

# CAMP THE SUNSHINE TIMES



Spring 2010



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## Keeping Hope Afloat: A Camp Tradition

By Matthew M. Hoidal, Esq., Executive Director

On a recent tour of the campus, a guest inquired if we had any camp traditions. Those intimately familiar with Camp Sunshine know of our many rituals, which include Hands Up, bonfires and marshmallow roasts, Super Dooper Blooper Games, and various others. One tradition, however, shines among these, literally: "Wish Boats."

Walk into Arts and Crafts on any given day when camp is in session and you are bound to notice kids armed with

glue guns, paint brushes, and a palette of brilliant colors, each creating their own work of art. Every day of Camp, the room is abuzz with energy and magic, but never more so than the last two days of Camp, when children begin working on their Wish Boats.

***"I wish I could stay at  
Camp Sunshine forever."***

Children decorate and adorn these vessels with pirate flags, buttons, and beads. The final touches...a birthday candle plucked at the front of the ship, and a string tethered to the bow.

*continued on page 2*

# WISH BOATS

*Keeping Hope Afloat: A Camp Tradition, continued from cover:*

Ready to set sail, campers march down to the pond the last night of Camp, joined by all their family members, volunteers, and camp staff. They line the banks of the water, several standing, others crouched, and some in their wheelchairs, and launch their boats to the sounds of Greg Cooney's *Camp Sunshine Forever*.

It's a moment full of emotion, children's innocent faces reflected in the pond among the flickering candle flames. When the music ends, children blow out their candles and say their wishes. Wiping away tears, they linger for awhile and soak in the magic of the moment before slowly making their way back up to Camp to the final Celebration Show where the mood changes to laughter. It's a Camp Sunshine tradition that will carry on forever.

## In the Beginning

The idea of having a Wish Boat Ceremony at the end of each Camp Sunshine session originated with Doris Ham in 1984, then Director of a Girl Scout camp on nearby Thompson Lake. When she heard that Camp Sunshine was starting up that year, Doris decided that she would like to volunteer for the new program and brought with her a tradition that continues to be central to the Camp Sunshine experience.

As Doris recounts, the young ladies at the Girl Scout camp would scamper off into the woods and gather pieces of wood and bark to create their Wish Boats. The idea however didn't seem quite as safe for Camp Sunshine's ill children, so Doris's husband Wally decided that he would make a template out of wood that could be recreated for each Camp Sunshine session: his result, the first ever Camp Sunshine Wish Boat!

Doris spent the first session in 1984 helping children decorate the Wish Boats Wally had created. With so much care and time being put into each boat, several children returned from the inaugural launch upset that their boats had been set adrift on the lake, hence, the addition of a staple and string for all subsequent launches. Soon Wally tapped fellow volunteer, Mel Foster, to assist with the Wish Boat production due to the increased demand as more programs were added.

Incredibly, as we reached out to Doris to confirm these historical facts, she had yet one more contribution to add to her legacy here at Camp Sunshine. Several years ago, while cleaning out her basement, she came across something extraordinary - Wally's very first attempt at a Wish Boat - which will now be displayed at Camp Sunshine for years to come.



## 10 Years of Making Wish Boats

When a new volunteer arrived at Camp Sunshine in 2000 to help with the final stages of construction on Camp Sunshine's new campus, nobody could have ever predicted what he would be doing for the next ten years, not even him. While assembling railings on Camp Sunshine's 120 bunk beds, this gentleman overheard the one question that would set him off on his special journey, "Did anyone have a chance to make the Wish Boats for the first session?"

Today, nearly 200 sessions and 10,000 Wish Boats later, this man, Bob, (who prefers to only be listed by first name) has become Camp Sunshine's one-man Wish Boat manufacturing machine. At his shop in Cumberland, Maine, with wood that he purchases with his own money, Bob cuts, drills, and shapes, one-by-one, what will some day carry the thoughts and dreams of a young camper.

At age 61, he admits, "I have never even witnessed a Wish Boat

# WISH BOATS

launch. I have expressed to my wife that it would be fun and I would just love to sneak in and watch one someday - without anyone ever needing to know who I am."

Bob's understated personality makes his contributions to Camp Sunshine all the more special. Indeed, when we approached him with this story idea, he at first shied away from the recognition, but in the end consented, knowing how meaningful the Wish Boat Ceremony is for our families.

When asked why he has worked countless hours for ten years on a project he has never even witnessed firsthand, Bob simply said, "It is just one of those small things that to me, makes my life worth living."

All of us at Camp Sunshine have a feeling that some of Bob's boats just might have the same effect on others...



*In his 16 years at Camp Sunshine, A.J. Cincotta-Eichenfield has made more Wish Boats than anyone else. Pictured above are some of his fleet.*

## The Craft of Decorating Wish Boats

No single individual has explained, prepared, or watched the creation of more Wish Boats than veteran volunteer Mary Ragucci. In 1988, having no prior artistic training or experience, Mary began working each summer in Camp Sunshine's Arts & Crafts program. To this day, she continues to volunteer multiple sessions annually, and shares with each and every camper the art of crafting the perfect Wish Boat.

Mary still recalls her very first Wish Boat Launch. How could she forget? As campers and volunteers strolled to the water's edge, a storm was blowing over Sebago Lake. However, just as children knelt to launch their boats, the clouds began to split and a single ray of sunshine created a rainbow stretching across the entire sky. Some signs are hard to argue with!

When asked what makes a Wish Boat so special, Mary replied, "They have a fairy-tale quality. It's like wishing upon a star. I think that we all secretly wish that the candles do make wishes come true and hope each boat truly is magical - especially our wishes for healthier, happier children."

Everyone at Camp Sunshine embraces that sentiment and would like to take this opportunity to thank Mary for 23 years of keeping hope afloat.



*Mary Ragucci looks over just a few of the many, many Wish Boats she has helped children create over the years.*

# WINTER PROGRAMS

## Winter is a Blast at Camp Sunshine!

It wasn't the coldest or snowiest winter on record, but this past February was yet again a time filled with fun and support for families at Camp Sunshine. Horse-drawn carriage rides, ice skating, snowshoeing, sledding, spectacular skiing at nearby Shawnee Peak, and a variety of indoor activities kept families entertained, and treated them to a much-needed respite.

For the more than 80 families who attended the three winter sessions, the mild temperatures, blue skies, and beauty of Camp Sunshine's campus proved a timely break and welcome venue for coming together as a family, while connecting with other families in similar situations. Central to the Camp Sunshine experience are the parent discussion groups led

by Camp Sunshine Psychosocial Director Nancy Cincotta. These groups offer a rare opportunity for mothers and fathers to openly share experiences with others. Perhaps this is why families frequently travel from even the warm southern states to brave the wintry chill of Maine in February. The allure of seeing snow for the first time no doubt serves to attract, but Nancy's ability to make parents feel comfortable together is what helps them leave feeling the magic of Camp Sunshine.

Since the very first February session was offered in 2003, Camp Sunshine's winter sessions have become an integral part of our efforts in making the program available to families year-round, at convenient times, and when, they need us most.

## A Family Letter

Dear Wal-Mart Foundation,

We appreciate you sponsoring our family's visit to Camp Sunshine so much. Our two and a half year-old son Andrew is currently in the maintenance phase of therapy for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). Between chemo, steroids, and all his other treatment, Andrew has been through a lot, and continues to go through a lot. His illness has also greatly affected his older sister, Carolyn (4.5 years old), and identical twin Daniel, immensely. They all have enjoyed our time at Camp Sunshine so much.

All three kids were in the Tot Lot. The volunteers were so kind and upbeat. The kids enjoyed the arts and crafts, all the games, and story times. Even though it was winter, they were still able to enjoy the outdoor playground.

Our daughter thrived here. She tried ice-skating and skiing for the first time - and loved both. She participated in the talent show and we could not get her off the dance floor during the masquerade party or celebration party. She became very attached to several of the volunteers, and

it was so nice for her to have so much focused one-on-one attention.

The boys especially loved the sledding track. They couldn't get enough of the rush from zooming down the hill. They also could not believe

how big the horses were that took them on a sleigh ride.

The time away from home and our household responsibilities was wonderful for me and my husband. It was great to have someone else in charge of entertaining our three little ones during the doldrums of winter. The meals were great, and we were both able to find some time to relax. It also meant a lot to us to be able to connect with other families in situations like ours.

This was a much-needed get away for our family. We couldn't have afforded any type of vacation this winter, and we

are extremely grateful for your generosity in sponsoring our family.

Sincerely,  
The Byrne Family



# AROUND CAMP

## 2010 Program Schedule

February 12 - 16 .....	Oncology
February 17 - 21 .....	Oncology
February 26 - 28 .....	Mixed Diagnosis
April 16 - 19 .....	Oncology* ++
May 21 - 23 .....	Sickle Cell
May 27 - 31 .....	Bereavement
June 4 - 8 .....	Solid Organ Transplant
June 13 - 18 .....	Retinoblastoma
June 19 - 23 .....	Oncology
June 25 - 30 .....	Fanconi Anemia
July 5 - 10 .....	Brain Tumor
July 11 - 16 .....	Diamond-Blackfan Anemia
July 18 - 23 .....	Oncology
July 25 - 30 .....	Shwachman-Diamond Syndrome
August 1 - 6 .....	Oncology
August 8 - 13 .....	Brain Tumor
August 15 - 20 .....	Lupus
August 22 - 26 .....	Oncology**
August 26 - 30 .....	Oncology Off Treatment
September 2 - 7 .....	Renal
September 30 - October 3 .....	Dyskeratosis Congenita
October 8 - 12 .....	Brain Tumor
October 29 - 31 .....	Mixed Diagnosis
November 10 - 14 .....	Bereavement
December 3 - 5 .....	Brain Tumor

\*Children with cancer and their families, especially families in which a child has cancer and a parent has also been diagnosed with cancer are encouraged to apply.

++ Families with a child with Down Syndrome with leukemia are encouraged to apply.

\*\*Spanish-speaking families encouraged to apply.



## Have A Chance, Will Travel



The relationship between Have A Chance and Camp Sunshine is an interesting one, and Camp Sunshine is indebted to Amy Reiling for the introduction. Amy attended Camp Sunshine's program with her family in 2009, and left feeling grateful for the experience. Wanting to help Camp Sunshine, Amy contacted the Have A Chance Foundation and raved about our program. The Have A Chance team was immediately impressed with Camp Sunshine and phoned us to see how they could help.

After discussing a variety of options, the Have A Chance Foundation granted Camp Sunshine \$41,000 for a brand new passenger van, which we will use to transport families between Camp and the local airport and bus and train stations. The foundation team also included extra funds for fueling the van.

For more information about Have A Chance, please visit their website at: [www.haveachance.org](http://www.haveachance.org).

## Welcome Carol Hancock!

We are thrilled to announce that Carol Hancock has joined Camp Sunshine's Board of Directors. Those of you who have been with Camp Sunshine since our early years may recall that Carol had served as a Board Member in the 90's. Since then, she and her family have continued to remain involved in Camp Sunshine. Indeed, Carol, the Hancock family, and their company, Hancock Lumber, have been so supportive that Camp Sunshine recognized them with an award at its 25th Anniversary Celebration. Welcome back to the Board, Carol, and thank you for your unyielding commitment, compassion, and support.



# ENDOWMENT & CAPITAL

## A Donor Leaves Her Mark With a Gift of \$400,000!

We were stunned to learn recently that Camp Sunshine was named the sole beneficiary of an estate valued in excess of \$400,000. Katherine L. Derrig of Portland, Maine passed away on December 25, 2009 at the age of 92. To date, this is the largest estate gift ever received by Camp Sunshine. The gift will be added to Camp Sunshine's endowment, and will help secure the future of the program for years to come. Ms. Derrig never volunteered at Camp Sunshine and had no family connection to the program. She made a handful of contributions to Camp Sunshine over the past several years, none of which would have ever signaled the enormity of what was to come. According to the administrator of her will, Ms. Derrig was a quiet woman who enjoyed reading Camp Sunshine's newsletters and was apparently very impressed and taken by our mission. This gift illustrates the potential for planned giving to have a tremendous impact on the future of Camp Sunshine. Please contact Camp Sunshine's Executive Director Matt Hoidal at (207) 655-3800 or mhoidal@campsunshine.org if you are interested in naming Camp Sunshine in your will.

## Hannaford Support Hits \$200,000!

In 2007, the Hannaford Charitable Foundation made a \$50,000 contribution towards Camp Sunshine's \$14.5 million Momentum Endowment & Capital Campaign. Since then, Hannaford Supermarkets have continued to support Camp Sunshine, donating \$50,000 per year in 2008, 2009, and again in 2010. Support from the foundation and the company totals \$200,000 to date, of which \$150,000 was used to support the addition of the *Shaw Brothers Construction Second Floor* onto Camp Sunshine's *Viterbi Family Activity Center*. In appreciation of their support, Camp Sunshine named its second floor administrative offices after the company and foundation. The recent \$50,000 will be used to sponsor one of Camp Sunshine's 2010 summer oncology sessions. Camp Sunshine is extremely grateful to the Hannaford Charitable Foundation and Hannaford Supermarkets for their continued generous support.

### Our Sincerest Apologies

Our sincerest apologies to Dennis Canavan, Bill Gumbel and I Halpern, Inc. who were inadvertently omitted from the donor and volunteer lists in the 2009 Annual Report.

## Groundbreaking for New Volunteer Building on Track for Fall

In 2009 the Orokawa Foundation pledged \$500,000 towards the expansion of volunteer housing. Since then, we have been busy firming up plans and working on the permitting for the project. We expect the expansion to be completed in time for use during Camp Sunshine's 2011 season. A total of 10 new rooms are planned, the primary purpose of which is to make room for more Camp Sunshine families who wish to return to volunteer. Including former Camp Sunshine families in our volunteer corps adds depth to the program, and is part of our comprehensive plan of keeping families connected to Camp Sunshine throughout their children's illnesses, and beyond. We are grateful for this opportunity made possible by the Orokawa Foundation, and look forward to sharing project progress reports with you throughout 2010 and 2011.

### Available Underwriting Opportunities

Endow a Week at Camp.....	\$1,000,000
Elevator .....	\$50,000
Front Porch.....	\$50,000
Family Suites.....	\$50,000
Volunteer Suites.....	\$50,000
Endow a Family Sponsorship Fund.....	\$25,000
Adult Craft Room Furnishings.....	\$15,000
Executive Office Furnishings (6).....	\$5,000



# ENDOWMENT & CAPITAL

## The JTG Foundation Offers \$250,000 Matching Challenge to Help Camp Sunshine Kick-Off Next 25 Years

After witnessing Camp Sunshine successfully celebrate its 25th Anniversary in 2009, the JTG Foundation (a Maine-based organization founded by John T. Gorman, Jr. in 1995) offered Camp Sunshine a gift that would help it continue its momentum and leverage the opportunity of this historic moment in the organization's history. The gift is in the form of a challenge, matching all gifts of \$25,000 and above to Camp Sunshine's endowment in 2010, to a total of \$250,000.

Once complete, the JTG Foundation Matching Challenge will result in a gain of \$500,000 toward Camp Sunshine's \$14.5 million Momentum Endowment & Capital Campaign, pushing it to the \$10 million mark in 2010. Specifically, the \$500,000 will endow 20 family sponsorship funds in perpetuity. The JTG Foundation began sponsoring families at Camp Sunshine in 2005, and supported the construction of the new Parents' Discussion Room in 2008 with a gift of \$100,000.

To date, \$125,000 has been raised towards the challenge, from the following donors: **David & Laurie Sukoff** committed the first \$25,000 in January 2010. David is a Camp Sunshine Board Member who, along with his wife Laurie, daughter of our founders, gave \$50,000 to Camp Sunshine's endowment in 2003. **Matt & Linda Ramsden** committed the second \$25,000 towards the challenge through **Jack's Magic Bean Fund**. Their gift is made in memory of their son Jack, who passed away from cancer in 2005, and will be used to endow a bereavement family sponsorship fund. **An Anonymous** donor, who had already given \$25,000 in 2007 to endow a family sponsorship fund, gave the third gift of \$25,000. **The Billy Burchard Foundation** committed the fourth gift of \$25,000, honoring the life of Billy Burchard, who died of pancreatic cancer at the age of 48. **The Carol J. & K. David Hancock Charitable Trust** committed the fifth and most recent gift of \$25,000. This is the second gift of \$25,000 from the Trust to Camp Sunshine's endowment.

To learn how you can participate in the challenge, please contact Camp Sunshine's Executive Director Matt Hoidal at (207) 655-3800 or mhoidal@campsunshine.org.

### The 2010 Membership Drive Underway

Last year over 9,200 people made financial contributions to Camp Sunshine. If you were one of them, thank you for your generosity. Camp Sunshine will need your help again in 2010. Please mail your gift today in the enclosed envelope. Donations can also be made online at [www.campsunshine.org](http://www.campsunshine.org).

### Endowment & Capital Commitments of \$25,000 and over as of May 2010

The Orokawa Foundation	\$1,500,000
Anna M. Gould	\$1,000,000
Dr. Lawrence Gould	\$1,000,000
The New Balance Foundation	\$500,000
Estate of Katherine Derrig	\$400,000
JTG Foundation	\$350,000
Shaw Brothers Construction	\$250,000
The Barovick Family Foundation	\$250,000
Alison & Gary Lieberman	\$250,000
TD Bank Charitable Foundation	\$200,000
Joan & Bill Drapeau	\$150,000
The Viterbi Family Foundation	\$150,000
Life is good	\$150,000
The Skirball Foundation	\$150,000
Hannaford Charitable Foundation & Hannaford Supermarkets	\$150,000
Carol Hancock, Carol J. & K. David Hancock Charitable Trust, Alison & Kevin Hancock, & Hancock Lumber	\$125,000
Joey's Polar Plunge Family Sponsorship Fund	\$106,000
Nancy & Morris W. Offit	\$100,000
The Sol & Margaret Berger Foundation	\$100,000
The Hermann Foundation	\$100,000
The Anne Griffin Herrick Family Sponsorship Fund	\$85,000
The Sportshoe Center Maine Marathon	\$85,000
Laurie & David Sukoff	\$75,000
The Katie Vashon Family Sponsorship Fund	\$63,000
Arline M. & Clayton W. Belyea Family Sponsorship Fund	\$60,000
The Thomas F. Staley Foundation	\$60,000
Acorn Hill Foundation	\$50,000
Anonymous	\$50,000
The Amanda Martin Family Sponsorship Fund	\$50,000
The Buller Family Foundation	\$50,000
Nancy Cincotta, M.S.W. & Andrew Eichenfield, M.D.	\$50,000
The F.M. Kirby Foundation	\$50,000
Dana & Donald Toms	\$50,000
Tzell Travel Group	\$50,000
The Zobel Foundation	\$50,000
The Ron & Julie Eby - Windham Automotive Family Sponsorship Fund	\$50,000
Camp Mataponi - Marcy & Dan Isdaner	\$50,000
Guests of Migis Lodge - Brick Walkway Sections	\$50,000
Oakhurst Dairy	\$40,000
Wal-Mart Foundation	\$35,000
The Jason Chapman Family Sponsorship Fund	\$33,000
The William J.J. Gordon Trust	\$32,000
The Anna Gould & Larry Gould Family Sponsorship Fund	\$30,000
Billy Burchard Foundation	\$25,000
Carol & Ted Levy	\$25,000
Mattina R. Proctor Foundation	\$25,000
Milton Gray	\$25,000
Jack's Magic Bean Fund- The Ramsden Family	\$25,000
The Harold Greenberg Family Sponsorship Fund	\$25,000
Carol & Robert Weissman	\$25,000
The Shawnee Peak & Homer Family Sponsorship Fund	\$25,000
Scheerer Family Sponsorship Fund	\$25,000
Wadsworth Golf Charities Foundation	\$25,000
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$8,429,000</b>
<b>Brick Walkway Matching Donors</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>
<b>Endowed funds prior to Campaign</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,929,000</b>

# NATIONAL SUPPORT

## Thank Goodness for Flip Flops and Tropical Smoothie Café!

Our toes love this time of year. After being crammed into wool socks and boots all winter long, the opportunity to break

free into flip flops is a welcome and celebrated occasion. Our friends at Tropical Smoothie Café agree, and have created their very own holiday to celebrate this time of year, and the kick-off to summer. *National Flip Flop Day* is going into its fourth year, and third year for Camp Sunshine. As many of you know, Tropical Smoothie Café picked Camp Sunshine as



their national charity in 2008, and has raised over \$400,000 for our program in just two years. Funds raised have been used to sponsor families at Camp, and to help families from around the country with travel assistance, enabling them to access our unique and one-of-its kind family-focused program.

This year, *National Flip Flop Day* is set for Friday June 18th. On that day, each of the more than 275 Tropical Smoothie Cafés throughout the country will give away free Jetty Punch smoothies to the first 500 people wearing flip flops to each

store. On May 24, Tropical Smoothie Café will start promoting *National Flip Flop Day* in its stores, and raising money for Camp Sunshine through the sale of paper flip flops. They will continue to raise money and accept donations for Camp Sunshine past June 18th, all the way until the end of the month. The total monies raised through this year's campaign will be announced at Camp Sunshine during the August 1-6, 2010 oncology session, also known as *Tropical Smoothie Café Week* at Camp Sunshine.

We hope you will visit Tropical Smoothie Café's website [www.tropicalsmoothiecafe.com](http://www.tropicalsmoothiecafe.com) to find a location near you, and head on out wearing flip flops on June 18th to celebrate Camp Sunshine and enjoy a tasty treat.

## Text To Donate!

Those unable to visit stores can still support Tropical Smoothie Café's fundraising efforts on behalf of Camp Sunshine. Starting now, text **CAMP** to **20222** and a one-time donation of \$10 will be added to your mobile phone bill or deducted from your prepaid balance. **Messaging & Data Rates May Apply. All charges are billed by and payable to your mobile service provider. Service is available on most carriers.**

## JetBlue Airways Comes Through Again!

Camp Sunshine is pleased to recognize JetBlue Airways once again this year for their donation of 80 round-trip airline tickets in 2010. Tickets will be used to help families who would otherwise be unable to access Camp Sunshine's program. JetBlue donated the same number of round-trip tickets to Camp Sunshine in 2009, and has been flying Camp Sunshine families to Maine since they first began service to Portland, Maine in 2006.

As one of the only camps of its kind in the country providing support to the entire family and not just the ill child, it is important for Camp Sunshine to help increase access to its unique program to families from around the nation. JetBlue recognizes this need, and through their continued support, has displayed great compassion and commitment.

The following is an excerpt from a letter to JetBlue written by a

Camp Sunshine family from Florida who attended our 2010 Winter program:

*"I couldn't believe it, I was so thrilled. I was able to bring my son to Camp Sunshine without breaking my budget to make it happen. We tell others of the support JetBlue has provided for Camp Sunshine so they can use the service of JetBlue over other airline companies. You were able to put a smile on my son's face and excitement in his heart when he began to count down the days to be at Camp Sunshine again! I could say "thank you" over and over again, but that doesn't seem like enough. To witness my son go through all he has at such a young age is sheer torture. To be next to him as he cries in pain and be completely powerless to help is a feeling that no parent should ever experience. However, being next to him when he leaps into a 5 foot snowdrift at Camp Sunshine and I see the biggest grin on his face, is a feeling I will hold with me forever, thanks to the generosity of JetBlue Airlines."*

We are grateful for this long-standing partnership with JetBlue and are proud to recognize them as Camp Sunshine's official airline.

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## Polar Dips A Chillin' Good Time!

What a start to the official 2010 plunge season it was! New Year's Day brought the greatest Joey's Plunge to date in Boston. Breaking all previous plunge totals, Joey Cerato, along with family, and friends, surpassed the \$30,000 mark, pushing the event's five-year total to over \$109,000!

Thanks so much to Joey Cerato and the Cerato Family, all of the Joey's Plunge participants, including our friends and supporters from Life is good, Adam and Erin at Callanan & Klein, Fred Ahern and the L-Street Brownies, and the kind folks in Boston for being so supportive.

Just hours later on New Year's Day in Coney Island, New York, more than 600 people took to the icy waters of the Atlantic to also help raise money for Camp Sunshine. The historic boardwalk was packed with several thousand spectators and the frigid air seemed to deter few from joining in the festivities. In typical Coney Island fashion there were characters in every imaginable costume!

Camp Sunshine and the Coney Island Polar Bear Club raised more than \$28,000! Thank you so much to the Coney Island Polar Bears for allowing Camp Sunshine to be the recipient of funds from this 107-year tradition.



These plunges were followed by our Wachusett Plunge and AJ's Plunge, raising over \$11,000 and over \$38,000, respectively. This was our first time at Wachusett, and with some great volunteer support, it was an incredible success. Next stop, the Jersey Shore. Thanks to Pier Village shops and Le Club Avenue for their support on what might have been one of the coldest plunge days of the year. AJ's Plunges have raised over \$195,000, the highest total of any plunge to date. Special thanks to A.J. Cincotta-Eichenfield, his parents Nancy and Andy, Pat and Jack Horan for their hospitality, and all the friends and family who participated.

Coming off the heels of New Jersey, we headed back to Maine, all the way up to Bangor, where plungers raised in excess of \$6,000 for Camp Sunshine. Special thanks to Camp Capella for hosting the event and volunteer Joe Dowling for the countless hours of support. Next, it was back down to Portland, Maine, where Camp Sunshine plungers raised another \$20,000.

As the season continued, the next two Plunges made huge splashes after having to be rescheduled due to stormy weather. Both the Virginia Polar Dip in Reston, VA and the Long Island Polar Dip in Amityville, NY were chilling successes!!

Over 85 plungers braved the icy waters of Lake Anne, raising more than \$47,000 for Camp Sunshine. This was amazing, considering the goal was \$25,000!!! Special thanks to all of the event supporters: Reston Association, Lake Anne Merchants Association, Sheraton Reston, and the Jasmine Café. Finally, we extend a very warm thank you to our local event organizers and beloved friends, the Toth Family!

Unfortunately, the Long Island Polar Dip turned out to be the dip that would get stormed out not once, but twice. After having been cancelled once due to snow, and then again due to extreme winds and high surf, plungers decided to get together for a party instead, celebrating their achievement in raising \$20,000 for Camp Sunshine! Way to go folks!!!

Camp Sunshine's plunge season came to a close with the Bowdoin Polar Bear Dip at Popham Beach, Maine on April 3rd. Clear skies and 70 degree weather only made for more contrast when 25 plungers hit Maine's frigid coastal waters. The after party hosted by Camp Sunshine supporters Michael and Chelsey Gilroy at Frontier Café, Cinema and Gallery was the perfect end to a phenomenal plunge season.

**The total raised in 2010 exceeded \$205,000!**



# BUILDING COMMUNITIES

## Fostering Hope

Camp Sunshine is many things, a story to be told on numerous levels. Each layer of Camp Sunshine represents another dimension within the bigger story, a story founded on the premise that Camp Sunshine was to help children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. The mission was clear, the journey uncharted.

The world has changed since 1984, and although the Wish Boats have remained the same, the world of medicine has not. Children with life-threatening illnesses are living longer, treatments have become more aggressive, and there is much to be endured. In many situations there is more hope.



Many of the emotional tenets of living with a life-threatening illness remain universal: the uncharted journey is, at best, daunting. If you have a life-threatening illness as a child, you realize that it is rare and you often feel alone in the world. Part of the magic of coming to Camp Sunshine is that Camp enables those facing the challenges imposed by illness to feel connected with one another. The experience at Camp helps family members realize that they are not different. Feeling different in the world is something that many people struggle with; making peace with feeling different is not something that everyone gets the opportunity to do. Connecting with others, recognizing your strengths and accomplishments, and creating friendships based on who you are, and what your family is experiencing, is an amazing thing.

In life, you may not always know exactly where you are going, but upon reflection it is often easy to acknowledge where you have been. What can be seen within the reflection of the candle from each Wish Boat is an image of a boat, made at a given session, by a particular child, embodying a specific wish. What cannot be seen in the reflection are the pain, the suffering, the wisdom, and the energy that comes in association with a child with a life-threatening illness. In twenty-five years we have learned (to quote a moment from the Jonathan

Beech Memorial Concert) that it is not exclusively about the journey that you are on, but more so, who accompanies you on that journey.

Camp Sunshine has helped many communities to grow and has done so in proud partnership with a number of organizations. We will tell the stories of a variety of our communities in our publications over the months ahead.

As we embark on the summer season,

on the night of June 26th at 7:00 PM, to honor all of the families we have served, those with children with all types of cancer and other life-threatening conditions: leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, brain tumors, Wilms tumor, retinoblastoma, neuroblastoma, rhabdomyosarcoma, osteosarcoma, Ewing's sarcoma, hepatoblastoma, Fanconi anemia, Diamond-Blackfan anemia, Shwachman-Diamond syndrome, dyskeratosis congenita, sickle cell anemia, systemic lupus erythematosus, renal disease, those who have had solid organ transplants, and in honor of those who have died, I will light a candle at Camp Sunshine and invite you to do the same wherever you may be. This candle will be lit during the Fanconi Anemia session, which is the session with the highest number of families in attendance annually. It is a symbolic way to connect, knowing that we can all look at the flame at the same time, regardless of location. It is also a way to honor the moment, as the present moment is all that is assured. On the night of June 26, the numbers of candles burning will be unequalled in Camp's history.

Camp Sunshine's strength is derived from the composite energy of all the individuals we have served. What might have begun with the flicker of a candle on a Wish Boat can now illuminate the journey. As ever, we invite you to join us on the journey.

Nancy Cincotta, MSW  
Psychosocial Director

# PSYCHOSOCIAL CORNER

## Hugs of Hope Quilt Program

In the summer of 2000, Ann Goffin of Kaleidoscope Quilters, along with Sandra Negus of Valley Needlers Quilters, innocently offered to contribute the first quilts to our new campus. Ann's motivation was personal. Her seven-year old granddaughter suffered with a life-threatening illness and had been a Camp Sunshine camper. The Nimble Thimbles chapter had made some service quilts and decided to donate them to Camp. Sandra volunteered to personally deliver them, and in her words, "had an eye-opening experience." She immediately decided that she wanted to become more involved, which led to the idea of presenting to all the chapters in Maine's Pine Tree Quilters Guild the challenge of filling Camp with quilts and wall hangings. Ann and Sandra joined forces and spearheaded this most ambitious challenge. Specifically, the chapters hoped to provide quilts for all 40 family housing suites, but time was not on their side.



Fearing that their goal would not be realized before the June 17, 2001 opening of the Campus, they suggested an article be placed in a widely read quilt publication, *The Keepsake Quilting Newsletter*. And in they rolled – quilts from around the country. Mission accomplished!

We have been so blessed during the last decade to have

received several hundred "hugs" from generous donors residing in more than 40 states and 5 different countries; and we are deeply indebted for each and every gift. All of the quilts have provided our children and their families with the warmth, comfort and love that they deserve during their respite away from home.

**But the need continues. Based upon our rapid program expansion since 2001 and the wear-and-tear on the quilts, we must keep the project alive. If you would like to donate a quilt, we would appreciate your support and know the families will too.**

## Nick News: "The Face of Courage: Kids Living with Cancer"

There are many enjoyable parts of Camp Sunshine, but there are also intense times, times of taking on new challenges. Camp is a place to relax and enjoy and also a place for families to talk and reflect on what they are going through. It is a place to just be, and to be understood. For years we wished to find ourselves in partnership on a project with Nickelodeon, because they are fun and focused on kids, and because we would like the world to understand more about Camp Sunshine.

Our moment finally came this fall: the process moved from conception to production quickly. We recommended many kids to be filmed (we wish everyone could have participated). Two Camp Sunshine families were selected: Lexi Williams and her family (filmed at Camp), and Alexandra Capellini (filmed at home). We were delighted to be part of this project, and to have the opportunity to reinforce the message that a diagnosis of a life-threatening illness in childhood influences the whole family, including siblings.

In three months the interviews were transformed into a powerful, expressive piece. It aired on January 24th, and is archived at <http://www.nick.com/videos/clip/nick-news-face-courage-kids-living-with-cancer-full-episode.html>.

It was so exciting to have the opportunity to work with the Nickelodeon crew. We would like to thank everyone at Nickelodeon and Lucky Ducks Productions, with special thanks to Margie Cohn (for a dozen years of connections), Linda Ellerbee, Marty Toub, and Kara Pothier. Above all, we thank Alexandra, Lexi, Emily, their families and everyone at the October Brain Tumor session. The program speaks of the resilience, courage, honesty, and awareness of children. Nickelodeon allowed us to have a voice in this powerful piece, and we afforded them a window into the wisdom of Camp Sunshine families. There are those who would prefer not to speak of children and cancer on prime time television. In the interest of advancing awareness and understanding, we are grateful that Nickelodeon took on the challenge. What a wonderful beginning!

Nancy Cincotta, MSW  
*Psychosocial Director*



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## CAMP SUNSHINE'S WISH LIST

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- Weed Trimmer
- Fabric (3 yard lengths)

For a complete list, visit our web site at [www.campsunshine.org](http://www.campsunshine.org).



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