



SHARING OUR STORIES

Changing Lives

Billie's body and spirit soar on first zip-line flight

Camp is a place of freedom for many campers. "Anything I want to do or have the desire to do is made possible when I'm here," said Billie Maher, long-time Camp Courage participant. This year, she attended the extended 10-day retreat session with her husband, Mark. Also, Billie fulfilled her lifelong dream of 'flying.'

Billie's desire for flying started early in life. Billie's twin died at birth. As a little girl, she was told that her twin was an angel watching her from heaven. As a child, Billie pictured her twin flying around with angel wings. "I thought someday God's going to sprinkle fairy dust on me and give me wings because I can't walk," she said. As Billie grew older, she began to realize there wasn't any magical fairy dust. When Billie heard about the new zip-line at Camp Courage, she promised herself she'd face her fear of heights and try it ... if it didn't look too scary.

"I finally had decided to go - and then got really scared," she said. "I was talking to Jason and kept asking him if I was going to be safe or if I was going to make it through." Jason, director of True Friend's Team Quest program, reassured her. Then Billie told him the story about how she always wanted to fly.

Billie made it all the way across the zip line. **"For those ten seconds it didn't matter if my legs worked or not, I was able to fly,"** said Billie. When Billie got to the end of the zip line and was lowered, her phone rang. Her sister, Brea, happened to call right at that moment, and they shared the excitement of this life-changing experience. "Going on the zip line was the best feeling in the world," she said.

In the 20 years of coming to camp, Billie has been through many adventures, like visiting Duluth and an underground mine, but she said nothing could beat flying through the sky. **"I may not have gotten wings, there wasn't any fairy dust, but I got to fly,"** said Billie.

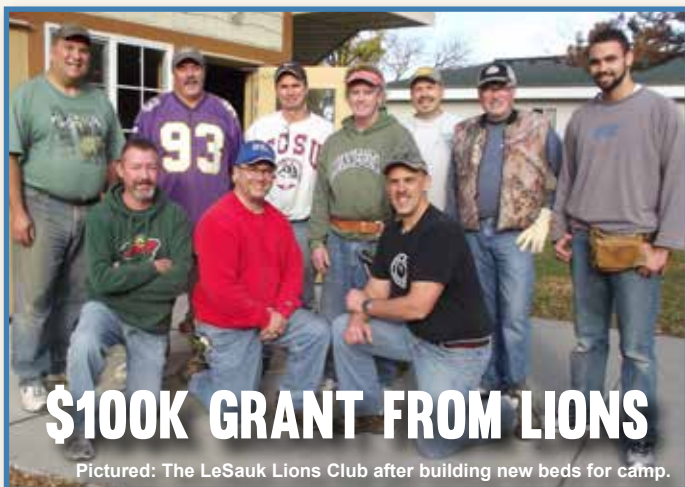
Billie says she returns to camp year after year because of the experience. *"At camp, I get to be just Billie, not Billie with her sisters or her mom, I am just Billie. Rolling through the woods, laughing with my girlfriends and spending time with my husband."*



Billie (center) with her husband, Mark and other camp friends

NEW AT TRUE FRIENDS

More experiences and adventures



\$100K GRANT FROM LIONS

Pictured: The LeSauk Lions Club after building new beds for camp.

The Lions Club International Foundation has approved a \$100K matching grant to purchase a mini-bus and build an accessible ropes course at Camp Courage!



CAMP COURAGE TURNS 60

Camp Courage opened in 1955 to provide a summer experience for children with physical disabilities. Read more on Page 6.

Shop smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to camp!



MULTI-SENSORY ENVIRONMENT COMPLETED AT CAMP FRIENDSHIP

Summer camper, Marty, utilizes the new MSE at Camp Friendship. The MSE at Camp Friendship is complete and in use for campers with unique sensory needs. Read more on Page 7.

The July/August edition of Camp Business magazine features Team Quest as their camp profile! Check it out online or in print.

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CAMPER STORIES

Changing Lives

MATTHEW



Staff member, Mitch, and Matthew

At home Matthew loves school and learning. His favorite classes are reading and writing and he loves reading new books. At camp, Matthew likes trying new things like swimming, tubing and painting. He makes new friends and hangs out with old ones, too. Picking a favorite camp activity is not easy.

"It's hard to choose," Matthew said "I have a lot of them." He's enjoyed activities like kickball, biking, fishing, having a floating picnic and performing the "invisible bench" at the talent show. "I love camp," he said. "It's fun."

Matthew's favorite memory of camp is tubing with a friend from his cabin. When the ride was over, Matthew was dry and his friend was soaked. Matthew said, "It was funny that he got wet when I was completely dry."



Matthew proudly displaying his catch

AMY



Amy spent her first time away from home doing something she loves - horseback riding. It's a hobby she has loved for a very long time. She loves being around horses and interacting with them. "She seems like she's at home on the horse. She is so happy and loving every second of it," said Annie, Amy's counselor.

Amy also loved the other aspects of her camp experience. Her favorite memory is hanging out in Arts and Crafts with her cabin mates. "We got to hangout, laugh and make bracelets," Amy said. She also enjoyed her boat ride. "It reminds me of being on the boat at the cabin."

At home, Amy volunteers at a hospital and a nursing home by helping with different exercise programs. One of the activities is a balloon game, where she tosses the balloon back and forth to work on the residents' motor skills. She said, "I love playing the balloon game with the patients."



At camp, Amy learned about horses and how to care for them. She also used her photography skills to create some special memories.

VOLUNTEER

Be the difference

NATIONAL CHARITY LEAGUE

Members of the National Charity League (NCL), have volunteered hundreds of hours at True Friends camps in the past two years. In return, these volunteers say they have received very meaningful experiences.

NCL is a national philanthropic volunteer and leadership organization providing mothers and daughters with opportunities to participate in community service, leadership and cultural activities. NCL has 200 chapters nationwide, including one in Minnesota. "Volunteering with campers is so rewarding. We love spending time with them and getting to know their personalities," said Mary Prouty, vice president of NCL West Lakes Chapter. "Seeing the campers engage in the activities at camp and watching their expressions is priceless."

One of her favorite memories was while assisting a camper with verbal limitations in the sky chair at the high ropes course. "She had the biggest smile we had ever seen and she was just shaking with excitement!" Mary said. "Seeing someone experience that feeling for the first time was unforgettable."

The group has organized holiday events, made crafts and played games with campers. During summer, they volunteer weekly to organize the carnival games at Camp Eden Wood. Members have also volunteered at Camp Friendship during the summer and winter sessions as well as respite weekends.

Sharon and Lily Cunagin, a mother-daughter duo and members of NCL, say they volunteer because of the experiences they receive from it. After volunteering the first year at camp, they knew they would return.

"We come away from camp feeling our lives have been enriched by the experience."

- Sharon, NCL Mother

Camp is filled with many special moments and NCL volunteers experience them with family. "It definitely brings you closer," Mary said. "It's so rewarding seeing your children interacting with the campers. Many times you see a side of them you don't always see at home." Busy lifestyles seem to get even busier as children get older, Sharon added. "Volunteering together allows us to spend time with each other while participating in fun, meaningful experiences."

In summer 2015, NCL volunteered a total of 542 hours, making them one of True Friends' most dedicated group of volunteers.



National Charity League, Inc.
Mothers AND Daughters SERVING COMMUNITIES Together



(L-R) Paige & Mary Prouty, Janet & Maddie Klein

Their favorite memories from both years are the dance and the talent show. The night of the dance, volunteers, campers and staff get dressed up in costumes. "I remember one young volunteer said it was better than prom," Sharon said. "How sweet is that?"



You can make a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Visit truefriends.org/volunteer to learn more about our opportunities and apply today.

volunteerservices@truefriends.org | 952.852.0101 x399

ALUMNI CONNECTION

Camp Impacts Futures

A LETTER FROM A COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING, SUMMER 2015

Dear World,

There are many ways to fall in love, but this has to be my favorite. It was my first Wednesday at camp. I'd slept very little the night before, and my entire cabin was filled with fairly challenging 1:1 campers. I'd spent most of my week with one in particular, a wonderful man who liked to spend most of his time in the music room, causing occasional havoc when he'd run off to the staff computers, or try to get into the locked cabinets. On this particular sleepless Wednesday, I'd just been dealing with my very first behavior and was feeling rather beaten down when I brought him to the music room. On our way there he took his usual detour to the computer room, and I assumed my position in front of the door. As he reached around me for the handle, I looked him straight in the face and said 'Please. Please, can we not?' I do not know if he heard the crack in my voice or saw the slump in my shoulders, but he looked straight back at me and said 'Okay, Kermit.'



Margo, CIT, with a summer camper

This is camp. It's working yourself to the edge and finding love and support when you get there. It's being covered in face paint and shaving cream and glitter and mud and throwing yourself into the sloppiest of hugs with the most wonderful old ladies you'll ever have the honor of meeting. It's the clasping of gloved hands and the understanding of tired eyes. It's laughing late at night at stories you'll never have the words to tell with people you may never see again, but will love so completely while you've got them.

I will never have the words to describe the feeling you get when your camper smiles for the first time, or is finally understood, or hugs you and tells you that this is their favorite place in the entire world. You just have to come feel it for yourself.

Love, Margo

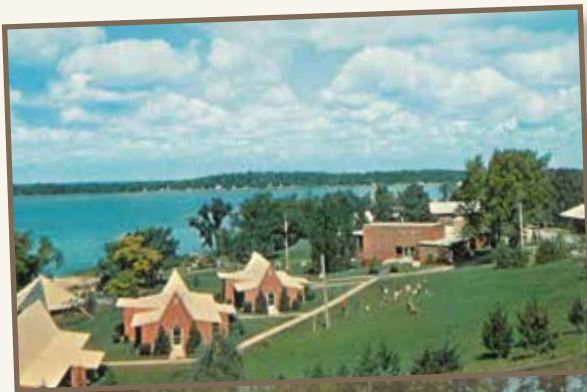


Reconnect with old camp friends and share your stories on our Facebook group!
Visit facebook.com/groups/truefriendsalum or scan the code to join.



WHAT'S HAPPENING

Events at camp



Camp Courage is celebrating 60 years of service to individuals with disabilities this year. In 1955, camp opened to serve individuals with physical disabilities such as polio, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and others with congenital and acquired disabilities. To make camp a worthwhile experience, children with disabilities had to participate in activities, be challenged and have opportunities to learn new skills to use in their daily lives.

The original camp location is now called Lakeside at Camp Courage. In 1966, a new campus was added to serve children with communication disorders. Children with speech, hearing and language impairments were now able to have a summer experience that included speech therapy and education. This site, originally called Speech and Hearing camp, is now called Woodland at Camp Courage.

In 2012, Camp Friendship acquired Camp Courage and rebranded as True Friends. The Dudley Equine Center and Sanner Arena were constructed in 2014 to accommodate the new True Strides Therapy Horses program. Camp Courage is a busy location for partner camps, core programs and rental groups and most recently, an environmental charter school.

Join us

An open house event to celebrate the occasion will be held on October 11, 2015 from 1-3 pm at Camp Courage.



HOST YOUR EVENTS AT CAMP... AND BRING THEM TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH TEAM QUEST

Open year-round, our inviting cabins and variety of meeting spaces can fit nearly any style of gathering. Escape the daily grind with hiking trails, campfires and many other outdoor activities followed by delicious home-cooked meals. When you stay with us, you support the mission of True Friends. Visit conferenceandretreat.org for more information.

Achieve more than ever before with our dynamic team building and leadership programs. These programs give participants the freedom to move out of their comfort zones, conquering their fears through team support and individual determination. Team Quest operates on and off-site year round. Visit team-quest.org for more information.

952.852.0104

GIVING IS GOOD

Donors make innovation possible

MULTI-SENSORY ENVIRONMENT DEDICATED TO ANDREA M. VIEAU

After losing their precious daughter, Andrea, at an early age, Ralph and Lana Vieau decided to do something that would create a lasting legacy in her name. In reviewing various options, the Vieau's decided on a project that they agreed would be a meaningful tribute. Through their generosity, a new Multi-Sensory Environment was built at Camp Friendship this year.

A Multi-Sensory Environment (MSE) is a dedicated room where users can control their sensory input using evidence-based practices and targeted equipment. Lighting, noise, temperature and smell are all regulated to meet the needs of anyone entering the space. An MSE allows users to easily meet their sensory needs using safe equipment to sustain satisfied and content feelings. A significant benefit of using an MSE is decreased anxiety and a better ability to focus.

"After considering a variety of ideas, Lana and I both agreed this was a unique program we wanted to be a part of while honoring Andrea."

-Ralph Vieau

Individuals with hypersensitivity or hypo-sensitivity to stimuli can use elements of the MSE to bring their bodies to a calm, satisfied state. Equipment is available to stimulate auditory, visual, proprioceptive, vestibular and tactile sense systems. Individuals who aggressively seek or flee from particular types of

input can benefit from frequent use of an MSE, as it provides the ability to control the recurrence or lack of certain stimuli.

This room serves participants with autism, brain injury, challenging behaviors, sensory processing disorders and cognitive disabilities. Individuals with limited physical ability can also utilize the MSE to maximize the use of all available senses.

Camp Friendship serves hundreds of individuals with disabilities during camp and weekend respite programs. The ability of our staff to use MSEs to de-escalate behaviors before they become aggressive, will significantly increase the quality of the experience both campers and staff receive.



Ralph and Lana Vieau at the room's dedication

To make a donation visit truefriends.org/giving or send donations to:

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10509 108th St. NW
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A SIMPLE WAY TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT THAT WILL ENDURE

Designate True Friends as a percentage beneficiary of one of your retirement plans, such as a 403B, 401K or IRA. Simply request a beneficiary form from your plan administrator and add True Friends. Contact your retirement plan administrator or our Gift Planning Officer at 952-697-2281.

Helping campers in need



\$25

Personal care supplies to stay happy & comfortable

A week of meals & s'mores

\$50



\$100

Health care supplies for excellent quality of care

Financial assistance to help a family afford camp

\$250+





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