First Annual Duck Ranger Derby Event Brings New Fun, Friends & Fundraising

Over 3,200 duckies took a maiden voyage on Lake Monomonic during the first annual Duck Ranger Derby this summer at camp. This event, inspired by a favorite camp song and dreamed up as a FUNdraiser which would engage campers, staff, families, friends, and neighbors of the camp, was a rousing success!

During staff training in June, counselors descended in their small mentoring groups on local businesses to offer free face painting to patrons and promote the Derby. Over 1,200 ducks were adopted just that day—and countless faces painted! Sponsor locations included Market Basket, the Hometown Diner in Rindge, Belletetes, the Daily Bagel Café, Wal-Mart, and Pizza Pi. It was a great chance to spread the word about Starfish, and our staff took their enthusiasm and excitement for that task to a whole new level! Our Derby Mascot, the Quacken, made a visit to each location for pictures with kids and even autograph signing!

A few short weeks later it was Derby day! Campers and staff were joined by adopters and friends of camp for a yummy picnic lunch and Flooded Corral Carnival—complete with games and prizes galore. And, of course, before we let the ducks loose everyone joined in for a rousing rendition of the Duck Ranger Song, the inspiration behind the entire event.

Lake Monomonic isn’t exactly a raging river, but duckies were released from a big canoe at Star Beach and herded along their course to the swim beach by camper, staff, and volunteer Duck Rovers, who (like in the song) made sure the duckies could “git along OK.” As ducks made it to the finish line, 4th year camper (and Derby Ambassador) Sharice helped Camp Director Adam record winners: the first, second and third place ducks, then the anniversary duck (this year it was the 15th to cross) and finally, the Daffy Duck—the very last one! Then camper volunteers had fun tossing the arrivals into the shallow end of the swim area. Before the ducks were taken out, camper bunks took turns hopping in the water to take pictures with the racers and, of course, the Quacken.

At the end of the day, when the duck adoptions were counted, we had raised over $11,000 for the Campership Fund. And in addition to all the fun and spirit of the day, we think that’s just ducky!

Relive the fun of the Derby online! See pictures & videos, listen to songs, and more. And get ready...2015 adoptions will open in April!

...and the winners are:

1st Place
#1753 Erica Ploof
2nd Place
#2631 Michelle Hankins
3rd Place
#431 Tara & Jason House
15th (Anniversary Duck)
#3162 Donna Lundeen
Daffy (Last Duck)
#1297 Astrid Thayer
Happenings & Updates

2014 Legacy of Leadership Award: Kevin J. Sullivan, Jr.
The Ned Rimer Legacy of Leadership Award is presented annually to an individual who epitomizes the mission by making a significant difference for the children, staff and families at Starfish. Kevin was honored in recognition of his truly extraordinary efforts over several years to support the camp and secure Starfish's permanent home in Rindge.

↑ Board Co-Presidents Alisha and Carrie present the award to Kevin (with his family).

Camper Wins School Award; Honors Starfish
For his award-winning senior project, 8th year camper veteran Sam created cards using his own photography and sold them to raise money for the Starfish Campership Fund. Sam made presentations at several public events, including July 4th and Veteran’s Day programs, as well as at a select Holiday Craft Fair. Way to go, Sam!

Sam presents Camp Director Adam Sparks with a donation check in front of over 200 people.

Clinton Savings Bank & the GPGP Stock the Safe Garden
Along with The Growing Places Garden Project and Central MA Sand and Gravel, staff from Clinton Savings Bank built several raised beds for the Safe Garden, and also planted everything from strawberries and cabbages to fresh herbs! Campers watered and cared for the vegetables, harvesting them in small batches for the kitchen to use in tasty meals. We picked green beans into October!

↑ Campers and staff show off their costumes before trick-or-treating.

Camp is Chosen Partner in Sorority Philanthropy
The Central MA Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Sigma Sigma has selected Camp Starfish as a focus for their local philanthropy. They have since donated funds, opened camp at the spring Work Day, and helped to make the Halloween Hurrah a grand success. Starfish is very grateful for their good work! If you have a club, organization or business looking for a charity partner, please suggest us!

↑ Members of Sigma Sigma Sigma, Starfish Board members, and camp staff at the May Work Day.

Yoga Reaches Out Holds Kids’ Yogathon to Benefit Starfish and Raises $6500!
YRO’s Kids Yogathon saw over 100 kids and families come together to support Starfish, raising $6500! Each child raised at least $50 to participate. Sarah, Elizabeth, and Joanna at YRO went out of their way to welcome Starfish to the YRO family, even inviting us to lead the intro to an afternoon Family Yoga session. An immense number of volunteers made the day truly amazing and we are extremely grateful!

↑ Kids and parents participating during a session at the Yogathon Singing the Aaaahhagator song with Starfish staff at the start of Family Yoga

Jamie Ingram Reaches 5-Year Milestone
Camp Starfish applauds Jamie Ingram, who recently completed her 5th summer at camp! Jamie started as a lifeguard and swim instructor on the waterfront and returned the following summers as an Administrator—Waterfront Director, then Head of Villages, and in 2013, as Assistant Director. Jamie also works part-time with the year-round team, helping with the staff hiring and camper enrollment. When she’s not at camp, Jamie works in South Carolina as a Pediatric Physical Therapist’s Assistant, where she helps children gain strength, balance and mobility, and spends free time with her family, where she is the oldest of six siblings.

↑ (L-R) Village Directors Kellene and Chris (with a friend), Day Camp Director Danny, and Jamie.

"We're Thankful For..." A Message from our Board Co-Presidents
Each year as our Fall/Winter Newsletter goes to print, we’re just about to enjoy Thanksgiving. It’s the perfect time to reflect on everything we are thankful for—our health, food on the table, a roof over our heads, people who love us and whom we love—and the many other wonders that fill our lives.

We also reflect on how thankful we are for the outpouring of support that comes from all of you in our Starfish family. You give your time to visit in the summer, to see the magic of what’s happening on site. Others of you send funds to cover essential services at the camp. Still others host fundraisers, dedicate a gift to Starfish in lieu of wedding favors, run a marathon in support of Starfish, collect toiletries for our campers who come without, or raise money to help us raise the roof on a new cabin. Some of you actually come with hammers in hand to raise that roof. We are lucky and grateful to have such wonderful, generous supporters.

When our campers and families sit down for Thanksgiving and share what they are thankful for, Starfish will be at the top of many lists. Thank you for all that you do to make that possible. It is a wonderful gift.

↑ Carine (in the wheelbarrow) and Alisha (second from right, back row) with staff members on Duck Day in June. "Visiting the donation locations and spending time with staff was fantastic." Carine said. Alisha added, "the dedication, professionalism and positive energy of the staff was out there for everyone to see."

- Alisha Pollastr, Ph.D. & Carrie Endries
Co-Presidents, Starfish Board of Directors
Thank You to our Shining Stars!

Camp Starfish is tremendously grateful to our many friends for their generous sponsorship between Oct. 31, 2013 & 2014.

- Anonymous (2)
  In Honor of Kyla Cody (1)
- Helen Adrienne-Spurr & Marc Spurr
  In Honor of Shaina Grace Berman
  In Memory of Shelia Walter
- Joseph & Marion Armstrong
- Debra Aylward
- Steven & Susan Bails
- Karlan Baumann
- Grace Bell
  In Honor of Chris Neumann
- Joshua Berlin
- Deb Berman
- Steve Boucher
- Robert & Lib Blucke
- Andrew Bushman & Amy Null
- William & Mary Burtis
- Susan Oke Bush
- Stephen & Jocelyn Caplow
- Michael Carver
  In Honor of Eleanor Carver
- Lynne Cascauuro
- Michael & Mindy Celona
- Lawrence B. Cohen, Esq.
- Sandi Coleman
- Elaine Cusick
- Jillian & Marc Cyr
- Mark D'Avilla
- Peter & Kathryn Deane
- Beth Degen
- Peter & Betsy Dempsey
- Bruce & Kirsten Dillaire
- William & Lindsay Donovan
- Michael & Susan Duffy
- Bryn Dunn
- Carrie Endries & Paul Morgan
- Diane Evelyn
- John & Anne Endries
  In Honor of Starfish Camp Counselors
- Cara Falconi
- Sean Feeney
- Kayla M. Flaherty-Dawson
- Joanne Foster
- Sarah Gardner
- Laurence & Yurika Geffin
  In Honor of Annalee Salcedo Power
- Emily Golinsky & Michelle Cyr
  In Honor of Shaina Grace Berman
- Herb & Doris Golinsky
  In Honor of Emily Golinsky
- Helen Hamel
  In Honor of Brian, Karen & Billy Mariscal

- Jay Gordon
- Elizabeth Goranson
- Richard & Shari Gelber
- Mr. & Mrs. Paul Giguette
- Paul & Mary Hayes
- James & Carol Herscot
- Maria Heskies-Allard
- Jim & Kathy John
- Jesse Johnson
- Karen Katsis
  Debber Berman's birthday
- Clarence & Claire Kay
  In Memory of Bessie W. Ross
- Michael Kunin
- Emily Lord
- John & Mary Lord
- Joanna Losty
- Donna Lundeen
- Bonnie MacDonald & Timothy Thomas
- Elizabeth Masden
- Alice Maggard
- Annette Manasse
  In Honor of the Manasse Pots Family
- Karen & Brian Mariscal
- Tom Martinson
- Chris Mawhinney
- Jacky Mayall
- John McCarthy & Eleanor Brox
- Levan McLain
- Anita McFeeters
  In Honor of Kellene Resa
- Jennifer McIntosh
- Julie & Patrick McVeigh
  In Honor of Leo True-Frost
- Carl & Dorothy Mellon
- Andrew Minter
  In Honor of Carrie & Paul's Wedding
- Elaine Mittell
- Sam Montanez
- Beth Montplaisir
- Melissa Morris
- Jeff Murphy
- Mary Kay Mykky
- Jim & Ginny Neumann
  In Honor of Chris Neumann
- Chris Neumann
- John & Ellen Nylds
- Maureen & Brian Oats
  In Honor of Deb Berman
- Kym Oppenheim Williams
- Janet Ousley
- Bo & Katherine Peabody
- Anne Perset
- Charles & Anita Phillips
- Marty Pirriannini
- Michael & Alisha Pollastrri
- Arlene Prater
  In Honor of Gwenyth Prater
- John & Debra Queen
- Kate Rafferty
- Zoie Randell
  In Honor of Carrie & Paul's Wedding
- Richard Reinhans
- Beverly Rimer
  In Honor of Ned Rimer
- Ned & Katie Rimer
  In Honor of Starfish Staff
- Bill Seidman & Harriet Robbins
- Liz & Alan Rockin
- Bob Roff
  In Honor of Alex Roff
- In Memory of Sara & Edward Roff
- Annalee Salcedo
  In Honor of Deb Berman
- Brad & Angel Santos Bories
- Anthony & Vera Sarantakis
- Kinsey Sebeika
- Joseph & Linda Senecal
- Ken Danila & Maggie Schmidt
- Adam & Aimee Sparks
- Eric & Iris Spungin
- Jan & Bill Stanwood
- Jeff & Deana Stephens
- Mark & Martha Steward
  In Honor of Bunny Holden, XOHKOY Ryan
- David Stolow
- M. Suits
  In Honor of Sarah Wiltz
- Fran & Ann Sullivan
- Kathleen Sullivan
  In Memory of Kevin Sullivan, Sr.
- Kevin & Adrienne Sullivan
- Marie Tremlay
  In Honor of Tyler Tremlay
- Steve & Claire Tunnick
  In Honor of Deb Berman
- Niambi & Amber van Meines
  Ice Bucket Challenge in Honor of Monte
- Sally Winter
- Robert & Kristi Zalukich
  In Support of Chicago Marathon Run by Singu Sarasivas
- Anonymous (3)
- David & Sonoko Barnard
- Singu’s Run, Continued
- Kathleen Coolidge
- Gerald & Elizabeth Devlin
- Stephen Fogg
- Rick Fingerman
- Karen & Jeff Greene
- Scott Haug
- Elliot Herman
- Joyce & Don
- Marianne Laffite
- Jim Lille
- Abigail Maines
- Marks Family
- Maureen McCaffrey
- Frank & Tracy McGrath
- Elaine & Doug Mittel
- Elizabeth Morgen
- Matt & Jen Packard
- Janet & John Pattillo
- Suzanne Pettit
- Judy Pinkser & Ben Smith
- Ellen Reynolds
- Thomas Scannell & Jeanne Hathaway
- Beth & Chris Shed
- Mark & Liz Spoto
- Nancy & Kirk Williamson

On Giving Tuesday (Dec. 3)
- Deb Berman
  In Honor of Emily Golinsky
- Elisabeth Bialosky
- Reid & Janet Boswell
- Robert & Cynthia Childs
- James & Kathy Deputy
  In Memory of Kevin J. Sullivan, Esq.
- Paul & Marilyn Hinkson
- Elizabeth Kay
  In Honor of Emily Golinsky & Michelle Cyr
- Ted & Jennifer Kremer
- Karen LeBlanc
- Jim & Ginny Neumann
- Marie Nazzaro
- Kerry Preyts
- Helen Rafterey
- William Richards
- Nancy Rullio
- Bill & Robin Spound
- Marc Spurr & Helen Adrienne-Spurr
- Cathy Stahl
- Linda Tanner
- Alison Walters

Special thanks to the foundations & corporations below for the outstanding support they provide:

- Associated Grantmakers / SummerFund
- Autism Speaks, Baker Camp Scholarship Fund
- Beacon Hill Circle For Charity
- Christensen-Dunn Early Foundations Fund
- C.J. Mawhinney Construction Co.
- Constant Contact CreatesKids Program
- Duttie Tremblay Community Fund
- Father Wren Council-KOF #3963
- Google Matching Gift, Grants Program
- Anonymous
- Belmont Hill School
- B.R. Alexander & Co.
- Central MA Sand & Gravel
- Clinton Savings Bank
- Cambridge Trust Company
- Curalate
- Fresh Start Cleaning
- McGraw Wentworth
- Growing Places Garden Project
- Johnson Family Foundation
- J.E. & Z.B. Butler Foundation
- Marigold Charitable Trust
- Mentor Charitable Fund
- Mary W.B. Curtis Trust
- Novack Family Foundation
- Parish of the Epiphany
- Max Kagan Family Foundation
- NH USDA Summer Food Program
- Constance O. Putnam Foundation
- Sarah W. Rollins Charitable Trust
- Stanton & Company
- Turnaround Management Asssoc., NC Chapter
- United Technologies
- Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills
- Wilmer, Cutler, Pickering, Hale & Dor
- Yoga Reaches Out

We are proud to collaborate with over 100 agencies, schools and programs, including the following:

- Adoptive Families for Children Foundation
- Arbor Counseling
- Autism Resource Center of Central MA
- Bay State Community Services, Inc.
- Brockton Area Multi-Services
- Brockton Community Mental Health Center, Inc.
- Cape Cod Regional Technical High School
- Central MA Alumnae Chapter, Sigma Sigma Sigma
- City of North Hampton, MA
- Community Council of Bristol County
- Community Council of Nashua, NH
- CT Department of Children & Families
- Deerfield School District
- The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism
- Ellie Fund
- Harry Alan Gregg Foundation
- Henninger Community School
- The Home for Little Wanderers
- The Institute of Professional Practice, Inc.
- Jason Hayes Foundation
- Judge Baker Children's Center/Mansville School
- Lahaye Health Shared Services
- MA Department of Children & Families
- MA Department of Mental Health
- Monadnock Developmental Services
- North Hampton School District
- North Middlesex Regional School District
- Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union
- Rise Above Foundation
- ServiceNet, Inc.
- Stoddard Schevalier District
- Towns of Georgetown & Westford, MA
- Wayside Youth & Family Support Network
A Look Back At How Far We've Come...

2000
Starfish opens for Summer #1 at a rented camp in Brewster, on Cape Cod.

2003
Camp hosts over 130 campers!

2004
Summer #5 moves to Camp Monomonoac in Rindge, NH.

2008
Starfish purchases the property on the shore of Lake Monomonoac. The camp now has a permanent home!

2009
Beachcombers and Camp Havocado programs begin!

2011
We celebrate our 10th summer, open Starfish Day Camp & begin year-round Weekenders respite.

2014
We celebrate our 15th summer of camp with over 180 overnighters, 75+ day campers and 100 staff members!

2012
The Starfish Lite program opens to offer younger overnight campers a 5-day, 4-night "try it" camp.

...As We Celebrate Our 15th Summer of Camp!

This summer, Camp Starfish reached a milestone—our 15th summer! Back in 1998, Starfish was a dream—a graduate school project of our founder, Deb Berman. She and co-founder Rick Hobish turned that spark into a reality when 87 campers got to experience the summer of 2000 at camp in Brewster, MA.

Over the formative years since, Starfish has grown, evolved and continued to collect accolades as a premier provider of safe, structured, fun and nurturing one-to-one programs for children with significant emotional, behavioral, social and learning difficulties.

Starfish is truly an awesome place with amazing people. This year, we decided to celebrate our birthday by starting a new tradition! In a ceremony at the opening campfire, each camper and staff member is called up to the stage to receive an “Awesome Place. Amazing People” t-shirt. There’s a different saying and color for each year of attendance, with our camp colors (blue, green and yellow) making up the first three years and the largest groups. We intentionally picked our first year quote, “watch while I do something amazing,” because it is during their first experience at Starfish that so many campers and staff learn to believe in their abilities! Participating at Starfish helps boost self-confidence and self-esteem, which is why our second years return to camp to proclaim “hello, my name is awesome.” This new tradition was quickly embraced by everyone from first year attendees all the way up to our 9-year veterans, and we’re already planning a new 10th year quote and color for these long-time returners in 2015! We can’t think of a better way to welcome our first years, recognize our senior campers and long-time staffers, get everyone excited about coming back to camp in future summers (one blue-shirted camper asked us, “how many years do I have before orange? It’s my favorite color!”) and honor the anniversary of such an awesome, amazing dream. Try not to be distracted by our awesome!

WATCH WHILE I DO SOMETHING AMAZING.
HELLO, MY NAME IS AWESOME.
I PUT THE "ZING" IN AMAZING.
TRY NOT TO BE DISTRACTED BY MY AWESOME.
ABSOLUTELY AMAZING IN EVERY WAY.
AWESOME IS MY NAME...CAMP IS MY GAME.
YOU CAN'T SPELL AWESOME WITHOUT ME.
I RADIATE 100% PURE AMAZING.
EXCUSE ME, I'M BUSY BEING AWESOME.
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**SARAH'S STORY**

When you are a teenaged girl with no true friends, there's not much to do in the summertime. Without school occupying her time, Sarah wandered aimlessly with little direction. Her best friends in the summertime? Books. But that was before Sarah and her mom Michele found Camp Starfish.

**Sarah:** Summers before I went to Camp Starfish, I mostly walked around town and I spent a lot of my time in the library. It was very boring and I didn't really enjoy it.

**Michele:** Socially, Sarah could not keep up. She was more likely to spend her time in the library or under a tree in the yard reading a book than she would [spend her time] trying to make friends. No one has really known what to do with her. She seemed OK on the outside, so people would just leave her alone.

Sarah's mom Michele always tried to keep her daughter busy during the summer months. Despite many planned trips and several attempts at traditional summer camps, Sarah was never ever to break out of her shell. She would return home "the same Sarah." Both Sarah and her mom wanted something different.

**Sarah:** Before Camp Starfish, I didn't really have any friends. I didn't really have people to hang out with. I just sort of hung out by myself a lot. I was very depressed a lot when I was by myself.

**Michele:** I wanted her to be safe. Everyone had been letting her do what she wants and I wanted her to become her own individual. I wanted Sarah to be able to go somewhere where she could learn to be herself, learn to take care of herself, and learn that she's a good person and that she has so much potential. Camp Starfish is that place.

When Sarah and her family visited Camp Starfish during an open house event, Sarah was hesitant and nervous.

**Sarah:** I remember thinking that I'd be really bored and lonely. I thought it would be the same [as other camps I've attended]. I was very negative about everything. As soon as I got to camp on the first day, I rode up on my dad's motorcycle. Everyone knew my name; everyone sang to me. It psyched me up. I had never really had that before, where everyone was happy to see me. It was genuine and it felt good.

Sarah flourished at Camp like never before, like nowhere else. With support from counselors and new-found friends, Sarah's inward, depressed demeanor noticeably changed to a smiling, happy camper.

**Sarah:** Going to Camp Starfish was a way for me to be happy. Camp to me signifies happiness. When I was signed up to go to camp, I was given happiness.

**Michele:** She was a totally different person! Her face was clear. She was happy and energetic. It was just amazing! When my daughters and I got in the car, we said "who is that girl?!" I wished I could recreate what Starfish does at home!

The impact Camp Starfish has had on their lives has been exceptional.

**Michele:** People understand at Camp Starfish. They don't judge her and think that she's rude, disrespectful, moody, or mean. Those are titles that she gets in other programs that she has gone to. There is a small group of people in Sarah's everyday life who understand what she's going through. But, it seems like everybody at Camp Starfish gets it.

**Sarah:** No one will let you down at Camp Starfish. They are going to hold you up. They want you to succeed just as much as you want to succeed. I learned that going in with a positive attitude means that you'll have a more positive experience. You should still try new things to better yourself. I did try new things like chicken parm (and I learned I still hate it). I started drawing again. I said I wasn't going to swim, but I did, and I passed swim levels! Now I have healthy eating habits and better sleep patterns. Camp Starfish changed me.