

## Celebrating Volunteers Everyday at Camp Boggy Creek!

Camp Boggy Creek welcomes hundreds of volunteers each year. Their priceless gifts of time are an important part of our mission's success. And, while most of our volunteers are college students, many, like Karen and Bob Bolles, discover that volunteering at Boggy Creek is truly ageless because everyone has something to offer Florida's most seriously ill children.

In 2005, Karen and Bob Bolles became "empty nesters" when the last of their six children left home to begin their adventure in life and pursue their dreams. It was then the Bolles decided to realize their dream and find an organization where they could volunteer as they began a new chapter in their lives.

Already involved with the racing community through Bob's business, the Bolles had heard wonderful things about Camp Boggy Creek, the Official Charity of [GRAND-AM Road Racing](#). After stopping by the Camp on their way to a race in Lakeland and speaking with the volunteer coordinator, Robin Brubaker, they decided to volunteer for a week long summer session. *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* was the theme during 2005 and as Karen says, "We have always felt that ever since that summer, and every time we come here, it always feels like we are going over the rainbow."

After their first week, Karen and Bob were "hooked immediately." Karen recalls fondly, "We were so profoundly affected by that experience, we have come back as often as we can to help wherever we are needed." Each year, the Bolles volunteer for at least one week during the summer and a few family retreat weekends, as well as special events such as the Holiday Party or the [Bruce Rossmeyer Ride for Children](#). "When you spend a week with these children, you get the full impact of the program," Bob adds.

Karen and Bob enjoy volunteering at both the summer sessions and family retreat weekends because each provides a very different dynamic. "During family weekends, we get to interact with the parents, grandparents, and extended family members. They need just as much care as the children because of everything they go through everyday caring for their children," explained Bob. Many parents have shared with the Bolles how the Camp has been a life-changing experience for their child and family.

The summer sessions allow volunteers to be an active part of all the children's activities and participate in the development of each child discovering his or her inner strength. Karen shares, "It is a beautiful thing to witness these children gaining confidence while having fun. They make lifetime friends with other kids just like themselves!"

When asked to describe the Camp, Karen quickly replies, "It's the happiest place on Earth!" Bob adds, "It's a place where children who have been through serious health experiences can meet other kids who have had the same experiences and they can feel like a part of something great."

The Bolles and all of Camp Boggy Creek's wonderful volunteers bring the magic of our mission to Florida's most seriously ill children. Karen shares, "As long as your heart is in it, you want to do whatever you can to help these children and their families. We have never been able to give as much as we have received."

Saying "thank you" will probably never convey how grateful Camp Boggy Creek is for the Bolles and the hundreds of selfless volunteers who give their time so children with chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have the time of their lives!



**Thank you all for helping to bring campers somewhere over the rainbow, to a place of love and laughter at Camp Boggy Creek!**