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SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Toto, we aren't in Kansas anymore!

Over the last few years, Tuolumne Trails has evolved into something special. We have long provided a unique experience for those with disabilities and offered respite to local families and caregivers. From the beginning, we enjoyed extraordinary support from our tiny community and a handful of loyal donors and volunteers from off the hill. Lately, however, our efforts to provide a world-class camping experience for our campers have come to fruition. We now serve campers from all over the state whose disabilities have previously precluded them from enjoying camp. We draw our staff from all over the world. Our training and onboarding efforts are among the best in the business.

This is a direct result of our strategy to expand our reach. **We knew** that individuals with more severe disabilities were being left behind. **We knew** potential staff were ready to commit their summers to make a difference, and donors would find us worthy. **We knew** we had to find a way to reach them.

We are now known throughout the state for being able to accommodate almost any need. Regional Centers (an agency through which the State of California provides services and support to individuals with developmental disabilities) have become active advocates. Families feel safe entrusting us with their

loved ones' care. Some of the following testimonials are from the families of our campers.

According to Dylan's mother Sue, when he and his group of friends aged out of other camps at age 20, they found CTT. The families of this group have



become close friends through the years, and Sue stated, "Dylan looks forward to Camp Tuolumne Trails for the entire year! He loves going with his buddies and also making new friends. The food and the activities are excellent, he raves about how kind and fun the counselors are, and it's so good for his confidence and independence. Big D will be back every year!" While Dylan and his buddies enjoy a week at camp every summer, Sue and the group's other mothers enjoy a weekend of respite in Pine Mountain Lake and Yosemite.

CTT's youngest camper at age 10, Oona, came to CTT for the first time last summer. Her family chose this camp because we allowed Oona to be accompanied by her in-home caregiver (at no charge). "Camp Tuolumne Trails has given our family the confidence to send our daughter Oona on her own summer camp adventure. Last summer, Oona spent four nights at the camp and fell in love with her cabin

mates and the incredible staff,” according to Oona’s mother Lisa Cunningham. “She came home with lots of stories about swimming, hayrides, bonfires and the talent show. We were delighted to hear that she tried lots of new foods and activities,” Lisa added.

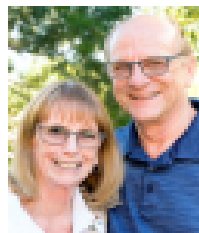
Another camper, Jack, has an acquired brain injury from encephalitis and also had brain resection surgery that left him with apraxia and uncontrolled epilepsy. He has seizures almost daily and needs constant supervision. His mother, Kristen, stated, “He is the most social young adult and loves to be engaged in any kind of activity with others. He loves summer camp and it’s so good for him to be able to enjoy regular activities with peers and also with the typical young adults who work as counselors. We are so grateful he has Tuolumne Trails to come each summer—we just wish it was a little longer!”

CTT also has become a place where our seasonal staff can find their calling. One summer with us and their life will be forever changed. It is impossible to overstate the impact of a CTT summer on our staff. Fully immersed 24/7, they gain an understanding of and respect for the challenges of living with a disability. For some, a summer at camp inspires them to take on a new career or change their college major. All will carry out the rest of their life with a fresh perspective. This requires us to reach more donors and extend our reach to every household in the county and beyond. Someone with a disability touches all of our lives. Our *Concerts for a Cause* were conceived to advance this effort. With the support of these incredible talents, we are reaching a whole new population of potential supporters. We will need every last one of them. What we do is hard, expensive and essential.

We thank you for your support and help in expanding our reach.

With Gratitude,

Jerry



Cabarets for a Cause Winter Fundraisers



CTT launched its new *Cabarets for a Cause* winter dinner shows as a new fundraising effort to benefit its summer campers. These indoor dinner shows turned out to be a phenomenal

success, with sold-out shows for each performance. These events brought the local community together for memorable evenings of outstanding entertainment and delicious dinners. Profits from these events help bridge the gap between the actual cost to run our summer programs and the fee that CTT’s campers with disabilities pay. It furthers CTT’s mission to be one of the most accommodating camps in the country—an ongoing and expensive undertaking.

New CTT Resource Fair

CTT is holding its first-ever Community Resource Fair on Saturday, June 1. This event is open to all free of charge, and aims to connect our local community, our campers, and their families and caregivers to organizations and non-profit resources in the area. Organizations offering resources for young families, seniors, and people with disabilities in Tuolumne, Calaveras and Stanislaus counties will be invited to have a table during the event. In addition to these organizations, vendors selling food and non-alcoholic beverages will be invited. Activities, including face painting, crafts, and a petting zoo, will be available throughout the day.

Campers and their families will also be invited that day to an “open house” as a prelude to our summer program. Camp staff will be available to lead tours of the camp facilities, answer questions, and share more detailed information about our summer program. The Resource Fair is meant to allow first-time campers to be better prepared for their camp session, become more familiar with the grounds, and get an idea of

what to expect during a camp session. Parents and caregivers will also feel more at ease after having an opportunity to ask questions, see the grounds, and learn how to better prepare their camper for their upcoming stay. The day's event will conclude with a performance by Drew Harrison and The Sun Kings, a Beatles cover band, which will encourage participants to sing along to well-loved and familiar songs.

4th Annual Concerts for a Cause Line-up

CTT's 4th annual *Concerts for a Cause* summer music series will kick off on Friday, May 31, with The Beatles tribute band The Sun Kings. This summer's lineup features some amazing talent, with a wide variety of genres (not entirely jazz) of music. CTT has secured some performers that we've been working on for a couple of years, and really ups the level of performers.

The Sun Kings ~ May 31



Drew Harrison and Scott Southard return to CTT with their band, The Sun Kings—an amazing Beatles tribute band. They will kick off the 4th Annual *Concerts for a Cause* summer music

series and fundraising effort. Their music will immediately transport guests back to the 60s and 70s, and you'll immediately recall those iconic lyrics.

Adam Hawley ~ Aug 24



On August 24, CTT will feature Adam Hawley—15-time Billboard #1 guitarist and producer. Adam's single from his third album *Escape* became the Billboard and Smooth Jazz Network 2020 Song of the Year. The title

track from his fourth album, *Risin' Up*, was top of the Billboard charts in 2021, and his most recent #1 Billboard chart ranking was for *Uptop*.

Vincent Ingala ~ Sept 21

Smooth jazz multi-instrumentalist superstar Vincent Ingala will hit CTT's stage on September 21. Vincent, who plays saxophone, guitar, drums, and keys, has ranked #1 hits on the Billboard Smooth Jazz



Chart eight times and has had 20 songs on the Billboard Top 10. His fun-loving stage presence and his obvious passion for playing elevate the audience to an exciting frenzy.

The Boneshakers ~ Oct 12



Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022, The Boneshakers have morphed into different iterations over the years, although lead guitarist Randy Jacobs has remained constant. For years, Randy has played with Bonnie Raitt, BB King, Seal, Paula Abdul, Tears For Fears, Warren Hill and Mindy Abair. Now Jenny Langer has joined the band as vocalist, and her powerful voice will knock your socks off. Their "thing" is blues and rock with a little funk thrown in for fun. Check CTT's website for tickets and more information. Visit

<https://www.tuolumnetrails.org/concerts-for-a-cause-2>.

Thank you to our loyal supporters of CTT, particularly for the CFAC music series. Annual sponsors include Mechanics Bank, MarVal Market, Chris Lawrence and world-renowned jazz superstar Dave Koz. If you or your company are interested in becoming a sponsor for one or all of our 2024 music concerts, please contact Jerry Baker at (209) 962-7534.

It Really Does Take a Village

CTT wants to send out a big THANK YOU to its team of selfless volunteers who have been helping at *Cabarets for a Cause* and upcoming *Concerts for a Cause*. We absolutely could not pull off these events without the generous help of our local volunteers and all their behind-the-scenes help! Let us know if you want to join our team of concert volunteers, where you'll have fun and enjoy the concert afterward.

<https://www.tuolumnetrails.org/get-involved/>

CTT Launches Ambassador Committee

CTT is looking for a handful of “ambassadors” who can spend more time directly with our campers, caregivers, staff and leadership. As a CTT ambassador, you will become intimately aware of what being the most accommodating camp in the state really means. Seeing camp through our campers' eyes, caregivers, and counselors can be truly inspirational. Sharing that insight will broaden our support and ensure that we are able to continue changing the lives of all those who we touch. If you have the time and passion to help us reach that goal, email Jerry@tuolumnetrails.org to learn more.

Your Support Continues to be Crucial

We thank our individual and corporate supporters who are committed to making regular donations. Despite these generous donors, the fact remains that the cost of operating these past few years has significantly strained CTT's budget. Your support can make a huge difference in making this summer an unforgettable and special time for our very special campers. A monthly donation of just \$67 will sponsor a deserving camper.

<https://www.tuolumnetrails.org/donate/>

Maintaining CTT's Legacy

We sincerely desire that CTT will remain a world-class camp for decades to come. To continue serving the disabled community, we must ensure that Camp Tuolumne Trails is sustained in the long term. If you are interested in including CTT in your estate planning, we would be forever grateful if you made CTT a part of your legacy.



Our Mission

Camp Tuolumne Trails is dedicated to helping those with special needs and those who support them by providing an accommodating and stimulating environment for healing, respite, education, and Recreation.



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