

Closed Crimean Summer Camp Gets Help From 'Exotic' Source

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Strippers in Rostov-on-Don have sent a day's earnings to Artek summer camp in Crimea in an effort to help keep it open.

A renowned children's summer camp in Crimea that closed amid a legal dispute linked to the region's secession to Russia has found help in a rather unlikely place: a strip club in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don.

As the Artek camp, a UNESCO site that opened in 1925 along the Black Sea shore, awaits confirmation of its legal status and possible backing by President Vladimir Putin, the girls of Rostov-on-Don's Provintsia strip club are offering up their hard-earned cash to help keep the camp running.

"We know that after Crimea became part of Russia, this popular camp was closed," an exotic dancer named Lana told the online tabloid LifeNews. "Me and the other girls decided to not just stand by, but to actually do something! All the money that we're making tonight is going to Crimea!"

In late March, the speaker of Russia's upper house of parliament, Valentina Matviyenko, proposed giving the camp the prestigious status of a "presidential" international children's center, state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

The camp's deputy general director said last week that he soon expected more clarification on the status, but still wasn't sure when the camp would resume accepting visitors.

As of Tuesday, the girls of Provintsia have already sent several tens of thousands of rubles to the camp. For comparison, the average monthly salary in their city is about 25,000 rubles (\$700), according to a report on the regional government's website.

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