



FEATURES

Going camping to conquer cancer*Normandy Farms joins Jimmy Fund event***By Christine Igo Freeman**

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The Jimmy Fund means many different things to many people. For the Garrett Family of Leominster and 200 fellow campers, it meant a recent weekend at Foxboro's Normandy Farms Campground as part of a new pilot program simply called Jimmy Fund Campout.

The Campout was held at four New England campgrounds the weekend of Sept. 14-16 in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. All funds generated from the first-time camping event benefitted both the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Jimmy Fund.

Since the early 1980s, the Jimmy Fund has been the charity of choice for Foxboro's award-winning campground according to Human Resource Director and Function Coordinator Marcia (Daniels) Galvin, who teamed up with pool supervisor Erin Mitchell to co-host this unique inaugural campout.

Earlier this week Galvin, campground recreation director Doris Daniels and Mitchell travelled to Fenway Park to present a very special check to the Jimmy Fund. With that presentation, Normandy Farms Campground made it to the quarter-million dollar mark in celebration of three decades of giving.

"Our total now reaches the \$250,000 mark for our 30th year," said Daniels. "Now we will have a new benchmark to reach for the future. The Jimmy Fund Campout was a great success this year. We look forward to doing it again next year."

And they are doing it for families like the Garretts.

"Anything for the Jimmy Fund," mom Barbara Garrett said when asked why her family travelled all the way to Foxboro. Barbara and her husband Tim camped with their two daughters, 9-year-old Samantha and 4-year-old Madison, and were part of the geocaching team that won first prize for their team photo.

The Garretts first found their way to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute at the beginning of 2011. Doctors found a tumor on young Madison's right eye on Jan. 3, 2011. The tumor was diagnosed as Retinoblastoma and her right eye was removed eight days later. Six months of chemotherapy was followed by five weeks of radiation, and as of July 18, 2011, Madison's cancer was in remission.

Just recently, however, another tumor was found on her left eye. The Monday following the Jimmy Fund Campout weekend, Madison was scheduled to have surgery on her "good eye," as Barbara calls it.

This time the Garrett Family received good news. Madison's doctor told her family that the tumor appears "dead." As Barbara reported via e-mail: "So everything looks good. We will go back next month for the last freeze to make sure it is truly dead and no new tumors are found."

The Jimmy Fund Campout gave participants like the Garretts the opportunity to enjoy camping and other outdoor activities they love, while supporting the lifesaving mission of Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund.

Galvin and Mitchell, a senior at Bridgewater State University majoring in Special Education, worked closely with Kelly Lauriat, Associate Director of Special Events for the Jimmy Fund, who was an active participant in the campout at Normandy Farms. It was Lauriat's first time at Normandy Farms and she had nothing but words of praise.

"The staff here is so welcoming," she said. "Normandy Farms is definitely on the list for a return visit."

That sentiment was echoed by Samantha Garrett, who said they will return to Normandy Farms next summer and for much longer, "at least 10-12 days."

In addition to Normandy Farms, Bayley's Camping Resort in Maine and Danforth Bay Camping & RV Resort in New Hampshire also served as host campgrounds. During that same weekend, campgrounds across New England did their own fundraising activities as part of the Jimmy Fund Campout facilitating what they called "S'more Support."

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The Garrett Family won first place in the team photo contest for Geocaching with Geoteaming event during one of many events at the Jimmy Fund Campout at Normandy Farms Campground, from left: Front row, Geoteaming Representative Tanya Phillips, Tim Garrett, daughters Madison and Samantha and wife Barbara; back row, Jimmy Fund Campout co-hosts Erin Mitchell and Marcia Galvin of Normandy Farms Campground. (Photos by Christine Igo Freeman)