

WELCOME TO CAMP'S 2022 SUMMER NEWSLETTER



Celebrating 40 years of Fun, Community, Healing and Good Times

IN THE NEWS - We Surpassed Our Walk Fundraising Goal!

Thank you to our 615 walkers, 33 teams, and our many corporate partners for helping us raise \$375,795 and counting - a record-breaking total AND level of participation in Camp's Walk for Kids, which was held on Saturday, April 30th at The Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena. The event was held in partnership with the Los Angeles and Pasadena Ronald McDonald Houses.

We joined together for the 2022 Walk for Kids to celebrate the community effort that will help healing happen for our campers who will be heading "up the mountain" this summer for a camp experience, free-of-charge.

Thanks to YOU, families like The Watson Family (who graciously shared their story as a part of our opening ceremony at the Walk for Kids) will reconnect with other cancer-impacted families to embrace life with a sense of hope, enthusiasm, courage, and joy!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US! - Camp is Turning 40!

And by us, we mean our entire family of campers, volunteers, staff, and supporters like YOU who have made the magic of Camp a reality every day for the last 40 years. We've served cancer-impacted children and families not only from across Southern California but around the globe. In the process, we've learned so much about the needs within our community. So as we prepare to celebrate our birthday this summer (details are in this newsletter!), let's take a look back at some of the milestones that brought us to where we are today!

August 1982: 60 children from three local hospitals experienced the first "Camp Good Times" summer camp session at a rented site in Malibu. And just one year later, plans were made to build a year-round camp facility to serve children living with cancer. In those early days, a host of celebrities supported the groundwork of Camp founders like our beloved Dr. Stu Siegel. Among others, actor Dustin Hoffman and singer Michael Jackson made generous contributions that helped propel us toward becoming the program we are today.



October 1988: 17 campers and their families participated in our first Spanish-language Family Camp session. Just over half of Camp's families identify as Latino, and our "Campamento Familiar" sessions make connecting with our Spanish-speaking families possible to this day.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US

CAMP IS TURNING 40!



November 1989: 77 children and youth impacted by a sibling's cancer diagnosis attended our "Sibling Camp" weekend that year. In the years since, we have welcomed thousands of cancer-impacted siblings "up the mountain" to reclaim their childhoods alongside their brothers and sisters.

September 1994: After years of renting different sites throughout Southern California for our sessions, the charity purchased Apple Canyon Center, our current 60-acre facility in the San Jacinto Mountains.

Spring 1996: Thanks to the generosity and dedication of the Bob Chandler Foundation, Alpine Towers Inc. constructed a 50-foot group development adventure and climbing structure on our new site. Named "The Bob Chandler Courage Course," it was the first of its kind on the West Coast.

1997: We opened "The Med Shed," which is our 3,200 sq. ft. state-of-the-art health care facility that supports the medical needs of any and all of our campers when they are up at Camp.

October 2012: Pond-side "Camper Village" opens at our site, which includes a year-round activity building and five fully handicapped-accessible camper cabins with a capacity to serve 60 children and their family members.

June 2015: We opened the AS&F Dining Hall and Activity Center, with help from the Los Angeles Kings hockey team. This spacious dining facility, complete with a professional kitchen, has a capacity to serve 250 campers at a time. The building also contains the Don & Lorraine Freeberg Foundation Fellowship Hall and a meeting room.

June 2017: Thanks to the Billy Foreman Fund, Camp renovated the retired food service kitchen into a kid-friendly program area, "The Billy Foreman Kid's Kitchen." The BFKK features family-style stoves, instruction and food preparation stations, an outside seating pavilion with a wood-burning pizza oven, and all of the equipment needed to learn good nutrition and how to make fun favorites like homemade pasta, tortillas, soups, cupcakes, and more.

As we prepare to launch into our next 40 years, more big developments are on the way! We completed an extensive program needs assessment, we're building a new cabin village, with a new amphitheater to follow. Through wildfires, virtual "Camp at Home" sessions during the last two years of the Coronavirus pandemic, and our upcoming reopening for in-person sessions this month, we've seen so much together! Thank you for standing with us always, in good times and more challenging ones. It's that commitment that makes us family.



CAMP LEARNINGS

AND WISHES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE



Some folks and Camp go waaaaaaaaay back! Here is what a few of these friends had to share about their arrival at Camp, the lessons they've learned there, and their hopes for Camp's future.



Barbara Britt, R.N.

Barbara recalls the day Dr. Stu Siegel sat down to eat lunch with her in the Children's Hospital Los Angeles cafeteria to tell her how he and Pepper Abrams had just committed to opening a pediatric oncology camp. She immediately volunteered to serve as a nurse at Camp and continued to do so in the decades that followed. For Barbara, volunteering at Camp has been "a true labor of love."

Over her many years of volunteer service at Camp, Barbara has learned that "friendship is the greatest gift, conquers all barriers and lasts forever. Cancer can't erode the gift of friends." She goes on to say "My wish for Camp's future is that through the programs our kids and families experience, our Camp community will have a ripple effect in the society of acceptance, caring, love, decency, and a recognition of the value of all persons. I hope we never abandon the Camp hug in the name of political correctness, because this wholesome embrace of friends greeting each other in joy or sorrow, supporting each other in every circumstance, is fundamental to who we are as an organization. My further wish for Camp is that we can someday provide services for those young adults who are adrift in society due to the long-term consequences of the therapies used to treat their tumors.



Fran Wiley, R.N.

Fran recalls first volunteering as a Camp nurse in the second year of our existence. According to her, fellow nurse and longtime Camp volunteer Barbara Britt invited her to do so, and also encouraged Fran to bring some of the young cancer patients she helped treat at UCLA with her. Fran states, "It's funny how I can remember the names of several of the kids - Sammy Fergusson, Whitney Mills, Jeffrey Brown and Josh Wood. That session was at Calamigos Ranch in Malibu. Since then, I've never missed an opportunity to go to Camp." Fran has also served on Camp's Board of Trustees.

In reflecting on her Camp journey, she says "the positives of a camping experience are very real and multiplied for kids and families facing the challenge of childhood cancer. I was already involved in youth camping through Girl Scouts, but the ability to combine work as a pediatric oncology nurse and camping is a gift that's difficult to overstate. My fervent wish for Camp's future is that we continue to be passionate about our mission. I'm concerned that if we travel far from our original mission, the passion will become diluted."



Karen Preisler, Volunteer

Karen first began supporting Camp in 1983. For many years, she has worked with a committed group of volunteers to plan Camp's annual, always-highly-anticipated holiday party, which gives our families a wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate with food and fun activities. Karen and her team even secure gifts for all of the kids! She shares, "I have learned that when you give of yourself, you are rewarded in ways you could never fathom. Camp has always offered more than just the usual 'camp fun.' It has allowed children with cancer and their siblings to be with other children who understand what they are going through." Karen has also observed how children and their families feel more comfortable participating in activities at Camp, in part because volunteer doctors and nurses are always on-hand to attend to any medical needs that might arise.

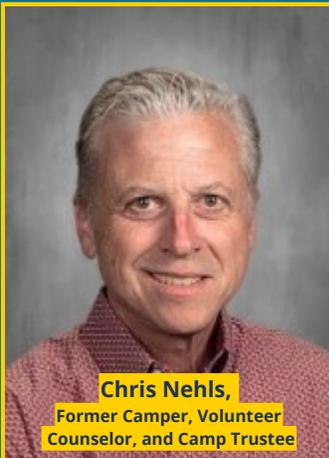
She concludes, "My wish for the Camp's future would actually be that there is no need for Camp, because childhood diseases have been eradicated. Until that happens, I hope that there will always be wonderful volunteers and generous donors who ensure that Camp always remains free-of-charge."

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AND WISHES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE



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Chris Nehls,
Former Camper, Volunteer
Counselor, and Camp Trustee

Chris first attended Camp in the summer of 1984, on the heels of his own pediatric cancer diagnosis. Over these many decades, Chris has returned to Camp as a volunteer counselor (in the summer of 1988) and as a member of Camp's Board of Trustees (in 2016). Chris retired from the Board in 2018 when he and his family moved to Colorado. According to Chris, his greatest learning from Camp has been the value of unconditional love and support. He states, "There is something about being around a group of people who have or have had many of the same traumatic experiences you've experienced." He goes on to say this bond is so strong, it often transcends the need for words. Chris shares that at Camp, it's sometimes possible to communicate "I got you" to another camper with just a look.

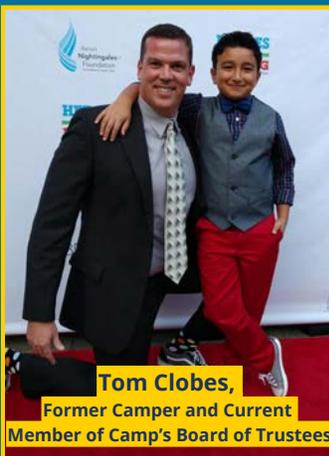
Chris says, "I hope Camp goes on forever. I'm so happy to be part of the family. My wish is that everyone can have that feeling you get when you are at Camp, at least once in their lifetime. I will always be Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times' biggest fan!"



Brian Crater, Camp's
Associate Executive Director

Brian was hired as Camp's Director in 1988. Since then, he's welcomed thousands of children and their families up the mountain, and has played a pivotal role in overseeing not only our program, but so many of the important site improvements that have (and will) help us ensure that children and families have a fun, safe, and comfortable visit at Camp.

According to Brian, our campers have taught him so much. He states, "The lesson I have learned from our campers is to treasure EVERY MINUTE of EVERY DAY. Meet others, learn from others, laugh with others, dance with others, and share yourself; to enjoy the sun or rain or snow on my face; enjoy big breaths, stars, campfires, sunrises, and sunsets; project courage, kindness, wonderment, and appreciation... for every day is a gift." In reflecting on his wishes for Camp's future, he hopes we continue to seek out and embrace young people and their family members in their illness journey by providing comfort, care, and support to improve their lives.



Tom Clobes,
Former Camper and Current
Member of Camp's Board of Trustees

Tom was a pediatric cancer patient when he first attended Camp in the early 1990s. Today, he serves on Camp's Board of Trustees. Both he and his son Owen have served as Heroes for our annual Heroes for Healing gala, so you can say his family's commitment to Camp is intergenerational. Regarding the greatest lesson Camp has taught him, he says "I would say that I made lifelong friends and saw the impact volunteers can have on others' lives. I've learned (at Camp) how to serve others." Regarding his wishes for the future, he concludes "I would hope that Camp continues its legacy and thrives in the future, and that we are able to expand our programming and better meet the needs of children with cancer and their families."

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Shannon Edwards,
Former Volunteer and Camp's
Current Program Associate

Shannon first came to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern California not as a camper or volunteer, but with her family when they moved into the Los Angeles Ronald McDonald House (LA RMH) in 1990 and again in 1998. The reason was that Shannon's twin was receiving treatment for pediatric cancer at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. During her second stay at the LA RMH, 13 year-old Shannon came across some marketing materials for Camp and decided right then and there that they would volunteer with Camp when they were old enough to do so. "That decision and follow through," they say "have shaped the direction of my entire adult life."

Shannon did become a volunteer counselor when they got older, and was hired as Camp's Program Associate in 2016. Since then, Shannon says they have learned "that healing happens in community, and that kids deserve a lot more respect, care and community than our greater culture gives." Shannon has played a key role in the ongoing development of Camp's Wilderness Outdoor Leadership Program (W.O.L.P.), which provides teens ages 15 to high school graduation with opportunities to lead activities for younger campers, as well as learn life skills to carry with them into adulthood. Shannon also directs Camp's Teen Advisory Committee (T.A.C.), which is comprised of teen campers who, under Shannon's guidance, lead W.O.L.P. Shannon's wish for Camp's future? "More adolescent and young adult programming!"



Jasmine "Jazzy" Joya,
Former Camper and Camp's
Current Community Relations &
Recruitment Manager

Jazzy first arrived at Camp back in 2007 as a 14 year-old who'd been diagnosed with leukemia. She fell in love with the program during that first summer session, attending every summer after that until she graduated from high school in 2011. Then in 2014, she applied for an internship with Camp. Program Director Chad Edwards interviewed Jazzy, who had first met Chad when she was a camper!

Today, she feels that Camp's greatest gift to her has been those opportunities to be "even a small fraction of a counselor's or a family's journey." It brings Jazzy great joy to know that any time she meets a family or forges a relationship with a hospital, she's helping to support Camp's mission. She also shares that when she witnesses a camper's journey and their strength, it adds value to her life and influences how she carries herself. Jazzy will tell you, that she's NOT a fan of when campers grow taller than her!

Moving forward, she hopes that everyone within the Camp community continues to amplify one another. "Our community is like a campfire," Jazzy says. "We have to tend it and pour into it the same way you would a campfire to keep it burning. If we put our all into the Camp community, it can only get better. We're in for a really strong legacy."



Brenda Escoto,
Former Volunteer and Camp's Current
Development and Social Media Manager

Brenda joined the Camp family as a volunteer cabin counselor in the summer of 2017, and according to her, "my life has been changed ever since." Brenda's love for Camp is infectious, and she has also served the program with her professional marketing skills. She has displayed such leadership in this area, in fact, she was recently promoted to Marketing Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern California, a role she will assume later this year.

Brenda states, "The biggest lessons I've learned at Camp came from an 8 year-old camper. She told me "It's okay to be sad sometimes, but only for 3 days... then you need to be happy again. Because you are like sunshine and the world needs sunshine." Brenda believes that the way our campers view the world has taught her more than she could ever put into words. Her wish for Camp's future is "that it continues to be a shining light in the darkness that accompanies a childhood cancer journey and that those who experience Camp take that magic with them down the mountain and carry it for the rest of their lives."



CAMP SCHEDULE

Session 1: June 24 - 29

- *patients & siblings ages 9 - High school graduation*

Session 2: July 4-9

- *patients & siblings ages 9 - High school graduation*

Session 3: July 14-19

- *patients & siblings ages 9 - High school graduation*

Session 4: July 24-29

- *patients & siblings ages 9 - High school graduation*

Graduate Camp: Aug 4-7

- *open to Campers who graduated from Camp in 2020 & 2021 but didn't get to have their last session of Camp*

Summer Camp Online + Camp in a Box: Aug 4-7

- *open to those Summer Campers who can't / choose not to attend in-person summer Camps*

Children's Hospital Los Angeles Teen Retreat: August 19-21

- *servicing teen cancer patients from CHLA*

Family Camp Weekend: September 9-10

USC Adolescent & Young Adult Weekend - September 16-18

- *servicing those ages 19-30 who have Cancer*

Campamento Familiar Weekend: - September 30- Oct 2

- *Spanish Speaking Family Camp*

RMHCSC Family Camp Weekend: - November 4-6

- *servicing families staying at the RMHCSC Houses*



LET'S CELEBRATE

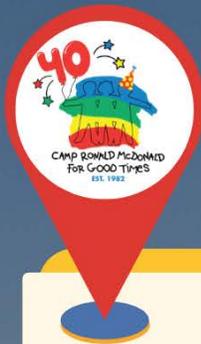


WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR B-DAY BASH!

You're Invited!

Camp's 40th Birthday Bash

Saturday, July 30th, 2022



Camp Site

56400 Apple Canyon Rd,
Mountain Center, CA 92561



Schedule

11 AM - Check-in Opens



Scan to Join Us



A NEW RESOURCE TO PROTECT WHAT YOU LOVE



We're excited to share FreeWill with you to provide our community with an online tool to write a legal will, at no personal cost. Just as you've supported the future of the children and families we serve, now you can support your own future for free.

Take 20 minutes to complete this important task and protect the people and causes you care about. **Get started today at FreeWill.com/RMHCSC.**

If you have already included us in your estate planning, please fill out this form so we can thank you for your support:
FreeWill.com/Record/RMHCSC.

Dear Camp Family,

We've started the year strong with our first event, the Walk for Kids, exceeding our initial fundraising goal! We had a beautiful day at the Rose Bowl Stadium (a new venue for us), and it was a huge treat to see the enjoyment on participants' faces after the long wait to gather in-person again.

We've also completed our program needs assessment, which was led by a team of consultants from Kaleidoscope, Inc. Over the course of the last 6 months, we've met with campers, donors, staff, and volunteers to build a foundation for mapping out Camp's growth. We'll keep you posted about our progress along the way!

On June 24th we'll have the honor of welcoming home our first group of in-person campers since the start of COVID. The excitement and laughter will be infectious, both from the campers and the counselors. The treasured memories will be unforgettable.

We're also planning Camp's 40th birthday bash, which will be held on July 30th up at Camp. We'd love for you to come celebrate with us, but please note - tickets will sell out fast!

Thank you again for your commitment to Camp. We owe our success to all of YOU, our donors, staff, and volunteers.

Let's keep this great momentum going throughout the rest of 2022!

Warm Regards,

Erica Mangham

Executive Director

Carmen Herrera

President, Board of Trustees

