

camp rising sun **news**

Camp Rising Sun Charitable Foundation • October 2014

*A place where kids
with cancer have fun!*

Camp Week 2014, “Entertaining Kids with Cancer Since 1983”

Another fun and successful camp year has come and gone with a lot of happy, tired and satisfied kids...and plenty of treasured memories.

This year's Camp theme was TV Shows: “Camp Rising Sun: Simply Entertaining”. The week was undoubtedly a testament to the theme name!

Counselors got into the spirit by transforming their cabins and golf carts into re-creations of TV favorites such as Scooby Doo, Animal Planet, The Voice, Batman, Pretty Little Liars, Gold Rush and Duck Dynasty.

Kids spent the week enjoying activities such as swimming, horseback riding, zip lining, wiffle ball, arts & crafts, pizza making, water slides, laser tag, archery, rock climbing, boating, basketball, gaga ball, Zumba, scrapbooking, spa treatments and tons of other fun activities to keep them occupied and entertained.

“All-Camp activities” are always a big hit with campers, as was the mystery show that started off the week. The fun continued, kids enjoyed TV show theme contests based on favorites, such as Survivor and The Amazing Race. Kids later got to showcase their talents at the

America's Got Talent talent show, where we were treated to many singing, dancing, instrumental debuts and comedy routines. We then got wet and wild during American Ninja Warrior inflatables where kids got to splash down waterslides, jump around in bounce houses and even sink their counselors and friends in the dunk tank.

The Hawaii 5-0 Beach Party, the annual water front barbecue and fireworks display put on by Quest Diagnostics, with entertainment by the band, Vivid was nothing short of spectacular. The next night, the folks at EDR presented their annual dance. This year's theme was, “So You Think You Can Dance”. As always, CRS received some help from some our outside friends who were so generous in volunteering their time and resources. Special thanks to Quest Diagnostics,



Curious Creatures, The Spa at Norwich Inn, Lazer Tag Adventures, Naples Pizza Truck, Vivid, EDR, City Beat Productions, Shelton High School Cheerleaders and all the folks who volunteered their time to teach the kids during free choice activities. There are so many people to thank, I hope we didn't miss anyone!

The CRS staff will regroup in January for our annual staff training where planning will begin for next year's camp week and they'll begin to map out another unforgettable experience for all of our wonderful campers!

Mini Camp Weekend is March 21-22, 2015. Registration Opens in January.

It is our mission at Camp Rising Sun to provide a safe nurturing environment to kids who have faced the diagnosis of cancer; so that they may grow and learn from their experiences to become the best they can be.

*Camp Rising Sun Charitable Foundation
P.O. Box 472
Branford, CT 06405*

www.camprisingsun.com

Thank You to All Our Supporters



The 13th Annual Night Out to benefit the Kids at Camp Rising Sun was held on Wednesday, July 16th.

The evening featured an amazing silent auction and raffle, barbecue dinner, kids craft tent and live music performed by the band Vivid. Shaun Heffernan, camp director, also announced that our **\$100,000 Challenge** was met. In June, the Yvette

and Arthur Eder Foundation promised Camp Rising Sun they would match whatever amount CRS could raise from June 1 - July 15, up to \$100,000! It was through your generous donations and kind support that we are proud and excited to announce that we did it!



A Marriage Made in Heaven and at Camp

We bring you back to 1992 when Freddy and Joanna's paths first crossed. He was a 9 year old camper, and she was the 6 year old daughter of Dr. Joe, the camp doctor. Like most kids that age, they did not pay much attention to each other; however, there are rumors of a crush during their teenage years.

As time wore on they became friends, as everyone in the Camp Rising Sun family does. Freddy became a counselor in 2003 and Joanna in 2007; she went on to join the medical staff in 2008. In 2010, 18 years after they first met (and with a little prompting from Mrs. Dr. Joel!), they began to date. Their commitment to each other and camp continued to grow.

On June 21st, in a beautiful ceremony at St. George's Church in Guilford, Dr. Joe McNamara gave former camper Freddy Samoskevich, his daughter Joanna's hand in marriage. A reception followed at the Saybrook Point Inn, which was attended by a group of Camp Rising Sun volunteers. On August 18th they came back to where it all started, Joanna as a vital part of the camp medical team and Freddy as Assistant Camp Director.



Invention Update

Many of you know that camper Kylie Simonds won the Patent Award at the Connecticut Invention Convention for her I-Pack invention – a back pack equipped to administer chemotherapy that is also small enough for a child to move around and play. She is now seeking funding for research and development and final patent approval. Since our last newsletter, Kylie's invention and her desire to patent it and bring it to market have caught fire on social media!

Kylie has been highlighted in numerous magazines in the US, Brazil, Germany, Greece, and the UK. She was interviewed by News Channel 8 in Connecticut and her story was aired across the nation. Most recently, Kylie were flown to LA for a filming of "The Doctors". Catch her segment this fall. Kylie's goal is to eventually see some of these backpacks being used by children in hospitals. Please help in spreading awareness and supporting Kylie to achieve her goal, visit www.gofundme.com/bzo1ds.

Run For Camp - Join Us at the 2014 NU Hartford Marathon

**Saturday, October 11th
8:00 a.m.**

Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT

In 2013, Team Camp Rising Sun raised \$17,000 for camp!

Once again, Camp Rising Sun is an official charity of the NU Hartford Marathon. We are looking to recruit both runners and volunteers for this year's event. Runners can choose to run the full marathon, half marathon or 5K, and raise money for the Camp Rising Sun Charitable Foundation through their running efforts. New this year, there will be minimum fundraising levels that must be met by the runners, to help insure that Camp remains free to our 120+ campers. 5K runners and all CRS counselors will be required to raise \$250, while half-marathon and marathon runners are required to raise \$500. Everyone who meets their fundraising minimum will receive a CRS technical running shirt and water bottle, and have access to our tent the day of the race (which includes our own port-o-potties and our own massage therapists – no waiting in lines!). If any runners raise over \$1,000, and they will receive additional CRS gear and 2 tickets to our premier fundraising event at the picturesque Owenego Beach Club in Branford, CT that takes place in July each year. Lastly, if any runners raise \$1,500 or more, they will have the opportunity to come visit camp for lunch or dinner!

In addition to runners, we need 30 Camp Rising Sun volunteers. This year, the volunteers will be responsible for helping out with the Kids K Course. The



event takes place right in Bushnell Park, so volunteer responsibilities will end with enough time to cheer on all the CRS runners.

If you are interested in signing up to run/fundraise or volunteer, please see the information below on how you can register to join us in Hartford.

To sign up as a RUNNER:

1. Sign up for the 5K, half marathon or full marathon at www.hartfordmarathon.com. Use promo/discount code CAMPRISING14 when you register to save \$5 on your registration fee.
2. Then go to <https://www.crowdrise.com/camprisingsun2014> to officially join our team.

For questions about running, please email Scott Capozza (scapozza@hotmail.com) or Erin Burke (erin.burke1122@gmail.com)

erin.burke1122@gmail.com)

To sign up as a VOLUNTEER:

1. Go to <https://2014hrtdmarathon.theregistrationsystem.com/en/2090>.
 - a. Click "REGISTER NOW"
 - b. On the PERSONAL INFORMATION PAGE – at the bottom you will see TWO questions you must answer:
 - Are you volunteering with any of the following groups/charities? - select CAMP RISING SUN
 - Access Code: enter CRS
2. Where it lists the available volunteer activities, scroll down to and select: Kids K Course (Official Charity)

For questions about volunteering, please email Rachel Hardy (rhardy326@aim.com)

Check out all of our events on our Facebook page, Twitter and Website
www.facebook.com/camprisingsun, [@camprisingsun](https://twitter.com/camprisingsun), www.camprisingsun.com

Planning a fundraiser to support Camp Rising Sun?

Contact info@camprisingsun.com



Joining the Camp Family, a Perspective of a First Time Counselor

I've never had cancer before, but I can't imagine it being a casual walk in a sunny, flower-filled park. In fact, I imagine it more like a visit from your cousin who takes over your room, sleeps in your bed, and snores while you sleep on the deflating air mattress next to the bed. I imagine that feeling you get while stuck behind a meandering walker in a crowded mall. I imagine it feels like sliding down a cold metal slide with a wet, bare bottom and no end in sight. I imagine the sinking feeling you get in your gut while tip-toeing through a haunted forest waiting for a swamp-monster to pop out and chase you down the trail. And, I imagine it feeling like all of that multiplied by a million.

But, after being at Camp Rising Sun for only a short amount of time, you would never know the frustration or pain cancer so kindly brings to these campers. On the contrary, within the first few hours of the campers arriving, I was fairly confident that these kids were actually incapable of complaining. Despite climbing — or wobbling, limping, hopping — up the incline of all inclines to the Senior Lodge cabin, every single person walked through the cabin door with the biggest, most genuine smiles. Within hours, I felt more welcome and comfortable than I've ever felt before.

And that was only the beginning. It was impossible not to feel the pure camaraderie and immediate sense of security. It didn't matter if you were five or sixty-five; if you had been a camper for a few minutes or ten years, you could feel the comfort and happiness present. It didn't matter if you were shooting hoops, passing a frisbee, eating a meal, or just sitting in a field—you felt comfortable sharing your fondest memories, your darkest fears, and your funniest quirks. There were moments I would laugh so hard my belly would ache for hours, and moments I could feel my heart pulsing through my body with an overwhelming sense of awareness.

There is no such thing as wasting time at camp. Whether you are sitting around a campfire or sitting at the beach or running around an empty gymnasium, every minute is memorable. Every moment is so full; it is impossible to not feel present and alive.

On the third night of camp, everyone gathered for a beach-themed cookout and fireworks. What I thought would just be another fun-filled night, became a night so clarifying, so poignant. After spending the evening playing, talking and dancing, I found myself walking over to the beach to find a spot to watch the fireworks with a little boy from Cabin 4. I had heard bits

and pieces of his story from others, and knew he was in active treatment, but at that point in time our only concern was finding a prime spot to watch the show. His excitement was contagious, and although I had seen fireworks many times before, I was eager for the show to start, too.

As he sat in my lap, I couldn't help but feel a sense of serenity. This child spends the majority of his time at doctor appointments and in hospital beds — yet here he was sitting in complete stillness mesmerized by these fireworks.

For a few minutes we sat in silence, and I completely forgot where I was. It wasn't until he began shooting his arms into the air in unison with the explosions that I began to really think about the phenomenon of the situation. Here was a boy, who, for some unknown reason was burdened with a horrible illness. But, in this moment, he thought of nothing else but being the force scheming the fireworks. In a world that stripped him of his privilege to be a carefree kid, he was able to feel in control — even if only for that short amount of time.

It was then I realized what camp is all about. It is more than just a safe and nurturing environment where campers can

grow and learn, it is a place where campers can finally feel in control. It is a place with no judgment, no restrictions. A place where every person is given a chance to be the person they are.

It is a place where scars are celebrated, and where differences are embraced. It is a place where a boy with limited mobility can feel brave enough to scale up an inflatable water slide and fly down into a pool of water, knowing without hesitation the inexpressible amount of support from the people waiting at the bottom. It is a place where the smallest acts hold more courage and fearlessness than most will ever experience in their lifetime.

On the last night, the entire camp gathered around a small campfire. Everyone was given a stick and marker to write a fond camp memory, a tribute, or personal statement. I realized this was a perfect combination of personal reflection, liberation, and respect for what camp represented. But most importantly, I felt overcome with inspiration. It was no longer an individual experience, but rather a kindred sense of hope.

Throughout the week I frequently heard, "Until there's a cure, there's Camp" — and I couldn't help but feel, as long as there is camp, there is hope. There is hope that more people can feel surrounded by such love and optimism, such strength and capacity for greatness. I am now more hopeful of a better tomorrow.



CT Challenge Bike Ride 2014



Team Camp Rising Sun participated in the 10th annual CT Challenge bike ride on July 26. In our second year as an official team, we had 14 riders representing Camp Rising Sun along the 10, 25, and 50 mile routes. Team members included campers Maya Oberstein and James McQuade; and counselors Jessica Ellison, David Larracuenta, and Scott Capozza.

Camp Rising Sun receives 60% back of the money we raise through the CT Challenge; in 2013 we raised almost \$6,000 for camp and we are looking to raise a similar amount in 2014 (final amount not in, fundraising closes September 30).

The CT Challenge is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering cancer survivors throughout Connecticut, and Camp Rising Sun is proud to partner with them.

They Say There's a Picasso in Everyone ...



A group of people including counselors and camper's relatives gathered at Kelley's in New Haven, CT, September 20th for a Paint Nite to raise money for Camp Rising Sun.

Camp Rising Sun Calendar of Events

Friday, October 10

Oktoberfest Presented by the Knights of Columbus Carmel Council
2630 Whitney Ave., Hamden, CT
\$25.00 each, buy your ticket at the door

Saturday, October 11

Team Camp Rising Sun Runs the Hartford Marathon
Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT
Contact: scapozza@hotmail.com

Sunday, November 2

Lions of District 23C Gala
New London, CT
Contact: lionkeith23c@yahoo.com

March 21-22

Camp Rising Sun Mini-Camp Weekend
Camp Jewell, Colebrook, CT
Contact: Tina@camprisingsun.com

Wednesday, July 15

Annual Kids Night Out
Owenego Inn, Branford, CT

August 23-28

Camp Rising Sun Camp Week
Camp Jewell, Colebrook, CT
Contact: Tina@camprisingsun.com

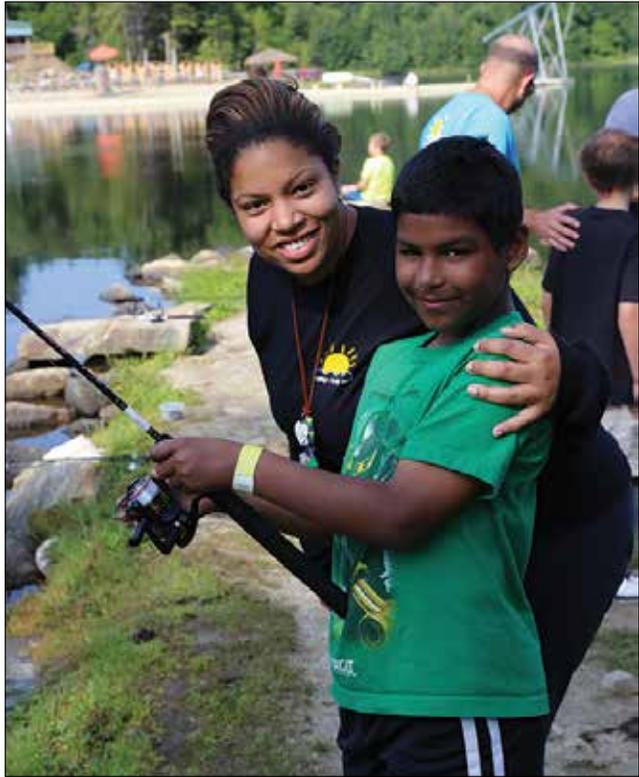
If you are interested in hosting a fundraiser to benefit Camp Rising Sun, please contact Shaun at shaun@camprisingsun.com



When you shop at AmazonSmile, Amazon will donate to Camp Rising Sun Charitable Foundation Inc. Support us every time you shop.









What a Difference a Year Makes!

In case you missed our Facebook post – “Transformation Tuesday”– during camp week, we bring it to you here. Meet 2nd year campers, Nick and Will.



Welcome to Camp, Colin – and His Crew



Colin’s Crew was inspired by friends and family of a brave boy, Colin Westbrook. Colin was your typical two-year-old when he was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, (“ALL”) back in October 2009, just days after his second birthday. Colin’s Crew was originally formed to provide financial and emotional support to the Westbrook family. As Colin continues

to do well, Colin’s Crew is planning fundraisers to assist families in the same situation as the Westbrooks.

This summer, Colin’s Crew:

- Donated 20 bins of snacks and drinks for the Camp Rising Sun campers and counselors.
- One bin of snacks and one bin of drinks for every cabin.
- Snacks consisted of pre-packaged

single serve items that varied from fruit snacks to chips to granola bars.

- The Renker family borrowed their church van and drove the bins up to Camp.
- Campers Colin and Anneliese and their family organized the snack bins and distribution.

Camp Jewell YMCA - Camping Facility Keeps Getting Better

Over the last three years, Camp Jewell YMCA has invested more than \$170,000 in capital improvements to program areas at camp. Their new recreation area includes state-of-the-art surfacing, basketball hoops, a pickle ball court, four square and ga-ga pits.

Camp Jewell has completed the first phase of improvements at the waterfront, including new docks and a rope swing. A new zip line, near the ski hill, now allows participants to ride over the finger of Triangle Lake not once, but twice.

The Camp Jewell water park is a dream project they are bringing to life. Their staff and volunteers have worked hard to design a facility to suit the needs of all kids. They considered a pool, thinking more kids would be enticed to swim in it instead of a lake. But they were concerned few kids would choose to swim in the lake if a pool were available. They believe swimming in the lake is a tenet of summer camp, bringing kids closer to nature.

The result is a water park that uses lake water but encourages kids to interact with water in a more comfortable and more familiar way. The facility consists of three ponds less than a foot deep, incorporating elements of waterfalls, bridges, fountains and natural landscaping. The end result is a play area for kids in keeping with camp values.

Future plans include cabin and facility upgrades. The new, state-of-the-art cabins will be the most environmentally-friendly facilities at camp. Combining efficiencies

with aesthetics, each new cabin will offer campers and staff the amenities they want while maintaining a durable and rustic style that feels like “camp”. The updated cabins will have twice the bathroom fixtures of the current cabins, separate sleeping areas for staff from campers (when applicable), expanded individual bunk storage space and a more functional med room area. Featuring efficient insulation, doors and windows, along with radiant floor heat, the cabins will offer significant energy savings.

Improvements to the welcome area, including a large open-air pavilion and park-like greeting space, will enhance the first impression we give our guests and campers. Additional facility upgrades will feature a covered riding arena, additional year-round staff housing, relocated maintenance facility, boating dock, and new sailboats.



The Lions of District 23C present
A Gala Event to Benefit Camp Rising Sun

Sunday, November 2, 2014 – 1:00 p.m.
Port ‘n Starboard – Ocean Beach – New London, CT

Luncheon with a silent auction and basket raffle.

\$30 donation per person

All proceeds to benefit Camp Rising Sun

For tickets and information, contact Lion Keith Lemire
at 860-448-0201 or lionkeith23c@yahoo.com

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR LONG-TIME PARTNERS
Entertaining our Campers For Many Years



Curious Creatures



Norwich Inn and Spa



Naples Pizza, Guilford, Connecticut



Shelton High School Cheerleaders



Camp Rising Sun
P.O. Box 472
Branford, CT 06405

Return Service Requested



Camp Rising Sun is very excited to announce a partnership with Branford's Premier Subaru as part of Subaru's National "Share The Love" event. "For the past 6 years, Premier Subaru and Subaru of America have teamed up to support worthwhile national and local organizations with a donation of \$250 for every new Subaru sold by our dealership from November 20th, 2014 to January 2nd, 2015 through the Subaru Share The Love campaign," said Robert J. Alvine, President of Premier Subaru

in Branford, Connecticut.

Buyers at the Branford dealership will be given the opportunity to select from one of five national charities or Camp Rising Sun. "This is a great opportunity to raise funds for and awareness about Camp Rising Sun and childhood cancer." said Shaun Heffernan, Camp Director. Heffernan added, "We hope that all of our supporters will share this news with their friends and family."

