

Then and Now Mark McManus calls Camp Sunshine the place that shaped him. As a volunteer counselor, he tries to create similar experiences for campers. **Page 3**

The Dawgs are in the House Learn about the long partnership Camp Sunshine has had with the Georgia Bulldogs football team. **Page 5**

Family Affair Volunteer Leigh McManus met her future husband at Camp Twin Lakes. Now she and Mark are regular volunteers. **Page 8**

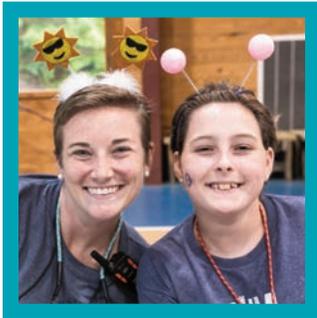
CAMP SUNSHINE



POSTCARDS

‘We See Nothing but Joy’

Medical volunteers marvel at the transformational impact of Camp Sunshine



“It’s so great to see kids have a chance to be part of a normal environment. I look forward to seeing that in the kids. It’s the polar opposite of the hospital setting. In the hospital we see a lot of sorrow and pain. At camp we see nothing but joy.”

– Rebecca McConnell
social worker at Aflac/Egleston



He was a quiet boy, more so than most kids his age. He didn’t interact much with others while receiving treatment at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. His mom answered most questions for him.

The medical team in charge of his care thought time away at camp might be good for him. To make it work, they rescheduled some of his treatment sessions.

“The next thing I hear, this boy is wearing a sequined shirt and is out on the dance floor having a great time,” says Dr. Melinda Pauly, Camp Sunshine’s medical director. “He got involved in all the activities. After that one week, we noticed he was so much more engaged.”

Dr. Pauly, who knew the boy from her role as a pediatric hematologist/oncologist at the Aflac Center, was amazed at the transformation. But as others who serve the camp in a medical capacity can attest, it’s not unusual. Camp Sunshine, they discover, is a place where kids with cancer can have a normal experience. Some come to camp without hair. Some without limbs.

And many arrive with hesitation. Older kids may suspect a camp for kids with cancer will be “lame.” Younger ones sometimes cry when their parents drop them off.



A week goes by, and these campers are different kids. They challenged themselves and tried things they never imagined. They made new friends who understand what they are going through. And when it’s time to go home, many cry all over again – they don’t want to leave.

On the front lines of this transformation is the medical staff – nurses, doctors and social workers from the Aflac Center at both Egleston and Scottish Rite

campuses, as well as Memorial Health in Savannah – who volunteer during the weeks of summer camp. They’ve seen these children as patients in the hospital – sometimes at their worst.

“But at camp, we see them be normal kids,” says Rebecca McConnell, a social worker at Aflac/

Egleston, who volunteers during Teen Week. “They might be nervous at first, but soon they are climbing over rock walls, attending a prom and doing all the things they thought they couldn’t do. They’re so supportive of each other, and Camp Sunshine helps them see the world differently.”

Kristin Frazier, a lead social worker who also works at Aflac/Egleston, remembers a girl last year who was experiencing a lot of complications with treatment.

Continued on Page 4



DEAR CAMP SUNSHINE FRIENDS,

As a camp nurse at the first Camp Sunshine in 1983, I quickly realized the magic of summer camp for kids with cancer and witnessed transformations – of our campers and volunteers. It brought a whole new world to the children and teens and forever changed my view as a pediatric oncology nurse.

Thirty-six years later, camp is still as magical and transformative. As reported in the Postcards cover story, medical professionals from our partners at Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta travel to camp each summer. For both weeks, they give their time and skill to be there for kids

who are undergoing treatment but still want to enjoy camp.

Having on-site treatment is good for campers, of course. It's also good for the medical staff to see these children outside of the hospital. And it's a huge benefit to parents, who gain peace of mind knowing that care is available.

Leigh McManus is one of the nurses who has volunteered in the med lodge and as a cabin counselor. Leigh's volunteerism at Camp Sunshine began in 2012, and she was back this summer – even though she was a month away from delivering her second child!

You can read about Leigh in our Volunteer Spotlight, and on page 3, read about her husband, Mark. Diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma at the age of 14, Mark came to Camp Sunshine as a camper in 2001. Eight years later he returned, this time as a volunteer, and he's been a perennial participant since.

Finally, if you tune in to Georgia Bulldog football this fall, you'll be watching a team that's been a steadfast supporter of our camp and kids. Over the summer, UGA players boarded buses and spent a few hours at both the teen and junior camps, a tradition that goes back to the days when Vince Dooley coached the Dawgs.

Coach Kirby Smart again joined his players for one of those days. His connection to Camp Sunshine is especially personal: his brother Karl was once a camper.

As we celebrate another successful summer... we celebrate all of you who help make it happen.

– Sally Hale, Executive Director

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.

Loyal, Constant, and Steadfast...

That's the definition you will find when you look up "faithful" in the dictionary. Here at Camp Sunshine, those words also define our incredible community of donors. And we recognize our special group of donors who make monthly donations to support the mission of Camp Sunshine as "Faithful Friends."

Families and campers are engaged with Camp Sunshine all year long. From Summer Camp, to fall Teen Retreat, Spring Family Camp and Seasonal Sunshine – our year-round programs are fueled by your generosity. When you sign up to be a Faithful Friend with your monthly donation, you are helping us keep the Sunshine going all year long.

Won't you consider becoming a Faithful Friend?

- Visit our online donation page at www.mycampsunshine.com to set up a recurring gift by credit card
- Donate through your company's employee giving program
- Write a monthly check to Camp Sunshine when you pay monthly bills

To learn more about the different ways to give to Camp Sunshine, please call Alicia Brady at 404-325-7979 or visit our website at www.mycampsunshine.com. Thank you! ✨



THEN & NOW

Mark's Story



“I am trying to deliver an environment where kids can develop friendships and share experiences that last a lifetime. That’s what camp is all about.”

– Mark McManus, former camper and volunteer

Since he has been a part of Camp Sunshine as both a camper and counselor since 2001, Mark McManus has a lot of memories of what he calls “the place that shaped him.” Yet there is one memory that stands out.

It was last summer, in 2018, when a 13-year-old boy in his cabin was the last to try climbing the 30-foot “Pamper Pole” that sits in the middle of camp. Though the boy was hesitant, Mark talked him into trying it. He got one-third of the way up, and said he couldn’t do it. Mark encouraged him from the ground. He ventured up a little further, and once again, didn’t think he could continue. Mark encouraged him to keep going. Alongside Mark, a crowd had gathered and was also cheering him on.

“He made it!” reports Mark. “He pushed himself to go way beyond what he ever thought he could do and he was so proud of what he accomplished. That memory will stay with me for a long time.”

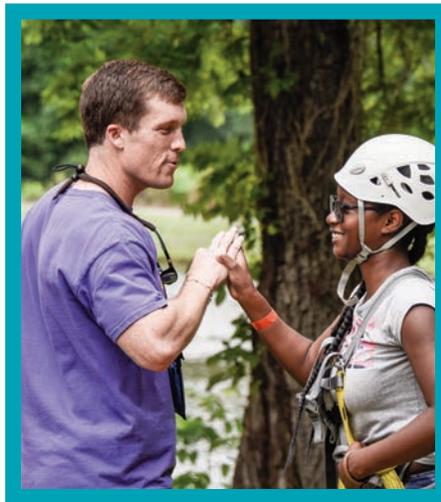
Mark calls moments like those “the joy of Camp Sunshine” – where kids achieve things they never thought they could, they can be themselves and they form lifelong friendships.

Mark experienced that firsthand when he came to camp in the summer of 2001. He was 15, he’d just come off five months of treatment for Hodgkin’s Lymphoma, and he was nervous.

“I had the normal apprehension that comes

with going to a new place and not knowing anyone,” he says. “But it exceeded all of my expectations. It totally blew me away. It was such a formative time anyway – it helped shape me and gave me a support system.”

He can talk to you about all the fun activities he did at camp throughout the years, but when it comes down to it, he says the most important thing he got out of his four years of camp were lifelong friendships.



“There was an immediate bond, a camaraderie and acceptance,” he says. “There were no cliques – I could just be myself.”

His favorite memory of being a camper is participating in the Outdoor Challenge Program where Camp Sunshine campers are selected to

go to the Colorado Outward Bound School. “I went with my best friends from camp,” he says. “It was a great time to bond together. I was challenged and grew so much from that experience.”

After going to camp all through high school, Mark returned in 2009 – a year after he graduated from college – as a volunteer. Since then he has been a cabin counselor to 13-15 year old boys.

“I was looking at what was next and how I could stay involved,” he says. “Other counselors – many of whom had a big impact on me – encouraged me to volunteer.”

He says as a counselor, he is committed to creating the same joy for the campers as he had. “I am trying to deliver an environment where kids can develop friendships and share experiences that last a lifetime,” he says. “That’s what camp is all about.”

Mark, who works as a chief financial officer in a private equity firm, has only missed two summers – the first when he was in graduate school, and the second when his son was born in 2017. He also volunteers with his wife, Leigh, a nurse (see Volunteer Profile on page 8).

“It feels like the right thing to do,” Mark says. “There is a big piece of me that was influenced by camp – I got so much out of it. I want to give a piece of it back.” ✨



'We See Nothing but Joy,' continued from page 1

The girl had a bright personality, but the difficult treatment was taking its toll. She could only attend camp for two days.

Yet once there, she jumped in right away. The girl made friends with other girls in her cabin and even performed in the talent show.

"I think about how huge those two days were for her," says Kristin, who has volunteered during Junior Week for the past eight years. "It was just what she needed to go back and keep fighting. And that girl was so excited to come back this year and she will be able to do so much more."

Having a medical staff at camp not only makes it possible for kids to experience camp – it also helps put parents' minds at ease. They know their children will continue to be watched by professionals and can even receive treatment if necessary. And more than a few parents have been surprised by the changes they see in their children.

"Some have said to me, 'Thank you for giving me back my child and the things the cancer had taken away,' such as independence and confidence," says Kristin.

The transformation has an impact on the medical volunteers as well.

"It's nice for physicians to see kids outside of the hospital environment," says Dr. Pauly. "We find out that they're good at tennis, or we work in the garden with them and learn they want to be a chef. Most of our interactions with them are about their health. At camp we get to see another side of the kids."

"It's so great to see kids have a chance to be part of a normal environment," adds Rebecca. "I look forward to seeing that in the kids. It's the polar opposite of the hospital setting. In the hospital we see a lot of sorrow and pain. At camp we see nothing but joy."*



Keencheefoonee Road Race: Volunteers Surpass Fundraising Goal

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 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 19 years, our volunteer staff has raised well over \$3 million by asking friends, families and corporate sponsors to support Camp Sunshine. This year we had 146 volunteers participating in the race with 10

teams including a new alumni team of former campers from near and far. The goal was an ambitious \$350,000. Volunteers blew by that

goal – bringing in \$372,000 so far from almost 1,800 donors – making the Keencheefoonee Road Race another great success!*



COMMUNITY PARTNER

Georgia Bulldogs Spread Sunshine During Camp Weeks



Each year during both Teen Week and Junior Week, a busload of Georgia Bulldogs football players descends upon Camp Sunshine to spend a few hours with the campers, doing activities, playing games and signing autographs.

"It's really a blast," says Georgia football senior captain J.R. Reed, who comes to camp every year. "It puts a smile on my face to know I'm inspiring these kids, and they inspire me."

This partnership between Camp Sunshine and the Georgia Bulldogs dates back to the early days of camp when Vince Dooley, former head football coach and athletic director at the University of Georgia, served on the Camp Sunshine Board of Directors as a Trustee. He started the tradition of the Bulldogs visiting the camp and it has become a highlight of summer camp week. The football players do this voluntarily.

"It's an awesome opportunity to affect these kids and hopefully put a smile on their face," says quarterback Jake Fromm. "You put [the experience] in your memory bank. Stuff like this will keep you going on your tough days."

The players are accompanied by some of the coaches, including UGA head coach Kirby Smart, who has a personal connection to Camp

Sunshine: his brother, Karl, was a camper and a volunteer.

"This place has meant a lot to my family and we can't wait to continue the tradition of coming back here every year," says Coach Smart, who attended family camp when he was younger. "Our players really enjoy coming to Camp Sunshine. It's a great event. The campers come from hometowns all over the state, just like our players, so they enjoy getting to

interact with each other. They know our players from seeing them on TV and then seeing them here two, three, four years in a row, so this is special."

Even though Kirby Smart is a successful football coach, at camp he lets his brother shine. "Karl was a warrior, he battled, and he is an inspiration to so many of these kids," he says. "Anytime I come here, I'm Karl's little brother... and that's just fine with me."★





CAMP SUNSHINE POSTCARDS

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

SAVE THE DATE

March 22, 2020
Signature Event at the Alliance Theatre
Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed: The Rock Experience

SPA NIGHT At Camp Sunshine House

September 16 and November 11
 6:00 PM-8:00 PM
 Call to RSVP 404-325-7979 or email
 ann@mycampsunshine.com
 Come have dinner and enjoy a massage
 or a facial.

WHAT'S NEXT? Planning for College

PROGRAM FOR JUNIORS AND SENIORS IN HIGH SCHOOL

September TBD
 6:00 PM-8:00 PM
 Camp Sunshine House

Featured Speaker: David Graves,
 Senior Associate Director of Admissions
 Operations and Evaluations, 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

Educational Workshop For Healthcare Professionals

**Courageous Conversations with Adolescents
and Young Adults, Their Families**

September 13, 2019
 8:00 AM-12:00 Noon
 Sally J Hale Center

Featured speaker: Lori Wiener, PhD, DCSW



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

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 1 9

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

O C T O B E R 2 0 1 9

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



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

N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 9

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

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 9

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

SPECIAL EVENTS

SEPTEMBER IS CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS DAY AT THE BRAVES

Saturday, September 7, 2019

Camp Sunshine families are invited to the Atlanta Braves vs Washington Nationals game on Saturday night, September 7, 2019 at 7:20 PM. Registration details to follow on our website - mycampsunshine.com.

RACETRAC GIVES BACK PROGRAM FOR CAMP SUNSHINE

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

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

Saturday, September 7

Wild Adventures for South Georgia Families

Sunday, September 29

NE Georgia Regional Program at Uncle Shuck's Corn Maze

Sunday, September 29

Poppell Farms Pumpkin patch in Odum, GA for Savannah families

Sunday, November 3

Family Photo Sessions for Savannah Families

Sunday, November 24

Gingerbread House Decorating at The Alida Hotel in Savannah

Sunday, November 24

NW Georgia (Rome) Enchanted Garden of Lights Lookout Mountain

Thursday, December 5

Columbus and LaGrange Area Callaway Garden, Fantasy in Lights



CAMP SUNSHINE®

A ray of hope for children with cancer.™

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

Is Your Info Up to Date?

Email Chanteasea@mycampsunshine.com
Or call 404-325-7979, ext. 121
Or go to 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



CAMP SUNSHINE POSTCARDS

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Leigh McManus: Serving in a Special Place

Leigh McManus believes she owes a lot to Camp Twin Lakes and Camp Sunshine. It's where she met her husband. It's where she decided to

become a nurse. And it's the place where she has a whole lot of fun.

Leigh visited Camp Twin Lakes for the weekend in 2006 and fell in love with it. That summer she became a member of the summer staff, helping out as various camps – including Camp Sunshine – came through. She also met a fellow counselor named Mark. They became friends at the camp and the friendship continued while they were both students at the University of Georgia. Little did

she know then that he would one day become her husband.

Like many college students, Leigh was unsure of what she wanted to do with her life. She did know it was something with children, but she wasn't sure in what capacity. While at Camp Twin Lakes the summer between her sophomore and junior years, suddenly things became crystal clear.

"I saw the nurses relating with the kids and it just hit me that that's what I wanted to do," she remembers. After finishing at UGA, she earned her nursing degree from the Medical College of Georgia. Thanks to her contacts with nurses at the camp, she was able to shadow many of them and decided she wanted to work with kids with cancer. She took a job at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's Egleston campus in February 2011.

Leigh married Mark McManus that same year and the two have been mainstays during teen week for all but two summers, including 2017 when their son was born. She has worked as both a nurse in the med lodge as well as a cabin counselor.

"Camp Sunshine has enriched my life as a nursing professional," she says. "It reminds me that these are kids outside of their diagnosis. I get to see them in another way – coming out of their shells and having fun."

This year she came to camp – along with Mark – eight months pregnant with their second child, but she says she wouldn't miss it.

"Camp Sunshine is a place that is off the charts in terms of everything you can get from a summer camp," Leigh says. "We are really grateful that we get to be a part of it. It has blessed us immeasurably. Also, knowing what it did for Mark as a former camper – it's the most incredible way to serve. It feels like this is where I'm called to be. I can't *not* do it."*

