

News from

# SickKids®

FOUNDATION

**For Immediate Release**

## **Camp Oki receives \$1 million gift**

*Firkin Group of Pubs generosity fuels Camp's growth, benefits SickKids cardiac patients*

**TORONTO – December 16, 2010** – Don Cherry, the renowned host of Coach's Corner, joined Larry Isaacs of The Firkin Group of Pubs and Jeff Neiman, founder of Cardiac Kids, today at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) to announce a \$1 million gift to Camp Oki, Canada's only summer camp for children with congenital heart disease.

This generous gift was announced in the Hospital's Atrium amid a summer camp-like scene complete with Muskoka chairs while a crowd of SickKids patients and campers cheered in excitement for the growth of Camp Oki. Isaac Schoenhals, 10, a SickKids heart transplant patient who has twice attended Camp Oki, shared highlights of his experience.

Founded by SickKids cardiologist, Dr. Joel Kirsh, Camp Oki offers cardiac patients a week-long program in Muskoka, Ontario. The generosity of The Firkin Group of Pubs and Cardiac Kids plays a major role in fuelling the growth of Camp Oki and bringing it to the next level.

"This is by far the most significant gift we've received to date for Camp Oki and we are so grateful to our donors," said an excited Dr. Kirsh. "Back in 2004, we received a start-up grant of \$2,000 from Cardiac Kids and it's wonderful to now be the recipient of such a generous gift from The Firkin Group of Pubs. We have plans to grow from a one-week program to a summer-long camp with a permanent home and this gift will help us get there. We have dozens of Camp Oki families who will be delighted to hear the news."

Cardiac Kids has been a proud supporter of SickKids Foundation since 2000 and has supported Camp Oki since day one. Mr. Neiman was instrumental in making today's gift possible.

"Camp Oki provides a traditional camp experience to help these children realize they are not limited by their condition," says Neiman. "Cardiac Kids is proud to support Camp Oki ourselves and also to work with The Firkin Group of Pubs on their annual golf tournaments to raise more money to help send more kids to camp."

"Since 2005, The Firkin Group of Pubs has been a proud sponsor of Cardiac Kids, helping to raise funds and awareness for this important charity. Cardiac Kids is committed to giving every child with congenital heart defects the opportunity to feel accepted and welcomed," said Larry Isaacs, Director of Marketing for The Firkin Group of Pubs. "In many ways, that's what we do at the Firkin. We're dedicated to making sure that everyone who visits our pubs enjoys the same warm welcome and acceptance. This donation of \$1 million will help to ensure that cardiac kids from across Canada get to enjoy a summer camp experience of a lifetime."

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Camp Oki is run entirely by volunteers who are staff of the Labatt Family Heart Centre at SickKids. The Camp is offered free of charge to patients aged eight through 16 with heart conditions requiring pacemakers, defibrillators and heart transplants. Congenital heart defects are the most common birth defect, affecting one in 100 children. Camp Oki provides a safe and enjoyable recreational opportunity for children who are often unable to attend mainstream summer camp programs. Campers look forward to meeting new friends and trying new outdoor activities in a medically-supervised environment. Visit [www.campoki.ca](http://www.campoki.ca) for more information.

**About The Firkin Group of Pubs:**

Founded by Stanley Adelson and Ian Fisher, The Firkin Group of Pubs is North America's largest growing chain of neighbourhood pubs – a welcoming place to meet friends for a pint, some fine food and a good time. Today there are 30 Firkin pubs in Canada with future Firkin pubs currently under construction in Kitchener and Ottawa. Visit [www.firkinpubs.com](http://www.firkinpubs.com)

**About Cardiac Kids:**

Cardiac Kids is a volunteer group established in 2000 to raise much needed funds for children suffering from congenital heart disease. All money raised directly benefits the children and staff of the cardiology ward at The Hospital for Sick Children. To boost the morale of the children and their families, Cardiac Kids has hosted approximately 2000 children and families at various sports and social events. Furthermore, Cardiac Kids is a strong supporter of pediatric cardiology nursing education, with the aim of helping provide the best possible care for children who must undergo cardiac treatment. To that end, each year scholarships and conference funding are provided to Cardiac Program nurses to maintain their position at the leading edge of pediatric cardiology nursing. Visit [www.cardiackids.ca](http://www.cardiackids.ca)

**About SickKids Foundation:**

Established in 1972, SickKids Foundation is the fundraising organization for The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) - one of Canada's most research-intensive hospitals and the largest centre dedicated to improving children's health in the country. Philanthropy is a critical source of funding for SickKids. For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010, SickKids Foundation made an investment of \$52.5 million in children's health research, education and care. A direct result of community support, this is one of the largest investments in paediatric health care and one of the largest contributions to a hospital anywhere in Canada.

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