

**Then & Now** Childhood cancer survivors Jessie and Joe met at camp as teenagers. When they met again as young adults, romantic sparks ignited. **Page 3**

**Dream Ride** Campers experience the thrill of cruising Georgia 400 in a rare vintage automobile. **Page 4**

**Flight to Neverland** Campers and families experience the magic of "Peter Pan" at a benefit performance. **Page 4**

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



# POSTCARDS

## Counselors Respond: Why Do You Want To Return To Summer Camp?

*I remember thinking being a counselor would pale in comparison to being a camper, but last summer proved me wrong. I loved it.*

*It gives me a different perspective and appreciation for the patients that I work with on a daily basis. I love getting to know the kids outside of the hospital.*

*It is part of who I am. I have been coming to camp since 1996, and it keeps me grounded and reminds of what is important in my life.*

*I have attended Camp as a camper, an LIT and a counselor, and camp gets better every year. Seeing kids who have been through so much having such an awesome week is the highlight of my year, and I wouldn't miss it for the world.*

*I love camp! It reenergizes me – seeing all my patients healthy, happy and being 'normal' kids.*

## First-timers and Returning Campers Gear Up for Summer Fun

*For a child with cancer, carefree summer days filled with hiking, swimming and having fun with friends are often replaced with clinic visits, treatment protocols and hospital stays. At Camp Sunshine Summer Camp, a camper can receive chemotherapy in the morning and go horseback riding in the afternoon. No wonder that for first-timers and returning campers alike, thoughts are turning to Summer Camp.*

Last year, close to 400 campers attended Summer Camp, enjoying the campfires, sing-alongs, friendship bracelets and opportunities to kick back and relax – just like other kids at camp. They arrive home more confident in themselves and more secure about their illness. As returning camper Morgan Webster said, "It is amazing how fast I made friends and how many activities I did. I cannot wait to go back."

For a child with cancer, one week at camp can truly make a lifetime of difference. Here Morgan and first-time camper Nolan Blake share their stories.

### **Morgan Webster: The Second Time Around**

Maybe it's the thought of kayaking with friends, horseback riding along the trail, taking on the pumper pole challenge again, or making even more friends. Whatever the reasons, 17-year-old Morgan Webster of Cartersville cannot wait for her return trip to Summer Camp. Diagnosed in 2009 with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, Morgan went to Summer Camp for the first time in 2010. "I loved it. It was a great getaway from being sick and at the clinic and in the hospital," she said. Unfortunately, about half way through her week, Morgan started running a fever and



her blood counts dropped. She left camp in an ambulance and had to miss the rest of her camp week.

Morgan turned her disappointment into

anticipation, patiently waiting for a return trip this year. "Camp is awesome. There you are in the middle of being sick and you can feel like a totally normal person, because everyone knows exactly what you are going through," she said.

Morgan was a junior at Woodland High School, an honor student preparing for a role in *The Nutcracker*, when her world turned upside down. "The week before Thanksgiving, we were just sitting down for a normal family dinner when Morgan texted me to come into the bedroom – her back was hurting terribly," her mother Missy recalled. At first her mother, a nurse at Floyd Hospital, thought it might be strained from dancing or, perhaps, a kidney stone. A CAT scan and lab work

*Continued on Page 5*

**DEAR CAMP SUNSHINE FRIENDS,****OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

**Camp Sunshine enriches the lives of Georgia's children with cancer and their families through recreational, educational and support programs.**

**MOVING?**

Have you moved recently? Are you about to move? Do we need to change your mailing address, e-mail or phone number? Contact Chanteasea@mycampsunshine.com or call 404-325-7979, ext. 10.

**BRAVES SEASON TICKET HOLDERS**

Donate tickets for August 14th Braves game for families to attend our annual "Hit a Home Run."

Contact Tenise at 404-325-7979 or tenise@mycampsunshine.com

What do a spectacular theater production, a children's birthday party and a ride in a snazzy Ferrari all have in common? In the hands of creative donors, philanthropists and friends, all are ways to benefit the children and families of Camp Sunshine.

One amazing aspect of camp is the limitless ways that people support our programs. This issue of *Postcards* reminds me how this imaginative and generous giving makes possible not only Summer Camp but also an entire year of programming.

This benevolent spirit was evident at a special performance on February 21 of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* by threesixty° Productions at Pemberton Place in downtown Atlanta. We are deeply grateful to the producers and to our sponsors and donors who enabled campers and their families to take flight on an unforgettable journey to Neverland.

Ferrari-Maserati of Atlanta offers a different kind of travel in the annual Dream Ride for Kids. On the first Saturday in June, owners of some of the world's ritziest cars take children from CURE, the Ronald McDonald House and Camp Sunshine on an unforgettable ride up Georgia 400. It is hard to tell who has more fun – the grownups or the kids. We are deeply grateful for this exhilarating opportunity.

Financial support is essential to our programming, but it is the giving of volunteer time and talent that makes

camp, camp. Our Volunteer Spotlight on Cathy and Dave Graves highlights friends who not only give of their own volunteer time, but also have made Camp Sunshine a family matter. The Graves have taught their own children, Mitchell and Amelia, from an early age about camp. One year, the children even dedicated their birthday parties to camp, wanting no birthday gifts for themselves but rather asking for gifts to Camp Sunshine.

Our Then & Now spotlights another couple, Jessie and Joe, both childhood cancer survivors who met at camp as teenagers 13 years ago. The romantic spark didn't ignite until much later. Jessie and Joe were married last August. Like the Graves, they are committed as a couple to Camp Sunshine. Their story is inspiring; their volunteer giving is invaluable.

Summer Camp is just around the corner. Our cover story highlights returning camper Morgan Webster who cannot wait for her return trip and first-timer Nolan Blake who practically has his bags packed. But it is not just our campers who are counting down the days. Read what our returning counselors have to say.

There are many ways to help a child experience Summer Camp. You can go on-line and support the Keencheefoonee Road Race or use the enclosed envelope to make a donation directly to camp. It costs \$500 to send one child to camp for one week. The rewards, as seen in the smiles of our campers, are positively priceless.

– Sally Hale, *Executive Director*

**Your Gift Makes a Difference**

Summer Camp is just around the corner. You can help a child with cancer experience an unforgettable week with a gift to Camp Sunshine today.

<b>Provide arts &amp; craft supplies for a cabin .....</b>	<b>\$ 50</b>
<b>Provide snacks for one day .....</b>	<b>\$ 100</b>
<b>Provide cabin welcome gifts – T-shirts, water bottles &amp; more.....</b>	<b>\$ 250</b>
<b>Sponsor a camper for a week .....</b>	<b>\$ 500</b>
<b>Sponsor one camper EACH week .....</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>Provide bus rides to camp for 200 campers .....</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>Sponsor a full cabin of campers! .....</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

Gifts of any size are welcome, acknowledged and gratefully received. Simply fill out the enclosed donor envelope and return it with your check. Or donate on-line at mycampsunshine.com.

## THEN &amp; NOW

## Jessie's &amp; Joe's Story



**Jessie and Joe have some very important life experiences in common. Both were diagnosed with childhood cancer at Egleston Children's Hospital in February of 1995. Both were campers at Camp Sunshine throughout the late 1990s. After graduating from camp, both became counselors-in-training. Both are graduates of the University of West Georgia. Both are popular and well-loved cabin counselors for Teen Week. And now they share the same wedding anniversary, because on August 28, 2010, they were both married – to each other.**

They met at camp in 1998. Joe was 16 and Jessie was 14. They became friends with one main common interest: Camp Sunshine.

"When you are a kid with cancer, you have parents who want to shelter you and take care of you and never let you out of their sight," Jessie said. "Camp was



awesome. I got to be around kids who knew what I was going through. Most important, I got to be a normal kid again."



Jessie was 11 and had been to the doctor's for a sore throat and low energy. One day at school her

teachers noticed how pale and lethargic she was. Jessie was taken to Egleston where she was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia. Jessie began intensive chemotherapy. After one week, she was released from the hospital and continued her treatment at the clinic. Within a month of diagnosis, Jessie's cancer was in remission, but she continued with chemotherapy for six months. At that time, testing revealed the possibility of relapse, and

Jessie's doctors highly recommended a bone marrow transplant. A matched unrelated donor was found on the national donor registry. Jessie received her transplant at the University of Minnesota Medical Center in October of 1995.

At approximately the same time, Joe was seeing doctors about a pain in his knee that wouldn't go away. At first it was thought to be growing pains. Eventually an orthopedic surgeon called for an MRI. Further testing discovered the source of Joe's pain: Ewing's sarcoma. Joe began chemotherapy and underwent a limb salvage procedure in June. After starting another round of chemotherapy, infection developed in the leg and it had to be amputated. Joe finished his chemotherapy and has been cancer free since 1995.

Both learned about Camp Sunshine through "Miss Sydney" at Egleston. "It was fun and wild with all the activities we had to choose from," Joe said. "Today there are even more programs and events for the kids to do." Even more amazing, they both agree, are the friendships formed at camp that last throughout the years.

In 2000, Joe graduated from high school and camp and went on to college at the University of West Georgia. Jessie graduated a year later and also enrolled

there. They were reunited and remained friends throughout college; however, they lost touch after Jessie graduated and started working.

Fast forward to 2009. By this time, Jessie was working full-time and Joe had re-enrolled at the university to finish his degree. Joe had continued to volunteer at various camp programs, but because of college classes and work, Jessie had missed several summer camps. One day Joe happened to find Jessie on Facebook and rekindled the lost friendship. She was living in Newnan not far from where Joe was living in Peachtree City. Joe invited her to meet him and a group of friends for dinner at a nearby restaurant one night. They began dating and their friendship started blossoming into much more.

The two were married last August before 260 guests, including many Camp Sunshine friends. Also in attendance was one very special guest – Rebecca, Jessie's bone marrow donor, with whom Jessie and her family keep in touch.

The newlyweds are counting the days until Summer Camp. "It inspired me as a young camper to see the counselors who were survivors and to get to know their stories," Joe said. "I hope that our stories can inspire campers for years to come."★





## COMMUNITY PARTNER

## Ferrari-Maserati of Atlanta Makes Dream Rides Come True

Picture riding up Georgia 400 in an Enzo Ferrari, vintage Mustang or imported Alfa Romeo and you can begin to imagine the excitement of young campers who participate in the annual Dream Ride for Kids, hosted by Ferrari-Maserati of Atlanta and sponsored by several local Atlanta businesses, to benefit Camp Sunshine, CURE and the Atlanta Ronald McDonald House.



Owners of fine and exotic vehicles from all over the country are invited to meet in Atlanta on the first Saturday in June to give children from these organizations the ride of their dreams. The group gathers at Seasons 52 Restaurant at Perimeter Mall and travels I-285 to GA 400 north to the dealership on Alpharetta Highway in Roswell with a police escort, including officers from Roswell, Marietta, Alpharetta and Dunwoody, providing smooth sailing and safe arrivals.



The event, which features 100 rare and priceless automobiles, is a big undertaking involving many logistics, noted manager Will Campbell. "But we have truly committed customers, employees and volunteers who love this event and wouldn't miss this opportunity to support these kids. The response is overwhelming year after year."

The cars run the gamut from old muscle cars like GTOs and Camaros to luxury imports. The kids get to choose the car they want to ride in, and many bring a brother or sister along for the ride. Once the caravan reaches the dealership, the kids and the their families are treated to a cookout and fair-like fun with miniature horses, an Army helicopter, the Atlanta Falcons cheerleaders, a Silent Auction and more.

The Dream Ride holds special meaning for Ferrari-Maserati's Hugh Steward. His daughter Sarah is cancer survivor and former Camp Sunshine camper who is now a leader in training for Summer Camp. "This is a terrific event for us, for the kids and for these organizations," he said. "We are thrilled to be a part of it." ✨

## Camp Sunshine Touched by Neverland Magic

Camp Sunshine thanks our sponsors, donors, guests and partners for an unforgettable journey to Neverland at a special benefit presentation of J.M. Barrie's "Peter Pan" by threesixty° Productions on February 21st at Pemberton Place in downtown Atlanta.

More than 1,000 people, including campers and their families, enjoyed this spectacular, in-the-round live musical theater performance. Proceeds from the event benefit Camp Sunshine's

year-round programs for children with cancer and their families.

Camp Sunshine is thrilled to have partnered with Presenting Sponsor, The Coca-Cola Company, and the producers of Peter Pan to offer this extraordinary experience for our campers and their families. A huge thank-you and a sprinkling of pixie dust to all of our generous sponsors for making this event possible. ✨



**"Those who bring  
sunshine to the lives  
of others cannot keep  
it from themselves."**

**— J.M. Barrie**

**Presenting Sponsor**  
The Coca-Cola Company

**Neverland Sponsor**  
Aflac

**Tinkerbell Sponsors**  
RaceTrac  
Georgia Power  
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**Special thanks to all of our  
High Flying Sponsors as well!**

## First-timers and Returning Campers Gear Up for Summer Fun, continued from page 1



revealed abnormalities. Morgan was taken to Children's Healthcare at Scottish Rite, where the diagnosis was confirmed.

While in the hospital, Morgan and her family (including her mother, her father Danny and her younger sister April) were introduced to Camp Sunshine. "It's a wonderful connection you make with people who help to steady you," Missy said. Morgan first attended Camp Sunshine's Spring Teen Retreat. "When it was time for Summer Camp, I thought if this is anything like Teen Retreat, this will be great – but it was even 10 times better!"

Morgan enjoyed a range of camp activities. Despite having lost 30 pounds and tremendous muscle mass in her legs, she made it to the top of the pumper pole: "It was really scary, but mentally I was daring myself to do it. It was a struggle, but I made it."

Morgan has this advice for first-time campers: "I would absolutely go for it. At Camp Sunshine, everybody is so accepting and nonjudgmental. It is an amazing life-changing experience."



being with his four siblings (Rylea, Simon, Charlie and Luke), Nolan started feeling sick and vomiting for no apparent reason. "At first the pediatrician thought that maybe Nolan was stressed out because school was starting," his mother recalled. "But then he started having headaches, too, in addition to the vomiting."

Nolan was referred to a gastrointestinal specialist. A CT scan revealed a tumor the size of a golf ball in the ventricle of the brain. Nolan underwent a seven-hour surgery at Children's Healthcare at Scottish Rite, followed by a treatment protocol that included radiation therapy at Emory University Hospital and chemotherapy at Egleston and Scottish Rite. Additionally, he began intensive rehabilitation to regain essential skills, including learning to walk again.

Nolan's recovery has been hard-fought. He finished chemotherapy in December, and his latest MRI showed no signs of cancer. "Slowly he is getting better, and slowly we are seeing improvement," his mother commented.

Although too sick last summer to attend camp, Nolan had a taste of camp life with Camp Sunshine's in-hospital program, Sunshine 2 U. Together, the family attended Family Camp last fall. "That was my trial run to see how Nolan would do and how I would like it," his mother said. The verdict: "He loved it, I loved it, the whole family did!" The children enjoyed the paddle boats and arts & crafts. "They also loved staying

in the camp cabins," she said. "It was exciting to experience something so different. It was a welcome break from the doctor appointments, clinic appointments and the routine."

His mother admits to being "a little nervous" about letting Nolan go to summer camp on his own: "But I know that they have a medical team on the scene. It gives me security." She also appreciates that Nolan will experience new activities and make new friends: "I just love what Camp Sunshine is doing for these kids, and I want that for Nolan." ✨

**TEEN WEEK**  
June 26 – July 1  
Ages 13-18

**JUNIOR WEEK**  
July 3 – 8  
Ages 7 -12

**Start planning now!**

### Counselors Respond: Why Do You Want To Return To Summer Camp?

*I love to give back to the organization that gave so much to me... camp is my passion and my "battery charger" for the year.*

*This program changes so many lives and being able to see and experience this while playing just a small part is an honor and privilege.*

*The campers, of course!*

*I love that I've been able to experience those memories outside the hospital walls with the patients and staff who I work with every day.*

*Being a volunteer has shown me the amazing ways that these kids push through their lives every day. Camp Sunshine kids know how to work together and help each other out.*

*Honestly, there is no better feeling than giving back to an organization that has already given me so much.*

**It's the best place on earth!**

### Nolan Blake: Ready for a Hard-won Break

After almost 18 months of hospital stays, radiation treatments, chemotherapy and clinic visits, 8-year-old Nolan is looking forward to a week of rock climbing, water sports and, most especially, fishing. "He hasn't actually started packing yet," said his mother Brittany. "But he is looking forward to camp very much."

This summer should be quite a contrast from 2009 when life took a sudden, drastic change for the Blakes, who live in Griffin. Normally a healthy child who loves





# CAMP SUNSHINE POSTCARDS

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

**M A Y 2 0 1 1**

## ONGOING PROGRAMS

### FAMILY NIGHT

3rd Sunday of each month.

5:30 – 6:20 Dinner

6:30 – 7:20 Groups meetings

Call to RSVP

Meet and share dinner with other families affected by pediatric cancer.

Following dinner, groups will meet to share, encourage, support and learn from others in similar situations.

Parents will meet, teens will gather and school age children will get together. Childcare is available for those under 5.

### SPA SYDELL NIGHT AT CAMP SUNSHINE

May 16, September 12, and

November 14, 2011

6:00-8:00 PM

Call to RSVP

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

### PRESCHOOL MUSIC CLASS

2nd and 4th Wednesday each month

12:15 PM – 1:45 PM

Call to RSVP

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

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Sunshine 2 U at AFLAC Cancer Center/Egleston	4 Washington DC Trip For Teens Sunshine 2 U at Scottish Rite	5 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	6	7 NE Georgia Regional Program
8	9	10	11 Pre-School Music Class	12	13	14 Young Adult Program at CTL Will-A-Way
15 Family Night	16 Spa SydeLL Night	17	18	19	20	21 Staff Orientation for Summer Camp
22	23	24 Seasonal Sunshine BINGO at Camp Sunshine House	25 Pre-School Music Class	26	27	28
29	30 Office Closed	31				

**J U N E 2 0 1 1**

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 Sunshine 2 U at AFLAC Cancer Center/Egleston	2 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	3	4
5	6	7 New Camper Orientation at Camp Sunshine House	8 Pre-School Music Class	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Pre-School Music Class	23	24	25
26 Teen Summer Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	27 Sunshine 2 U at AFLAC Cancer Center/Scottish Rite	28 Keencheefoonee Road Race Camp Twin Lakes	29	30		



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

## JULY 2011

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 Junior Summer Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	4	5 Keencheefoonee Road Race at CTL	6	7	8	9
		Sunshine 2 U at AFLAC Cancer Center/Egleston				
10	11	12	13 Pre-School Music Class	14	15	16
17 Family Night	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Pre-School Music Class	28	29	30
31						

## AUGUST 2011

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Sunshine 2 U at AFLAC Cancer Center/Egleston	3 Sunshine 2 U at AFLAC Cancer Center/Scottish Rite	4 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	5	6
7	8	9	10 Pre-School Music Class	11	12	13
14 Hit a Home Run	15	16	17	18	19 Sibling Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	20
21 Family Night	22	23 Seasonal Sunshine at Camp Sunshine House	24 Pre-School Music Class	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### SAVE THESE DATES

**September 9-10, 2011**

Annual Yard Sale at Camp  
Sunshine House

**September 17, 2011**

Wild Adventures

**September 30-October 2, 2011**

Remember the Sunshine  
Weekend at Camp Twin Lakes

**October 14-16, 2011**

Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes

**October 21-23, 2011**

Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes

**October 30, 2011**

Fall Festival

**November 8, 2011**

Seasonal Sunshine Thanksgiving  
Dinner at Camp Sunshine House

**November 18-20, 2011**

Teen Retreat at Camp Twin Lakes

**December 11, 2011**

Holiday Party at Camp Sunshine  
House

### UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENT

**Keencheefoonee Road Race**  
**June 28 and July 5 at Summer  
Camp**

Support your favorite volunteer or  
camper team for Camp Sunshine's  
own 5K road race! For more informa-  
tion go to [www.mycampsunshine.kintera.org/roadrace2011](http://www.mycampsunshine.kintera.org/roadrace2011).

### 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 our  
website [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com),  
the newsletter and your mail for  
programs coming to your area.





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## C A M P S U N S H I N E P O S T C A R D S

### VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

#### Cathy and Dave Graves: "Sharing Something Really Special"

Cathy and Dave Graves of Watkinsville have volunteered at Camp Sunshine Summer Camp Week for a combined 36 years. An oncology nurse with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Cathy started as a Summer Camp volunteer in 1991. Dave, Senior Associate Director of Admission at University of Georgia, began in 1993, a year after he and Cathy were married. In all their years together, they have missed camp only twice: when their son Mitchell was born in 1997 and their daughter Amelia was born in 1999.

The couple met as students at Clemson University. Early in her career, Cathy was drawn to camp for a special reason: "It was an opportunity to be with the children I saw at the hospital in an entirely different environment – to be with them, play with them, and not be doing anything medical." Her week at camp is "like a booster shot" that inspires her throughout the year.

In the early years, Dave supervised archery: "I got to work with all the kids and help them try something that, for many of them, they never tried before." Now both Cathy and Dave are Cabin Counselors during Junior Week. "It's a great age," Cathy said.



"The campers still want to spend time with you; they're still kids." "It's just a real joy as a Cabin Counselor to get to know the kids better and help them figure out what they want to do or accomplish," Dave added.

He remembers a camper who was legally blind and whose goals were to ride a bicycle and go kayaking. "The kayaking went pretty smoothly," Dave recalled. "But the bike riding was really a challenge." The solution was a bike procession – with the camper in the middle, camp staffers in the front and Dave in the back. "He made it the entire way around camp," Dave said. "That was a big part of camp that week for him, and for me."

For the Graves, Camp Sunshine is truly a family affair. They introduced their children at a very young age to what camp is all about. One year the children dedicated their birthday party to Camp Sunshine. "They were allowed to invite as many friends as they wanted, and instead of birthday presents everyone was asked to make a donation to Camp Sunshine," Cathy recalled. They raised \$600. "At first I wondered if they would miss their presents, but no, they loved it." Mitchell



and Amelia spend a week with their grandparents while Cathy and Dave are at camp. They aspire to be volunteer counselors themselves one day.

Cathy and Dave have chaperoned the Teen Trip to Washington, D.C., the white water rafting trip and other activities. Dave is instrumental in "College Night" at Camp Sunshine House, helping campers and their parents with questions and concerns about the college application and admission process.

The Graves enjoy seeing their young campers grow up and move on to college and career. Dave knows a sophomore at UGA who "married" him on Carnival Night several years ago at camp. Cathy remembers a young man, now at medical school, who once played the Budweiser frog in the talent show: "His biggest talent was burping."

The Graves love doing their volunteer commitment together. "To us, camp is something really special that we get to share," Cathy said. "To be able to talk about it with someone who shared the experience is just great."★