



## How You Helped...

No sooner had Stronghearts developed an online application for families who need help caring for a child with a congenital heart defect, when two families requested help. Having direct contact with families reminded us again of the difficulties caring for children with congenital heart defects. We became close to Mallory during her pregnancy, when she first learned that her unborn child, Madeline, had a CHD. We felt her anxiety as she prepared for her birth and then her deep sadness when dear Madeline died last spring. In Madeline's memory, we planted a heart shaped tulip garden at the Pottle Tree Farm. We hope to continue to remember children with CHD's in this way.



Stronghearts also helped Connor and his family with medical bills. Connor's mother, Gretchen, wrote, "Connor's defect is rare, so rare that doctors who have been doing this for 20+ years have not seen this type of defect. Connor is an amazing little boy. He is off one of the medications and has been doing amazingly according to his team of doctors. Everyday is a blessing and we ALL hope for a long time with him." Connor's family has lived with uncertainty, from the time of Gretchen's first ultrasound. He has two older sisters.

We sponsored 3 campers to go to Camp Meridian. Corbin (11) was one of those campers. Corbin was born with Pulmonary Atresia. At 8 days old he had surgery and at some point he may need another surgery to put a valve in. Corbin has gone to Camp Meridian for 2 years. He says that at Camp Meridian you can be one hundred percent yourself. He loved rock climbing, playing soccer and a game where three teams had to compete to solve a mystery. At Camp Meridian, Corbin feels like he's not the only one with a heart defect, like he does at home. Corbin is in fifth grade and likes to ski, draw, play with friends and use his Ipad. Corbin is able to have a normal activity level and just takes an aspirin a day.

## 2015 Fundraising Events and Reflections

By Sue Carroll Duffy

Stronghearts sponsored two fundraising events again this year with our steadfast friends, volunteers, and the wonderful Pottle Tree Farm. Winter Sports and Fun in February last year, was one of the more chilly years—Mainers are not easily scared away. We still had a wonderful turnout. Around the Lake for Stronghearts is a more intimate event, with several friends and families joining us to get the 13.5 miles around Boyden Lake some way some how. We have a confession. Sue didn't get around this year due to a weak ankle. She enjoyed the time at the farm helping to plant Madeline's Garden. We are dreaming of the spring blooms.

In 2015 we raised \$4,560.68 between the two events and donations received throughout the year.

It's hard to believe that it was 14 years ago that Seamus was born (and died) and 11 years since Jim Pottle of the Pottle Tree Farm passed on. From the most painful of experiences of loss, there too is beauty. Thank you for being part of our community of remembrance, support, love, fun and education.



Roy, Brian, Siobhan and Sue Duffy at Winter Sports and Fun. Photo by Don Dunbar

## Small Grant Application for Families

Please send families that need support, our way! [Stronghearts@roadrunner.com](mailto:Stronghearts@roadrunner.com)

## Memorial Donations in Loving Memory of:

Gina Patterson, Madeline Schaafsma, Mike Duffy, Patricia McDonald, Millie Gomez, Kip Gormley, Ginnie and Leonard Ritchie, Scott and Mary Metcalf, Evan Jewell Weston, Paula Louise Weston, Jim Pottle, Seamus Carroll Duffy, Diane Bassett, Lewis Bassett, Elizabeth Matera, Dale Sherrard, Elliot Fishbein, Bob Dolan, Caroline Dopyera, Lee and Irene Carroll, Judy McDonald, T.Way McDonald, Dana Bowen, Jr., Philip Clement, Sid and Hazel Bahrt, Dr. James Bates, Leiana Howarth, Moses Holbrook Walker, Jim Neal, John Benvenuti