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## Camp is in its 70th year



By David Giuliani

ROCIADA — Many people around here have heard of Pendaries Village in Rociada, but few know about Camp Davis, which is a few miles down the road.

The camp, celebrating its 70th anniversary this year, features eight cabins, a dining hall and a recreation building, as well as opportunities for fishing, hiking and horseback riding.

In the summer of 1939, Coach J. Mule and Liz Davis founded Camp Davis. In the 1940s, '50s and '60s, the Davises had hundreds of kids from Texas stay at the camp throughout the summers.

Since the 1970s, the camp has scaled back, operating only about six weeks in the summer. One of the Davises' sons, Bill Davis, and his wife, Irma, have been operating the camp for the 37 years. The camp is now in a transition in which one of the founders' grandchildren, Kelly Murphy, is preparing to take charge.

She and her husband, Bennett Murphy, are looking to expand the camp's operations.

For years, the camp has been renting out to a number of families, many of whom have been coming year after year. The Davises have seen the fourth and fifth generations of families spend their vacations at the camp.

Murphy said she will aim to also attract business meetings, church groups and scouting troops.

She would also like to make the camp a bed and breakfast from the winter through May. She plans for restaurant nights that would bring residents from the area. The camp's head cook, Ida Martinez, has worked there for six decades, Murphy said.

"Food is a big draw here. What's served is stuff you're not allowed to eat like fried chicken," Murphy said, adding that she and her husband have experience in the restaurant business.

Many visitors like to go horseback riding. Most nearby property owners allow access for riders, with the exception of actor Gene Hackman, who owns a ranch next to the camp, Kelly Murphy said.

Each cabin has a fireplace and signatures of previous visitors on the walls — a practice the camp encourages.

"Outside of meals and horseback riding, there are no scheduled activities. People do their own thing. That's what they like about it," Murphy said.

Worsham, a junior in college from Houston, said she enjoys Camp Davis.

"My family has been coming here for 14 years, I love it here. It's a great escape from the heat of Houston, and a nice place to be in the summer," she said.

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