

**Emily's Story** Much-loved  
counselor shares a world  
of possibilities with  
campers every summer.  
**Page 3**

**Cherishing the Miracles**  
Sixteen years of volunteering  
brings Eric Newburg  
countless memories. **Page 4**

**Saluting Big Apple Circus  
Sponsors** Annual event  
sponsors shine, as more  
than 1,100 friends gather  
under the Big Top. **Page 8**

# C A M P S U N S H I N E



# POSTCARDS

## Bonding With Others Who "Get It" Programs Respond to Teens' Special Needs

Taylor liked wearing a purple "dressy dress" with spaghetti straps and feeling special at Camp Sunshine's annual Winter Dance and Teen Lock-in in February. Rod liked being able to show up late after his basketball game and still be greeted as part of the group. Either way, both teens thoroughly enjoyed the event, and offer this advice to other teens with cancer who are thinking about Camp Sunshine programs – just do it!

"I liked it – it was a fun night, and it was nice being around people who knew what you were going through without asking a lot of questions," said Taylor, a relative newcomer to Camp Sunshine's teen programs.

Rod, who has participated in camp programs since he was 7 years old, was even more emphatic: "You don't ever have to worry about fitting in. It's not like at school – at Camp Sunshine, people come up to you and introduce themselves to you. Everybody is great."

Adolescence is all about self-discovery. For teenagers who have or had cancer, Camp Sunshine's teen programs offer opportunities to explore, share, care, grow and connect with others facing similar challenges. "For any parent of a teen with cancer, I would say give these programs a try," said Rod's mother Melenda. "All of these kids are so positive, and they need to surround themselves with others who are as positive as they are. With Camp Sunshine, you don't have to tell your story over and over again to explain what's happening in your life. Everybody gets it."

"It's interesting," said Taylor's mother Melissa. "Camp Sunshine is a place where these kids can go and just have fun and actually escape from being sick,"

### STRENGTHENING PROGRAMS

The addition of the Sally J. Hale Center at Camp Sunshine House provides more space to expand programs and accommodate more children with cancer and their families. The Teen Winter Dance was one of the first events to be held in the building, adjacent to the Camp Sunshine House on Clairmont Road in Decatur. The center will house programs and services not only for teens, but also for children, young adults and parents. It includes a large meeting room, play therapy room, conference room, counseling area, reception area and office space.

The center provided the perfect backdrop for the winter get-together with more than 40 participants enjoying the chance to dance, mingle and be themselves. Following the dance, participants crossed over to the Camp Sunshine House for the annual Teen Lock-in – complete with late night pizza, games and the chance to nurture old friendships and make new ones. "It was like summer camp only inside the Camp Sunshine House," Rod said.

A veteran summer camper, Rod started attending Camp Sunshine at age 7 and has never missed a camp session since. He has grown up with his cabin buddies;

*Continued on Page 5*





**DEAR CAMP SUNSHINE FRIENDS,**

Spring is the time for new beginnings, and at Camp Sunshine we are marking the season with exciting growth and fresh changes of our own. While I am humbled by the naming of the Sally J. Hale Center, our second building at Camp Sunshine House, I am thrilled to report that the building is already being put to good purpose. One of the first events at the center took place in early February – our annual Winter Dance with more than 40 campers on hand to nurture old friendships and begin new ones.

By all accounts, the campers had a blast at the “new building” and then walked over to the Camp Sunshine House for a food-filled, fun-filled Teen Lock-in. Our Teen Programs give adolescents the all-important opportunity to interact with other teens facing similar challenges. Read about these programs here and on our website at [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com).

For teens, children, families and young adults alike, the new building holds enormous promise for expansion of our programs and services. It also broadens our fundraising prospects with unique *naming opportunities*, including our large meeting room, play therapy room, counseling room, reception area, conference room and several offices. Friends and supporters who are interested in learning more should contact me at 404-325-7979 or [sally@mycampsunshine.com](mailto:sally@mycampsunshine.com).

New beginnings are also in store for Missi Hicks, our Program Director for Support and Education who has

been with us since 2003. Missi and her family are moving to Raleigh, NC, to pursue an exciting business opportunity for her husband Henry. Missi was instrumental in the strategic planning process when Camp Sunshine House was only an idea. Her grasp of issues impacting children with cancer and their families has been invaluable. We will miss her greatly and warmly welcome in her stead Terri Sexton. No stranger to the world of pediatric oncology, Terri most recently has been with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She looks forward to connecting with many of you in the months ahead.

This is an important time of growth and opportunity for Camp Sunshine. Yet many things about us will never change. For example, the deep gratitude and endless admiration we have for our community partners, dedicated volunteers and generous supporters. This issue tells the inspiring story of Emily, who has grown from a shy, reserved camper to a well-loved and admired Camp Counselor with a successful professional career and a bright, broad future. Our Volunteer Spotlight salutes Eric Newberg, who in 16 years has never missed a summer camp and still finds “the miracles” in each and every camp experience. We also express great appreciation to the many sponsors who made Camp Sunshine Day at the Big Apple Circus an unforgettable event.

The new beginnings of spring also mean that summer – and Summer Camp – are just around the corner. Start packing! – *Sally Hale, Executive Director*

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

Camp Sunshine enriches the lives of children with cancer and their families through recreational, educational and support programs allowing them to share similar experiences and to participate in activities that promote normal childhood development as they cope with the challenges of childhood cancer.

**MOVING?**

Have you moved recently? Are you about to move? Do we need to change your mailing address? Contact [Chanteasea@mycampsunshine.com](mailto:Chanteasea@mycampsunshine.com) or call 404-325-7979, ext. 10.

**Give a Child a Week of Sunshine**

It costs \$500 to sponsor a child with cancer to attend summer camp at Camp Sunshine. The rewards are priceless. Fill out the enclosed donor envelope and return it with your check today. Or donate on-line at [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com).

**Summer Teen Week at  
Camp Twin Lakes  
13- to 18-years-olds  
June 15-21**

**Summer Junior Week at  
Camp Twin Lakes  
7- to 12-year-olds  
June 22-28**

## THEN &amp; NOW

## Emily's Story

**“Something inside of me changed that very first camp week. Camp Sunshine had given me so much self-confidence. I knew it was something I wanted to pass on to other kids.”**



Diagnosed with retinoblastoma in her right eye when she was 9 months old, Emily has grown into adulthood with sight in one eye only. Yet hers is a clear vision of a world of possibilities – a world she shares each summer as a Camp Sunshine counselor for 10-to 12-year-old girls.



“Because I was diagnosed as a baby, I used to think that all kids did what I did – go to the clinic, see the oncologist, have the tests,” Emily said. “I remember being at Egleston once and doing an art project with (play lady) Miss Sydney and realizing that one of the other patients, who was obviously older than me, didn’t have hair. I was very confused and asked if she was a baby because she was bald.”

By the time she reached her teen years, Emily, who grew up in Carrollton, GA, felt that her medical challenges set her apart from other kids. “I was born in 1980 and back then the treatment protocol for my kind of cancer was largely radiation therapy,” Emily said. “They don’t even do my protocol anymore.” While successful in

treating her cancer, the treatment left her with some facial deformities, which made her increasingly self-conscious as she entered adolescence.

For years, her oncologist Dr. Abdelsalam Ragab tried to convince her to attend Camp Sunshine summer camp. Finally, at age 14, she reluctantly decided to go. “I had absolutely no self-esteem. I was a dorky, shy 14-year-old, and I had already decided I wasn’t going to have any fun,” she recalled. “In fact, I cried the night before I left for camp. I was convinced it was going to be awful.”

During the first hour at camp, she was “miserable.” “The counselors seemed really nice,” Emily recalled. “But there were bald-headed kids and kids who were missing limbs, and I just wasn’t sure I fit in.” Then she met a cabin mate, Kristie. “She said we’re going to have the best time ever! And we did. I had the greatest time I had ever had in my life. And when my mother picked me up at the end of the week, I was just bawling. I didn’t want to leave.”

She also knew she wanted someday to be a Camp Sunshine counselor. “Something inside of me changed that very first camp week,” she said. “Camp Sunshine had given me so much self-confidence. I knew it was something I wanted to pass on to other kids.” Emily hasn’t missed a year at camp since that first life-changing summer. She went on to be a CIT in 2000 and 2001 and has been a cabin counselor for six straight summers. Additionally, she volunteers at Family Camp twice a year and is consistently a successful fundraiser for the Annual Keencheefoonee Road Race, e-mailing

friends who e-mail more friends about the Camp Sunshine story.

While her camp memories are countless, a personal highlight was the Teen Trip to Washington, DC, in 1996. The group had a tour of the White House, and the teens were eating ice cream in the Rose Garden, when they had an unexpected visitor join them – President Bill Clinton. “He must have spent an hour talking to us,” Emily recalled. “It truly was one of the highlights of my life.”

As an adult volunteer, she cherishes the opportunity to watch many of her girls grow up and accomplish things they never thought they could. She tells a favorite story about a young camper who had undergone limb salvage and was in a wheelchair. The girl had heard about the rock wall and was driven in a golf cart to see it. “She got one look at it and smiled the most beautiful smile and said *I’m doing it*. And she did – she climbed to the very top. There is an incredible sense of accomplishment in doing something like that.”

A graduate of Auburn University, Emily has a child life specialist degree. Professionally, she worked for a time in government affairs and is now in sales for At Home magazine in Nashville, TN. A huge Auburn football fan, Emily also enjoys exercising regularly, cooking, hanging out with friends, and listening to many music styles. She is considering law school and is taking the LSAT exam in June. “I love my job – it is so much fun,” she said. “But I also think about doing something that really makes a difference.” To Camp Sunshine friends, she already does. ✨

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## For Eric Newberg, Miracles Happen with Every Camp

Eric still remembers the mix of emotions he experienced 16 years ago arriving at his first Camp Sunshine week as a cabin counselor for 7- to 9-year-old boys. "Honestly, I was scared to death," Eric recalled, chuckling. "It was just the fear of the unknown, just nerves."

What quickly set his mind at ease was the arrival of the first camper, Andrew Wood (now in his early 20s). "As soon as I met Andrew, I felt comfortable. We walked back to the cabin together, carrying all of his stuff, and I knew I had found my place," Eric said.

The Chief Financial Officer for Diaz Foods by day, Eric commits not only one week every summer to Camp Sunshine, but also serves as a dedicated member of the Board of Trustees and a tireless advocate for the organization. A true believer in spreading the sunshine, Eric has connected his company as a corporate partner for Camp Sunshine events, including the Big Apple Circus day.



**"Camp Sunshine keeps you grounded. The people I work with look forward to my coming back from camp every year, because I am suddenly a lot more in tune with what is truly important."**

– Eric Newberg

Moreover, he has introduced friends, co-workers and family, including his brothers Todd and Dan, to the joy of volunteering for Camp Sunshine.

Eric is himself the father of two young sons, Jake and Alex, which helps explain his devotion to Camp Sunshine through the years. "It is not one camp activity or one camp week that sticks out in my mind," Eric commented. "It is the campers... not just the children you see returning every year, but also the children whose lives have been lost along the way...that is the reason I go back."

Eric remembers an evening early in his volunteer career when the campers in his cabin got together for a late night

conversation: "A nurse came in to give prednisone to one of the campers. Another boy said, *Oh, you take prednisone? So do I!* And then another boy said, *Oh, you had cancer? So did I!* And so it went. They didn't even realize they were at a camp for kids with cancer – they just knew they were at camp having fun. Those are the best times...sitting at the campfire... eating at the dining table... listening to the kids just talk."

In 16 years of volunteering, Eric has seen many positive changes for Camp Sunshine. "One of the biggest changes is that Camp Sunshine is touching more families and touching them more deeply than ever before," he said. "We have the opportunity now to impact the lives of children with cancer by offering programs year-round."

But many things have not changed, and for these constants, Eric is grateful. "The camp experience doesn't change. The miracles still happen every year. The feeling of excitement and anticipation never changes – not for the kids, and not for me."★





## Camp Sunshine's Teen Programs

**TEEN RETREAT:** These weekends offer 13- to 18-year-olds the opportunity to interact with other teens facing similar challenges. Held each spring and fall at the Camp Twin Lakes facilities.

**SUMMER CAMP:** For teens ages 13-18, this one-week camp is held at Camp Twin Lakes in Rutledge, GA. Programs and schedules designed specifically for teens.

**TEEN GROUP:** Held 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at Camp Sunshine House, Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA. A time to meet, share with and gain support from other teens who have or had cancer.

**WASHINGTON, DC EXCURSION:** A special journey each spring for 16- to 18-year-olds. The four-day trip includes touring the Capitol and White House, meeting with members of Congress and much more.

**OUTDOOR CHALLENGE:** Offered every summer to a limited number of teens. Past trips have included a dude ranch in North Carolina and a leadership training trip to the Colorado Rockies.

**LOCK-IN AND WINTER DANCE:** A chance to catch up with camp friends and make new friends with teens who have been recently diagnosed.

**PLANNING FOR COLLEGE:** For high school juniors and seniors. Help with navigating the admissions process, getting into the college of your choice and learning about scholarships for cancer survivors.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING:** Available to teens who need support and counseling regarding illness-related issues. On an appointment basis.

**For more information about our teen programs, visit [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com).**

## Bonding With Others Who "Get It," continued from page 1

even if several months go by without seeing each other, when they do reconnect they don't skip a beat. "They are my best friends," Rod said.

Now 15, he was diagnosed at age 4 in December of 1996 with Wilm's tumor (Stage 4), a cancer of the kidney most often found in very young children. His treatment included chemotherapy, radiation therapy and a kidney resection at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA). A sophomore at Hiram High School, Rod has been off therapy for many years and is followed by Dr. Lillian Meachem at CHOA's Cancer Survivorship Program.

Camp Sunshine's teen programs are available to adolescents, age 13-18. As soon as Rod reached his 13th birthday he was ready to participate. One of his favorite memories is horseback riding up a mountainside on the teen trip to a North Carolina dude ranch. "I am 5-foot-2, and that horse was huge," Rod commented. "I didn't think there was anyway I could ride that horse up that mountain. But I surprised myself. I did and I was proud of myself."



## STRENGTHENING TIES

Fourteen-year-old Taylor's first venture into Camp Sunshine's teen programs was the Teen Retreat weekend last fall. Already, she said, she has "had good times and made good friends" with other teens who understand what she is going through.

Taylor was diagnosed in July of 2007 with a form of cancer rarely found in girls – desmoplastic small round cell tumors that presented in her stomach, lungs and liver. For Taylor, the start of her freshman year at Collins Hill High School was interrupted by hospitalizations, chemotherapy sessions and clinic visits. Her mother says Taylor is a fighter who stays focused on her goal. "She wanted to earn her black belt in karate – that was her goal," Melissa recalled. "Right before her 13th birthday, she did!"

Taylor's tenacity serves her well in the face of her medical challenges. Her care team at Children's Healthcare at Scottish Rite encouraged her to look into Camp Sunshine's programs for teens. By October, only three months into treatment, Taylor was feeling well enough to attend the Teen Retreat weekend. "We are so glad she did," said her mother. "It was good for her to be around kids who have been through or are going through treatment. It made such a difference for Taylor; it really does help."

In fact, Taylor was so pleased with her first Camp Sunshine experiences that she returned for the spring Teen Retreat, reconnected with friends and is looking forward to her first Summer Camp. "I already sent in my application," she said. "I'm excited."\*



**ONGOING PROGRAMS**

**FAMILY NIGHT**

1st and 3rd Tuesday each month

5:30-6:30 PM Dinner

6:30-7:30 PM Group Meeting

Call to RSVP

Meet and share dinner with others in similar situations. Then participate in professionally facilitated groups to discuss pertinent topics. Parents meet together; children meet with other children and childcare is provided for children under age 5.

**TEEN GROUP**

2nd and 4th Thursday each month

5:30-6:30 PM Dinner

6:30-7:30 PM Program

Call to RSVP

For 13- to 18-year-olds. Meet, hang out and get support from other teens who also have or had cancer. For those who are on treatment or were diagnosed as a teen. Dinner is followed by discussion or activity.

**YOUNG ADULT GROUP**

3rd Thursday each month

5:30-6:30 PM Dinner

6:30-7:30 PM Program

Call to RSVP

For 18- to 23-year-olds who are currently on treatment. Dinner is followed by discussion or educational topic of interest.

**SPA SYDELL NIGHT AT CAMP SUNSHINE**

2nd Monday each month

6:00-8:00 PM

Come have dinner and be pampered by the talented professionals from Spa SydeLL.

**PRESCHOOL MUSIC CLASS**

2nd and 4th Thursday each month

10:30 AM-12:30 PM

Join us for lunch, music class and a fun activity. For campers birth - 6 years old and their preschool age siblings.

**For any House programs, we ask that you RSVP to 404-325-7979**

**M A Y 2 0 0 8**

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			Washington DC Trip	1 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	2	3
4	5	6 Family Night	7	8 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Young Adult Group Family Night in Athens	16	17 Staff Orientation for Summer Camp
18	19 Spa SydeLL Night Family Night in Central Georgia	20 Family Night	21	22 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	23	24
25	26	27 Seasonal Sunshine	28	29	30 Young Adult Retreat	31

**J U N E 2 0 0 8**

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Family Night - New Camper Orientation	4	5 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Family Night in Athens	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Teen Group	27	28
29	30					



For any House programs, we ask that you RSVP to 404-325-7979

## JULY 2008

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	11	12
13	14 Spa Sydell Night	15 Family Night	16	17 Young Adult Group Family Night in Athens	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	25	26
27	28 Family Program in Savannah	29	30	31		

## AUGUST 2008

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 Family Program in Columbus	2
3	4	5 Family Night	6	7 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	8	9
10	11 Spa Sydell Night	12	13	14 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	15	16
17 Hit-A-Home-Run	18	19 Family Night - Sibling Program	20	21 Young Adult Group Family Night in Athens	22 Sibling Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	23
24	25	26 Seasonal Sunshine	27	28 Pre-School Music Class Teen Group	29	30
31						

### SAVE THESE DATES

#### September 20

Wild Adventures

#### October 3-5

Remember the Sunshine Weekend

#### October 10-12

Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes

#### October 17-19

Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes

#### November 21-23

Teen Retreat

### UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

#### June 6-8

10 % of proceeds from sales at Lime Taqueria (Smyrna, GA) will support the Keencheefoonee Road Race. [www.limetaqueria.com](http://www.limetaqueria.com)

#### September 10

Brad Gambrell Golf Tournament

#### September 27-28

HD Marine and Wendy's Fishing Tournament

#### October 3

Chris Young Golf Tournament

### INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

Camp Sunshine offers support and counseling for children, teens and young adults ages 5 - 23 regarding illness-related issues and concerns. Call Terri Sexton, LMSW, at 404-325-7979 for details.

Camp Sunshine will now offer support and counseling for parents of children, teens and young adults regarding illness-related issues and concerns. For more information, please contact Terri Sexton at 404-325-7979.

### REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

Camp Sunshine continues to provide regional programming. We will now provide programs in all areas of the state in addition to programs in the Metro Atlanta area. Check out our website [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com), the newsletter and your mail for programs coming to your area.



## Big Apple Circus Sponsors Shine



**What better reason to "Celebrate" than the fourth annual Camp Sunshine Day at the Big Apple Circus?** More than 1,100 people, including 152 Camp Sunshine families, gathered under the Big Top, as the Big Apple circus brought its 30th annual extravaganza, *Celebrate*, to town. Highlighting extraordinary circus performers from across the globe, the event featured the incomparable Jeff Foxworthy as Guest Ring Master and helped raise more than \$90,000 for Camp Sunshine programs. We gratefully acknowledge our many sponsors for this unforgettable *soiree of scintillation*.

**BIG TOP SPONSOR**

The Coca-Cola Company

**RINGMASTER SPONSOR**

AFLAC

**OPENING ACT SPONSOR**

Amgen

**CENTER RING SPONSORS**

RaceTrac Petroleum  
Yamaha Outboards and Watercraft

**ACROBATIC SPONSORS**

Diaz Foods  
Diane and Randy Rowe  
Wachovia Trust

**IN-KIND SPONSORS**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
Fitzgerald + CO  
Graphic Solutions Group  
Scott Kinney Graphic Design

Special thanks to our many High Wire Sponsors who made it possible to share this special event with Camp Sunshine campers and their families.



1850 Clairmont Road  
Decatur, GA 30033  
404-325-7979  
www.mycampsunshine.com

Camp Sunshine Postcards is published three times annually for friends and supporters of Camp Sunshine.

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ATLANTA, GA  
PERMIT # 1156