

Building Bridges of Hope

Building Bridges of Hope is a campaign to build the Harbor Lodge at the Children's Harbor Lake Martin Campus. The complex consists of 13 buildings which includes a conference center, 44 rooms of sleeping space with a capacity of 5 people per room, and a duplex cabin for conference leaders and/or medical staff. Harbor Lodge is designed to meet the rest and relaxation needs of families who have seriously ill children. When not being used by these families, the facilities will be made available to other groups with a preference for those serving children and families. Construction on Phase 1 of Harbor Lodge is complete. (See related story on pages 6-7.)



Friends of Children's Harbor who made a leadership gift toward the construction of Harbor Lodge are listed below:

FRONT GATE AND ROAD - Dedicated in Loving Memory of Billy and Annie Laurie Radney

CABIN 1 - The Daniel Foundation of Alabama

CABIN 2 - ALFA Foundation

CABIN 3 - Alexander City Rotary Club

CABIN 4

- Room A - Alabama Power Foundation
- Room B - Warren and Suzanne Hines
- Room C - Bill and Fay Ireland
- Room D - Jamie and Marty French

CABIN 5

- Room A - Regions Bank
- Room B - In Honor of Hunt and Lily by Carter and Susan Kennedy
- Room C - Robert R. Meyer Foundation
- Room D - In Loving Memory of Mr. and Mrs. James H. Skinner

CABIN 6

- Room A - Ron and Anne Drinkard
- Room B - Roy and Nancy Granger
- Room C - Martha and Trnum Fitzpatrick
- Room D - John W. (Jack) and Patricia Barr

CABIN 7

- Room A - In Memory of Tom Williams (Joan, Tommy, Jane, and Clark)
- Room B - In Loving Memory of Charlene Jones by Paul Jones and Compass Bank

- Room C - Chris and JoAnne Richardson
- Room D - Employees of Motion Industries

CABIN 8

- Room A - Hill Crest Foundation
- Room B - In Loving Memory of Justin McBurney by Bob and Barbara Smith (Bob Smith Construction, Inc.)
- Room C - Protective Life Corporation
- Room D - Tim and Pam Wellborn

CABIN 9 - In Honor of "You" by Paul and Isabelle Dreher

CABIN 10

- Room A - In Memory of Kimberly Carla McLendon by Randy, Beverly, and Ryan McClendon
- Room B - The Luce Family (Karen, Mike, Farris Ann, Kyle, Jacob, and Nathan)
- Room C - Harbert Management Corporation
- Room D - Wood and Donna Herren

CABIN 11

- Room A - Charles and Patsy Collat and the Associates of Mayer Electric
- Room B - In Honor of Anna Ballowe Aldag Edward Karl Aldag, III and Anderson Bishop Aldag by Ed and Melinda Aldag
- Room C - In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Haber Vickers by Owen and Marsha Vickers
- Room D - In Memory of Joni Meeks by Owen and Marsha Vickers

CABIN 12 (Duplex) - Available to be Named

CONFERENCE CENTER

- Registration Office - In Honor of Al and Virgie Perkins by Joe and Becky Smith
- Meeting Room 1 - Gordon and Bobbie Spitzer
- Meeting Room 2 - Available to be Named
- Breezeway Leading to Phone and Laundry Areas - Available to be Named
- Fireplace - Available to be Named
- Conference and Dining Room - Available to be Named
- Meal Serving Area - Available to be Named
- Kitchen - Available to be Named
- Boardwalk and Bridge - Available to be Named
- Sound and Video System - Available to be Named

BOAT DOCKS AND PIERS (To be Constructed) - Available to be Named

CART BARN AND LAUNDRY FACILITY (To be Constructed) - Available to be Named

AMPHITHEATER - (To be Constructed) - Available to be Named

VOLLEYBALL AND BASKETBALL COURTS - Available to be Named

Harbor Lodge Dedication

Harbor Lodge Dedicated August 18, 2007

History will record August 18, 2007, as an important date for Children's Harbor. Mid-morning on this extraordinarily humid and hot day, friends and families gathered at Children's Harbor to dedicate Harbor Lodge to the memory of Billy and Annie Laurie Radney, parents of Children's Harbor Co-founder Luanne Russell.

Realizing there simply was not enough space to meet the needs of families with sick or disabled children, Executive Director Jim Ray proposed the new Harbor Lodge. After the board approved the idea, Ben and Luanne Russell and Russell Lands donated 16 lakefront acres adjoining the existing campus. Along with a dedicated volunteer campaign committee chaired by Richard Cashio of Birmingham, Jim and the Board of Directors kicked off the "Building Bridges of Hope" campaign to raise the \$9.9 million needed to translate the dream into the reality of August 18, 2007.

Parents and children played a key role in the Lodge's design. One of the things they wanted was accessibility. Harbor Lodge has 11 cabins with four family units per cabin, each of which can sleep up to five people. There's also a duplex cabin to house physicians/nurses, staff or guests, and a 10,000 square-foot conference facility that can accommodate 250 people for meals and meetings. The conference facility has two breakout rooms and is equipped with state-of-the-art audio and video equipment, including wireless internet connections. Wheelchair accessible walkways connect each cabin to the other and to the conference center.



The Full Life Ahead Foundation was the first illness-related organization to use the new Harbor Lodge facilities. Their family camp was held in July 2007.

The first illness-related organization to use the facility was the Birmingham-based Full Life Ahead Foundation, which assists students with disabilities and their families in planning and achieving a full life after high school. They held a family retreat in July, and families at the retreat were overwhelmed at the lodge's level of accessibility for the disabled children.

Suzanne Echols of Gardendale and her son, Joshua, who depends on his wheel chair because of cerebral palsy, attended the family retreat and returned on August 18 to help celebrate the lodge's official dedication.

Suzanne said that it was at the new lodge that Joshua, 21, was able to take a shower independently for the first time since he was 14. He could get into the swimming pool by himself. And he could wheel out the door of the cabin at the lodge without assistance and say, "See you later, Mom."

Because all of its 13 buildings are connected with walkways that are wheelchair-accessible, Joshua could leave their cabin and return without assistance. "It was just great to know that he could do that, and I didn't have to worry about it," Suzanne said.

At the Full Life Ahead retreat at Harbor Lodge, Joshua was around people who have gone through the same experiences and who have overcome obstacles. Meeting with those in a setting where so many everyday barriers have been removed made the experience even more meaningful. Suzanne



Children's Harbor board members, staff, families, and friends gathered on August 18, 2007, to dedicate the new Harbor Lodge to the memory of Billy and Annie Laurie Radney, parents of co-founder Luanne Russell. Contributions to the "Building of Bridges of Hope" campaign made this a day of celebration for children with long-term serious illnesses and their families.

said the retreat has given Joshua hope for his future.

Magic Moments, a Birmingham-based organization whose mission is to provide wishes for children with life-altering illnesses, has been a Children's Harbor partner for many years. Tim Head's daughter Jennifer, now 12, (featured on the front cover of this publication) has been coming to Magic Moments Family Camp at Children's Harbor for four years. Tim said the new Harbor Lodge means that "more children will be able to experience what we've gotten to experience. The kids come down, and when they leave, they just have a whole new level of confidence. They meet so many struggles out there in regular life and people saying you can't do this, you can't go here, but when they come down here they can do anything they want. They can ski; they can swim in the pool and slide down the slide. A lot of the kids have never gotten to experience that ever in their lives."



The cabins and conference center are nestled among the trees on the 16-acre site donated by Ben and Luanne Russell and Russell Lands. Harbor Lodge is an extension of the existing facilities on the Lake Martin campus.



Pam and Tim Wellborn are among the leadership-level donors to the campaign who attended the dedication and toured the new facilities. Room D of Cabin 8 is named in honor of their gift.

business groups, with the rental income helping pay the cost of donating the facilities to the illness camps.

Chip Colee, senior choir director at First Baptist Church in Montgomery, thinks the conference center reaches its goal grandly.



Joe and Becky Smith made a leadership gift to name the Harbor Lodge Registration Office in honor of Al and Virgie Perkins, long-time friends of Children's Harbor.

Tim said the blessing of the new lodge is that "there's going to be so many other people that can come to a place like this that really couldn't afford to go to any other place or have the physical ability to go any other place and do these things."

Another part of the dream was to use Harbor Lodge to provide a state-of-the-art conference center that could be rented by non-profit and

The church brought its junior high school and senior high school choirs to a retreat at the lodge. "We (First Baptist) do a lot of camps and retreats, and we all agree that you just don't find a place like that."

Chip said the senior high school choir, which numbers near 90, divided the large meeting room in two. Half of the room was left set up for eating and the other half was set up for rehearsals. "It's got everything you need. The A/V (audio-visual) equipment is first rate, and the acoustics were great," he said. "Early in the year like this, it's important that the choir members get some confidence, and so it was so great to have such a live room like that for them to sing in."

The junior high school choir used one of the smaller rooms, and the youth pastor set up video games in another room with a large, flat panel screen mounted on the wall. Choir members played the games or played outdoors during breaks.

Hmmm . . . seems to me that giving Joshua and others reason to hope is something to sing about!

(See related story on page 4.)



This impressive rock fireplace is the feature of the 10,000 square-foot state-of-the-art conference facility.