



UNITY



TRUST



RESPITE



THE
LOVE
Letter

Thank You to All Our Sponsors!

Thank you to all of our wonderful supporters who made 2018 a great year for our families by helping us provides camps, adventure programs, emergency financial relief and educational scholarships.

You made possible the hundreds of smiles, hours of laughter, and safe environments for sharing that make camp so magical.



Join us for an evening of cocktails and s'mores to benefit children with cancer and their families at Special Love's camp-themed gala.

Friday, April 5, 2019
Hilton McLean Tysons Corner
7920 Jones Branch Drive, McLean, VA


Cocktail Attire

Cocktails 7:30pm Dinner & Dancing 8:30pm - 11:30pm
Sponsors are invited to join us for an exclusive VIP reception beginning at 6:30pm.

**For more information,
contact Kim Jappell at
888.930.2707 or via email
at kjappell@speciallove.org**



Kay/Moore Scholarship for Young Adults with Cancer

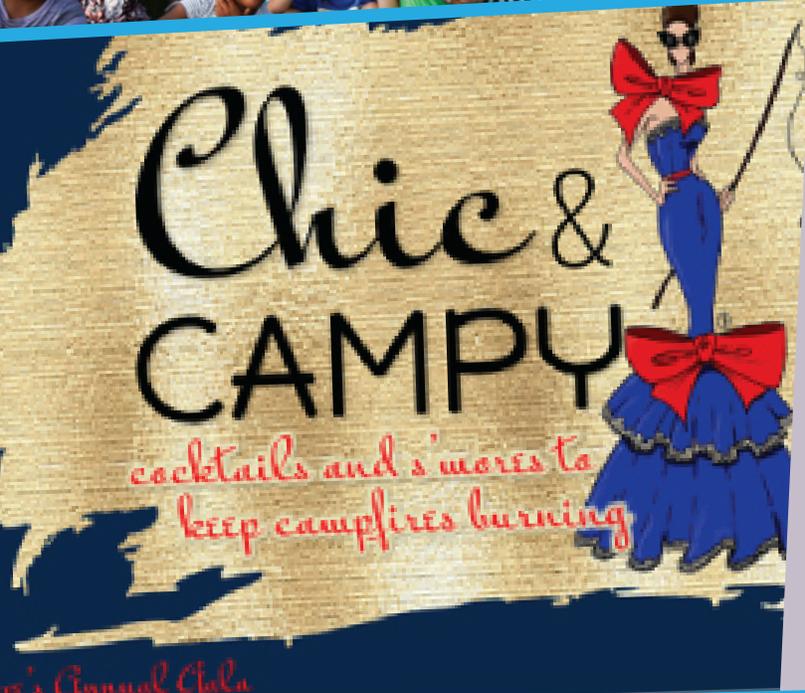
Don't wait, the deadline for submitting applications is Monday, April 1, 2019.

Campers in need of assistance with your continuing education? We're here for you.

There is still time to apply for a Kay/Moore Scholarship for Young Adults with Cancer.

The application and guidelines can be found on our website at www.speciallove.org. We will be reviewing completed applications in April and making scholarships awards in early May.



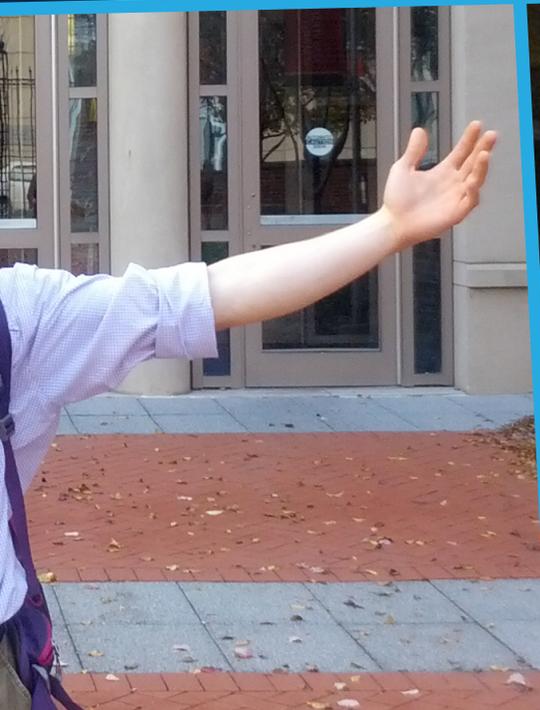


You're Invited!

Join us for Special Love's Annual Spring Gala Friday, April 5th, at the Hilton McLean Tysons Corner in McLean, Virginia.

The fun-filled evening will encourage guests to take part in some of our camp activities, such as a craft project, face painting, and magic, and treat them to great food, drinks and dancing.

Attendees will also meet some of our Camp Ambassadors and learn first-hand the difference our camps have made in their lives.



Who doesn't love a good love story?

From The Notebook to Romeo and Juliet everyone has their favorite! This may sound the cheesiest of cheesy, but my favorite love story is mine!

My and my husband's love story began with Special Love's camps for children with cancer.

Let's go back to August of 2004, I was in the thick of maintenance chemotherapy for leukemia and stepping on to a charter bus to go to camp for a week. Not just any camp, I was on my way to Camp Fantastic, a week-long camp for kids with cancer! I remember getting off the bus, meeting my counselor Anita and heading to our room to get settled. When we arrived at our room, a lively counselor, Ann, came through our joining room door and declared, "We are one room!" That week Ann and I quickly realized we were kindred spirits.

It was during that week, Ann mentioned she had a son, Patrick, that was my age. As a self-proclaimed "boy crazy" teen I asked if she had a picture of him and she showed me a blurry picture of a boy in a baseball cap. I saw his picture and said, "Oh my god, he is so cute!"

I continued to see Ann over the next year at family weekends and we remained close friends. It wasn't until a year and a half later that I came face to face with Patrick. My mom often reminisces on that fateful moment when we locked eyes, she always says something like, "there were fireworks" or "the earth moved". I just remember feeling like I had found a long-lost friend. That night we stayed up talking until 4:00 in the morning just catching up. The next day we went our separate ways and said, "see you later."

That "later" would be that following summer at Camp Fantastic! It was my last year as a camper and Patrick's first year as a counselor. The week of fun flew by and ended with Patrick and I innocently holding hands during the magnificent fireworks at the last campfire.

After Camp Fantastic we kept in touch, but there was a big barrier standing in our way; distance. At the time, I lived in Virginia Beach, VA and he lived in Harrisburg, PA. That's 320 miles between us! So, we talked on the phone, visited each other a couple of times, but we were both starting to feel like the distance, for our age, was too much.

We decided that if it was meant to be, we would find each other.





To read more stories like this go to
www.specialove.org

During the next 2 years we saw each other during camp and at camp weekends, but we were dating other people, so remained friends. It was during this time Patrick's mom, Ann, and I became super close, more like family.

Finally, in 2008, We decided distance didn't matter anymore; that we were meant to be! We were in absolute bliss, until our world stopped spinning and came crashing down: my leukemia had returned and in 2010 I received a life-saving stem cell transplant.

During my transplant Patrick never faltered. He always loved me, supported me, made me smile, and lifted me up. His calm nature balanced the hard and scary times of transplant.

Special Love has been the constant centripetal force in our relationship. We met, grew together, and even got engaged at camp! And on October 29th, 2016 our camp family helped us celebrate our wedding day!

The best part? My camp family (Ann) became my actual family!

The Grinch Didn't Steal Christmas

Twas three weeks before Christmas, and all through Franconia Fire House, children and families were stirring, waiting on Santa and his spouse.

They delighted in magic and painted their faces, then with a roar and a wave, they were off to the races.

In came Santa, not with Mrs. Claus, but with a tall furry fellow, green right down to his paws.

The children and families laughed and they sang, with Santa handing out presents until the lunch bell rang.

The Grinch, though quite ugly, was really a doll, spreading his mischief and cheer through the hall.

When the day had ended and we packed up to go, the holiday spirit left all our hearts aglow.



Family Ski Weekend

Family Ski Weekend found the snow at Canaan Valley Ski Resort over the long Martin Luther King holiday weekend. A lot of snow, as a matter of fact.

A record crowd of 55 families braved the elements, enjoying a couple of days of great skiing, snowboarding, tubing and sledding. When not outside, families could be found playing bingo, doing arts and crafts, watching a movie and even catching a big football game. There was something for everyone!



Thank you to TC Williams and his wonderful crew of volunteers, Captain Token, the Marshall High School Choir and the Franconia Fire House. You made our holidays bright!



Not Much Snow, But Lots of Fun

Fantastic Winter Weekend was one for the books. Skipping the 4-H Center this year due to renovations, we tried out a new camp location and loved it.

The weekend, held away from parents, allowing the kids to be a little more adventurous, was held this year at Shrine Mount Retreat and Conference Center, close to Bryce Resort. We hosted 39 current and past cancer pediatric cancer patients between the ages of 13 and 25.

Despite a little rain and not a lot of snow, campers enjoyed a full day of skiing, snowboarding, and tubing, along with a fun slope side campfire with s'mores kits provided by Bryce Resort, as well as hot chocolate and singing. Of course there was singing!

A special thank you to Shrine Mont Retreat and Conference Center, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Bryce Resort, and Richards Bus Company for an awesome weekend!

Strong in the Broken Places

Even parents need a break, and we had the perfect weekend getaway just for them.

Special Love hosted its annual Parents Weekend Getaway for parents of patients and survivors who are 25 years old or younger and still live at home, as well as bereaved parents, at the historic George Washington Hotel in Winchester on November 17-18. We welcomed nearly 70 parents, 10 of whom were new to the Special Love community.

Each year, Special Love provides the weekend for parents, by parents to give them a safe place to share and support one another in a small group setting, an outlet to deal with the facts of cancer individually, and ultimately a renewed sense of control.

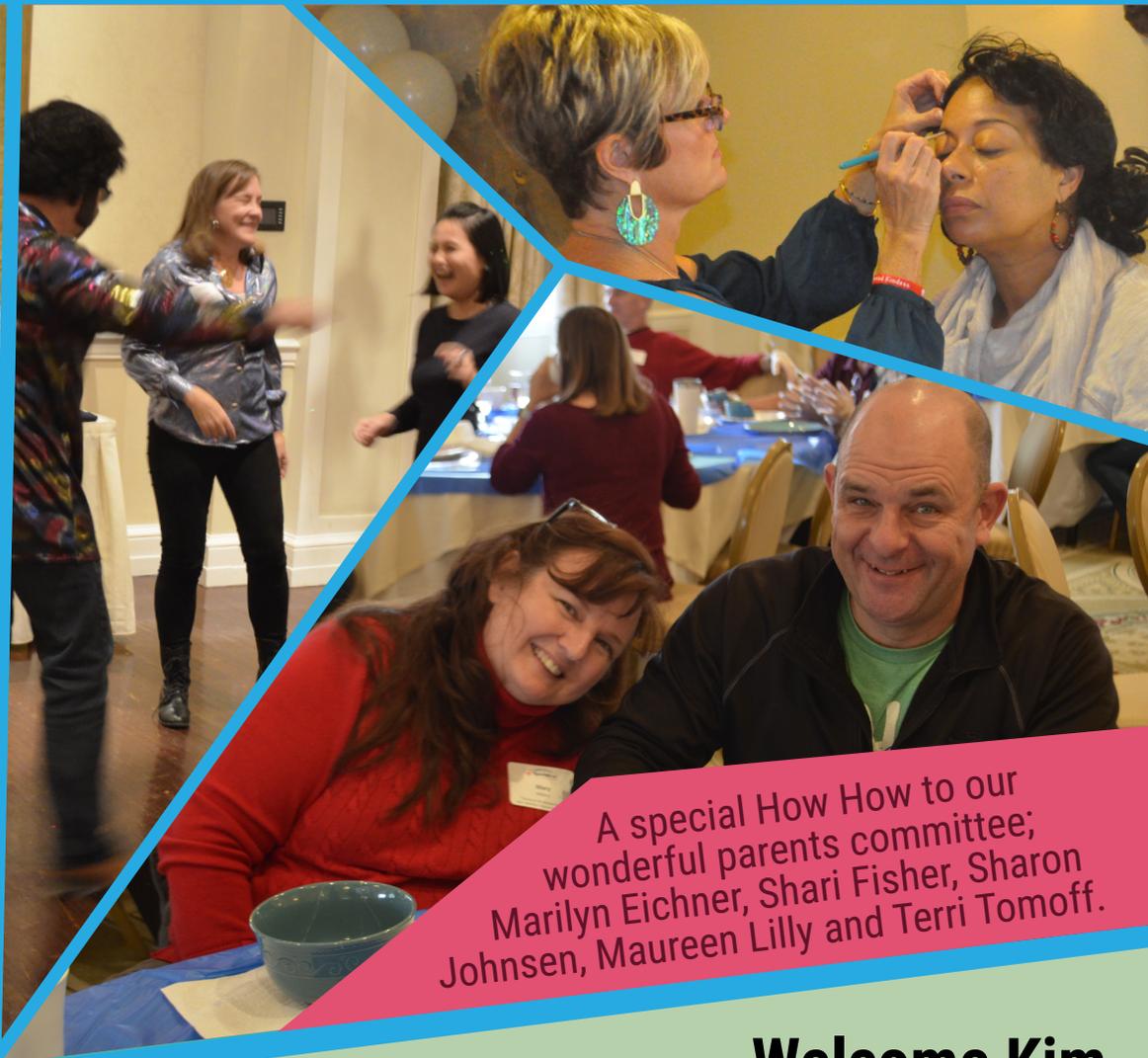
Our weekend, themed "Strong at the Broken Places," kicked off Saturday morning with a Kintsugi exercise led by Special Love Parent and Board member, Shari Fisher, along with her daughter Julia Jones. The exercise of breaking pottery and putting the pieces back together again provided a bonding opportunity for not only the couples themselves, but with others couples as well. It spoke to the strength parents and families in the cancer journey gain with their child. To quote Ernest Hemingway; "The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong in broken places." Parents spent the afternoon being pampered by wonderful volunteers with rejuvenating activities such as; Reiki, yoga, massages, makeovers and scrapbooking.

A warm thank you to our wonderful volunteers, Judy Martin, Kathleen Moore, Laurel Webster, Leslie Yager, and make-up artists Jodi Hawk, Helene-Marie Kirby, MaryBeth Pagnella, Cheryl Rosenthal and Christine Tamsi.

Saturday night, the fun really started as parents got their groove on with a Disco-themed dinner dance. Everyone put on their best platform shoes, bell bottom-jeans, and afros to show off their disco moves, grooving to music provided by former Special Love camper and now volunteer, DJ Malcolm Jones.



Feel free to reach out to **Kimie** at kjappell@speciallove.org or **888.930.2707**



A special How How to our wonderful parents committee; Marilyn Eichner, Shari Fisher, Sharon Johnsen, Maureen Lilly and Terri Tomoff.

Welcome Kim

In November, Special Love welcomed Kim Jappell its new Director of Development.

Kimmie is a familiar face around the organization as she grew up in Special Love's BRASS program for cancer siblings. Kimmie has been a BRASS counselor and committee member for the past 10 years, and most recently served as a member of Special Love's Board of Directors.

Kimmie and her family helped found Camp Funshine, a weekend program for families of children with HIV, in tribute to her late sister, Bernadette. Camp Funshine was conducted under Special Love's umbrella between 1997 and 2006.

"I've known Kim for many years and am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with her again,"

said Special's Executive Director, Jan Bresch.

"She brings a wealth of fundraising and relationship-building experience to Special Love and, equally important, a commitment to and passion for Special Love's mission."

She looks forward to continuing her many friendships – and making new ones!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #167
Winchester, VA

▶ April 5

Chic & Campy, Special Love's Annual Gala

Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, McLean, VA

▶ May 31 - June 2

Young Adults Weekend (YAC)

Airfield 4-H Conference Center, Wakefield, VA

▶ June 7

Tom Baker Memorial Camp

Fantastic Golf Tournament

Rock Harbor Golf Club, Winchester, VA

▶ June 14 - 16

Summer Family Weekend

(formerly Reunion Weekend)

4-H Center, Front Royal, VA

▶ June 28 - 30

Fantastic Friends Weekend

4-H Center, Front Royal, VA



Special Love, Inc.[®] is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.

*All donations are **tax-deductible**.*

Audited financial statements are available on our website at
www.Speciallove.org

CFC# 49642

Check out our social media channels
to stay up-to-date on Special Love happenings.

www.facebook.com/speciallovecamps

www.twitter.com/speciallove_org

www.instagram.com/speciallove_org

www.youtube.com/speciallovecamps

