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Easter Seals Wisconsin Newsletter
Summer/Fall 2017

Celebrating 25 Years of Respite!



The Wisconsin Elks/Easter Seals Wisconsin Respite Camp celebrated their 25th Anniversary on June 24th in conjunction with the annual Elks Day celebration.

Easter Seals Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Elks began their partnership in the 1970s with funding for various projects around camp. Throughout the years, Easter Seals noticed a void in respite services available to families of children and adults with disabilities statewide. With the support of the Wisconsin Elks lodges and State Major Project, the Wisconsin Elks/Easter Seals Wisconsin Respite Camp was created in 1992 on 400 wooded acres in Wisconsin Dells.

Respite Camp was the first overnight respite program in the state of Wisconsin and started by serving a handful of campers in two week-long sessions. We have since grown to offering 14 Respite weekends during the school year and 10 week-long sessions during the summer. This year we will serve a record number of 811 campers.

The Wisconsin Elks have provided annual support and camperships in excess of \$1 million along with \$2 million in building new facilities at Respite Camp. In the last few months alone, they have provided funding to remodel the Lodge bathrooms and donated new furniture, including sofas, loveseats and chairs.

Without the support of the Wisconsin Elks, families and caregivers would not have the opportunities they have today – a place where their loved ones are safe and provided new experiences in challenge and independence in a nurturing outdoor environment filled with fun – and provided a respite from what is often 24-hour care.

Thank you to the Wisconsin Elks for their dedication and support to Wisconsin families of loved ones with disabilities. We look forward to many more years of a successful program and many more Elks Days to come.

Thank you, Wisconsin Elks!



Pat O'Donahue, In Memoriam

Pat O'Donahue, the man who lent his time, energy, passion – and, for many years, his name – to the Easter Seals Golf Outing for Kids has died. He was 86.

Pat grew up in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where he attended St. Patrick's School. While there, he excelled in sports and met his wife-to-be, Gerrie Hobbs. Pat earned an athletic scholarship to UW-Madison, becoming a proud member of the famed 1951 "Hard Rocks", the greatest defensive team in UW Football history. He earned All-American status and played in the 1952 North-South All-Star Game. Pat was a fifth round draft pick of the San Francisco 49ers and played his rookie year with that team before spending 2 years in Japan with the US Army. Returning to the states, he finished his pro career playing a year with the Green Bay Packers.

Pat loved to golf and had a strong commitment to giving back to the community, so hosting a celebrity golf outing to benefit Easter Seals Wisconsin Camp Wawbeek was a natural fit for him. The event, now in its 22nd year, has raised more than \$2 million.

Easter Seals will be forever grateful to Pat for all he did to make the Golf Outing for Kids such an amazing success. We extend our sincere sympathy to his wife of 65 years, Gerrie, their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Pat made a difference in this world. He will be remembered and missed.



Barry Richter (left) and Pat Richter (standing) with Pat O'Donahue at Camp Wawbeek following the 2016 Golf Outing for Kids.

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Easter Seals News

Our New Look!

Easter Seals Wisconsin has adopted the new logo and brand created by our national organization, Easter Seals, Inc. The old logo - the red "seal" with the lily - will be phased out. You may continue to see it on some printed materials while supplies last, but you will begin seeing the new logo on our website and in promotional materials and our letterhead, etc.

Our programs and services, of course, remain the same!



Staff Retirements



For close to 12 years, **Melba Brown** has worked as the Program Assistant for the Easter Seals Wisconsin FARM team. Through every challenge the team faced, Melba brought laughter and encouragement. "We appreciate everything Melba has brought to the FARM Program," says Paul Leverenz, Vice-President of FARM and Vocational Services. "It will be hard to see her go, but of course we wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement."

Dennis McDonald has maintained the buildings and grounds at Camp Wawbeek and Wisconsin Elks/ Easter Seals Respite Camp since 2009. Already retired from Gerber in Reedsburg when he started with Easter Seals, Dennis enjoyed the challenge of doing everything he could to keep the camp buildings in working order and good repair. He tackled everything from rescuing a staff member from the elevator, to balancing chemical levels in the pool, plowing snow, pounding nails and caulking windows. His can-do attitude was appreciated! All the best, Dennis!

Donation Center



Left to right: Michael Scalzo, Shirley Warnock, Amber Riedesel, Trevor Bellrichard, and Ken Alterman.

In May 2017, at a Savers Partner conference, Amber Riedesel and Trevor Bellrichard were presented with the 20 Year Partnership Award, celebrating the successful relationship between Savers and the Easter Seals Wisconsin Donation Center, which began in 1997.

"We sorely missed Chris Fessler and Nance Roepke at the event," said Riedesel. "They were so instrumental in forming this enterprise and have worked so hard to make it the success it is."

Are you thinking of selling or trading in that old car or truck?



Why not donate it instead?

Easter Seals Wisconsin accepts donations of vehicles in good working order including cars, trucks, boats or trailers. To donate, call 1.877.208.5109.

Avenues to Understanding

Disability Awareness Educational Curriculum Offers Age-Appropriate Lesson Plans for Variety of Ages

Avenues to Understanding is a disability awareness program created by Easter Seals Wisconsin and offered free of charge to public and private schools, early childhood programs, and faith and community based organizations throughout the state.

The Educational Guide is designed to provide an expanding knowledge of disabilities and disability issues for young people as they age. Young children will be presented with an introduction to disabilities, will learn about what they are, and will be helped to look for similarities rather than differences when meeting someone with a disability.

Older kids will begin to explore the architectural and attitudinal barriers that may provide stumbling blocks to integration for people with disabilities and look at them in conjunction with their own need to fit in.

High school students are encouraged to explore their communities, to look at how people with disabilities are regarded and portrayed in various media and to consider how people with disabilities might be affected by the same real-world challenges they themselves are facing – independent living, college, and jobs.

Program materials are in electronic format and are free of charge. Contact Mary Statz at mstatz@eastersealswisconsin.com.



Camp Kee-B-Waw



Kee-B-Waw day campers Becca & Cate enjoyed meeting some of the celebrity team captains (including Matt Bernstein, pictured with them here) at the picnic following the Golf Outing for Kids.

During seven, one-week summer sessions, kids aged 6-13 are invited to experience Camp Wawbeek as a day camp. Camp Kee-B-Waw's unique location (a day camp for children held at a camp that serves children and adults with disabilities) enables all campers to learn about differences, develop confidence, and make new friends in an environment filled with both indoor and outdoor fun.

Campers enjoy swimming, hiking, archery, field trips and our high and low ropes courses, along with other traditional summer camp activities.



Events

Golf Outing for Kids



Former Badger Kyle Jefferson pauses for a selfie with campers while signing autographs.

Despite the frequent torrential downpours throughout the day, the 2017 Golf Outing for Kids went on as planned, with 230 enthusiastic golfers taking to the courses at Wild Rock Golf Club and Trappers Turn to support Easter Seals Wisconsin Camps.

Highlights on each course included a \$5,000 matching gift "Happy Camper Campaign" sponsored by Tito's Handmade Vodka; hole-in-one contests sponsored by Premier Golf and Utility Vehicles; and the Circle Game sponsored by Moosejaw Pizza and Dells Brewing. Players were also treated to fresh grilled brats and sausages, courtesy of Klement's Sausage Company, and ice cream donated by Cedar Crest Ice Cream.

The highlight of the day was once again the meet-and-greet with campers. As a result of the rain, Respite Campers weren't able to make the trip to Camp Wawbeek, so we brought the celebrities to the campers to sign hats and mingle. For many of the celebrities, it was their first time at Respite Camp, a great opportunity to showcase another part of camp. Wawbeek campers were entertained by local magician Ryan Martin. Afterwards, celebrities returned to Camp Wawbeek for the picnic and awards. Our guests got an opportunity to hear first hand how important camp is to the kids. Thanks to JustAGame Fieldhouse, we held our first ever mobile bidding auction throughout the day which ended during the awards program.

Easter Seals extends its thanks to our dedicated sponsors, volunteers, friends and staff who helped to make this day possible. Special thanks to the Golf Outing for Kids Committee: Pat Richter, Barry Richter, Matt Bernstein, Andy Crooks, Joe Gussel, Joy Royston, Pat Stein and Chris Tancill.



T Ellenbecker helped serve lunch at the 2017 Skip Ellenbecker Memorial Golf Outing, an event honoring her late husband.

Skip Ellenbecker Memorial Golf Outing

The Skip Ellenbecker Memorial Golf Outing was held on Saturday, July 29 at Pine Valley Golf Course in Marathon. Twenty-three teams participated, raising a net amount of \$13,502! Held in memory of former Board member Skip Ellenbecker, proceeds from this event benefit the Easter Seals Wisconsin FARM Program, which Skip strongly believed in and happily supported.

Easter Seals thanks everyone who honored Skip by participating, sponsoring, volunteering, or otherwise contributing to the success of this great event, including our presenting sponsors: County Materials Corp., S.D. Ellenbecker, Inc. and Janke Contractors.

Veterans Family Camp



The Spring 2017 Quilts of Valor honorees.

On May 5-7 Easter Seals Wisconsin held its semi-annual Veterans Family Camp at the Wisconsin Elks/Easter Seals Wisconsin Respite Camp in Wisconsin Dells. Beautiful weather and sunshine throughout the weekend added to the enjoyment of all the camp activities – fishing, rock climbing, ziplining, crafts, boat rides, campfires, and more. Twenty-seven veterans and 67 of their family members were in attendance. It is always an honor to offer our Veterans Family Camp to such exceptional individuals.

The purpose of Veterans Family Camp is to create a space for families to reconnect with one another and to network with other veterans while having a fun and relaxing weekend. We recognize that America endures because of the men, women, and families who serve and sacrifice to defend our nation and protect the ideals we hold dear. Veterans Family Camp is one small way Easter Seals Wisconsin can show our gratitude and immense appreciation for these individuals.

A big thank you to all who volunteered for the camp session with a special thank you to Dells Boat Tours for a phenomenal boat ride in the Upper Dells. Thank you to all the ladies who participated in creating quilts and put on a beautiful Quilts of Valor Ceremony during the camp session. Lastly, thank you to the Mount Hope Legion Auxiliary Post 229, who baked and donated an abundance of delicious desserts for the entire weekend. The camp session would not have been a success without the kindness and generosity of all of you!

Our next Veterans Family Camp session will take place September 22-24, 2017. We are always searching for new families to share the camp experience with! Feel free to spread the word about our camp. We welcome all veterans and immediate family members, **completely free of charge**. Apply for camp online at the following link: <http://camp.eastersealswisconsin.com/veterans-family-camp/>.

Golf Outing for Kids Major Sponsors

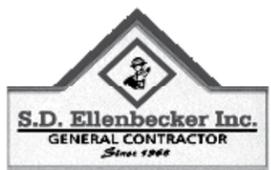
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Self-Employment Services

Due to two major work-related injuries, Perry Frahm was no longer able to work in competitive employment and was receiving Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) when he was referred to Easter Seals Wisconsin Self-Employment Services (SES) in mid-2015. Perry's goal was to be productive and self-sufficient again and to earn enough income that he would no longer need SSDI. Julie Jensen, SES Specialist, helped Perry research self-employment and conducted a self-employment feasibility analysis, followed by a business plan.

Perry's home has a number of wooded acres on which the previous owner had tapped the trees to produce syrup. Because Perry grew up in a family that tapped maple trees in the woods on their farm and made maple syrup for friends and family as a hobby, Perry had knowledge of the process and the desire to build a successful business from it. Existing buildings on the property could be converted to a production facility and a small store to sell his syrup. And innovative high-tech equipment existed to help in the processing of the syrup that would make it possible for Perry, with some assistance from family and friends, to make the syrup, stay within disability limitations, and work towards independence.



While his first year in business had some weather-related drawbacks, he is very excited and enthusiastic about his progress and has plans to increase his yield by renting additional land with sugar maples and purchasing available sap from others. He also plans to branch out and add more maple products as well as other Wisconsin products for sale to his customers.



Perry Frahm (with Julie Jensen, left), talks to a group in Madison about the assistance and guidance he received from Easter Seals Wisconsin Self-Employment Services.

AmeriCorps

This summer, Easter Seals Wisconsin has 32 AmeriCorps members serving at Respite Camp and Camp Wawbeek. These members came from across the country to serve a term of National Service at Easter Seals Wisconsin. All of the members have a passion for camp and the mission of Easter Seals Wisconsin, love helping others through service, and are having a wonderful time this summer!

Following the successful completion of their term of service, each AmeriCorps member will receive an Education Award to use towards costs associated with school, as well as connections to hundreds of employers that give preferential hiring to AmeriCorps alumni, and various other benefits.

To meet some of our AmeriCorps members, check out our "Easter Seals Wisconsin Camps" page on Facebook. Each Monday, a #MemberMonday post highlights our AmeriCorps team members. The service these individuals do for Easter Seals Wisconsin is invaluable – we cannot thank them enough!

If you or someone you know is interested applying, or learning more about the program, please contact Anna Korb at akorb@eastersealswisconsin.com, or on the AmeriCorps website at www.americorps.gov.



AgrAbility Summit

The 2017 AgrAbility of Wisconsin Summit, jointly hosted by the National Farm Medicine Center and AgrAbility of Wisconsin, was held on March 15th at the Marshfield Clinic in Marshfield.

The day-long program gave participants an opportunity to network and learn about resources available through AgrAbility of Wisconsin as well as Easter Seals Wisconsin's FARM Program. Topics covered included the Beginning Farmer Project, Assistive Farm Technology, safety on the farm, and finances and farm transitions.

Ken Saville Fall Sprawl



Join Us!
Saturday, October 7, 2017
Camp Wawbeek

1450 State Highway 13 • Wisconsin Dells
Registration & Check-in: 8:00 - 9:00 am
Run begins at 9:15 • Walk/Wheel at 9:30

Please join us at the 2017 Ken Saville Fall Sprawl as we walk, run and roll together through the beautiful autumn woods at Easter Seals Camp Wawbeek in Wisconsin Dells. Entry fee is just \$25 (\$30 day of event), and includes a t-shirt, refreshments and, best of all, the opportunity to see Camp Wawbeek and all the improvements made there in the past few years. We'll be implementing chip timing this year, so we encourage competitive runners to join in the fun.

The Fall Sprawl serves as a fundraiser for Easter Seals Wisconsin Camp Wawbeek. You can raise funds by collecting donations from friends and family to turn in at the event, or by creating your own online fundraising page, which can be personalized with your photo and a story explaining why you're raising money for Camp.

You can register for the event and/or set up your personal fundraising page by visiting: <https://www.firstgiving.com/fallsprawl/2017-Ken-Saville-Fall-Sprawl>. To learn more, contact Kris Ackley at kackley@eastersealswisconsin.com or by phone at 608.237.1370.