

# Construction begins at Camp Soaring Eagle

Armed with heavy machinery and a few shovels, Jessica DeLeonard helped break ground and officially begin construction on the future site of Camp Soaring Eagle. She was accompanied by Max James, Camp Soaring Eagle founder and visionary.

Nestled amid the spectacular red rocks near Sedona, Camp Soaring Eagle is being built to give children with serious illnesses a traditional camp experience.

It will be housed on 55 acres and amenities will include climate-controlled cabins, athletic fields, an equestrian center, a fishing pond, an indoor recreation center, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a cafeteria and more.

A resident of Sedona, DeLeonard attended the original Hole in the Wall Camp in Connecticut as a child while battling leukemia. DeLeonard knows firsthand the impact a camp of this caliber will have on children in the Southwest.

"My experience at the original Hole in the Wall Camp has had a profound impact on my life, and I am honored to help break ground on what will soon be an incredible Camp in our backyard," said DeLeonard. "It will provide kids throughout the Southwest with a fun and memorable healing experience by letting them forget that they're sick."

Based on the vision to provide children with illnesses a chance to be themselves, have fun and not worry about their illnesses, Camp founder Max James has been working to make the project a reality since January 2006.

"This is a significant step in

the development of the Camp and we're thrilled that Jessica could join us," said Max James, Founder of Camp Soaring Eagle. "We are looking forward to working with the community, and Arizona overall, to make this camp a reality for children throughout the Southwest."

Construction is expected to start immediately following the groundbreaking and work through several phases. Designed by Dick & Fritsche Design Group (DFDG), the Camp will be built by The Phil W. Morris Company, one of the oldest construction contractors in northern Arizona. The first camp session is anticipated to take place in September 2008.

For more information about Camp Soaring Eagle, visit [www.campsoaringeagle.org](http://www.campsoaringeagle.org).

## About Camp Soaring Eagle

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. 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 weeklong stay, campers will be able to ride horses, fish, hike, climb, and swim in an Olympic-sized pool.



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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.

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.