

Vol 1 – Fall 2012

It's the holiday season, and what better way to spread the good cheer than to thank all the wonderful people who make Camp Goodtimes possible! In this Fall Newsletter, you will read about the Annual Holiday Cruise donated by Argosy; you will learn about the amazing impact camp has on both the siblings and parents; you will see just how important the Wine Auction and Camp volunteers are to our success; and you will get a glimpse of those much appreciated sponsors who have already committed to supporting this cause again this year.

To all of you out there, thank you! We are looking forward to seeing you **April 6, 2013** at the **Seattle Aquarium** for the **10th Annual Camp Goodtimes Wine Auction!**



Camp Goodtimes Celebrates Another Holiday Cruise Thanks to Argosy!

What a great night the Holiday Cruise was, once again! For the 23rd consecutive year, Argosy Cruises donated one of their boats for the Camp Goodtimes family to enjoy. At the core of Camp Goodtimes is the goal of bringing together those who are affected by childhood cancer and offering joy and community.

The Holiday Cruise brings families together to experience the joy of the holiday season with others who have experienced a similar story. Thank you to all 230 people who attended! It was great to catch up with so many campers and parents and begin to build the excitement towards camp 2013! Along the way, campers and families were greeted by Santa and Mrs. Claus, made snowflakes and bead people, given gifts donated by the Starlight Foundation, danced to DJ Doogie's tunes, and rapped with Mooselips. There were smiles aplenty, and even a fantastic feature on KOMO news to close out the night. All in all, I come to understand anew - each time this group gathers - that the biggest gifts given and received in our lives are simply love and grace for one another, and the resulting community that is built and sustained.

May your holiday season overflow with this love and grace.

Gus "Beef" Peterson, Camp Director

For more information, please visit <http://goodtimeswineauction.org>
or contact Lisa Meindl at 206-674-4162 or lisa.meindl@cancer.org

A Message from a Camp Sibling and Parent

Camp Goodtimes has been a big part of my life since I was 14 years old, then I was a camper there with my sister Kathryn who was 10. She had recently finished treatment for a medulloblastoma brain tumor. Being at camp gave us an opportunity to share with fellow campers the difficulties and joys that dealing with cancer can bring. It also gave us a chance to see the great lives people were living who had been through treatment. As a sibling Camp gave me a chance to meet other siblings of cancer patients. This gave me insight and a viewpoint of other siblings' struggles, something you don't get outside of camp. From then on Camp was always something that we looked forward to every year. In 2006 I was finally old enough to be on Camp staff, and since then Camp has been not only something I look forward to once a year, but in every part of the year because it has become a second family. In 2010 Kathryn was diagnosed after ten years cancer free with a Glioblastoma Multiforme Brain Tumor. Our Camp family was a huge support system for us through this until she passed away on February 2, 2012. They have continued to support our family till this day. Camp is a place that Kathryn and I loved as a team and there is nothing better than giving that experience back to other children and families.



Richard "Loop" Bradley and his sister, Kathryn "Panda" Bradley

- **Richard "Loop" Bradley**



Michelle Baker with her children Cambria and Aaron

I thought that Camp Goodtimes sounded like a great idea. The nurses encouraged me to sign the kids up right away. After just a few months of this horrible "new normal", I was ready for something to help out with morale. Aaron was preparing for his second surgery. Cambria was feeling like she was invisible. Jeremy and I were scared and tired. When we first found the tumor, our first instinct was to circle the wagons and start looking for silver linings. We tried to keep our days as positive and stress-free as possible, but even the funniest parents and bravest kids need a break once in a while. While we waited in line to check in, you would have thought the children were being abandoned at a work camp. They were miserable. We very nearly lost Aaron at the Gauntlet- he was horrified at the prospect of running down the middle of all those cheerful, jumping people. I thought I had made a terrible mistake.

A week later, we sat in the amphitheater watching the skits and introductions of all those wonderful campers, leaders, and staff. My children were smiling and happy! And not too embarrassed that I cried like a baby during the campers' heart-wrenching rendition of "One Day".

Cambria met siblings who understood the challenges of being invisible. Aaron finally got to be a regular kid again. Jeremy and I met other parents who needed no explanations. We all know what it is like to wait for results, and watch the sweet nurses walk our child out the back door to prep for surgery. Camp Goodtimes introduced us.

I feel like I cannot clearly express what the Camp experience has meant to my family. For one week a year, we all get to take a break from cancer. Jeremy and I get to relax, knowing that the amazing staff at Camp Goodtimes is taking good care of our children. The kids get a wacky week stuffed full of fun and joy. Each of us has made new, dear friends to play with and talk to outside of Camp. We all get recharged, and that is a beautiful gift.

- **Michelle Baker**

Thank You Volunteers

What a difference a year has made! Last September, I joined the American Cancer Society and became the staff lead for the Camp Goodtimes Wine Auction. I didn't know anyone involved with the event; I did not have a wine palate; and I didn't know what Camp was all about. But now, all that has changed, and I would like to thank the wonderful volunteers for opening my eyes up to so many amazing experiences.

To the *2012 Wine Auction committee* – Thank you for teaching me about the event and fundraisers of this caliber. It was my first time being involved in a volunteer atmosphere as intricate as the one with the American Cancer Society, and you all did a wonderful job of welcoming me into your group and leading us to a successful evening for the children of Camp Goodtimes West. You also secured some of Washington's finest wines, allowing me to improve my pallet for this state's treasure!



To the *2013 10th Annual Camp Goodtimes Wine Auction committee* – Thank you for your leadership and efforts to build the relationships that were developed in years past. Your hard work and persistence will allow this event to continue to grow. You have so many creative ideas to bring the life of Camp to this boutique wine event, and I am excited for a truly beautiful night on April 6 at the Seattle Aquarium.

And lastly, to the *Camp Goodtimes West volunteers* – Thank you for opening your arms to me, to the event volunteers, to the children, and to all American Cancer Society supporters. The families who participate in Camp are fortunate to have you in their lives, and I am thankful to you for being a good story in this world where there is so much turmoil.



It is because of these amazing volunteers that Camp Goodtimes West continues to help so many children. Last year, 235 pediatric cancer patients and their siblings showed up at Camp Burton for a chance to have their childhood back, even if only for a moment. It is this time that they will remember as they look back on their cancer experience, and you are the reason it is possible, so thank you!

I look forward to continuing my work with the Camp Goodtimes Wine Auction committee to provide a memorable event for all our supporters on April 6 at the Seattle Aquarium. I hope to see you there!

Cheers!

Lisa "Puma" Meindl

Distinguished Events Director – ACS

Thank You From the Parents!

**“What a gift to give
parents, kids and
siblings!”**

“My son is only 9, but he
wants to be a camp counselor
when he’s old enough!

**“We think
camp is
AWESOME!”**

“It provides freedom...that has
been taken away for a time as they
have gone through treatment.”

“Never stop this camp!”

“These precious kids go through
so much and your camp creates
such happiness for them.”

**“A chance for
lasting
friendships.”**

**“Thank you so much for
giving my daughter the
best week ever.”**

“Many thanks for all the fabulous
staff’s energy, enthusiasm and
HEART that goes into making
Camp Goodtimes what it is!”

“She has new friends,
we have new friends!”

**“A wonderful camp. I
couldn’t ask for
anything else. This is the
best program ever.”**

“We’ll be back again
next year!”

**“What’s the saying? ‘It
takes a village...’ I feel like
we finally found our
village.”**

“It’s nice for him to go to a
safe place full of love and fun!”

“Thank you a billion times to
all the donors, supporters, and
volunteers of Camp Goodtimes
for an amazing experience.”

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