



Camp Hobé Herald

The Annual Camp Hobé Newsletter: February 2023

Message from the Executive Director

Welcome to 2023! We are so excited to kick off the new year. My staff has so many wonderful ideas for amazing programs to support our campers and their families.

Our 2022 summer camps were a fantastic Beach Party, serving 243 kids and teens. 44 kids registered for Day Camp / Hobé Juniors, 80 for Kids Week, 95 for Teen Week, and 24 for Virtual Camp. Forty-one percent were new campers, and 59% had participated in Camp Hobé before. Thirty-eight percent were patients and 62% were siblings. Of our patients, 97% had a diagnosis of cancer and 3% had related illnesses. Approximately 94% of our campers live in Utah, and the rest in Idaho, Nevada, and Wyoming. We offered 3 free family activities to our families in 2022, serving almost 600 individuals in 2022. Our family activities included our first-ever Virtual Family Game Night in March, a visit to the Utah Arts Festival in June, and the in-person Big Dig event (in partnership with the local American Cancer Society) in September.

Our primary focus is always on serving our families. As we look forward to 2023, I wanted to take a moment and focus on why we do this work. One of our campers said it best: "At Camp Hobé, I could be myself. Everyone is facing similar challenges, so no one judges each other. Surrounding yourself with others who get what you feel is truly amazing. I have met so many wonderful people."

Thanks once again for making these life-changing programs possible. You make this happen, whether you are a family who participates in our activities, a volunteer who gives their time, or a donor who gives financial support! We couldn't do this work every year without you. Happy 2023!

- Christina Beckwith (aka Wapiti Mama), Executive Director

We have been so grateful for the support and resource that Camp Hobé has been for our children over the last 9 years of our son's cancer journey. It has provided a safe place for them to be able to have fun and have a break from the day-to-day worry about cancer, while at the same time, be around peers that understand exactly what they are going through. There

is an understanding between ALL the kids that can go unspoken. They feel the heaviness of the burden that cancer can be, but being at Camp Hobé provides that reprieve. Our kids have been able to create lasting memories together with their siblings, as well as making new friends, creating instant bonds and friendships. It gives them the opportunity to be a KID while going through the unimaginable, either as a cancer kiddo, or a cancer sibling. Camp Hobé is something special, and will always hold a special place in our family's hearts.

-Shae Hansen (camper mom)



Beach Party 2022

Camp Hobé provides psychosocial support for kids with cancer (and similarly-treated disorders) and their families, through summer camps and family outings. Our mission is to create an atmosphere that enhances self-esteem, fosters independence and friendships, and creates a feeling of belonging.



Meaningful Moments

DAY CAMP / HOBE JUNIORS: Summer 2022 was a very meaningful year at Day Camp. One particularly memorable experience this year was the final campfire with the Hobé Juniors. The campers learned some new songs in their Dance and Music rotation and wanted to lead us in the songs. The campers went up on stage and led us in their songs without any help from the counselors. They knew all the words and sang their hearts out. This was the highlight of Day Camp for me this year!

At the end of camp, one camper said as he got into the car, "I had the best day ever!" That is why there is Camp Hobé: to give these kids their best day ever. Two of our first-time volunteers said as we wrapped up camp, that this experience changed their lives. This is what keeps volunteers coming back year after year.

We are so grateful for the volunteers, for another great year at camp and for the families for sharing their kids with us. It's because of our campers that Camp Hobé is the most special place around!

Maranda Fisher- Assistant Day/Jr Director

KIDS WEEK: Let me tell you about an experience that happened at Camp Hobé this year that showcases why camp and its campers are so special. During the middle of the week, I had the opportunity, along with my assistant director: Jessica, to lead a nature hike up the hill behind camp. Two cabins were selected for this hike that consisted of a scavenger hunt. While hiking up the hill, each camper had to look for hidden animals that I had strategically camouflaged along side the trail. There was a total of twelve animals to find, each the size of about your hand. As the hike started and the first few animals were found, one camper asked if they could keep the animal that they had found. I quickly thought in my mind that there were twelve campers and twelve animals. Perfect! Each camper will get one animal to keep. Toward the end of the hike, another camper pointed out that there were thirteen campers and not twelve campers. Oh boy! Now what do I do? It would not be fair for one camper to not be able to keep an animal while all the other campers could. I told the group of campers that unfortunately I had miscalculated how many campers there were for this hike and that they would not be able to keep the animals that they had found. Then the magic of camp happened. One young camper said they would give up their animal so that the other twelve campers would be able to have the opportunity to keep theirs. I was touched by this camper's kindness. Then later that evening at campfire, it came to my attention that another camper was touched by this one camper's decision to give up their animal, that they in turn gave up their animal as well. That is the spirit of Camp Hobé! This is the reason why I keep volunteering year after year. This is the reason why there is so much good in the world, because there are people like this camper who are selfless, thoughtful, and caring. When I leave camp each year, I leave with a new determination to be a better human being, to love a little more fiercely, and share kindness wherever I go. When I see these campers with the spirit of Hobé in them, I have no fear for what the future brings because we will be in good hands when these campers grow up and change the world.

Eric Willison (aka Captain Grape Boy), Kids Week Program Director

VIRTUAL CAMP: This camp session was especially meaningful. I lost a dear person to me to cancer the day virtual camp started. I was able to join the last day of camp and it was just the medicine I needed. Being surrounded virtually by all those campers who knew what it was like to live in the cancer world but still were living in the moment gave me strength. I especially loved watching the teens be so involved in the escape room followed by a karaoke of Backstreet Boys I Want It That Way! Camp Hobé is truly a magical place and it's amazing that the Hobé spirit continues on even virtually!

-Heather Hibbert- Virtual Session Director

TEEN WEEK: Hey Teen Week Campers! What an absolutely incredible week we shared. I say "shared" instead of "had" as we experienced things together, as a family, and not just as individuals. This year really touched my heart in more ways than one, and reminded me why I love to spend my time with you all every year. There's one moment in particular that I feel that all of you teens should know about, as every single one of you had influence into it. We have a particular camper who almost wasn't able to attend this year. He showed up a little shy and a little nervous. Although he had been to camp before, he was unsure he would fit in, as many of us have felt at the beginning of camp. I kept an eye on him throughout the first few days to ensure he felt included, however it turns out it was unnecessary. By Wednesday I had noticed a complete change in him. He was leading activities with a war cry, excited to talk to staff and all-around a changed person. Unsure of what had changed his attitude, I engaged him in an extremely competitive water fight, where I admittedly lost. When we were soaked and laughing until our stomachs ached, he came up and gave me a (masked) side hug, thanking me. I asked him what I did. He said he was thanking me for letting him come to camp and meet all of YOU. That he has never felt so absolutely loved and accepted by such a large group of previous strangers. That the love he felt from each and every one of you, erased all of the memories of hardship and pain brought on by a disease that brings us all together. Because of you all, he felt at peace. So, thank you Teen Week Campers. Thank you for being so unique, caring, loving and incredible. You change lives. Don't forget that.

**Love, Nicole (Princess) Ledford
Teen Week
Director**



Support our Programs

You can help our campers and families year-round in many ways, including shopping programs, car donations, and monthly giving. More info at camphobekids.org Learn More and Help.

New Shopping programs: The more you shop, the more you help.

- The Official Camp Hobé Swag Store: Purchase Camp Hobé gear at <https://www.bonfire.com/store/camp-hobe-gear/>, in the style, color, and size you want. Choose from apparel, mugs, tote, and other items. Items ship directly to you, and Camp Hobé receives part of the proceeds.
- Nextdoor Sell for Good: Visit <https://help.nextdoor.com/s/article/About-Sell-for-Good> to sell your stuff, then donate all / part of the proceeds to Camp Hobé.
- Walmart Round Up Program: Give change to make change! Round Up is part of Walmart's Spark Good program for nonprofits. Visit our profile at <https://www.walmart.com/nonprofits/7c5de-ca9-a1ae-487c-81b3-defcd6a792ff/profile>, then log in to your account to choose Camp Hobé for Round Up. Walmart will round your orders up to the nearest dollar at checkout, then donate your change to Camp Hobé.

Thanks for all you do to support our campers and their families!

CIT Director

This year at Camp Hobé the CITs started a new tradition which will endure at camp for years to come. Hobé Forever is a special place for campers to remember those who they have lost and allow their spirits to live on here at camp. This year we had the CITs decorate and share their stories by painting a new bench to dedicate to our Hobé Forever Garden. There were many unique paintings with inspiring stories behind them. By painting the bench this provided a space for the CITs to share their stories with their peers and allow them to bond with others who have shared similar experiences.

Keeping the Hobé spirit alive for all the past, present, and future campers and volunteers, proves that no matter what trials we go through and where life takes us, we are all forever a part of this Hobe family.

Emma Fisher- CIT Director



Medical Wrap-up

The summer of 2021 with ZERO cases of COVID at camp lead me to believe medically preparing for Camp Hobé 2022 would be easy! Our policies and procedures for handling a pandemic were in place. I have learned to appreciate my hopeful nature but the reality was different than what I hoped. The case numbers were higher than ever and the testing centers were closing. We found a testing center that could ship to home, the state agreed to come out to camp despite the holiday, and the numbers stopped climbing although they remained terribly high. YAY, we were in the clear! Wait! What about those case numbers? Well, they caused several of our staff to test positive and miss camp. They also caused families to worry and be exposed in the weeks leading up to camp. It was A LOT of work and worry by camp staff, families, campers, and volunteers.

BUT we did it, we got to camp! As the campers arrived, I began to hear the laughter and see the smiles of campers and volunteers alike. I could feel the spirit of Camp Hobé come alive. The spirit that allows everyone to feel a part of the camp family, a very special and important part of camp. I heard comments from campers like: "Don't you love how we just fit here?" and "Aren't you excited for the party?" One camper conquered his fear of taking pills by mouth and we celebrated! A camper reminded us all to live our lives fully and BIG during our remembering ceremony. Another child conquered his fear of staying overnight with flamingo lights! Finally, I cried, not because I was stressed out about the testing, or safety, but because the joy was overwhelming. THIS IS WHY WE DO THIS. Why we do the redundant tests, why we wear masks, why we pod into groups, why we eat outside at tables 6 feet apart. It is for the children, and their safety. It is so they can continue to come back each summer to find their place of joy and inclusivity, knowing they are safe.

So, did it work? Yes, it did. All the testing, pods, and caution were worth it, because to Camp Hobé, the safety of each and every camper, staff, and volunteer is top priority. Even one severe illness or injury would be unacceptable, especially if it was preventable. Thank you for helping us keep these campers and staff safe! See you next year—hopefully without the masks!

**- Jamie Seale -
Medical Director**



Bead Nomination Program

Any nerves that a parent, camper, or volunteer may have about Camp Hobé melt away when you see the smiles and join in the fun and friendships that only this type of camp can bring. Our hope is that the feelings of belonging felt here, shine during camp and help sustain us throughout the year until we get to be together again the next summer. One thing we did in 2022 to add to the magic of Hobé (and make its positive effects last forever) was enhancing a camp tradition we call our "Bead Nominations". We had the opportunity to partner with an international non-profit called "Beads of Courage". Through this partnership, kids and teen campers and the staff were given opportunities during each week to give and receive beads. They could add these beads to a special Hobé "Courage Clip" in hopes of recognizing and encouraging others AND ourselves.

We wanted to help everyone have tangible memories of those moments of courage, friendship, unity and kindness they displayed during their time at camp so they could remember those impactful moments and know that they make a difference.

I was blown away with how well it all was received. It was humbling to see campers write notes of caring to fellow campers and staff. Our leadership team gave beads and we all participated in bead activities of reflection and inspiration. I have never felt more united with our staff and campers in all my 13 years of camp.

1650 moments of Hobé courage and kindness were recognized with these bead nominations during the two weeks! Can you believe that!?! In 10 short days we made memories that will last a lifetime. I am humbled to be a part of this amazing organization and I look forward to gifting more beads for years to come!

-Ashley (smashley) Clinger- Deputy Director



Join Our Camp Hobé Team

Our mission to create an atmosphere that enhances self-esteem, fosters independence and friendships, and creates a feeling of belonging for our campers could not be realized without the time, energy, and dedication of our incredible volunteers. Our campers include children in Utah and surrounding states tackling psychosocial and medical challenges that occur with cancer and similarly treated disorders. Please join us and be a part of a program that helps support their needs through our summer camps and year-round family outings!

We have a variety of positions that are suitable for all ages and skills sets. We need medical volunteers, lifeguards, food service staff, as well as volunteers to help run activities, supervise campers, publicize our events, and raise funds throughout the year.

We are now accepting applications for the 2023 season. All volunteers must apply, interview, and complete staff training before camp. Each session's volunteers must be onsite for their full summer camp sessions. Visit <https://camphobekids.org/home/volunteer/> for an overview of all our volunteer opportunities and more information.

We thank you for your consideration to volunteer with Camp Hobé. It is an opportunity to make a difference, meet new friends, and provide our campers with the support they need to discover the joy and freedom of being a kid.

-Shamar Lejardi- Volunteer Coordinator

To see all important Camp Hobé dates, visit our event calendar here:
<https://camphobekids.org/home/camp-hobe/camp-dates/>

2023 Program Dates

Family outings: free of charge to all eligible families.

- Cookie Event: Registration Kick off! April 15th
- ACS Big Dig Construction vs. Cancer: Sept 23rd
- Other events: Coming soon!

In-person Summer camp sessions

- Day Camp / Hobé Juniors (ages 4-6 years): Friday 6/9 and Saturday 6/10. Day Camp for 4-6 years, and Hobé Juniors (1-night overnight) for 6+ years.
- Kids Week (ages 7-11 years): Monday 6/12 to Friday 6/16
- Teen Week (ages 12-19 years): Monday 6/19 to Friday 6/23

Virtual Summer camp session 2023:

- Monday 7/10 to Thursday 7/13



Psychosocial support programs for kids with cancer (& similarly-treated disorders) and their families.

[HTTPS://CAMPHOBEEKIDS.ORG](https://CAMPHOBEEKIDS.ORG)