camp as "Holy Ground". To have survived two tumultuous firestorms, unscathed by one and a year later, scorched, but surviving the inferno, we have reason to celebrate. Once again our gracious Lord has spared some of our holy mountain from total destruction. But many holy hands and big hearts are needed to rebuild.

Please join us on Saturday, April 24 as we honor Fr. Jim Poulsen at our 2004 Dinner Dance and Auction. Your support of our annual event is essential this year to ensure the rebuilding of our camp in time for Family Camps, summer Cursillos, youth retreats, etc.

We all remember our first experience at Whispering Winds and the sound of the wind as it blew through the trees. Now is an opportunity to give thanks to the Lord in return for His many blessings and the gift of this "Holy Ground."

Mary Griffin

2004 Dinner Dance Committee

Chairperson.....Mary Griffin
Silent Auction.....Vicki Youngers
Donna Wilkins
Susann Wilhite
Glenn Wilhite
Rick Eggeling
Rita Eggeling
Will House
De Ann House
Jim House
Mattie Scull
Claudia Penzar
Carol Grayson
Live Auction.....Beverly Wight
Reservations.....Lillian Wills
Stella Vazquez
Mattie Scull
Claudia Penzar
Invitations/Program.....Judy Bowen
JillAnne Ochoa
Advertising.....Ed Brown
Joe Horn
Photographer.....Danielle McCay
Decorations.....Cindy Kojis
Office Liaison.....Don Kojis

Person of the Year Fr. Jim Poulsen

(1975-77), campus ministry at San Diego State (1977 - 80), and five years as associate pastor at Our Lady of Grace Parish in El Cajon (1980-85).

Father Jim is the founding Pastor of Saint Gregory the Great Parish in Scripps Ranch. The Parish was founded in 1985. This award winning church was consecrated in 1999. Through Fr. Jim's gentle and caring leadership, Saint Gregory the Great is a very loving and vibrant community comprised of over 2400 registered families. The parish's many ministries receive full support and encouragement from Fr. Jim. The parish also gained national attention last fall for its prompt and compassionate response to the needs of those who lost their homes in the Cedar fire. Saint Gregory the Great became not only a meeting place but a relief center for hundreds of families who were displaced by the firestorm.

Father Jim has a long association with Whispering Winds having served on many Cursillo Teams as well as dozens of youth retreats at the camp. Seeing the need for a toilet and sink in the dining hall, Fr. Jim provided the funds to make that project a reality. No doubt many people were giving thanks to him for that decision.

He enjoys travel, music, photography, film, computers and cooking, but above all gives thanks to God and God's people for thirty-five fruitful and joyful years as a Catholic priest.

SAVE THE DATE

**Whispering Winds'
22nd Annual Dinner Dance**

**Saturday, April 24, 2004
Doubletree Hotel**

\$135 per person

Tables seat 10

**Silent Auction - 5:30 pm
Live Auction and
Dinner - 7:00 pm**

Executive Director's Corner

We are so blessed amid all the devastation of the Cedar Fire to find out that we have a green belt of trees, brush and our **grass field in the center of the campgrounds.** **Our children's playground,** chapel, caretaker home, maintenance building and Mary's Grotto are still there. The Milner and Juanico Lodges were spared although they suffered exterior damage to the vinyl siding.

Gone are our Quadruplex cabin,

meeting hall, recreation building, three storage trailers, the Women's Auxiliary store, kitchen/dining hall, 8 tipis and the accompanying toilet/sinks and showers building. All our fences, wooden and barbed wire have been destroyed and need to be replaced to provide a secure campground.

Yet, despite our losses, we are so filled with optimism and enthusiasm to rebuild our camp

better than before and more permanently because of you, our loyal and faithful supporters. Your prayers, letters of encouragement, and your personal experiences at the camp, wonderful emails and optimistic cards along with your financial generosity gives us immediate hope for the future of Whispering Winds. Our strength is in the Lord.



Whispering Winds Needs Your Help

I would like to make a donation to Whispering Winds:

VISA MasterCard Check

Card # _____ Amount \$ _____

Signature: _____ Exp Date: _____

I would like to **Volunteer** my time to help rebuild Whispering Winds. Please email the office at wwcc@aol.com to let us know your area of expertise or willingness to help.

I am interested in including Whispering Winds in my will.

Please add my email address to the Whispering Winds' list of friends to keep me updated on important issues.

I would like to donate a car, trailer, motorhome or other vehicle to Whispering Winds. Please contact me or call Don Kojis at 619-464-1479.

Please Print:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Whispering Winds' Fire Walk

**Join the Whispering Winds 5K Fire Walk
Saturday, March 27th at Mission Bay Park.
Walk starts at 10AM.**

Come join us for a 5K Fire Walk to help rebuild Whispering Winds one step at a time. The Fire Walk is open to volunteers of all ages. The purpose of the walk is to replace the Children's Game room at Whispering Winds that was lost in the recent Cedar Fire.

The Fire Walk will start at De Anza Cove in beautiful Mission Bay Park and walkers will walk to the Mission Bay Hilton and return to the starting point.

We are planning to have music, food and good times. The Whispy Chicks will be there along with many of our friends from Cursillo, Family Camps and all of the friends of Whispering Winds.

You can participate in a number of ways to make the Fire Walk successful. You can become a Fire Walker and gather sponsors; you can be a sponsor and make a financial donation, or you can become a "Fire Chief" and help organize groups to participate and help in transportation.

If you would like to volunteer, then please fill in your contact information on the webpage - <http://mbdcorp.com/firewalk/> or go to the Whispering Winds webpage - <http://www.whisperingwinds.org> for a link to the site (See Sign Up On-line) or call Jimmy Villalobos at 619-749-6830.

For a Fire Walker Kit, you can either download a kit, or email us at villalobosjw@cs.com and we will get a kit to you. You will be assigned a Fire Walker Number and you will receive updates via email as the date draws nearer.

Thank you and God Bless your efforts to re-build Whispering Winds "one step at a time".
Jimmy Villalobos

Renewal Mass Held at Whispering Winds

On November 27, 2003, approximately one month after the disastrous Cedar Fire, about 200 people gathered despite high winds warnings for morning prayer and a "Mass of Renewal" in the camp's green meadow presided over by Auxiliary Bishop Salvatore Cordileone.

Just two days before the fires swept through the Whispering Winds campgrounds, Bishop Cordileone was celebrating Mass in Mary's Grotto with more than 100 people on a retreat who were all told to evacuate immediately. The event was an opportunity to give thanks for Whispering Winds, to honor the firefighters who risked their lives to save some of our buildings and it was a time for



prayers, a time for renewal - both at the camp and in our own lives.

Don Kojis, executive director, told those present that "we will rebuild this camp and build it better than

before." He said that with the prayers and financial support of our faithful, we would be up and running by this summer, God willing.

Whispering Winds Women's Auxiliary

Spring General Meeting and Fashion Show

The 2004 Women of the Year will be introduced at our Spring General Meeting and Fashion Show. This award represents generosity of time and spirit, and dedication to the goals of the Whispering Winds Women's Auxiliary.

Basket Building Event

Date: March 30, Tuesday

Time: 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Place: Santa Sophia, Daniels Room

If you can help or donate a basket with a theme, call Mo at 619-582-6300.

Spirituality Committee

Our annual WWA retreat will be a perfect opportunity to see

our beloved Whispering Winds rise from the ashes - cleaned, repaired and renewed.

The destructive force of the fire has ignited a new energy among the people who have been touched by Whispering Winds. Many hands are working to not only return the camp to its previous charm and beauty, but to make the facilities even better.

God speaks to us in many ways, but we know His voice is strong and clear on the mountain. Plan on meeting Him there.

Save the date: May 14, 15 and 16 for a wonderful weekend with Sr. Susan Blomstad from Serra Retreat in Malibu.



Wish List

Camp

Storage Sheds-\$1200.00 ea.

Trees

Net for batting cage-\$900.00

Sports Equipment

Balls

Archery

Slip-n-slide heavy

duty-\$500

Tug-of-War Rope

Basketball backboards/

hoops/nets

Pool tables

Ping Pong tables

Foosball tables

Air Hockey tables

Indoor basketball machine

Kitchen - to be restocked

Knives

NSF can opener

Giant baking sheets

Large pans/stock pots

Trays

Spatulas, scrapers,

tongs, spoons

Carafes, pitchers

50 & 100 cup coffee pts

10 gal. Igloo Water

coolers

Pot and pans

250 green stackable hi-back chairs
at \$9 each

50 6-8' rectangular tables @ \$50
each

Wood fence and posts

Barbed wire fence and posts

Patio heaters @\$330

Hardwood altar

Self-contained motorhome or
trailer for our cleaning crew to stay
overnight

Office

8 1/2 x 11 copier paper

Rolls of \$.37 stamps

Avery or other brand of 1"x2 5/8

white or clear laser labels

DVD RW or CD RW discs

Trash cans - small plastic

Plastic liners - large or small

Plain white envelopes

Whispering Winds Catholic Conference Center
Website: www.whisperingwinds.org

"WE WILL REBUILD"

Whispering Winds
8186 Commercial Street
La Mesa, CA 91942
619-464-1479

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