Images of Summer
by Karen Mcnelly, Aust. Camp Dir.

Sun-touched noses, an art studio bursting with creativity, marshmallows hovering above an open camp fire, shouts of courage from atop the 30 foot high ropes-course, laughter bubbling up from the swimming pool, smiles everywhere and friendships rooted in a common bond. Summer 1997 was filled to the brim with extraordinary experiences and the greatest number of participants Camp Mak-A-Dream has ever served.

Camp Mak-A-Dream hosted 191 participants from across the United States and Canada. Of the five sessions, two were for children ages 6-16 with cancer, two were for young adults ages 17-23 with cancer and one session welcomed our campers' siblings ages 6-16. Including the 19 participants from our first annual Winter Young Adult Conference, Camp Mak-A-Dream served 210 children and young adults in 1997. This is an increase of 80 participants over 1996.

There were many fun activities throughout the summer, including horseback riding, camp-outs, archery, swimming, drum circles, challenge high ropes-course and climbing wall, river rafting, fly fishing and performances by Native American dancers. A welcome addition to the list of activities was our weekly trip to the historical town of Philipsburg. Upon arriving, each participant crossed the bridge of dreams, bringing with them their own unique set of needs and experiences. However, within the week it became evident that the common bond they share with each other is one which must be lived to be understood. As one of our sibling participants explained, "To be with people who have shared your feelings makes you feel less alone." One 10-year-old girl found Camp Mak-A-Dream to be a place where she could set her cancer aside and reconnect with the fun of being a child. I didn't even write a letter home because I was having so much fun. The pool I love more than anything."

The growing interest in our Young Adult Conference is encouraging as we recognize this is an age group which has lacked sufficient and appropriate support in the past. "To me, Camp Mak-A-Dream has given me the support that I have always needed," said one participant. "One of the hardest parts for me is the transformation from being a teenager growing into an adult. That is why the YAC program has helped me so much." As one reflects on 1997 it is easy to be filled with the warm fuzzy feeling which has become commonplace at Camp Mak-A-Dream. We anticipate that 1998 will bring even more smiles and good times. This year began with 30 participants at our second annual Winter Young Adult Conference. Soon our special guests will arrive at camp once again, bringing with them the warmth and strength which makes Camp Mak-A-Dream more than just a pretty place in Montana.

Blood products and cancer therapy
by Stuart Kaplan, M.D.

Many children battling cancer have to endure blood transfusions during their therapy. Although many people think that the need for blood is due to the cancer, it is actually the cancer therapy that is to blame. The primary abnormality in cancer is a cell that divides abnormally. Although almost any cell in the human body divides, there is a very tight control on the way it divides, and each kind of cell divides at a different rate. Cancerous cells divide uncontrollably and chaotically. A logical strategy in cancer therapy, therefore, is to destroy cells while they divide. This is the principle in chemotherapy which targets cells while they are dividing; cells that divide quickly are killed, while cells that divide more slowly are spared. The problem with this scenario is that chemotherapy is not able to tell which cells are cancerous and which cells are not.

The body has several normal kinds of cells that divide quickly. These include hair cells (why hair often falls out with chemotherapy), cells in the stomach and GI tract (why mouth sores and nausea often occur), and blood cells. Red blood cells are required to carry oxygen throughout the body. When red blood cell counts are low, patients often feel tired and lack energy. Platelets are the clotting factors in blood, and when platelet counts are low, patients often bruise easily and have bleeding problems such as nosebleeds. Both platelets and red blood cells can be replaced by transfusions, and they work almost as well in the recipient as they work in the donor.

White blood cells are the infection fighters in the body. When white blood counts are low, patients are much more likely to acquire serious infections than when counts are normal. White blood cells cannot be transfused for two reasons. First, they divide so quickly that they do not survive long enough to be removed from the donor, stored, given to the recipient, and used. Second, white blood cells do not function nearly as well in a recipient as they do in the donor. Medications have recently been developed, however, that help the body produce new white cells more quickly, and to promote rapid maturation of white cells, to minimize the amount of time that patients have low white blood cell counts.

The future holds promise for fewer and fewer blood transfusions to cancer patients. Products have already been developed to help platelets mature more rapidly, and these are currently being tried. There has been a product to promote red blood cell maturation for quite awhile, but at this point, it takes a bit too long to be useful. Work is still being done in this field. Finally, there is research underway looking for ways to target cancer cells specifically, thus avoiding completely many of the side effects of cancer chemotherapy.
The President's Message

When I was young, spring signaled the excitement of the coming season's activities. For me, it was the beginning of life in various forms. I still look forward to spring and summer, but I also realize that there is nothing more important than this day, no matter what time of year it is. At Camp Mak-A-Dream, the office is buzzing with activity every day in preparation for rental activities, retreats, conferences and summer camp programs for children.

As you read through this newsletter, you will see last year's successes, as well as much that is yet to come. In addition to our present experienced staff, Dr. Stuart Kaplan (formerly a volunteer counselor and doctor at camp the last two summers) comes to us from St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Tennessee as our Co-Camp Director and Camp Physician. We are delighted to have Stu on board.

Camp Mak-A-Dream has written some very important chapters about cancer. At camp, kids get a second chance at the childhood they thought they had lost. Each camp creates a safe, supportive environment where young people and adults can talk, listen, share and learn. Our hope is that by the time they leave they'll be able to face their challenges, armed with new-found knowledge and supported by new-found friends.

Continued success and growth is vital to the future of Camp Mak-A-Dream. As we celebrate our fourth season, we invite you to participate and make this day more important than any other.

Paulette Fischer - President, Board of Directors
Children's Oncology Camp Foundation

Executive Director's Report

In this past year, two things about Camp Mak-A-Dream stand out. For me, the first is the strength and wisdom of the children and young adults who attend the sessions. When at camp, it does not take long to see how special these kids are and what they have to contribute which makes Camp Mak-A-Dream a success.

The second is the kindness of all the people and companies that donate time, money and needed items. It is truly amazing how many people want to be involved in camp, and without them Camp Mak-A-Dream would not have survived. Thank you, everyone.

I have no doubt that the upcoming season will be another great success, due not only to both things I mentioned, but also to the incredible staff that works tirelessly so that everyone involved with camp, one way or the other, can be assured that it will be a success. Thank you to all.

Gregg Doerfler - Executive Director

In memory of the children and young adults who enriched our lives.

Please join with us in honoring the lives of eight of our campers. We extend to their families our deepest sympathy and also appreciation for sharing them with us. While their lives were shortened due to cancer, they will continue to enrich our lives.

The following children and young adults have passed away since the publication of our Spring 1997 Dreamcatcher.

- Joel Ankerberg
  Michigan
  Age 14
- Jeff Benner
  Pennsylvania
  Age 11
- John Eismann
  Pennsylvania
  Age 11
- Kate Heinrich
  Michigan
  Age 14
- Brittany Keller
  Montana
  Age 11
- Kimberly Maxine
  Michigan
  Age 11
- Robin Maxxie
  Texas
  Age 17
- Michelle Sallards
  Texas
  Age 15
A message from our Founders

Many of us, in our lives, become somewhat cynical about the world, given we fight daily to earn a living and raise families. The world, at times, seems an insensitive place. Well, cynicism may have its place, but those who feel frustrated have not been exposed to Camp Mak-A-Dream and all that it implies.

We cannot even begin to describe the rewards we have experienced as a result of our association with the Camp. First, of course, is experiencing the joy of the children who have had the opportunity to attend the camp. We never tire of reading and re-reading their letters of gratitude. Second, is the relationships we have established with the professionals who make sure the Camp operates properly. We have the best in the business and are grateful for all their contributions. Third, we are thankful for the hundreds of volunteers- the Board of Directors, medical staff, counselors and many others who have given of themselves so unselfishly. To say we are grateful is an understatement. Finally, it has been so exciting to see the Camp grow from 45 campers in 1995, to last year when 210 attended the Camp. That bodes well for the future and we look forward to the years ahead with much anticipation.

Given our experiences, when friends and acquaintances complain about the few rewards in their lives, we simply smile and suggest that, in some manner, they might want to get involved with Camp Mak-A-Dream. We always guarantee that it will bring new meaning into their lives. It has to ours.

Harry & Syl&ia Grauader - Founders

Camps and participants...
Plot your path for the summer.
Call for an application today!

Believe it or not it's almost that time of year again. We have been so busy at the camp office getting everything ready for a terrific, fun-filled season. Again this year we will have five summer sessions to meet the needs of a variety of participants. Two sessions are for children between the ages of 6 and 16 who have or have had cancer. Two sessions will be devoted to our Young Adult Conference, an experience that is both educational and recreational for participants between the ages of 17 and 23 who have or have had cancer. Finally, our highly successful siblings' camp for brothers and sisters of cancer patients, will wrap up the summer season. See the schedule on pages one and six for specific dates.

For kids 6-16 who have or recently had cancer, there is a fun-filled, action-packed week of activities ahead. You can look forward to swimming, horseback riding, a camp out, making amazing works of art, and hanging out by the camp fire. The week will go by so fast, you'll wonder where the time went.

The Young Adult Conference (YAC) will have, as always, a good balance of educational opportunities, including keynote speakers and workshops, as well as recreational activities such as a raft trip, minor league baseball game, and the opportunity to perform in a historic opera house in Phillipsburg.

Siblings can look forward to a week of exciting activities. It is a chance to be around other kids who are growing up with a family member with cancer and to share experiences. The emphasis, though, is on a fun filled week when they are the center of attention.

Applications need to be completed and returned as soon as possible. Our medical committee is selecting this year's campers. We strive for a careful balance of children and young adults in various stages of cancer therapy, including some who have completed their therapy. Any application that arrives before the medical committee meets will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis. So call our office soon if you know someone who would benefit from a week at Camp Mak-A-Dream: (406) 549-5987.

Summer volunteers needed

Each summer Camp Mak-A-Dream utilizes over 100 volunteers for five different week-long sessions. We still have a limited number of positions available, so if you are interested in helping us out at camp, give us a call at our foundation office in Missoula. Space is very limited, so please contact us as soon as possible for an application. Volunteering at camp requires a nine day commitment and a multiple step application process. Please call (406) 549-5987 for more information.

1998 Wish List

We ask that any items on this list be provided in good condition & in working order and that you please call and tell us what you would like to donate. Our foundation office phone number is (406)549-5987.

Equipment:
- 35mm cameras
- TV / VCR one piece unit
- Overhead projector
- Remote control slide projector
- 15-passenger van
- IBM compatible (486 or newer) computer
- Copy machine in good condition
- Video camera (VHS)
- Old fashioned popcorn cart
- Foosball table
- 12' x 14' Log Structure

Sporting goods:
- Tennis racquets (in good condition)
- Spectator bleachers
- Snow shoes
- (3) CD boom-box style stereos
- Binoculars

Kitchen items:
- Food processor
- 5-qt. Kitchen Aid Mixer
- Kitchen Aid hand mixer
- 1-doz. bundt cake pans
- 1-doz. angel food cake pans
- 1-doz. metal bread loaf pans
- Assorted glass salt & pepper shakers
- White ceramic creamer/sugar sets

Decorative items:
- Dried floral table center pieces
- New candles: taper, pillar & votives
- Candle holders: glass or ceramic
- Assorted glass rose-bud vases
- Handmade table decorations (call office for details)

Costume accessories:
- Bandanna kerchiefs
- Cowboy hats
- Vintage clothing (cleaned), jewelry, hats, gloves, shoes

Facility & grounds items:
- Hand gardening tools
- Chainsaw in working order

Little things:
- Goody bag stuff: gum, LifeSavers, mini star erasers
- Individually wrapped candy; mini-Stickers, mini Butterfinger, Hershey Hugs & Kisses, Microwave popcorn

Medical items:
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Insect repellent
- Lip Balm
- Band Aids
- Alcohol wipes
- Use of portable pulse oximeter & IV pump

Stringed musical instruments:
- Guitar, banjo, mandolin, etc.

Cabin & housekeeping items:
- Large floor pillows (30" square, solid colors, washable)
- (100) standard size, fiber-filled pillows

* Donated items can be mailed or delivered to our foundation office at: 3700 S. Russell Street, Bldg. B, Suite 101 in Missoula, MT 59801.
Thank You!

...to our volunteers

Non-profit organizations count on volunteers to survive. Camp Mak-A-Dream is no exception. Without the hundreds of people who offer and volunteer of their time, energy and resources, this program would not be the success that it is today. To date, Camp Mak-A-Dream has served more than 400 children and young adults with cancer, hosted several adult cancer retreats and put on professional conferences—all with the assistance of volunteers. So many people give of themselves and their time during the summer at camp, speaking and presenting at conferences, during fund raising and community events, making quilts and pillows for camp and every day all year around at the foundation office in Missoula. Thank you to each and everyone of you who have helped us make dreams come true!

...to contributing businesses

Community businesses of Montana and across the country continue to be generous and grant request after request, donating goods and services to camp as well as items for our annual fund raising auction. You make such a difference in providing an experience of a life time for these deserving children.

...to our donors

None of this could happen without funding and in-kind gifts from our many, many donors. For everyone who has ever given to Camp Mak-A-Dream, we thank you for your past support and hope you will continue to support this special program in the future.

...to our Board of Directors and Founders

These people are also volunteers who give of their time, resources and energy on a continuous basis—raising funds and setting policy and goals for the future. Thanks to all of our local, regional and honorary board members for their continued support.

...to the wonderful communities of Montana

So many people give in ways we cannot even begin to describe. Our undying gratitude to you for your generosity and open-arms. Our campers and participants all feel welcome in Montana because of you!

...and last but not least to our campers and young adults' families

Thank you for allowing your loved one(s) to attend the camps and conferences at Camp Mak-A-Dream in beautiful Western Montana. It is a pleasure to serve them all! We love to hear how everyone is doing, so please keep in touch.

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Lawman 1000 “Ride of Dreams”

In 1998 Camp Mak-A-Dream has joined with the Lawman 1000 for the ‘Ride of Dreams’. Since 1990 the Lawman has raised money totaling $575,000 in Montana. The purpose of the Lawman 1000 is to team law enforcement officers with civilians to "Ride On The Side Of The Law" for a just cause. The Children’s Oncology Camp Foundation is fortunate and excited that the Lawman is riding for Camp Mak-A-Dream. The concept is that motorcycle riders collect pledges for a 1000 mile ride. On June 27 between 200 - 300 riders will depart from Missoula, Great Falls and Butte and ride to Cody, Wy. The next day they will ride, as a group, to Butte, ending the 1998 Lawman 1000.

With the dedication, enthusiasm and passion the Lawman riders have shown in the past, we are sure this year’s ride will be another great success.

If you have interest in riding or pledging please call or write to:

MONTANA LAWMAN 1000
P.O. BOX 4154
BUTTE, MT 59701
406-494-8225 (5437)
406-494-1988

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Flathead HOOPFEST - July 24-26th
To benefit Camp Mak-A-Dream

For the second year, Camp Mak-A-Dream is proud to be part of the Krystkowiak Flathead HOOPFEST. This is the sixth year and the organizers, Larry and Jan Krystkowiak, are expecting 350 to 400 teams. The event will bring approximately 3500 people to Polson for two days of basketball action. There will also be 3-point, free throw shooting and slam dunk contests.

Cost is $80-$100 per team. The event will be July 24-26. Registrations received after July 15th will be subject to a $20 additional charge.

With 30 courts, a good share of main street and several side streets will be occupied. Joining in the fun this year will be celebrity guests Howie Long, Frank Brickowski, John Creotty and others.

The proceeds of this event will benefit Camp Mak-A-Dream, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Polson Area Projects.

Camp Mak-A-Dream is looking for volunteers to help at this event.

If you are interested, please call our foundation office at (406) 549-5987.

For further information please contact the Krystkowiaks at:

E-mail: hoopfest@ewlink.com
Password: 28800
Fax: (406)857-2880
Mail: 812 N. Finley Point,
Polson, MT 59860
Thank You!

Camp Mak-A-Dream on Mount McKinley

At approximately 10:00 pm on June 25, 1997, Jon Mapes, Melissa McManus, Walter Murch, Cam Pollock, Tamzin Sarich, Bob Summer and Tom Summer successfully reached the summit of Denali. This team of climbers, who are all cancer survivors themselves, spent two weeks ascending before reaching the summit of Mount McKinley which is 20,320 feet above sea level. This group organized as Cancer Survivors on McKinley with the intent and goal of raising $100,000 to send children with cancer to cancer camps across the United States. Each team member was asked to raise $10,000 through pledges and donations, plus every climber covered his/her own expenses of the climb, including gear and guide fees. Because of their determination and triumphant success, they were able to raise $8,000 for Camp Mak-A-Dream! Our thanks to each member of the team, all of the volunteers who helped with the climb and to the event organizers. You have helped many dreams come true here in Montana at Camp Mak-A-Dream.

It takes people like you to turn dreams into reality

It is estimated that over 10,000 children and young adults will be diagnosed each year as having some form of cancer. Because of their special medical needs, most are unable to attend traditional summer camp programs. The benefits of these camping programs, however, can be even more valuable for an individual who has a life-threatening illness.

Programs that encourage self-confidence, self-esteem and the development of friendships support resilience and coping; the ability to bounce back from the adversities of illness. Similarly, adults with cancer are often in need of the opportunity of the camp or retreat experience that aids physical and mental recovery.

The Children’s Oncology Camp Foundation is now in Phase II of our Capital Campaign – not only for bricks and mortar but also for endowment.

COCF is proud of the accomplishments of Phase I. Our 3.5 million dollar Capital Campaign enabled Camp Mak-A-Dream to become a reality. Phase II, also for $3.5 million, will enable us to enlarge our campus. It will help us feel secure as income generated from the endowment will support facility maintenance, camperships and enhanced and expanded programs.

For more information, call Gregg Doerfler, Executive Director at (406) 549-5987.

Help send a kid to camp - buy a Campership

Camp Mak-A-Dream has a mission to provide an appropriately supervised, cost-free camp for children and young adults with cancer. This experience is provided free of charge to all participants and is funded entirely through private and corporate contributions. You can sponsor a child for a week at camp with a $500 donation. Please help make a dream come true: Camp Mak-A-Dream, P.O. Box 1450, Missoula, MT 59806 or call our foundation office at (406) 549-5987.

Name_________________________ Phone_________________________

Address_________________________

City/State/Zip_________________________

Amount Enclosed $_________________________

In addition I would like to pledge $_________________________ for ________ Years

Annually __________ Quarterly __________ Monthly __________

Spring 1998, Issue 87
1998 Schedule of Events

1998 Winter Program

Winter Young Adult Conference
A conference for young adults with cancer, ages 17-23
Jan. 3-10

1998 Spring Programs

Care Givers’ Conference
A conference for professional health care providers
May 14-17

1998 Summer Sessions

Kids Camp
Camp for children with cancer, ages 6-16
July 6-13

July 16-23

Young Adult Conference
Conference for young adults with cancer, ages 17-23
July 26-Aug 2

Young Adult Conference
Conference for young adults with cancer, ages 17-23
August 5-12

Sibling Camp
Camp for siblings of cancer patients, ages 6-16
August 15-21

1998 Fall Programs

Occasional Cancer Retreat
A retreat for women with ovarian cancer
August 27-31

Camp Limber Limbs
Sept. 18-20

Mens’ Prostate Cancer Symposium
A conference for men, ages 18 and older, with prostate cancer
Sept. 25-27

Women’s Cancer Retreat
A retreat for women, ages 18 and older, with cancer
October 8-11

We are always looking for volunteers in various capacities. If you are interested in volunteering at any of these events, please contact our foundation office at (406)549-5987.

Rent Gold Creek Lodge

Home of Camp Mak-A-Dream

When you choose to hold your business, family or group retreat at Gold Creek Lodge, you'll be enjoying more than just fine facilities in a mountain landscape. You'll also be helping to support the programs of Camp Mak-A-Dream. This facility is available for rental groups of 10-120 people, for a day long meeting or for a several day retreat. So, make your next retreat one to remember.

Some of the things Gold Creek Lodge has to offer:

- Fully accessible buildings
- Main lodge with meeting rooms, recreation room and dining hall
- Four cabins with common rooms & kitchensettes
- Accessible heated swimming pool & hot tub
- Outdoor patio area with BBQ grills
- Sleeping capacity of 90 people
- Art Studio building
- Health Care Center
- Meeting & activity rooms
- Smoke-free facility & grounds
- Ropes Course and archery range
- Fine dining & variety of menu options
- Competitive rates & excellent service

Medical Support:

This facility is equipped to provide medical care for groups that have unique medical needs. This service can be designed and arranged to fit a variety of needs. Please contact the foundation office for additional information.

The Gold Creek Lodge facility is a great place to hold team-building workshops, meetings or private family gatherings. It is available for rent from September through mid-November with a few exceptions. Let us help you create a retreat to remember with our professional staff and programming options. Call our foundation office for more information or to book your reservation at (406)549-5987.
Michigan Chapter: Friends of Camp Mak-A-Dream

Each year thousands of children and young adults are diagnosed with cancer in the United States. Due to this life-threatening disease, these young people are forced to miss out on many youthful activities. Instead they are thrust into a world of pain, illness, hospitals, drugs and therapy. Camp Mak-A-Dream gives young people with cancer an occasion to focus on their opportunities rather than their limitations. The camp offers a chance to take part in normal activities such as camping, swimming and horseback riding. Not only does Camp Mak-A-Dream offer physical opportunities, it builds self-esteem and self-confidence while developing friendships.

Here at the Michigan Chapter of Camp Mak-A-Dream, we are making every effort to help support the camp and the children and young adults that attend. In 1997, we raised approximately $75,000 and our goal is to double that in 1998. It is our intent to raise these funds through corporations, foundations and charity organizations. Hopefully, our efforts here in Michigan will lead the way to a national network of 'Friends of Camp Mak-A-Dream.'

Barry Shapiro - President, Board of Directors
Friends of Camp Mak-A-Dream

The Mailbox

“I am a 17 year old girl going through chemotherapy. I would like to thank you; I attended Camp Mak-A-Dream’s Young Adult Conference in August and I just wanted to let you know what a difference you made in my life. I will never forget the camp, and I will also never forget what a gift you have given. Thank you!”

Erin, Age 17 - Young Adult, Minnesota

“Thank you and all your helpers for my daughter’s week at camp. She enjoyed herself so much. It also helped her to see and deal with things she didn’t want to talk about. She is doing great! She will have her last chemo treatment next week, and is already talking about when she comes to camp next year. Thank you for caring for others, and especially for taking such good care of our Mary.”

Tom and Jane - Parents, Montana

“In August, our daughter attended your Young Adult Conference and she said it was the ‘best thing she’s ever had’ and looks forward to going again and reuniting with her new friends. Thank you so much! She has so many happy memories.”

Joan - Parent, Washington

“I am the mother of three daughters, one with cancer and two without. This past summer my two daughters without cancer attended your siblings’ camp. I find it difficult to put on paper the gratitude I feel to you all. There were so many thoughtful little things that went on that really touched my heart and my girls...keep up the good work, touching lives.”

Lylia - Parent, Washington

Children’s Oncology Camp Foundation
3700 Russell, Bldg. B
Suite 103, Lower Level
Missoula, MT 59801

P.O. Box 1450
Missoula, MT 59806-1450

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