



Merry *Heart* Children's Camp



2021-2022

Annual Report



<https://merryheartchildrenscamp.org>

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A Message from Camp

Dear Merry Heart Community,

In August, 25 campers, five counselors in training, and dozens of volunteers gathered for five days and four nights at our first in-person camp since 2019.

It was a joy to be back together.

Campers and counselors made new friends and got reacquainted with old pals. They challenged themselves with new activities and they learned about each other and about their hearts.

After days of swimming, field games, fishing, archery, and art projects, it was suddenly the final day of camp. Parents arrived, celebrated the campers at the awards ceremony, and then after a few hugs and smiles, they all said goodbye for the summer.

From a camper: My favorite part of camp was all the new friends and nice people. It was cool to see that most people had scars too.

And her parent: She is still talking about how much she loves it there. Thank you for giving her such a memorable week!

Next year, we expect to be back up to 54 campers - our pre-pandemic number of participants. We are also planning to have more opportunities for these kids and their families to gather and meet throughout the year.

Thank you for helping make Merry Heart Children's Camp a success - it was very clear to us as we watched our campers connect and interact, that they need this in their lives.

Take care,



Tim LaBarge
Executive Director



Paul Francis, M.D.
Board President

Mission

The mission of Merry Heart Children's Camp is to provide a safe, nurturing and fun outdoor experience for youth with heart conditions where they can meet new friends and develop courage and independence without fear of being judged by others.

Benefits

Our camp helps these young people by providing opportunities to:

- Interact with their peers
- Learn more about their heart conditions
- Explore issues surrounding their heart conditions
- Learn new skills

Program



Heart Camp

Our 8th week-long summer camp was held in August 2022.

It was a great week of activities, education, making new friends, connecting with old pals, and simply enjoying being together again in the outdoors. Covid was our biggest concern and hurdle as we prepared for camp. With fewer campers this year due to the pandemic, we had just four cabins of kids. We were able to maintain some social distancing by keeping the cabin-pods separated throughout the day. This created a more intimate feel to the camp and, given that there were no cases of Covid reported during or after camp, we feel it was a successful approach.

For some, the highlight of camp was learning archery, for others, it was fishing at the pond or quietly doing art projects on the porch. Nearly every camper loves swimming in

the heated pool. It's a chance to be goofy, play water games, and not be concerned about the scars on their chests.

On the final day of camp, parents joined us for an awards ceremony. Each camper was recognized for a skill or attribute, three counselors summed up the week with a song, and we recognized camp founder Dr. Mary Rice and her husband, past program and executive director, Rob McDonald. Cabinmates gave final hugs and high fives and made promises to stay in touch.



Heart Education

This year, the education component of camp was our traditional four-station rotation. Campers spent time with two pediatric cardiologists, one giving a hands-on lesson on how devices work in the catheterization lab, and the other discussing different heart conditions with 3D models. They also had the opportunity to view heart valves and other anatomy during a pig heart

dissection. The final station was hosted by Biotronik where medical devices such as pacemakers were discussed. This program is entertaining and loaded with information. Campers love to see how the heart works, how their own repairs were made, and what the devices that are in their bodies look like.

Camp Volunteers

Board member Amy Halloran-Steiner helped lead the volunteer crew for our 2022 camp. Our outgoing ED Rob McDonald, incoming ED Tim LaBarge, and Amy coordinated dozens of volunteers who took on roles as part of our medical team, our support staff, and our team of counselors. We had an incredible crew this year including high school students, college students, graduate students, recent college graduates, pediatric cardiologists (including board member Dr. Lindsay Urbinelli), physician assistants, nurses, pharmacists, echocardiology specialists, device technicians, social workers, artists, speakers, and a whole collection of people who did a little bit of everything.



Program Impact



At our annual event, Camp Is Where the Heart Is, we had several speakers. Camp Counselor Kyleen (above left in center) spoke about her own experience growing up with a heart condition and what camp has grown to mean to her. The counselors and campers are now her community, her CHD family.

"It was Merry Hearts that helped me realize, even as a counselor, that having CHD is something that I should be proud of.

It was Merry Hearts that made me realize how truly lucky I was to be a part of this community and to represent it.

It was Merry Hearts that made me feel again, even as a counselor, like I wasn't so alone."

Long-time camper, Ben, (above right) spoke about the impact camp has had on him.

"I'm the only kid that I know of, in the schools I've attended, that has a heart condition. So, seeing so many other kids at camp is awesome and reminds me that I'm not alone."

We also heard from Physician Assistant Ali Lyman, who has been to five of our in-person camps. It was great to hear her perspective on the week and why she continues to volunteer on the medical team: "Because camp improves the quality of life of these amazing kids."

Camper Satisfaction



Each year after camp, we review the week with staff, counselors, and counselors in training. We always learn what worked and what did not, and how to improve the camp for next summer.

We also sent a post camp questionnaire to campers and their parents which will be reviewed at our next board meeting. At this point, we've received a handful of answers and the reviews are great.

The best part of camp for one camper: "All the new friends and nice people. It was cool to see that most people had scars too."

The worst part of camp for another: "That it ended."



Event: Camp Is Where the Heart Is



On April 21st, more than one hundred patrons and volunteers gathered for our second ***Camp Is Where the Heart Is*** event at Chris King Cycle Group in Northwest Portland for an evening of music, speakers, auction excitement, and connecting with one another. The event raised more than \$32,000 for the camp.

Derek Smith, of KMHD Jazz Radio, played a great selection of tunes from his personal collection of records. Bidding on items in the silent auction got heated a few times as friends outbid friends on amazing packages of items. And Brooke Olzendam, the Portland Trailblazer's courtside reporter, helped the program move along smoothly.

Executive Director Tim LaBarge spoke about the history and future of camp. But our camper, counselor, and medical providers (featured above in the Program Impact section) revealed why camp is truly important to this community.

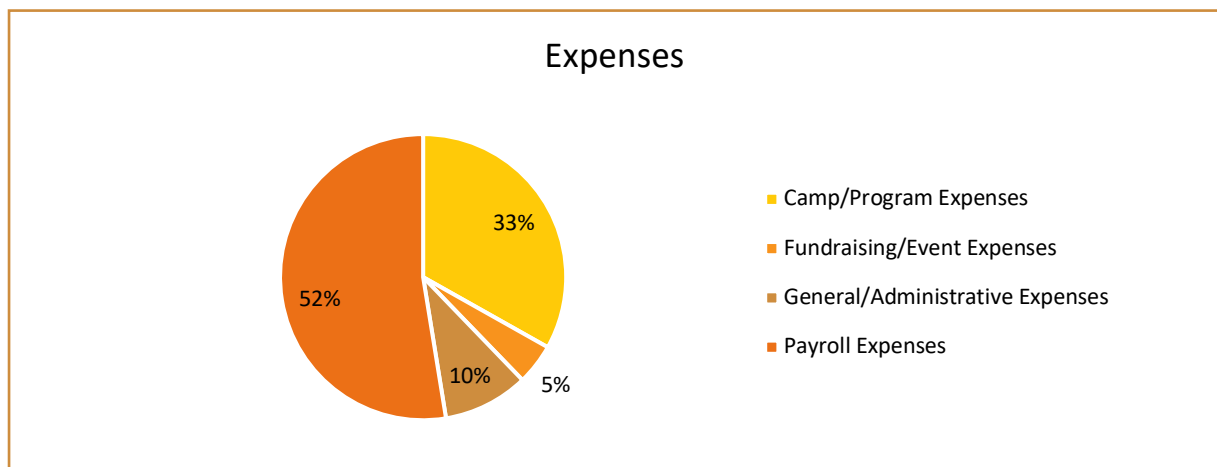
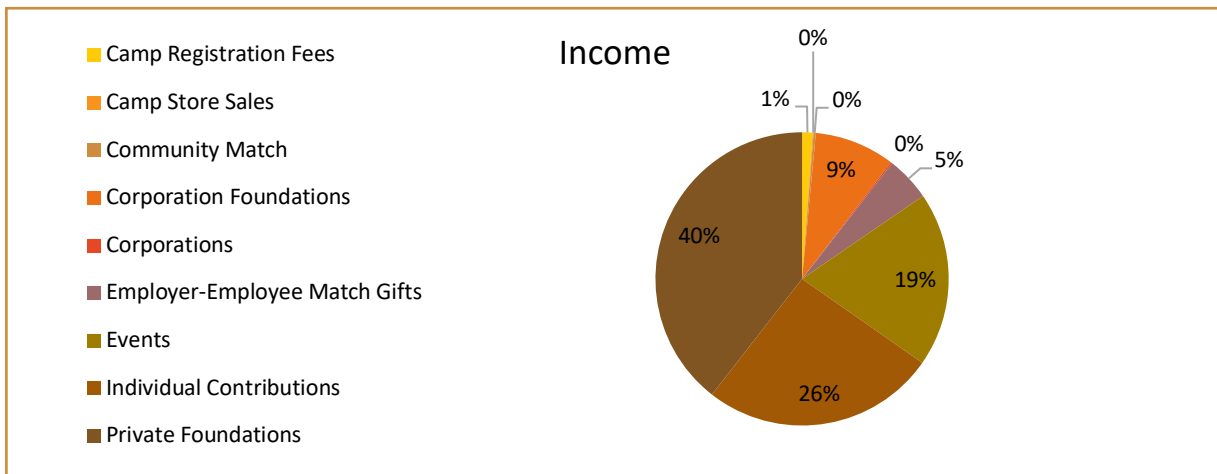
Support from Harnish Properties and Biotronik, Inc. helped make the event possible. We thank our donors, foundations, volunteers, camp families, and board members for believing in Merry Heart Children's Camp and helping make it happen every year.

Resources & Financial Management

This year, despite two years of pandemic operations, MHCC invested in growth. With help of a grant from Marie Lamfrom Charitable Foundation at the end of last fiscal year, the board voted to hire a part-time executive director to take over as our volunteer ED departed and to help guide the camp into the future.

Balance Sheet Summary	2020-2021	2021-2022
Total Assets	\$247,037.91	\$291,288.04
Total Liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$247,037.91	\$291,288.04
Variance	\$79,379.74	\$44,250.13

The organization also embraced the lower numbers at camp as a 'rebuilding year' after two years of online camp. Our goal is to increase camper numbers, individual donor contributions, and funds raised at smaller fundraisers like our **Camp Is Where the Heart Is** event. We also expect to expand our programming thereby reaching more youth and families in the heart community. This, over time, will improve our program vs. operations expenses.



Looking Forward

We are working hard to continue to provide a camp for our kids with heart conditions. Here is a quick summary in each area:

Finance: We hired an executive director to help lead the organization and increase our funding through online donations, increase our donor base, do an annual event each year and to increase the amount of grant support.

Programs: We expect to return to our pre-pandemic number of campers in 2023: 48 campers and six counselors in training. We also hope to expand our reach in the heart community in 2022 – 2023 by offering meetups for older youth, gatherings that include younger children, and opportunities for parents to connect.

Notable Upcoming Events: We are planning to host our third annual ***Camp Is Where the Heart Is*** event with a goal of meeting, or improving upon, last year's \$32,000.

We will also host and encourage smaller events to work towards more community support for the camp.

Sustainability: We continue to develop long-term relationships with all our donors, corporations, private and public foundations.

We Need Your Help

Every Donation Matters

Every penny matters when it comes to giving kids with heart conditions a place to go to meet their peers, be safe, and just have fun under the observation of our great medical volunteers.

It is a simple process to give by going to our [donation page](#) to donate. You can also donate by mail: Merry Heart Children's Camp, PO Box 80413, Portland, OR 97280.

Volunteer and Help Make a Difference

Not everyone can make a financial contribution. You can help in other areas by helping write grants, assisting with our annual fundraising event, coordinating other events, or volunteering for camp. Please visit our [website to volunteer](#) or send an email to director@merryheartchildrenscamp.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Thank You to All of Our Donors

Merry Heart Children's Camp is honored to collaborate with individuals, private foundations, corporations, and corporate foundation sponsors who help create a camp dedicated to youth with heart conditions. We would not be able to have this camp without you. **THANK YOU!**

Heart Guardian (More than \$5,000)

Juan Young Trust
Juliet Ashby Hillman
Foundation
Maybelle Clark MacDonald
Fund
Spirit Mountain Community
Fund
The June & Julian Foss
Foundation

Heart Hero (\$4,001 - \$5,000)

Biotronik, Inc
Bristol Myers Squibb
Harnish Properties
Medtronic, Inc.
Swigert Foundation
The Autzen Foundation
Rena Wittkopf

Heart Champion (\$2,501 - \$4,000)

OCF Joseph E. Weston
Public Foundation
Shapira Charitable
Foundation
Zera Foundation

Heart Keeper (\$1,001 - \$2,500)

Biotronik
Corey and Lindsay
Bushmaker
Paul Francis
Mary Rice and Rob
McDonald
Lindsay Urbinelli

Heart Friend (\$501 - \$1,000)

Michele and Robert Arluna

Mac Beall
Brigid Culey
Amy Culley
Edwards Lifesciences
Foundation
Shannon Howard
Victor Menashe
OnPoint Community Credit
Union
Thomas Morrissey
IQ Credit Union
The Holzman Foundation

Heart Helper (\$101 - \$500)

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Melinda Campbell
Peter Chang
Nancy Cretsinger
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Sweetheart (<\$100)

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Chris Pelikan
Austin Phillips
Diane Pohl
Tina Pohl
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Romana Preisner
Erich Regan
Ann Rice

Erika Rodakowski
Janine Salisbury – In
memory of Beau Laird
Zale Schoenborn
Travis Shultz
Nathan and Rene'
Sokolowski
Martin Sopher
Will Symms
Jeff Thomas
Maris Thompson
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