

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



# POSTCARDS

## Sunshine That Never Fades

*It often begins with some trepidation. An uncertainty of what the week will be like. A bit of parental worry about letting a child venture away from home – especially since the child has cancer.*

But it doesn't take long for apprehension to give way to pure joy. Because the experience of Camp Sunshine allows kids with cancer to try new things; to find acceptance and build confidence; to just be themselves.

As Katie Rutherford and Isadri Hernandez-Sanchez will tell you, that experience has a lasting impact. Both attended Camp Sunshine last year for the first time – and their stories reflect why so many call the camp “life changing.”

### THE RUTHERFORD FAMILY

From the minute Katie started treatment, the Rutherfords began hearing about Camp Sunshine – what a great place it was, and

how Katie just had to go. The doctors even planned her treatment around Teen Week.

But Katie wasn't sharing in the excitement.

“I wasn't sure what to expect from a camp for kids with cancer,” she remembers. “I thought it might be sad and kind of boring.”

But the minute she walked into the main hall, heard the music blaring and

saw all the people gathered, she knew the experience would be very different from her expectations.

“That just changed my mood right away,” Katie says.

Katie was diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma, a cancer of the soft tissue, in March 2017 when she was 15. She received chemotherapy two days before she left for camp. But that didn't curtail her activities – she just focused on those that didn't require as much energy.

It turns out camp was just what she needed.

“I was sad a lot of the time,” Katie says of her time during treatment. “My friends couldn't relate to what I was going through. But my new friends at Camp Sunshine understood exactly what I was going through. Seeing how positive they were uplifted me for a long time.”

“It was amazing to be plugged into a resource like this,” adds Katie's mom, Karen. “You are thrown into a middle of hurricane when you receive a cancer diagnosis. But with Camp Sunshine, you have a whole community to embrace you and help guide you.”

Since Katie had been going to summer camp since she was five, it was not hard to let her go. Still, Karen worried. “Every day I searched the website for photos of her,” she says. “Finally, on Wednesday I saw a picture of her dancing, and she had the biggest smile on her face. It brought tears to my eyes.”

After Katie attended summer camp, the Rutherfords attended



**Isadri Hernandez-Sanchez**



**Katie Rutherford**



## DEAR CAMP SUNSHINE FRIENDS,

I first met Kati Gardner at a local bookstore, where we were both waiting to meet Erma Bombeck for a book signing. Kati, just 8 years old at the time, had a bald head and was walking on crutches. I had a feeling she and I would cross paths at Camp Sunshine.

### OUR MISSION

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

### OUR VISION

The lives of children with cancer will be restored and strengthened by the embrace of our Camp Sunshine community.

And we did, the next year. Kati, who lost her leg to Ewing's sarcoma, first came to camp in 1991, and except for a few years off to have children, she has returned almost every year since then as a counselor.

Kati has written a young adult novel about a girl who also loses her leg to cancer, called "Brave Enough." It's her first novel, and its core message is one that resonates – courage.

Fighting cancer, of course, takes monumental courage.

To a lesser extent, so does coming to Camp Sunshine. Our lead story shows the initial apprehension that young campers and their parents often have about participating in a different kind of camp. But their leap across this uncertainty pays off, as you'll see in the experiences of recent campers Isadri Hernandez-Sanchez and Katie Rutherford. The impact of Camp Sunshine is felt for a long time.

Speaking of longevity – this issue profiles Kathryn Graves, an enduring supporter whose somewhat happenstance visit to Camp Sunshine led to years of volunteering and a tour of duty on our board of directors. Kathryn personifies what it means to stand by a good cause, as she has generously given talent and time to make us better.

In this issue, we salute another supporter, the Young Professionals Committee of Georgia. Through their annual golf tournament, the organization has donated over \$20,000 to Camp Sunshine.

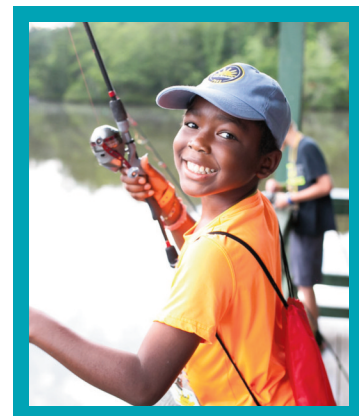
Winston Churchill once said, "Fear is a reaction, courage is a decision." During the two weeks of camp this summer, we saw so much courage, up close and first hand. The light of this bravery never dims – indeed, it inspires all of us throughout the year.

For that, I am eternally grateful.

– Sally Hale, *Executive Director*

## Become a Part of the Circle of Sunshine

**Members of Camp Sunshine's legacy giving club – The Circle of Sunshine – have committed to gifts beyond their lifetimes and are ensuring the future of Camp Sunshine for many years to come.** Planned gifts are any major gift made as part of a financial or estate plan, and are among the easiest ways to give back to Camp Sunshine. You can donate via a trust, life insurance policy, IRA, appreciated property, or most commonly, a bequest. All gifts to Camp Sunshine are tax deductible as allowed by law. To learn more about the many mutual and lasting benefits of planned giving or to notify us of a planned gift, please contact Sally Hale, Executive Director, at 404-325-7979 or [sally@mycampsunshine.com](mailto:sally@mycampsunshine.com). ✨



## THEN &amp; NOW

## Kati's Story



*"Camp Sunshine is a Frosty on a summer night; it's sun, glitter and heat. It's a dance where everyone gets to dance. It's all the good in the world."*

That's how Kati Gardner – former camper and now counselor – describes Camp Sunshine. The camp has been a special part of her life for the better part of the last 30 years.

Diagnosed at eight years old with Ewing's sarcoma – a rare form of bone cancer – Kati had her leg amputated as part of her treatment. She came to camp for the first time in 1990, when she was nine. From camper to CIT to counselor, camp has been a staple of Kati's summers. She only took a few years off to have children.

"Camp was the one place I didn't have to explain myself," says Kati, who does not wear a prosthetic, yet was able to dance and perform in the talent shows throughout her years at camp. "It was a week of normalcy."

Two summers ago, she was walking along a path at Camp Twin Lakes with one of the girls in her cabin who had also had her leg amputated. "She told me 'It's nice to be with another amputee so I can walk slowly with someone,'" Kati remembers. "And I thought to myself, 'that's why I come to camp.'"

Kati has never let the fact that she has just one leg define her. She's acted in plays. She's volunteered as a cabin counselor to 13-15 year-old girls. She's taught middle school.

And more recently she's written a book.

"Camp Sunshine gave me life skills that have stuck with me," she says. "Not just confidence and optimism, but the knowledge that it was okay to grieve. I was never upset about having one leg, but camp showed me it was okay. You need access, not special treatment."



Kati graduated from Brenau University in Gainesville with a degree in performing arts. She has worked various jobs from a receptionist at a law firm to a middle school theatre teacher, and performed in several plays in between. After she married her husband and

became a mother, she opted to stay at home with daughters Eleanor and Kennedy.

She took a few summers off from camp after she had her girls, and found she really missed it. So she did the next best thing: she wrote about it. A summer camp for children with cancer serves as the backdrop of her first novel, "Brave Enough," due out in August. In it, Cason, a 17-year-old prima ballerina, is diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma and must have her leg amputated.

Kati says that is where the similarities between her and Cason end. "This was not my story," she says. "My story is boring."

She strived to keep the story accurate, using real medical terms. "I wanted it to be accurate and authentic and I wanted to respect my teenage readers," Kati says.

One thing she didn't want her book to be about was a character dying of childhood cancer. "Survival rates are much higher now," she says. "Kids are living with cancer. Those are the books I want to write."

Katie credits Camp Sunshine with molding her into the successful person she's become and views her volunteer work there as a way to give back. Still, she says she gets more out than what she gives.

"I am optimistic – sometimes to a fault – and camp nurtured that in me," she says. "Camp Sunshine refuels me still."★



**Sunshine That Never Fades,** continued from page 1

Family Camp, and Katie's younger brother and sister also went to Sibling Camp. "Both were great experiences and Family Camp gave us some good family time together," Karen says.

**THE HERNANDEZ-SANCHEZ FAMILY**

Isadri and her parents, Adriana and Jose Luis, discovered Camp Sunshine purely by accident.

Isadri was diagnosed in 2015 at the age of eight with retinoblastoma, a rare eye cancer, which resulted in Isadri having to have her eye removed. The Hernandezes, who are originally from Mexico but live in Atlanta, sought treatment for Isadri in Miami, and later, when the cancer returned, in New York.

It was suggested they look into a camp in Maine for children with retinoblastoma. Coincidentally its name was also Camp Sunshine. When researching it, Adriana found Camp Sunshine in Georgia – and discovered it was close to where they lived. So she went over to Camp Sunshine House on Clairmont Road and knocked on the door.

Since that day, they've been all-in.

For the Hernandezes, Camp Sunshine represented love, support and family, one they didn't have close by, since all their relatives are in Mexico. They attended Bingo night at Camp Sunshine House, and Isadri went on the overnight visit to Zoo Atlanta. They also participated in Family Camp.

"That was amazing," Adriana says. "We laughed, we relaxed. We didn't know how much we needed it until we were there. It changed our life, meeting other families who were going through what we were."

Despite going to all of these activities, Adriana and Jose Luis were still hesitant to sent Isadri to camp by herself. "There was a part of me that really wanted her to go,"

Adriana says, "but she is our only child, and when your child is going through cancer you want to protect her and be with her the whole time."

Isadri shared those reservations. "I was nervous," she admits. "I didn't know anyone, and I was afraid I wouldn't make any friends."

But Isadri acclimated right away, making many new friends instantly. She went horseback riding for the first time and enjoyed making jewelry.

Adriana and Jose Luis saw a big change in Isadri when she returned.

"Before camp, she was hesitant to go anywhere by herself," Jose Luis says. "She was afraid of the dark. But when she came back, she was more confident, independent and happier." She even showed off her horseback riding skills for her cousins when the family returned to Mexico for a visit.

"I like that I made friends and can be with people who know what I'm going through, and we can go through it together," Isadri says.

Both Isadri and Katie happily returned to camp this year. For Katie it was a chance to give back to what she received last year.

"There were two girls new to camp this year in my cabin," she says. "I watched them grow like I did, encouraged them like people had encouraged me, and they had a blast just like I did." ✨



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## Kathryn Graves: Making Camp Sunshine a Priority

When Kathryn Graves gets a new calendar, the first thing she does is mark down the week of Camp Sunshine's Teen Week.

Since 1985, those seven days have taken priority over everything else in her life. In fact, she didn't even skip it the year she got married – two weeks after camp.

"The spirit of Camp Sunshine campers and counselors keep me coming back," says Kathryn, who is Associate Dean for Development and External Relations at Emory's Rollins School of Public Health. "It's the best week of the year."

Kathryn learned about Camp Sunshine almost by accident. She was working in fundraising for Emory University's School of Medicine, helping to raise funds for the Ronald McDonald Oncology Clinic and Research Building. The volunteer chair of the campaign was Hamilton Jordan, whose wife Dorothy founded Camp Sunshine.

"I needed to meet with him, and someone suggested I go up to Camp Sunshine, where he was volunteering for the week," she remembers. "I totally fell in love with the whole concept. I was so moved that day to see the kids."



*Kathryn (L) with Amy Moosbrugger*

The next year, she returned as a volunteer, working as a cabin counselor for 13-14 year old girls. And she kept coming back, serving as a cabin counselor for 10 years before becoming a Unit Head. More recently she has been providing camp support during Teen Week, giving tours and helping out wherever needed. For 10 years her husband Jud volunteered as well, also serving as a cabin counselor and on the fishing dock.

Though her responsibilities have changed throughout the years, her focus on the campers

has not. "Our goal is to give every camper a week where they feel normal, and where we try to make every activity possible, no matter what challenges they face," she says. "The confidence they gain as well as the meaningful friendships they form are just amazing to see."

Kathryn says some of her favorite memories are from the "Prom" held each year, where the King and Queen are voted on not because of their looks or how popular they are, but because of the impact they have on the other campers. It is symbolic of how she feels about camp.

"Camp Sunshine is a magical place filled with love and hope," she says. "You see what really matters."

Aside from giving a week of her time each summer, Kathryn has been a member of Camp Sunshine's Board of Directors for the past 20 years, sharing her considerable expertise on fundraising.

"I am so grateful for my time at Camp Sunshine," she says. "It's an amazing privilege to be a part of the Camp Sunshine family. Every year I thank them for allowing me to do this."★

## Volunteers Make Keencheefoonee Road Race Another Huge Success

Each Tuesday during the two weeks of summer camp, enthusiastic Camp Sunshine volunteers get up early to either run a 5K or walk a 2K race – while raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for Camp Sunshine.

This is the Keencheefoonee Road Race, Camp Sunshine's largest annual fundraising event planned and run by volunteer counselors who raise money in the months prior to camp to support Camp Sunshine's year round programs for children with cancer and their families.

Over the past 18 years, our volunteer staff has raised over \$3 million by asking friends, families and corporate sponsors to support Camp Sunshine. This year we had 148 volunteers participating in the race, including 10 teams, 21 Cabin Champs and four Virtual Runners.

Volunteers brought in contributions from over 1,700 donors, surpassing their goal of \$320,000 and making the Keencheefoonee Road Race

another great success! Special thanks to all of our sponsors, particularly R.N.C. Industries who matched a team total with \$50,000.★





# CAMP SUNSHINE POSTCARDS

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

## SEPTEMBER 2018

### SAVE THESE DATES

**January 2019**

Winter Dance and Lock In

**January 18-20, 2019**

Sibling Camp Weekend

**March 1-3, 2019**

Teen Retreat Weekend

**March 24, 2019**

Signature Event at the Alliance Theatre

*The Wizard of Oz*

**March 29-31, 2019**

Family Camp Weekend

**April 5-7, 2019**

Family Camp Weekend

### SPA NIGHT At Camp Sunshine House

September 10 and November 12

6:00 PM-8:00 PM

Call to RSVP

Come have dinner and enjoy a massage or a facial.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						<b>1</b> Childhood Cancer Awareness Day with the Braves at SunTrust Park
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Labor Day Holiday (Office Closed)	<b>4</b> Sunshine 2U at Aflac Cancer Center/Egleston	<b>5</b> Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Scottish Rite Sunshine 2U in Savannah	<b>6</b> Remember the Sunshine Family Night	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Preschool Apple Orchard Program
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Spa Night	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Wild Adventures for South Georgia Families
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>						

## OCTOBER 2018

### WHAT'S NEXT? Planning for College

#### PROGRAM FOR JUNIORS AND SENIORS IN HIGH SCHOOL

September TBD

6:00 PM-7:30 PM

Camp Sunshine House

**Featured Speaker:** Dave Graves, Senior Associate Director of Admissions, Operations & Evaluation, University of Georgia

#### Topics to Include:

- Navigating Admission Process
- Getting into the College of Your Choice
- Scholarships for Survivors

RSVP required. Call (404) 325-7979

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Sunshine 2U at Aflac Cancer Center/Egleston	<b>3</b> Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Scottish Rite Sunshine 2U in Savannah	<b>4</b> Remember the Sunshine Family Night	<b>5</b> Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes-Rutledge	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> →	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes-Rutledge	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> →	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Remembering the Sunshine Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes-Rutledge	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> → Fall Festival	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			



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

## NOVEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 Remember the Sunshine Family Night	2	3
4 Seasonal Sunshine Family Night Dinner	5	6 Sunshine 2U at Aflac Cancer Center/Egleston	7 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Scottish Rite Sunshine 2U in Savannah	8	9	10
11	12 Spa Night	13	14	15	16 Fall Teen Retreat at Camp Twin Lakes-Rutledge	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Holiday (Office Closed)	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### SEPTEMBER IS CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

#GoGold all month long to create awareness and opportunities to raise donations for Camp Sunshine.

#### CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS DAY AT THE BRAVES

##### Saturday, September 1

Camp Sunshine families are invited to the Atlanta Braves vs the Pittsburgh Pirates game on Saturday, September 1 at 7:10 PM. Registration details to follow on our website.

#### RACETRAC GIVES BACK PROGRAM FOR CAMP SUNSHINE

Visit any RaceTrac location in Georgia during September to support Camp Sunshine. See our website for details on ways to help.

#### NARI - ATLANTA TOUR OF REMODELED HOMES

##### Saturday, September 15

The 9th Annual NARI Atlanta Tour of Remodeled Homes on Saturday, September 15 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Proceeds from the sale of tickets will benefit Camp Sunshine. Tickets can be purchased at [www.atlantaremodelingtour.com](http://www.atlantaremodelingtour.com).

### REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

We now provide programming 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.



Connect with Camp Sunshine online to stay up to date on the latest news and happenings! Join us at [www.facebook.com/campsunshine](http://www.facebook.com/campsunshine), [twitter.com/mycampsunshine](https://twitter.com/mycampsunshine), [Pinterest.com/mycampsunshine](https://www.pinterest.com/mycampsunshine) and [Instagram.com/mycampsunshine](https://www.instagram.com/mycampsunshine)

## DECEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4 Sunshine 2U at Aflac Cancer Center/Egleston	5 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Scottish Rite Sunshine 2U in Savannah	6 Remember the Sunshine Family Night	7	8
9 Annual Camp Sunshine Holiday Party	10	11	12	13 Annual Young Adult Holiday Party	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Office Closed	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					





**CAMP SUNSHINE®**

A ray of hope for children with cancer.™

1850 Clairmont Rd. ✱ Decatur, GA 30033  
404-325-7979 ✱ [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com)

### Is Your Info Up to Date?

Email [Chanteasea@mycampsunshine.com](mailto:Chanteasea@mycampsunshine.com)  
Or call 404-325-7979, ext. 121  
Or go to [www.mycampsunshine.com](http://www.mycampsunshine.com)

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## CAMP SUNSHINE POSTCARDS

### COMMUNITY PARTNER

## Insurance Group Turns Golfing into Cash for Camp Sunshine

On a sunny Tuesday in May, 130 golfers hit the fairways at the Legacy on Lanier Golf Club to take part in the Young Professionals Committee's (YPC) annual golf tournament. For the last four years, YPC – an organization of young insurance agency professionals – has donated the funds raised from its golf tournament to Camp Sunshine.

"Camp Sunshine holds a special place in all of our hearts as cancer has taken so much away from our collective friends and family," says Heather Orvis, Assistant Vice President, Marketing and Service, at Apex Insurance Agency, Inc., and President of YPC. "We have all witnessed it first hand in adults and children. As an organization, we are honored that we can support something that gives these children and their families a break from all the hardships that this battle brings."

YPC has been holding the tournament since 2010, but in 2014, decided to make it more philanthropic. The Board of Directors discussed ways that the organization could give back to the community.

"After we talked it over for a bit and



discussed multiple charities, we decided that Camp Sunshine was a great local charity that helped children and their families and that was near and dear to our hearts," Heather says.

The organization has donated approximately \$20,000 to Camp Sunshine over the last four years. One feature of the tournament is the "Camp Sunshine Charity Hole" where players can pay \$20 to move up a tee box for their shot. Heather says this has been a great success and adds even more to the proceeds going to Camp Sunshine.

During Teen Week this year, Heather and two of her colleagues were able to tour Camp Twin Lakes and see firsthand how campers benefit from donations from organizations such as YPC.

"What a difference this camp makes in these children's lives," Heather says. "We were so glad to be able to witness and hear all about it. Camp Sunshine unselfishly continues to provide patients and families the support they deserve while bearing a tremendous burden. We are happy to be a part of it." ✱