



## *Friends of Castle Crags, McArthur~Burney Falls and Ahjumawi State Parks*

# **Spring~Summer 2024 Newsletter**

After a long and wet winter, spring has finally sprung! The mountain trees and wildflowers are popping out. And the streams are overflowing as snowmelt makes its way from Burney Mountain along Burney Creek and nearby springs to cascade over Burney Falls. Hikers are also popping out along the Pacific Crest Trail through McArthur-Burney Falls Park onward to Castle Crags.

### **Board News**

We reorganized our current nine-member board in February. Current members are:

Jim Sacson, President  
Mark Downie, Vice President  
Jaci White, Treasurer  
Ann Sacson, Secretary  
Bob Boyce, Webmaster

Sharon Elmore, Member  
Alice Hoveman, Member  
Bill McSweeney, Member  
Tom Stockton, Member

#### **Message From the New President, Jim Sacson:**

As President of the McArthur Burney Falls Interpretative Association, I am pleased to welcome visitors to the McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park. In 1964, my family bought a home and property near the park. I had the tremendous opportunity of growing up here. My family enjoyed exploring the natural beauty and all of the outdoor activities the Intermountain area has to offer.

I served in the United States Navy after high school and had the privilege of traveling to many places around the world. My travels helped me appreciate how unique and untouched much of our mountain area has remained. It is my desire to help retain the natural beauty we get to enjoy every day.

The theme for this year for the McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park is Restoring Balance. The goal is to bring restoration to many areas that have been heavily worn or damaged. This includes the lower falls trail, signage, picnic tables and benches. Of course, continuing education and protecting the natural rhythms of the park will remain a high priority. Together our efforts to restore balance are a gift we can give today that will continue to



*Jim & Ann Sacson*

### **Annual Plan**

Every year, we prepare our plan of action based upon last year activities and accomplishments, as well as our visitor forecasts and individual park needs. This is our plan for 2024:

#### **Board Business:**

Raise \$87,000 through donations, sales of Visitor Center Merchandise, Firewood and Visitor Guide Ads to support Interpretive Services at McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial and Castle Crags State Parks.

Continue to recruit and expand Board membership with focus on public relations and financial expertise. Develop a solicitation strategy and outreach to Dunsmuir/Mt Shasta communities for representation for Castle Crags State Park.

Provide opportunities for donations from the public on the MBFIA website and donation envelopes at the park with a goal of raising \$3000.

Raise \$5,000 coordinating the sale of two memorial tables at MBF at the park with a goal of raising \$3000.

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Develop policies and procedures that will enable the sale of Memorial Benches for implementation in 2025.6. Continue partnership with the Mountain Jewels Home, (Mountain Jewels Home assists developmentally disabled individuals, who in turn help us with recycling and other chores)

Solicit a minimum of 16 businesses raising \$5,000 for Visitor Guide Advertising at MBF.

### **Board Membership:**

We would like to increase membership in 2024 by two or three members. Hopefully, we'll add a member with some or all of these attributes: interested in Castle Crags State Park; bookkeeping background; advertising/publicity background. Having the ability to video conference enables people who live outside the immediate area to become a Board Member if they are able to travel to the parks to assist in special events, etc.

### Visitor Centers Reopening:

Operate full-time Visitor Center Gift Shops at McArthur Burney Falls and Castle Crags State Parks with goal of raising \$25,000.

Provide access to MBF Visitor Center for 12,000 visitors.

Expand sale merchandise inventory and explore new T-shirt designs.

### Firewood Production and Sales:

Provide funding in the amount of \$18,000 for processing 7,000 bundles of firewood for sale to campers at MBF and Castle Crags State Park.

Manage the sale of Firewood, stocking weekly supplies at campsite and entry wood sheds, with a goal of raising \$47,000 in revenue.

### Interpretive Services Projects:

Support the design and/or replacement of two Interpretive Panels in McArthur-Burney Falls and one panel in Castle Crags State Parks.

Finalize the plans to replace/repair the campfire benches, identify funding source of \$8,000, and complete the project.

### Interpretive Program Support

Print 35,000 twenty-page Visitor Guides for Mc Arthur Burney Falls Memorial State Park.

Order 1,500 2024 Discovery Challenge Patches for MBF.

Revise the Discovery Challenge Quiz Questions in the MBF Visitor Guide.

Provide funding in the amount of \$750 to Shasta Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation to hold 10 camp fire presentations with live birds and animals for campers at MBF and Castle Crags State Park.

Plan and schedule Heritage Day in October for 1200 visitors. Continue to re-envision the day with a broader look at the natural and human impact on the land, keeping in place what has been a successful involvement by local folks.

Continue to support the development of virtual interpretive activities through purchase of digital equipment to enable development of virtual presentations and training for the Interpretive Specialist.

## **Other General News**

### **California Parks Website:**

We try to keep our websites, [www.burneyfallspark.org](http://www.burneyfallspark.org) and [www.castlecragspark.org](http://www.castlecragspark.org) posted with the most up-to-date information regarding the parks possible. Just to be on the safe side, we recommend that you visit the California Parks website before you make your trip to the park. [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) will have the most current information regarding special requirements, such as during fire season or heavy winter events. You can also check out other state parks while you're on the site.

## **Reservations:**

Camping reservations are handled exclusively through [www.reservecalifornia.com](http://www.reservecalifornia.com). Reservations for Burney Falls cabin or boat rentals are handled through the General Store, 530-335-5713 or by Email at [burneyfalls@vista-rec.com](mailto:burneyfalls@vista-rec.com)

**Fund Raising:** As you can see, we manage to get a lot accomplished with what we have. We have no paid Board Members or staff and we spend our money very carefully and wisely. But, if we're going to move things forward at the parks we serve to make things better for visitors, and if we're going to reach our future goals, we do need to raise more money.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation before the end of the year... \$10, \$20, \$100, or even \$10,000 (smile), will go a very long way and be used very prudently. You can donate through our website, [www.burneyfallspark.org](http://www.burneyfallspark.org) or by mail to P.O. Box 777, Burney CA 96013. Thank you in advance.



**Planned Road Construction:** Preliminary work has already begun for road construction on Highway 89 near the park entrance. You'll want to check highway conditions before heading this way.

**Heritage Day:** We're still planning on holding Heritage Day, Sunday October 13<sup>th</sup>. This year's event may be scaled back somewhat due to the road construction and trail closures. We'll keep you posted as we learn more.

**Memorial Tables:** For the first time in a decade or more, we've had to increase the cost of donating a memorial table from \$2,500 to \$2,800. The tables are 8 feet long, ADA compliant, made of 3-inch redwood and include a crossbar at each end of the table with an inscription of your choice. If you have interest in donating a memorial table to Burney Falls Park, please contact us through the [friends@burneyfallspark.org](mailto:friends@burneyfallspark.org) Email address and we'll provide you with more information.

## **McArthur~Burney Falls Park**

**Burney Falls Trail Closure:** Contrary to published news articles saying the Park will be closed for the summer, *only the trails leading to the pool at the bottom of the falls are closed for most of the summer*. This is occasioned by the necessity of repairing and upgrading the trail. Unfortunately, too many users have migrated off the trail; that, combined with heavy precipitation, has caused extensive erosion of the trails and adjacent ground. But visitors will still be able to observe the falls from the outlook.



### **Burney Falls Park Visitor Center:**

The major problem we faced in 2023 was we were not able to keep the Visitor Center at Burney Falls open through the summer on a regular basis due to staffing shortages. The Park was short on park aids and camp hosts, and they've been our resource for staffing the Visitor Center in the past. If you live in the vicinity of Burney and would consider volunteering a day or two during the week to help us in 2024, it would be of great help, not only to park visitors, but to our income stream as well. The Visitor Center is in the process of opening for the summer as you read this. Jim and Ann Sacson are co-ordinating this effort.



**Burney Falls Parking and Traffic:** During the summer months, particularly on weekends and holidays, the volume of visitors to McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park is so high that Highway 89, which is the main Park access and also the major north-south traffic route from Reno to Mt. Shasta and Oregon, gets plugged up. The resulting delays in getting into the Park or travelling through the area have raised a lot of complaints and a multitude of proposed alternatives to resolve the issue. Be aware that the problem may be exacerbated during the construction period on Highway 89.

**Firewood Sales:** Firewood sales at both parks were up last year. Campers enjoy the warmth of a nice evening fire without the hassle of bringing their own wood with them, and having firewood available at the parks reduces the possibility of inadvertently bringing along harmful insects. The firewood we provide is acceptable, provided by Cal-Fire crews, and coordinated through the park system.

**Campground Hosts:** In 2023, we had a shortage of campground hosts. Hosts get a free, preferred camping site for the season in return for assisting Park staff by manning their assigned areas in the park, answering visitor questions, etc. If you have an interest in doing so or know of someone who might be, please contact the park at 530-335-2777.

### **Burney Falls Volunteer Day:**

New this year will be a volunteer day at the Park Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. This will be an ideal day for nature enthusiasts and youth organizations to assist us in cleaning up the park, making minor repairs, etc. Board Member Bill McSweeney is heading up this project and we'll have more information as the date approaches.

### **Castle Crags Park**

We'll be putting additional emphasis on Castle Crags State Park in 2024 and we're open to ideas and suggestions. What activities would you like to see there? How can the association, Friends of the Crags, do a better job in supporting that Park?

Thanks to every member of Friends of the Falls and Friends of the Crags for your interest and dedication to the future well-being of the parks.

### **Friends**

If you have a friend or relative who might be interested in becoming a member of Friends of the Falls or Friends of the Crags, all they have to do is go online to either website, click on the link and sign up! It's free! And you'll be their hero for giving them the link!