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Contacts: Shannon Sowby
(602) 417-0691
ssowby@ckpr.biz

Virginia Anderson
(602) 417-0627
vanderson@ckpr.biz

Caila Anderson
(602) 417-0682
canderson@ckpr.biz

AN INCREDIBLE PLACE FOR INCREDIBLE KIDS:
CAMP SOARING EAGLE WINS APPROVAL FROM YAVAPAI COUNTY SUPERVISORS

SEDONA, Ariz. – A free camp that will give children with serious illnesses a chance to “soar like an eagle” has won approval from the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors.

Camp Soaring Eagle was inspired by the desire to give children with serious illnesses a traditional camp experience. The Camp’s name evokes the heritage of local Native Americans who believed that the eagle, whose feathers were thought to have healing powers, flew so high that it communicated their messages to the “Great Spirit in the Sky.” It will be constructed on 55 acres nestled amid the spectacular red rocks and ponderosa pines of Sedona, as part of an expansion of Verde Valley School, one of the world’s most acclaimed boarding schools.

The non-profit camp is aspiring to become a member of the Association of Hole in the Wall Camps, founded by actor Paul Newman in 1988. Today, the iconic camps – affectionately named after the gang in the film *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* – are the largest family of camps in the world for children with life-threatening medical conditions.

The Sedona facility will serve children between the ages of 6 and 17 with cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, asthma, diabetes and other life-threatening conditions. There are an estimated 300,000 children with these conditions and other special health care needs throughout the Southwest, according to the National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs.

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Camp Soaring Eagle will give these children a break from the limitations their illnesses create by enjoying a variety of activities designed exclusively for them. During their week-long stay, campers will be able to ride horses, fish, hike, climb, and swim in an Olympic-sized pool. The camp also will feature facilities like an amphitheater, a Spiritual Center and an indoor recreation center.

Unlike traditional camps, Camp Soaring Eagle will combine these activities with the highest level of care. There will be one staff member for every two campers and a 24-hour medical center staffed by a full-time physician and nursing director, along with volunteer medical professionals. The medical center will accommodate the full array of treatments for medical conditions, with necessary medical supplies and equipment, whether it's a chemotherapy treatment, a dialysis procedure, or daily infusions.

"This will be a place where kids can discover the healing power of laughter and the sheer joy of play that they may not have been able to experience before," said Max James, the driving force behind the camp.

James, a Sedona resident and founder of the Max James Family Foundation, will help underwrite the estimated \$40 million building cost of the camp, in tandem with corporate and individual donors. The Camp's annual operating costs, which will range from \$3 million to \$7 million, will be funded entirely by charitable contributions.

James will work hand-in-hand with real estate developer George Reeve to bring the Camp's vision to life through design and architecture. James and Reeve are assembling a team of Arizona resources to build and operate the camp.

"Camp Soaring Eagle will be an integral part of our community and I'm sure our residents will welcome it with open arms," said Bert Berkshire, President of the Big Park Regional Coordinating Council, which enthusiastically recommended the Camp to Yavapai County's Planning and Zoning Commission last month.

Construction of the Camp is expected to start this winter and the first camp session is anticipated to take place in September 2008.

For more information about Camp Soaring Eagle, call (602) 417- 0691 or visit www.campsoaringeagle.org.

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Camp Soaring Eagle aspires to be a member of the Association of Hole in the Wall Camps. We are following a set of guidelines that we hope will lead to provisional membership and then full membership upon the opening of our camp. These requirements are designed to assure that each member camp provides the highest level of safety and programming for the children. They are also designed to assure that each member camp has sound financial support. At this time the Association of Hole in the Wall Camps is assisting Camp Soaring Eagle to meet the necessary requirements. Being a part of such a well-established and acclaimed network of camps will provide Camp Soaring Eagle with the experience, knowledge and support to operate at the highest level of excellence.