

PYLET

2021



*“It’s not the mountain
that we conquer,
but ourselves”*

- Sir Edmund Hillary



“Never, ever, ever, give up”

- Michael Gary Scott

Adam “Stripes” Bell, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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It's become cliché to say that we are living in challenging times, however that is exactly what we all have been facing. All of our summer 2021 campers, Lioneers, and Voyagers have faced a variety of challenges in their lives, however I am so proud of each and every one of you who did not give up during camp. You threw on a backpack and put one foot in front of the other, completing some of the most challenging hikes faced by Pyles campers in recent times.

You all inspired me this summer. Your excitement and positivity on day 1 of your session was contagious. Given what you've faced recently, I was pleasantly surprised to find you meeting the challenges of Pyles Camp with a can-do attitude. You proved to me that you have the skills to face the next obstacles in life. If you apply the mindset that you demonstrated at Pyles Camp, apply the lessons that your counselors taught you, and never give up, you are destined for great things in life.

To the team who made this summer possible, my words will never properly convey the gratitude I'd like to express. After learning in April we would be unable to run our program in Lloyd Meadows, you sprang into action to make sure we could execute a program to serve our boys. Through many long days, a lot of miles driven, and a little bit of creative reimagining of our schedule, you made it happen. This showed me that you not only talk the talk, but walk the walk. You utilized the lessons that you teach our campers and executed an outstanding program.

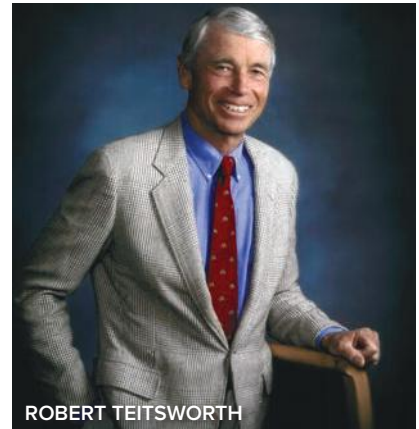
From the trails along the Santa Ana River in Barton Flats to the summit of Vandever Mountain near Mineral King, Pyles Campers and staff continue to show the world that you are capable of anything you put your mind to.

Dedication

THIS YEAR'S PYLET IS DEDICATED TO A GROUP OF SPECIAL PEOPLE THAT WERE RECENTLY LOST.

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of several men who have been instrumental to the success of R.M. Pyles Boys Camp. Our hearts are with the families of Bruce Conway, Jim Blom, Robert Teitsworth, and Dr. Richard Anthony Tafoya, and we dedicate this issue of the Pylet to them.

Bruce Conway served on the Pyles Camp Board of Directors from 1985 until 2013, when he moved on to the Board of Trustees where he served until the time of his passing. From 1993-1995 Bruce also served as the Board President. Through Bruce's fundraising efforts and direct contributions, well over \$1,000,000 was raised to support the mission of R.M. Pyles Boys Camp. Bruce's constant advocacy of the Pyles program made possible a better future for so many in the community.



Robert Teitsworth and Jim Blom both brought decades of service to the Pyles Board of Directors. Collectively they served 42 years on the Board of Directors and 28 years on the Board of Trustees. Both men had a passion for the mission of Pyles Camp and their efforts bettered the lives of thousands of boys and young men.



"It is hard to quantify how many lives Bruce, Jim, and Robert collectively touched and saved through nearly a half Century of tireless service and humble giving to the Camp. While words can't describe how sad we are at their passing, the legacies of these men will continue to inspire the Board and our leaders for years to come." -Jeff Wilson, Pyles Board President

Dr. Richard "Sgt. Agarn" Tafoya volunteered his time and talent for many years, reviewing our medical policies and procedures, as well as offering required physicals at no-cost to Pyles Campers. He was deeply passionate about the Pyles mission and gave back to camp whenever he could.



"I had the pleasure of working with "Sgt. Agarn" for more than 10 years with the last three as the Camp Director. "Sgt. Agarn" was an invaluable asset to our organization. He was knowledgeable, dedicated, and more importantly, he was passionate about the camp and serving the boys. The loss of Dr. Richard "Sgt. Agarn" Tafoya left a hole in the heart of the organization. This humble supporter preferred to help where he could without recognition. He wanted to give what he could to the camp that meant so much to him. His silent legacy should not be forgotten. Thank you Dr. Tafoya. Rest in Paradise." -Dale "Bamm-Bamm" Decker, former Pyles Camp Director

Dedication

This Pylet is also dedicated to Rose “Nana” Urbina, who passed away in 2020. For 50 years, Nana cooked with love for a countless number of campers and staff or “her boys” as she would say. “Nana” was introduced to camp in 1958 and served as camp cook until her retirement in 2008. While Cook was her title, she was so much more. Preparing food only scratched the surface of what she accomplished during her tenure.

We have no doubt that her legacy is still alive today in all of the campers, staff, and friends who were lucky enough to spend time with her. She was loved by all and will live on in our memories.

“NANA, NANA, LISTEN WHILE WE SING TO YOU..”



Message from Trek

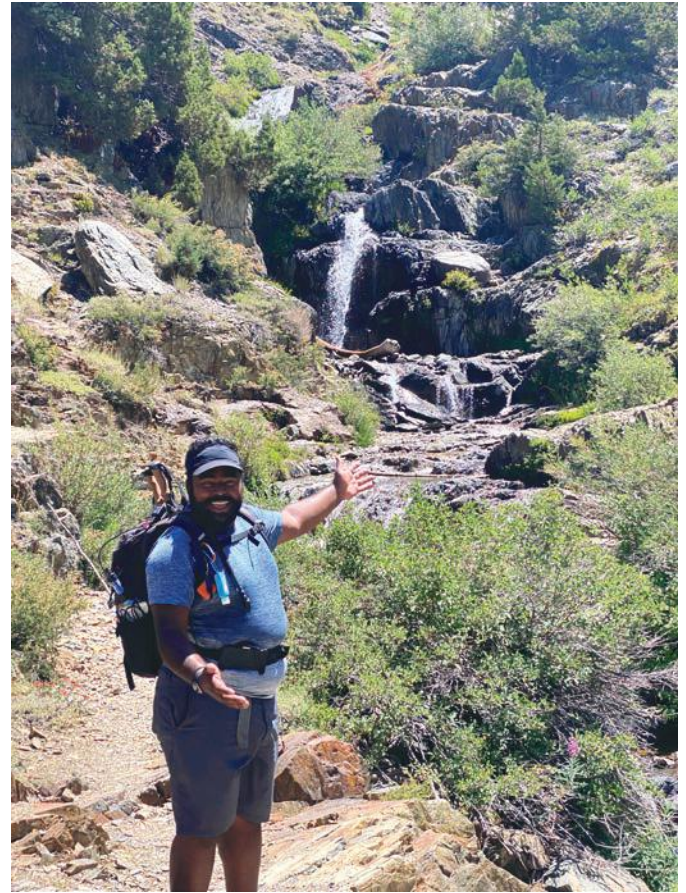
Summer 2021 is one for the record books! After not running in 2020 and being faced with multiple once-in-a-lifetime events in the form of a Pandemic closing camp in 2020 and a forest fire preventing access to camp in 2021, we succeeded when all seemed impossible. This summer we saw Pyles campers and staff spread their wings wider than ever before, embracing one new challenge after the other. We branched out from the comfort of our home in the Golden Trout Wilderness and made new memories in the San Bernardino National Forest and in Mineral King. We discovered new trails, some in better condition than others, and conquered new heights. We made new friends and renewed old friendships. I am very proud of what all of you accomplished this summer despite some very challenging circumstances.

Some of you may recall the campfire story I told during session 1 at Camp River Glen. It is important to remember that in order to be truly successful in all of life's opportunities you must keep honesty and integrity at the forefront of your decisions. Being honest with yourself and others will be what opens doors and opportunities for you. Remember that lying and taking shortcuts in your life will ultimately hurt you in the long run. Pyles will always be here to support you when you work hard and put in the effort to be a positive and helpful member of the community.

Now more than ever, it is important to surround yourselves with those that will lift you up and challenge you to be better young men. Sometimes all that gets in your way is yourself. Whether it is self-doubt or just a belief that you have no one to turn to. When you begin to look inside yourself, you'll find that it is only you and the choices that you make that will either propel you forward to great things or hold you back.

Stay strong and focused!

-Trek



*“I always thought it was me
against the world and then
one day I realized it’s just
me against me”*

- Kendrick Lamar

Message from Panda

For over a decade, I have looked forward to summers with eagerness and fervor. Eager to reconnect with old friends, make new ones, and most importantly, share the Pyles Camp magic with a new generation of campers. This past summer was one unlike any other in our history, a unique experience that will only be shared by those of us who were there. We experienced the Pyles Camp magic, but it wasn't at Pyles Camp. We hiked on trails, but they were different. We climbed on a ropes course, but it was different. We shot bows and arrows, but they were different. We became a family, and that was the same.

Although this summer looked different than any other, every Camper, Pioneer, Voyager, staff member, and volunteer transformed our temporary homes at Camp River Glen and Mineral King into our own versions of Pyles. We laughed, we cried, we learned, we struggled, and we succeeded together.

Now that summer has come to a close, we have each gone back to our homes, to live our lives away from camp; and although we may be far away, we will always be able to look back and remember the times we shared. We can apply the lessons of camp to our everyday lives, and every summer our Pyles family will be waiting for us at camp.

Until next time,

Jorge "Panda" Mendoza

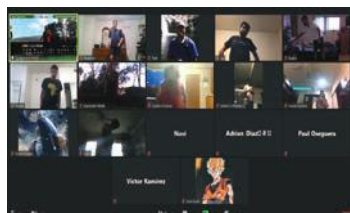
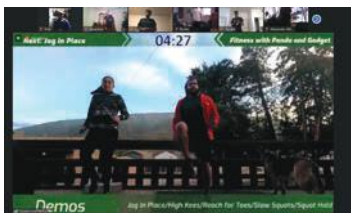


Outreach Events

Even with a Global Pandemic and a forest fire preventing access to Pyles in 2021, we still managed to engage our Campers, Staff, and Alumni in many year-round events. Take a look at some of the events from 2020- 2021.



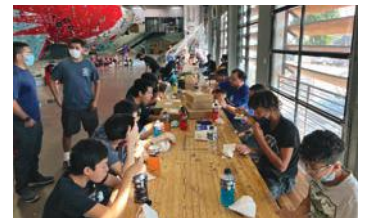
A DAY OF CAMP AT TOM SAWYER DAY CAMPS IN PASADENA



VIRTUAL CAMPER AND STAFF REUNIONS



LA AND VENTURA ROCK CLIMBING



UCLA STAFF FOOTBALL GAME



CHARGERS STAFF & CAMPER FOOTBALL GAME



BUSH TREE CLEAN UP WITH USFS



STAFF NIGHT AT SIX FLAGS

First Session Groups

FIRST YEAR CAMPERS



7th Pick: Rhino's "El Rhino's Crew"

Angel Balion-Garcia	Daven Steffey
Michael Beltran	Jacob Yanez
Ricardo Celis	
Aidan Comer	
Daniel Ramirez	



6th Pick: Cookie Monster & Patriot's "Strikers"

Maycol Bailon	Bryan Franco
Jayvin Caballero	Cade Heiber
Issac Cervantes	Joseph Hood
Evry Espiritu	Gerardo Leal
Lewis Figueroa	



5th Pick: Rocket & Crossover's "Cr8's"

Victor Aguirre	Andrew Oseguera
Andrew Chamagua	Logan Panther
Jake Griffith	Anthony Stemplesca
Nathan Hernandez-Chavez	
Rider Neccohea	



4th Pick: Navi & Jiggy's "Big Ten"

Issac Cueva	Michael O'Reilly
Evik Garcia	Eduardo Santana
Abdusami Issa	Owen Toomey
Logan Martinez	Javontai Wisdom
Jonathan Maza	



3rd Pick: Red's "Red Bulls"

Kyler Clark	Edwin Reyes
Cayleb Dickson	Sebastian Rodriguez
Sherman Gray Jr.	George Valenzuela
Julian Greco	
Jorge Medrano	



2nd Pick: Aztec's "Warriors"

Jacob Gomez	Elvis Munoz
Moises Lopez	Cesar Rodriguez
Angel Melendez	Samuel Stemplesca
Victor Monarque	Matthew Torres
Nathan Moreno	



1st Pick: Sniper & Active's "Big Ten"

David Avena-Puentas	Arthur Velez
Logan Cotton	Ronen Zamorano
Rocco Fernandez	
Jack McCormick	
Angel Mendoza	



1st Session Staff

Workers:	Specialists:	Senior Staff:
Shortcut	Lefty	Monsieur
Poseidon	Mouse	FoxLad
	Billy Bear	Gizmo
	Havoc	

Names in Bold = Honor Campers

Summer Reflections



This summer our spirits were tested. Though we were not at our home, the Spirit of Camp was with us because that Spirit of Camp is not in a place, but the people who make it move. No matter where you stay or where you go...the Spirit of Camp will also be there, as long as you believe. Pyles Camp gave us the true meaning of friendship. Last year we had many obstacles, and a sickness tried to separate us, but no matter what, God was and will always be there for us. Congratulations to everyone who came this summer and made it an incredible journey. My hope is that the two weeks you spent with your Counselors and the tools you were given will be used wisely as you move forward in life. When you feel down or low, remember the two weeks you spent with your friends. Never give up. Always stay positive. I will always remember to respect people and to care for one another. My hope is you accomplish your life goals and remember the light you received at the end of the two weeks. There's not enough darkness that can turn off your light.... So when we come across moments like we did in the past year, we have the tools to be strong and positive. It was a pleasure to be your AD. I had an incredible summer of sharing many great moments with you all. I hope you remember all the lessons we gave you. Thank you to the staff for making it happen this summer and trusting in the Spirit of Pyles Camp. May God bless you guys and your families.

Love,

Dolphin & South Paw



Lioneers

Hello Lioneers,

We hope this Pylet finds you all well and that your time since the second session at Mineral King has been well spent and productive. Over the past few months, we have found ourselves looking back at the time spent in Mineral King.

Though we remember the hard hikes and the seemingly never-ending rain, we also remember the beautiful views, the games, the explorations, and even the jokes made. It is our hope that these memories are shared ones, and that the time you all spent in the mountains will be some of the best memories of your lives. We know that the hikes were hard and that the camp chores may have even been harder, but it is these lessons and many more that generations of Lioneers have taken home with them. We hope

that the same can be said for all of you. We want you all to remember that though this past summer is over, the lessons of Pyles Camp never end. That the same hard work, determination, teamwork, and brotherhood that you developed at Mineral King can always be applied back home. Finally, we want you all to remember what you have accomplished; hiking trails that young men your age rarely hike, seeing views that some people may never see in their lives, and forging friendships that can last a lifetime.

Hoping to see you all for another summer,

Billy Bear, Red, & Rocket



2nd Session Lioneers: Billy Bear, Red, Rocket

Jose Ayala
Juan Estrada
Diego Garcia
Manuel Garcia

Michael Garcia
Leland Hernandez
Aydrian Hocking
Alexandre Lopez

Darian Moreno
Victor Zacarias

Looking at these photos sparks a laughter that seems long past. We spoke a lot about Lion Meadows and what would've been the usual Pioneer/Voyager experience. With the heartbreak of not being able to go to our home, you accepted the challenge of going to Mineral King. Some of you slept during that long, 25-mile drive on Mineral King Road. When we arrived y'all were brave in the new land. You spent seven nights at Mosquito Lakes, learning how the shadows moved and when the water was the warmest. You have rooted your name in Pyles history and have become legends to us. You are the "Summer at Mineral King." In time you will realize the daring days you endured were truly magnificent. You'll look back to this Pylet and reminisce of the better days, so remember...



3rd Session Lioneers: Billy Bear, Rhino, Skipjack, Mouse

Mazatepeyolotzin
 Aparicio
 Joesph Arrieta
Francisco Cueva

Emiliano Gamez
 Hector Jimenez
 Jesus Marinez
Christopher Orozco

Joel Sandoval
 Moses Yonko

Names in Bold = Voyagers

Joey winning his first game of snake eyes on his first toss. Moses' first words every morning. Chewie's "Mob It?", Joel's "Dale," Jesus's "Bro," and Emiliano's naps. Hector on scary story time. CK looking over the lake and Frankie's corny jokes. Waking up to ducks at the lake, Skipjack cooking, and Billy Bear sitting on the rock. Going to the top lake, the long KPs, and the digging spots. Skipjack's stories at night. Billy Bear's wise words. You brought wonderful joy and marvelous diligence to Mosquito.

Continue striving in life for happiness. We proudly miss you.

Loving Wishes,

Billy Bear, Rhino, Skipjack, & Mouse

Voyagers

Hello Voyagers.

Or shall we say, “Hello, future staff?”... We hope this letter finds you well, in good health, and high spirits. We also hope that whatever you are currently focused on, may it be school, sports, school clubs /extracurricular activities, family life, work, or following your passion, we hope that you are putting forth your greatest efforts, that you are happy in what you are doing and proud of yourself.

It’s already been a few months since camp has ended and I’m sure that, like us, even though we may be focused on our current goals, obligations, and obstacles, we can all take a second to look back to the time we all spent together. For us, the memories are so vivid it can feel like we’re actually there.

We think back to meeting all of you at Kaweah Lake, to staring at Farewell Gap from the parking lot, to motivating one another while trying to get to the gap, and to laughing at a shrimp fried rice joke. We remember our roar on top of Farewell Gap and how it felt to finally reach our goal. We remember all the sketchy parts of the trails, our tough hike up to Silver Lake, the mouse houses, our “campfires” we had, Aztec’s wonder food, Would you rather? with Navi, and shark tank. We can go on and on.

It was a great eleven days spent with all of you, full of memories we will remember for a very long time. We hope the tough parts we had helped you find the courage to keep going when things get hard in the future and in your current lives. We hope all the laughs we shared remind you to enjoy life every day. We hope running out of toilet paper, making a shelter while getting rained on, and doing KP inside a hole in the dirt helps you find gratitude in the smallest things and gratitude for those who support you.

We wish you all a great holiday season. We hope you spend it happy and that you spread happiness amongst your loved ones. We hope everyone is excited for next summer and ready to work hard and help the Pyles program thrive!

We are always here for you! Never hesitate to contact us or anyone through the Pyles Camp website if you are ever experiencing tough times, need someone to talk to, or even someone to celebrate your accomplishments. We want to hear from you.

Much love,

Sniper, Navi, & Aztec



2nd Session Voyager Group: Sniper, Navi, Aztec

Nicholas Alvarado
Anthony Antongiovanni
Camrin Burkhammer

Ashton Comer
Adrian Diaz
Angel Maldonado

Alean Nava
Dominic Robinson
James Torres

My BOYS!

Before anything, we hope that this Pylet reaches you all doing great! We know it has been a long time since we have been able to talk and touch base, but it's okay because we know you boys are out there hustling and doing amazing things.

Every single day, we wish that we could still be out there at the top of a new mountain, playing some chess out in the middle of nowhere, or trying out some fishing and fish soup (or fish tea) at a new lake. Unfortunately, we don't have that luxury, but what we feel helps keep us going are the moments we created during our short time together. Moments like when some of you had the chance to catch your first fish, when we all had to clean up in what seemed like the coldest water ever, or even when it seemed that we were getting attacked by deer! The memories are endless.

As all of you know, every activity we do together has a meaning or a lesson tied behind it that we can all use back down in our city lives. For example, the one that sticks with us the most is when we all had the opportunity to summit to the top of Vandever. The reason for that is because during most of our trip, we could see this mountain as we hiked throughout all our other destinations. The top of Vandever seemed like an impossible place to ever reach, yet we were the first group in over a decade to summit it! At that very moment, we were reminded that no goal is ever unachievable. It may seem like an impossible goal, but we are the ones that set the limits for ourselves. We want all of you to remember the very moment when we stepped up to the very top of Vandever, the amazing 360-degree view we had of everything, and the satisfaction, as well as the sense of completion, that came with it.

We are very proud of the young men that each one of you have turned into and we want to thank you for the memories and opportunities to learn more about ourselves that you boys gave us. We love all of you and if you ever feel the need to reach out to someone, DO NOT HESITATE! We are all here for you at any moment and will do everything we can to guide or help you out. Keep pushing boys, we all miss you!

In the Pyles Spirit,

Chavo & Aztec

P.S. "UHHH what was that... James!?"



3rd Session Lioneers/Voyagers: Chavo, Aztec

Alotl Aparicio

Eduardo Dominguez

Arkece Jackson

Bryce Kathan

Thomas McDonough

Jacob Orozco

Francisco Sierra

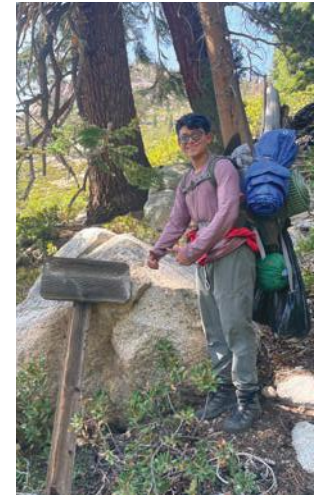
Emilio Syrus Ruiz

Names in Bold = Voyagers

2nd & 3rd Session at Min



eral King



Thank You, Staff!

This past summer would not have been possible without the endless dedication and commitment from our Pyles Seasonal Staff. The Pyles Family owes all of you a huge debt of gratitude for all that you do to bring the Pyles camp experience to so many young men. It is no small task to leave your friends and family in the city and spend many weeks in the mountains. Thank you for continuing to share the “Light” of Pyles each and every summer.







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