

# SHINE DONOR NEWSLETTER

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#### **EVERY DONOR COUNTS**



Camper presents Executive Director, Mike Katz with a donation from his school at the Celebration Show.

**STORY ON PAGE 2** 









Since the inception of Camp Sunshine in 1984, every donor has had an impact on where camp began, its amazing staying power and an influence on the work still to be achieved. Every donor counts and should celebrate in the many lives touched! Donations come in many shapes and sizes, from the large corporate donor to the young child who operates a lemonade stand or donates their birthday money to help others. Service to others can begin at a very young age. There is the employee that gives up their vacation time to spend time helping others, or the business that matches volunteer hours of that same employee with funds to further encourage such selfless actions. Sometimes the greatest gifts come from the kindness, support and the generation of awareness that an individual can provide through their giving and caring.

In 2017 it is even more apparent to me how the donation of time & talent has become so important to the development of the Camp Sunshine program, community and even the country as a whole. As the number of families and children attending Camp grows, more and more volunteers are called upon to provide the caring and nurturing our Camp families have come to know and deserve. It is inspiring in this day and age to see the collective community of Camp Sunshine come together.

As a child I remember saving up any money that I could for that special something that didn't happen to fit into the family budget. A few cents here, some extra chores around the house and oh yes my weekly allowance that I would try and negotiate higher; but to no avail. I even found myself gluing rocks onto cardboard and selling them to the neighbors (quite the entrepreneur)...a bit ahead of my time, had I just called them "pet rocks" my savings would have grown a lot more rapidly. But, as is the case...every little bit matters and after collecting, working, selling, and saving, I was able to purchase that special something.

That is how it is with many of our supporters, they give what they can, when they can. They collectively begin to save up together and something much bigger happens! Before you know it, a family sponsorship is reached, a new paddleboat appears at the waterfront, more craft supplies are available in the craft room and so much more begins to happen at Camp.

It is everyone, every donor that comes together that contributes to what we all know as the "magic" of Camp Sunshine. In some instances here at Camp it's people like Elizabeth from Katonah, New York who has committed to donating \$1.00 per day for the rest of her life, or Jane and Chris who started collecting Quarters for Camp and since January have raised \$1,943.50!

One of our favorite donors is Daniel from Louisiana who gives what he can, when he can and to date has made 17 contributions totaling \$44.56. Daniel makes it very easy to argue that at Camp Sunshine every dollar means a lot to the donor and it is our obligation to make certain that every dollar counts!

So thank you to our donors one and all, the corporate donor, the individual donor and the volunteer that shares their time, talent and love. Together you are the reason that Camp Sunshine has been and will continue to be an oasis for families to experience.

You are making a difference!

Michael +

Michael Katz – Executive Director

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UPDATES, PHOTOS, VIDEOS, AND MORE!







# APPLAUD THE SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS



Camp Sunshine started with a simple desire to help others in need, and it grew because a lot of people shared that desire. I had no idea it would evolve to where it is today when I first embarked on this amazing and fulfilling journey.

The more people heard about Camp, the more people called to ask how they could help. At each level of growth more people offered to help. I will always be in awe of how many called with the statement, "I can't write a big check, but what can I do?" And "do" they did. Help came in different ways - small donations, large generous donations and those in between. The Rotarians, who shingled the Activity Center, the National Guard who came in and set up a full bivouac and cleared the land and returned several times to help with other projects, volunteers, families and groups who held fundraisers in so many towns, children who set up lemonade stands and the list goes on and on.

I recently received a call from a dear friend who was in Florida during the hurricane and was taken back by the devastation. The day after the storm he had gone out for dinner and encountered a young family that had been displaced. Feeling compelled to help, he found the waitress, gave her a generous amount, and told her to give the family whatever they wanted and keep the rest.

After telling me what had happened he asked, "Who is going to help these people?" and I responded, "People like you performing random acts of kindness".

It is in these times of need that we all come together ... humanity at its best. Camp Sunshine is a true testament to that fact, and it has always restored my faith in humanity. The thousands of volunteers who come to help us execute the program, and the thousands of generous donors, small and large, who enable us to provide this incredible and much-needed respite.

Let us applaud all the acts of kindness in our Camp Sunshine community and beyond because they accumulate to build a wonderful world for all of us to live in.

Thank you to all of you who have been part of helping to create this amazing place for our deserving families to come to.

Heartfelt regards,

Anna Gould – Founder and Board Chair

Anna Goveld



# **CAMP SUNSHINE + SCIENCE = HOPE**

One of the most unique aspects of Camp Sunshine is the ability to host family meetings for four very rare inherited bone marrow failure syndromes: Fanconi Anemia (FA), Diamond Blackfan Anemia (DBA), Shwachman Diamond Syndrome (SDS), and dyskeratosis congenita (DC). This past year, several specialists from major centers across the country and around the globe presented their latest research and treatment plans for the families who attended. These centers include: the National Cancer Institute, the University of Minnesota, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Arkansas Children's Hospital, Steven and Alexandra Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York, and the University of Duesseldorf, Germany.

The history and importance of these meetings can be best described by Senior Clinician at the National Cancer Institute, Blanche P Alter, MD, MPH

I have attended Camp Sunshine two or three times each summer since 1992 for different inherited bone marrow failure syndrome sessions. This facility is an incredible resource for families with these rare syndromes, and I recommend it to any families that I see, particularly the new families.

The Fanconi Anemia Research Fund (FARF) was the first to come starting in 1993; DBA and SDS followed and DC began their meetings in 2010. An adult patient (and parent, founder of the DC family support group) came up to me after one day at the first meeting and said "Dr. Alter, now I understand why you kept telling me to come to Camp Sunshine!"

The bone marrow failure sessions provide many opportunities for family members to informally consult with physicians and researchers, and to share their experiences with other families; they learn from and provide support to each other.

The bottom line is that Camp Sunshine is an incredible resource for families with any of these rare inherited bone marrow failure syndromes. They can meet other families, and learn from the physicians and researchers with experience and expertise in their particular syndrome. And, most important, the children, and the adults, can have fun, in a safe, relaxing, and nurturing environment.



"LEARNING ABOUT THE LATEST RESEARCH AND ADVANCES FOR OUR CHILD IS SO WONDERFUL AND PROVIDES THAT SPARK TO KEEP GOING AND KEEP FIGHTING. IT'S VERY POWERFUL." - SARAH (MOM)

Dr. Eunike Velleuer, a Pediatrician and Haemo-Oncologist at the University of Duesseldorf, Germany and Ralf Dietrich, Executive Director and Family Support Coordinator of the German Fanconi Anemia Support Group also share their thoughts on the importance of Camp Sunshine.

Approved by Western Institutional Review Board and financed by the Fanconi Anemia Research Funds of the US, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Italy Dr. Velleuer and I try to learn more about the 700 times elevated risk of children and adults with Fanconi Anemia (FA) to develop squamous cell carcinoma in the oral cavity. Due to the high sensitivity to all kind of toxic influences, individuals with FA cannot be treated in the same way with chemotherapy and radiation as other patients with these kind of cancers.

Under the leadership of German doctors swabs collected at Camp Sunshine are carefully screened for morphological and genetic signs of dysplasia or cancer. In total we had 572 single inspections at the last 11 Camp Sunshine meetings. Thank you for the opportunity to see all these FA families and help us in our fight against the "Burden of head and neck cancer in Fanconi Anemia."

#### **FAMILY PERSPECTIVE**



When Grant was diagnosed, it felt like our entire world collapsed to focus solely on his hospital room. Our other children had to experience the shock of mommy + daddy suddenly dissapearing for weeks at a time. Even when we were at home, our thoughts and actions, more often than not, revolved around caring for and worrying about Grant.

For our family, Camp Sunshine has been a much-needed retreat and respite from the "cancer life" we lead at home. Camp Sunshine has allowed our family to relax, laugh together, feel a little bit lighter, form new friendships with others who truly understand the battle we are fighting, and to reconnect with our own needs as caregivers and parents. Though Grant tends to be shy around new people, he is thriving here at Camp with all of the support and safety provided to him in this environment. As Julia (his little sister) says "Here at Camp Sunshine, you have to be happy!"

The effects of childhood cancer last long beyond the diagnosis and treatment, with emotional scars that are challenging to "fix." For our family, Camp Sunshine is a place where we can work on healing together.

#### **OUTREACH UPDATE**



Anne Fletcher Howley, Family Coordinator delivers smoothies to the staff at Golisano Hospital in Fort Myers with Tropical Smoothie Café Area Developer Andrew Jessen

So often here at Camp we hear families tell us they just can't believe someplace like this exists, and that they just wish they'd heard about us sooner! We know how critical a support network, a week away, and an evening of laughter can be for a family who is experiencing a child's illness. This year, we have been focused on boosting our outreach efforts in order to share the magic of Camp Sunshine with as many of these families in need as we can. We are pleased to share that with the help of our mighty network of Camp Sunshine families, volunteers, donors, and partners like you, we've had great success and word is getting out about this special place in Casco, Maine.

Our outreach team "hit the road" this year, making new connections with social workers, child life specialists, nurses, and other partners with informational sessions at hospitals and organizations around the country. We've travelled across Florida, and made presentations closer to home in New York, Pennsylvania, Maine, and Massachusetts. We enjoyed participating in resource fairs and events with partners at Hackensack University Medical Center, Stony Brook Children's

Hospital, New York Presbyterian/ Columbia University Medical Center, The Children's Hospital at Montefiore, Hasbro Children's Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital.

At the annual conferences for the Association of Child Life Professionals (Las Vegas) and the Association of Pediatric Oncology Social Workers (Chicago), we had the opportunity to share information about Camp Sunshine with colleagues both new and familiar. Our referring partners returned to their communities around the country and have been "spreading the sunshine" to families they work with. We love hearing from families across the nation who have just heard about camp or seen our video and can't believe it's all available to them for free.

Realizing the unique challenges that military families with a child with a life-threatening illness face, we connected with organizations and programs who work directly with our country's service members and their families. The Around the World Swim in Coronado, an inspiring feat of strength and perseverance by active and former service men and women, raised awareness and money to support the cost of military families attending Camp Sunshine. We were honored for the opportunity to showcase Camp Sunshine at a nearby military Exceptional Family Member Program resource fair on the same day as the event.

Finally, as many of our families returned from Camp to their communities they shared their camp experience with friends, treatment teams, and colleagues, and the impact of those efforts has a ripple effect. Families often tell us that once they hear a "first-hand" account of what it's like to come to camp, it nudges them towards that next step of sending in an application.

As the year winds down, we look forward to continuing to see our Camp Sunshine community grow as more and more families leave camp with a greater sense of hope and joy. So far, we're on track to reach more new families, and more families in total, compared to last year! But our work isn't finished. We're thinking creatively and always looking for ways we can strengthen our partnerships and forge new relationships. As always, please keep us in mind and share any outreach opportunities you become aware of. Thank you for helping us spread the sunshine!

# 2017 SHARING THE SUNSHINE





The Maine State Police Department brought there MaxxPro (mine-resistant ambush protected) MRAP vehicle out for our families to investigate. This one-of-a-kind vehicle was not only a hit with the kids but our Founder, Anna Gould also found the time to explore.





Current Miss Maine, Katie Elliot, put smiles on the faces of our Campers when she visited to take pictures and sign autographs with campers.

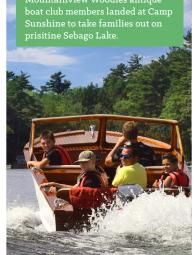


Camp CenterStage showed campers an amazing time with an extremely interactive performance. Their mission is to create a safe and supportive camp environment of inclusive youth artists who value serving each other and their communities through















Navy Week was not only held in Portland, Maine this summer but organizers brought quite a show to Camp Sunshine. Families were able to hear the amazing sounds of the Navy Band Northeast, engage in underwater simulations with the SeaPerch robot, wear actual EOD unit gear, and learn more about the USS Constitution and Navy heritage.



Children's performer and recording artist, Rick Charette entertained families during our Retinoblastoma Session. Rick has faithfully given of his time for the past 30 years!.





We were very fortunate to have Todd Gutner, WSCH Channel 6 meteorologist here to visit our campers! He even brought the weather-tracking van, Stormy. Todd was awesome with our family members, answering their questions and teaching them about weather. Then our families were taped and then broadcast on the morning news!









### TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT



During the winter, spring, summer and fall, Camp Sunshine continues to provide fun, year-round, free retreats to children with life-threatening illnesses and their families from across the country and around the world. Making sure each family gets from their home state to Casco, Maine safely, comfortably and ontime is no easy task. "In many cases, arranging flights for family members is only part of the process," explained Anne Fletcher-Howley, Camp Sunshine's Family Coordinator. "Once a family has landed at either the Portland International Jetport or Boston Logan Airport, we must then arrange ground transportation to and from Camp," she concluded. Thanks to the generosity of donors who contribute to the family transportation program, Camp Sunshine's fleet of vehicles that can be used to transport families has grown to include three caravans and a 12-passenger van. Having access to these vehicles has made ground transportation to and from the airport and bus stations much more manageable.

Transportation-specific donors include Hands on Tzedakah, Tropical Smoothie Café, Ron and Julie Eby, Noyes Brain Tumor Foundation, and John and Anne Ewalt. New to Camp Sunshine's fleet of vehicles is a 2017 Dodge Caravan, which was purchased using funds raised by corporate partner Texas Roadhouse. The wrap on the outside of the caravan was designed with the goal of showcasing that Camp Sunshine offers illness-specific sessions year-round. "The addition of this new van creates more opportunities at Camp to help ensure transportation availability, while also helping increase awareness," said Michael Katz, Camp Sunshine's Executive Director.

Also new in 2017 is Camp Sunshine's branded Custom Coach and Limousine bus, which has proven to be a great recruitment tool, as it makes its regular runs from Maine to New York. The eye-catching design also depicts Camp Sunshine's various seasonal recreational opportunities. Be sure to wave if you see it headed down I-95! The family transportation fleet is powered by the help and commitment of more than 20 long-time volunteer drivers, many of whom have been driving for Camp Sunshine for more than ten years. Thanks to the generosity of both volunteer drivers and family transportation donors, getting families to and from their homes to the shores of Sebago Lake has now become easier. If you are interested in signing up to be a volunteer driver or to donate to the family transportation program, please email info@campsunshine.org.

# THE WHEELS ON THE BUS... NEW BUS HIGHLIGHTS CAMP SUNSHINE



Camp Sunshine has partnered with Custom Coach and Limousine to wrap a bus that travels throughout the Northeast. The bus has been designed to showcase the amazing recreational opportunities that Camp Sunshine has to offer children with life-threatening illnesses and their families throughout the year.

# IT ALL ADDS UP!

#### EVEN THE LARGEST OF DONATIONS ARE MADE POSSIBLE BY MANY INDIVIDUALS



When Tropical Smoothie Café's CEO and Camp Sunshine Board Member, Mike Rotondo talks about their organization's fundraising efforts, one of the first things he'll share with you is that it takes every area developer, franchisee, employee and customer across the country for them to be successful in raising hundreds of thousands or even \$1,000,000.

When Party City raised in excess of \$200,000 for Camp Sunshine how did they do it? The answer ... in 1,2, and 3 dollar increments collected from caring customers at registers around the nation. Imagine if everyone gave at the \$2.00 price point. That is a total of more than 100,000 donors needed to make that possible!

Michael Halpern, Market Partner at Texas Roadhouse knows how to be successful and to reach and exceed the \$100,000 fundraising goal he sets each year. "It takes drive, strong leadership and even stronger and more committed employees. But without the tens of thousands of individual patrons it would never happen."

Finally, let's not forget a couple of Camp Sunshine's largest fundraising events and how they breakdown donations. Last year's series of polar dips raised nearly \$260,000, comprised of donations collected by approximately 3,000 dippers, who reached out to more than 4,253 individual friends and family members to reach that total.

Sometimes breaking down the numbers helps keep things in perspective. For every paper sunshine you purchase or cent you leave at a donation box or have rounded up at the register, for every brick that you purchase, and for every family you sponsor... a heartfelt thank you!







## **AWARDS & RECOGNITION**











DENIS LITALIEN
NORED WITH 2017 WCSH 6
WHO CARE AWARD

SARA BROWN
EXEMPLARY HONOREE AT
MAINE'S 2017 VOLUNTEER OF
THE YEAR AWARD UNDER THE
GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR
SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM

CAMP SUNSHINE

HONORED BY THE

MASSACHUSSETTS GENERAL

HOSPITAL CANCER CENTER

CAROL LEE TONGE
HONORED WITH DAILY
POINTS OF LIGHT AWARD

EMILY DZIEDZIC
HONORED AS ONE OF MAINE'S
20 OUTSTANDING WOMEN

#### **VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVES**



#### **SHARON DUBE**

After much soul searching I decided to become a volunteer in 2002 after my son, Brent Clark, graduated from high school. I was looking for something to fill the empty-nest void of a child going to college that was compounded by the fact that I should NOT have been an empty-nester yet. My younger son, Adam Clark, had passed away of a liver tumor in 1988. Adam should have been still at home.

To say I was nervous to walk through the doors at Camp is an understatement. I had come alone knowing I needed to do this on my own. I was volunteering at an oncology session. Would I be able to handle seeing the bald heads? Could I be helpful to the families? The last thing I wanted to do was cause any harm to anyone but would I be seen as their worst nightmare? I vowed to not tell anyone that one of my children had died.

When you arrive at Camp, you are handed an envelope with the schedule, your room key and a volunteer shirt. On the front of the envelope is your "assignment" i.e. what group you are working with and the name of a family for you to sit with at the first meal to help them get acquainted with Camp.

I was handed my envelope and the name of my family was the Clarke family!!! Despite the name being spelled slightly different, I knew I was in the right place at the right time and the magic that is Camp Sunshine started for me.

The magic has never stopped. Yes, I did tell my story that very first session to a family with a very ill child. I have told my story to many other families over the years in both the oncology and bereavement sessions.

I am in awe of the strength and resiliency of families as they journey through the illness of their child and, in some cases, the death of their child. I am forever grateful to Camp for the blessings I have received being welcomed into such a wonderful family made up of volunteers, families and staff. It's a true honor to be a "Yellow Shirt."



#### **ROBBIE LAWRENCE**

I truly don't think there is any feeling quite like walking through the three bright, yellow doors at Camp Sunshine. When you walk through the doors, you are instantly overcome with joy, excitement and calmness. all at once You are home. You can feel the sense of community and support that thrives there. You know vou are surrounded by likeminded individuals who all have their own unique reasons for being at Camp.

You know you are surrounded by people from near and far, different backgrounds, stories, and walks of life. However, you know you are surrounded by family.

I started volunteering at Camp Sunshine in April 2013. I was chosen to attend a Camp sessions as a service trip through Bridgewater State University. As soon as I got there, and walked through those famous yellow doors, I was hooked (How could you not be?!) After my first session, my life was changed. I had a different, more valuable, yet positive outlook on life. Little did I know how much those people I continued to meet at Camp in the future would impact my life and help shape me into the person I am today. I am still proud to call myself a "yellow shirt" and could not imagine my life without my Camp family.

#### **CHARITY NAVIGATOR**



Charity Navigator has again awarded Camp Sunshine its highest 4-star rating, showcasing Camp's overall financial responsibility, expediency, and transparency.

# **FUNDRAISING STORIES**

GO BIG OR GO HOME! This past June, Camp Sunshine was honored to have Gabriel Glass and his family visit Camp Sunshine. It was the perfect way to take Gabriel's fundraising efforts full circle. To celebrate his 10th birthday, Gabe decided that he did not need any presents and that friends and family could instead make contributions to Camp. His insight and compassion certainly shining through at a young age.

His goal - \$10,000! When mom, Nadine asked where he came up with such a lofty

amount he simply said "I figured go big or go home".

After several weeks all the gifts in his honor were tallied Gabriel was able to present a check to Camp Sunshine for \$400. Although a bit a lower than he had hoped you would not know it from his enthusiasm during his tour of the facility and the presentation of his check.

Somehow this Camp Crusader made \$400 feel like \$10,000 in the hearts of everyone here at Camp – thanks so much Gabriel.





HARVARD CLOTHING DRIVE During

the soggy spring months of 2017 the Harvard/Bolton, MA Endowment Group partnered with The Epilepsy Foundation to raise money for Camp Sunshine. Each pound of clothing, bedding, fabric and shoes donated to the Epilepsy Foundation promised a return of \$.20.

The original plan was to distribute Epilepsy Foundation bags at church reminding folks that a good spring cleaning would benefit all around. This soon grew to having donation boxes at the Council on Aging Office and local schools. Volunteers were also staked out at the local transfer station. There, instead of slipping their clothes into unnamed receptacles, families enjoyed knowing their clothing would help those in need, as well as Camp Sunshine. In addition, local stores and businesses became involved

with volunteers going out in trucks to pick up items.

The initial goal was 100 bags of clothing, then 500, then 1,000. By month's end 11,000 pounds of soft goods were tallied, setting a record for the largest clothing drive ever!

The Harvard/Bolton group is comprised of teens from two local high schools who apply to go to camp in chaperoned groups. With their application, teens pledge to raise \$250 each toward the annual fundraising goal. The clothing drive plus polar dips, bake sales, pancake suppers, mic nights, and trivia nights helped each to reach their individual goals.

What did these 16-18-year-old teens raise for Camp Sunshine? \$100,000 in six years, enough to sponsor four families in perpetuity.

**2017 AROUND THE WORLD SWIM** Camp Sunshine would like to thank the swimmers, kayakers, donors and everyone who made the 2017 chapter in the Swim for Sunshine series a tremendous success. The Around the World Swim, a 10-mile open-ocean swim around California's Coronado Island, took place on April 29, 2017.

Active and former military members began their swim on the beach of the famous Hotel del Coronado at sunrise. After navigating the 50 degree waters, sea life and boat traffic in San Diego Bay, the swimmers finished in just under five hours at Il Fornaio Coronado. The Beach Landing Party gave participants a chance to mingle with event sponsors, volunteers, Camp Sunshine families and staff.

The event was inspired by SEAL Hell Week evolution of the same name, when students paddle small boats around Coronado Island. This swim symbolized the endurance and strength required by Camp Sunshine families.

With the event relocated (for this year) Camp Sunshine used the opportunity to create more awareness for our program on the West Coast. Thanks to our matching sponsors Ralph and Suzanne Heckert and the Capital Group Companies, and Anna M. Gould, the event raised more than \$90,000, which will support sending military families who have a child with a life-threatening illness to Camp Sunshine.







"Just like the Camp Sunshine children and their families this event supports, this year's participants can't quit - failure is not an option!" - CDR Mike W., Event Creator











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FAMILY MEMBERS SINCE 1984

**CAMP SUNSHINE'S PROGRAM**IS MADE POSSIBLE BY





AND HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED BY









23 SESSIONS PER YEAR



DO YOU KNOW A FAMILY
WITH A CHILD WHO HAS
BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH A
LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS?
PLEASE CONSIDER TELLING THEM
ABOUT CAMP SUNSHINE!

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