

Another delay granted for Obamacare

SECOND FRONT ■ B1



Food companies going natural in ingredients

BUSINESS ■ B5



Quartz Hill clinches share of league title

SPORTS ■ C1



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TODAY'S OUTLOOK



Sunny. Highs in 60s to around 70. Lows in mid-30s to lower 40s.

WEATHER: C8

LOTTO: B1

Painted Turtle rises from ashes

Camp to reopen one year after Powerhouse fire

By ANDREW CLARK
Valley Press Staff Writer

LAKE HUGHES — The Painted Turtle is almost ready for a second life.

The Lake Hughes camp, founded by the late actor Paul Newman as a place where chronically ill children can experience the joys of summer camp, is almost ready to reopen after being closed last summer after sustaining damage in May during the Powerhouse fire, which blackened some 30,000 acres.

"We're super excited to be back up at the site," said Jessica Santos, development specialist at The Painted Turtle.

The camp buildings survived, though there was some damage. In addition, neighboring hillsides were charred and with the prevailing winds in the area, ash was blowing, causing conditions that would be unsafe for the campers.

The camp was able to recover from most of the damage, thanks to generous donations.

"We lost a lot of stuff in storage bins because those caught on fire," Santos said.

According to Santos, the ground that was blackened around the camp was planted this fall by "hydroseeding" — a mixture of grass seed and fertilizer. Select volunteers were at the camp site this weekend to prepare the facility for upcoming events, including the Liver Disease and Transplant Family Weekend at the end of February.

Coincidentally, the Liver Disease and Transplant group was the first summer



RUBY ALVARADO/Valley Press

BOUNCING BACK — Mother-daughter team Teresa, left, and Tiana Calver create flags as part of the volunteer work done Saturday morning in preparation for summer campers at the Painted Turtle, which is close to reopening after last year's Powerhouse fire.

session when the camp opened in 2004.

The camp will be having several events planned this year in honor of its 10th anniversary giving chronically ill children a week at camp. Thousands of children have attended camp at the Painted Turtle, which has medical facilities to care for them and cabins set up to meet their special needs.

Under care from the camp's medical staff, campers can boat and fish, swim, make crafts projects and participate in other activities.

A fundraiser in September drew 300 attendees to help raise funds for both the children and the camp.

At the time, camp executive director Blake Maher thought the cost of repairing the facility would be about \$1 million, but told the Valley Press the amount had grown to "at least a couple million."

"It's been a tough summer, but we're coming back," said Maher.

"Not only in terms of cleaning up and fundraising but in bringing the community out to see what they've supported for so long," Maher added. "Thanks to the generosity of everyone and their continued support, by spring of 2014, we'll see campers back at The Painted Turtle."

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