

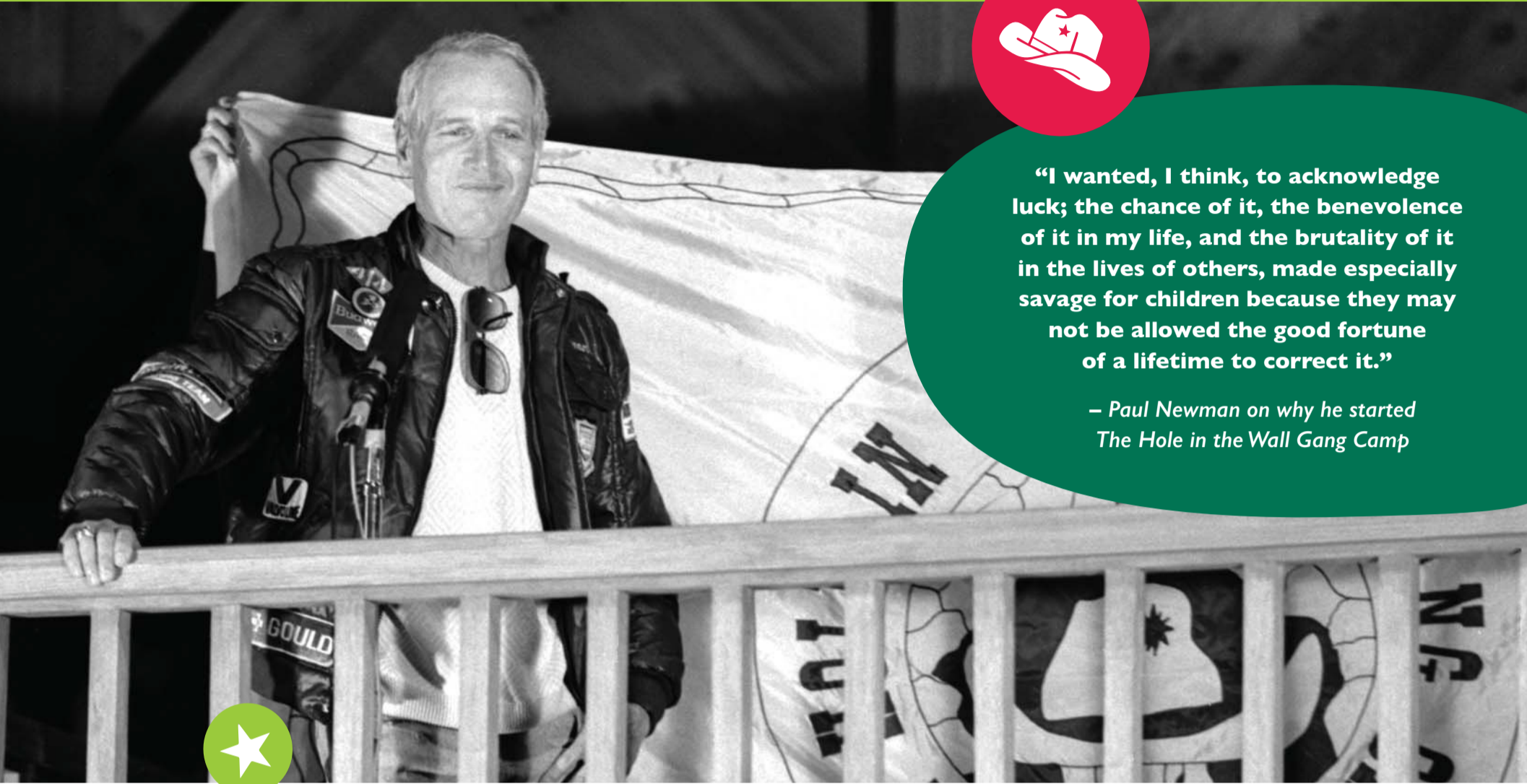


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THE HOLE IN THE WALL GANG CAMP

# GAZETTE

SPRING/SUMMER  
2025



**“I wanted, I think, to acknowledge luck; the chance of it, the benevolence of it in my life, and the brutality of it in the lives of others, made especially savage for children because they may not be allowed the good fortune of a lifetime to correct it.”**

*– Paul Newman on why he started The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp*



## REFLECTING ON PAUL'S IMPACT TO CELEBRATE HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

*- James H. Canton, CEO, The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp*

As I reminisce about Paul Newman on what would have been his 100th birthday, I am reminded of the purity of his vision – to pay forward good fortune by lending a hand to someone less fortunate. Indeed, Paul lived a life informed by his recognition of luck – but greater than that was his motivation to act on that acknowledgment, and truly make a difference. He was a tireless example of doing right, allowing others to see in him the qualities they would like to develop in themselves.

Nowhere was this clearer than at The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. Paul was always aware of how his life was positively influenced by factors outside of his control. With Hole in the Wall, he wanted to even the scales and provide children who were negatively impacted by factors out of their control the opportunity to simply have fun and be surrounded by friends who understood. Since then, hundreds of thousands of children and family members have found joy, hope and healing thanks to Paul's selflessness and inspirational dream, and many more will be impacted in the years ahead.

Over the years that I knew him, Paul was passionately involved at Camp, delighting in the joys that campers and their families experienced. He reveled in fishing with campers, though was known for never catching a fish while at Camp, and quietly listened in the Dining Hall as children shared their favorite activities and love for Hole in the Wall.

And he was a brilliant leader, empowering, inspiring and trusting others to steward the success of his dream. All of us at Camp remain profoundly grateful for the examples of compassion, humility, loyalty, mischief and leadership that he left behind.

To have someone of that celebrity and that influence be so humble and so committed to creating something so special – how extraordinary; what a legacy he left.

If you'd like to help carry the inspiring torch Paul left behind, please consider joining Camp as a volunteer. Contact [volunteers@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:volunteers@holeinthewallgang.org) for more information.



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*The Camp team in Maryland on demolition day.*

## RENOVATIONS UNDERWAY IN MARYLAND!

In February, phase I renovations kicked off at the Maryland location, preparing 50,000 square feet of residential, program, medical and dining space to welcome families in the spring of 2026. Now that we have determined who we will serve, the team continues to dream big about the programming that will be offered, all of which have informed renovation plans.

Programming will feel similar to the Connecticut location, with arts & crafts, swimming, archery and other activities we've all grown to love. But there will be local favorites incorporated as well, including crabbing! And while we absolutely will be retuning the crabs to the bay after they are caught, we don't have plans to follow the kiss and release tradition from Connecticut - ouch!

Renovations are being supported by a recent a \$1 million donation commitment from the Charles P. Ferro Foundation, which is specifically earmarked to create a purpose-built infirmary space designed to provide complex care to children with rare and ultra-rare diagnoses. The new infirmary will include three observation/overnight rooms, a reception area, a pharmacy and medical equipment. The goal is to create a modern, accessible and efficient environment that meets the diverse needs of campers and their families.

In addition to the infirmary, renovations include a family space where families can gather to play; a parent relaxation room where caregivers can enjoy rest and connect with other parents; a barrier-free theater that removes impediments for aspiring actors and singers of all ages; 15 family en-suite bedrooms with updates for increased accessibility and air quality; and much more. Looking to the future, plans are in development for additions to the location that will allow for camper-independent programming.



*Greg triumphantly crossing the finish line after the 70.3 mile Eagleman half-Ironman.*



## TRAILBLAZER

Camp FUNraiser Greg Perlstein ran his first race supporting Hole in the Wall with his middle school when he was just 11 years old. Even then he was impressed by Camp.

“I remember visiting the pool and learning about the heated water and the ‘french frier’ and understanding how important it was to be able to give every camper the experience of swimming freely,” Greg shared. “I was a swimmer, so that really resonated with me. I just knew Camp was a special place.”

Since then, Greg has continued to support Hole in the Wall as both a FUNraiser and volunteer. When he moved to Maryland and read about the new location coming to the Eastern Shore, he jumped on the opportunity to get involved, volunteering at an on-site workday and participating in the Eagleman half-Ironman to raise funds.

“I knew that if I was going to train for the half-Iron distance, I’d want to do it not only for my own sense of personal accomplishment but also to make an impact,” Greg said. “Fundraising for Camp was a motivator and also gave me accountability. Once I asked friends, family, coworkers – everyone I knew – to donate, I knew I’d better make sure I trained well enough to finish the race. It gave more purpose to the training and the event itself.”

Looking ahead, Greg is excited to continue his involvement. But his eye is fixed on the day his children can join him. And Greg’s son is already on board, even though he is only six.

“One day I came home and found my son vacuuming our car,” Greg said. “He told me, ‘Mommy said she will give me \$5 if I clean the car, and I want to donate that to your fundraising.’ It was the best. That is what I am thinking about for the future: how supporting Camp becomes a family endeavor.”

We are grateful to Greg for his nearly 30 years of friendship and can’t wait to see his family join the “gang”. If you'd like to learn more about turning any event into a FUNraiser for Camp, please contact us at [FUNraiser@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:FUNraiser@holeinthewallgang.org).



## FROM THE CEO

Earlier this spring, I had the privilege of joining Camp's newest board member, actress Ana Villafañe, and Hole in the Wall advocate, actor Luke Wilson, on a panel for Talks at Google. It was an honor to be able to share our Founder Paul Newman's inspiring vision for Camp – a place where children with serious illnesses can remember that they are not defined by their illness, find healing in the acceptance and friendship of their peers and “raise a little hell” along the way. This year, 38 years after our first summer, Camp will provide more than 50,000 healing experiences for thousands of children living with serious illness and their family members throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic – all free of charge.

I am so proud to be associated with this good, noble, important and life-changing organization since the beginning. And I am grateful for the many friends who make all the joy and hope of Hole in the Wall possible. Thank you for helping us continue to reach more children and families in need of Camp's healing magic.

**James H. Canton**  
Chief Executive Officer



## HOP ON THE GO

When three-year-old Hazel was diagnosed with cancer, her, and her family's, world was turned upside down. The once energetic and creative little girl's days went from playing and activities to hospital stays and clinic visits.

But once the family met Bailey, a specialist with Camp's Hospital Outreach Program (HOP)<sup>™</sup>, they had something to look forward to during their time in the hospital. Later, once Hazel began receiving treatment at the clinic, she formed a close bond with HOP specialist Emma.

“In the beginning, she was going to clinic four or five days a week, and it's monotonous, and it's hard, and it hurts,” mom Jaime said. “And those days when Emma was there, she was excited. Having that time to move in a joyous way and not in a horrible way, it was...the best.”

Hazel looked forward to those visits so much that the nurses would use them to help her get through challenging treatments. Emma had a unique ability to understand Hazel and met her with tailored projects, which sparked Hazel's interest.

“When I'm meeting a new family, it's always delicate because you have to remember that they are in a challenging situation,” Emma said of her approach to working with families. “You want to be the person that brings some joy and some light into the room, and you want to show the family that you're there for what they need. You come in offering a craft or a game, and then that is the way to build that relationship, because the connections are the most special part of HOP.”

Over Hazel's nearly three years of treatment, the duo have created everything from a self portrait to slime. But the day they made Marcel the Shell stands out as a favorite for both Emma and Hazel.

“Hazel was obsessed with Marcel the Shell, and she and Emma were talking about it,” said Jaime. “Emma ordered shells and googly eyes and little sneakers, and she brought it to Hazel and said, ‘do you want to make a Marcel the Shell with Shoes on?’ She listened and understood and went the extra mile. So that was a big deal. And we still have that.”

For Emma, being creative with Hazel has just as much of an impact on her.

“That was what was special about my relationship with Hazel,” Emma said. “I was always learning new things from her, or she would come up with a fun craft idea. I would do it with the rest of the kids in clinic. And they would go, ‘this craft is so fun,’ and I'd tell them, ‘my friend taught me.’”

If you'd like to learn more about how HOP connections are bringing joy to children during some of their most challenging times, contact HOP Director, Michele "Gill" McKenna at [michele.mckenna@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:michele.mckenna@holeinthewallgang.org).

*One of Hazel and Emma's favorite projects was making Marcel the Shell crafts, based on Hazel's love of the movie.*



*Emma and Hazel grew to have a close bond and looked forward to time together in the hospital.*





## BOARD MOVES

Last year, after 25 years of dedicated service, Camp’s Board Chair Ray Lamontagne stepped down, leaving some mighty big shoes to fill. Fortunately for Camp, two loyal friends and board members have taken on his mantle to lead into the future – Lynn Fusco and Jeff Horstman.

“Ray has left an indelible mark on Camp as chairman,” said Jimmy Canton, CEO of The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. “While his contributions are immeasurable, I’m confident Lynn and Jeff bring the expertise, dedication and passion to lead during this exciting time of growth.”

Lynn, who is the president of Fusco Corporation and has been a board member since 1996, brings honed business acumen and an expansive network to this role. She has extensive background in construction management that will be critical in guiding the build out of the new Maryland location. Jeff more recently joined the board in 2022

and is a passionate environmentalist as well as a respected leader in the Eastern Shore community. He previously served as both an executive in finance and founder of a non-profit that was charged with protecting the rivers that run into the Chesapeake Bay.

“We are excited to take on this leadership role at The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, an organization close to both of our hearts,” Lynn said. “There is a wonderful opportunity here, as the organization continues its expansion into the Mid-Atlantic, and we are energized to be at the helm, ensuring the organization continues its mission, reaching as many children with serious illnesses and their families as possible.”

As for Ray, he isn’t going anywhere just yet. Though he will no longer serve as chair, Ray continues his leadership role with Camp’s expansion efforts into the Mid-Atlantic.



*Camp is excited to welcome new board co-chairs, Lynn Fusco and Jeff Horstman!*

## BENEFIT EVENTS

The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp headed back to Boston’s Children’s Museum on April 12, for the 31st Annual Beantown Bash! The evening was a resounding success, thanks to the continued generosity of Presenting Sponsor Ken’s Foods, as they rallied their community to raise over \$1.7 million in support of Camp. Adding to the excitement this year, 50 camper family members joined nearly 800 camp supporters for the festivities at the museum!



Boston Bruins legend Tuukka Rask, and New England Patriots standouts Brenden Schooler and Miles Battle, brought star power to the occasion – signing autographs and posing for photos, while beloved home team mascots Pat Patriot and Wally added to the fun. The night was packed with entertainment for all ages, including Magician David Hall’s clever humor and jaw-dropping sleight of hand tricks, Amazing Animal Ambassadors, and a variety of interactive crafts and activities, along with hands-on exhibits.

The Silent Auction sparked lively bidding throughout the evening, as guests vied for exclusive experiences and coveted items – including a luxurious stay at Rosewood Tucker’s Point in Bermuda, tickets to a Red Sox vs. Yankees showdown at Fenway Park, and a football autographed by Patriots quarterback Drake Maye. The festivities were topped off with a delicious spread including cocktails and mocktails, hors d’oeuvres, buffet-style dinner and desserts, as well as a Beer Garden Tent serving up light bites alongside a craft beer mobile.

*The Beantown Bash served up lots of fun, while raising an astounding \$1.7 million for Camp!*



# FAMILY WEEKENDS

In the fall and spring, nearly 280 families gathered together at Hole in the Wall across 15 Family and Bereavement Weekends where they found respite, healing and connection. They enjoyed time together as a family while forging friendships with others who understand their challenges. And of course, they found plenty of Camp fun and laughter.





## FAMILY FLATS

There is something special about sharing experiences from your childhood with your children, hoping they can glean just a bit of the magic you felt. For former camper Jodeci, it was especially impactful when he was able to share his Hole in the Wall experience with his son, Jazz, who came to Camp for the first time last summer.

“I wanted him to experience summers seeing other people with sickle cell enjoying summer just like him,” Jodeci said. “Camp was a good opportunity for me. It’s great to be around those who are similar to you and know what you are going through. The bonds you make with people in similar situations is good.”

Jodeci delighted in seeing his son follow in his footsteps to step out of his comfort zone at Camp. Both father and son were able to break through their shyness to lead cabin chants and try new things. And in the fall, the entire family got to enjoy Hole in the Wall together at a Family Weekend, which included a race between Jodeci and Jazz down the zipline.

“I think I was faster,” Jazz shared. “I go really fast.”

For Jodeci, the time together at Hole in the Wall allowed him to relive his Camp days and relish in the experiences he had. The family got to test out Jazz’s favorite casting spot for fishing – the one where he caught 15 fish in one day over the summer – and reminisce about the times that Wee-Pee, the giant mythical fish in Pearson Pond, got away.

“It was a very nostalgic moment being there just kind of replaying memories in my head,” Jodeci said. “Seeing how everything changed was cool because there were a lot of new additions to the Camp, but at the same time there were still a lot of things the same.”

The tradition of summer camp is one that ties many families together, and Jodeci and Jazz are looking forward to more times together at Hole in the Wall.

If you’d like to learn more about Hole in the Wall’s residential programs for the entire family, visit <https://www.holeinthewallgang.org/programs/connecticut-location/>.

*Jodeci and Jazz just before their tower climb.*



## SHERIFF SPOTLIGHT



Clarity Software Solutions is dedicated to helping people make better choices in healthcare by giving them the tools and information they need, so it is only natural that as a company, their philanthropy supports organizations providing services for those with serious illnesses, including Hole in the Wall. Through their support of Camp, Clarity hopes to restore a sense of normalcy for children and families and provide an escape from their daily challenges.

Over the years, Clarity has supported Camp through Pedal for Pies, and most recently, Camp Challenge, inviting employees to participate as volunteers and athletes. It’s been a great way to showcase the impact of their support to those working there.

“When I went to Hole in the Wall, and I saw everything that was there, I was in awe,” said Sallie Francis, HR Generalist at Clarity. “I could see how these children can escape what they’re struggling with for just that one week. And then I talked to parents that have had children that were in the program, and they told me about how it helped. It’s incredible.”

Over the years, Clarity has donated \$20,500 to support Camp programming and has volunteers from the organization out to support rest stops and more at events. It’s been a partnership that is meaningful for both organizations.

“We are so grateful to Clarity for their friendship and support, which has helped provide ‘a different kind of healing’ to thousands of children with serious illnesses and their families,” shared Andrea Keefe, director of corporate & foundation relations for Hole in the Wall. “Camp relies on those in the community who are inspired by our founder’s vision to bring joy and hope to campers and families – all year long and always completely free of charge.”

If you’d like to learn more about how your company can partner with Hole in the Wall, contact Andrea at [andrea.keefe@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:andrea.keefe@holeinthewallgang.org).





*Hole in the Wall's  
New Connecticut Camp Director,  
Jude AlBukhari.*

## PARDNER PROFILE

At 11 years old, Camp's new Connecticut Camp Director Jude AlBukhari left her home in Jordan to spend a month at a camp in Germany with kids from 12 other countries learning about peace and diversity. She returned with a passion for camp and a curiosity about others that has stayed with her to this day and ultimately led her to the gates of The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp.

"That experience was the spark that started my love of camp and guided me to study psychology," Jude shared. "When I learned about Hole in the Wall, I thought, 'this is such a fantastic organization.' It combines two things that I'm very passionate about - camps and working with kids who are ill and their families. When the Camp director role was advertised, I literally jumped on it."

Jude was drawn to Hole in the Wall by the sense of community and belonging here, and when she came to Camp for the very first time, she knew she had found her home.

"It was February, and there were no leaves on the trees, and the pond was completely frozen, but the magic was still palpable," Jude said. "Then when I joined for my very first weekend at the Young Adult Conference, people were so welcoming and so genuine. I am so, so looking forward to becoming a member of the Camp."

As she steps into this new role, Jude is delighted to be a part of campers' and their families' stories. She is so excited to meet the "gang", recognizing that community is where the heart of Camp lies.

We hope you will join all of us at Hole in the Wall in welcoming Jude to the "gang." If you would like to contact Jude, please email her at [jude.albukhari@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:jude.albukhari@holeinthewallgang.org).



## LEAVE A LEGACY WORTH CELEBRATING

When you pledge a gift to Camp in your estate plan, your commitment helps share our founder Paul Newman's dream of "a different kind of healing" with the next generation of children facing serious illnesses. The Founder's Society recognizes our friends who have included Hole in the Wall in their estate plans. Join this celebrated group of legacy-makers by adding Camp as a beneficiary designee without needing to modify your will or trust. Common assets to add a nonprofit as a designee include: retirement accounts like IRAs or 401(k)s, life insurance policies, bank and brokerage accounts, or donor-advised funds.

**For more information, contact Deb Fraser at [deborah.fraser@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:deborah.fraser@holeinthewallgang.org)**



**Or scan the QR code to learn more**



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Paul Newman  
Founder

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# SAVE THE DATE

Get ready for a fun-filled fall at Hole in the Wall, with special events to suit every interest. For more information, visit [www.holeinthewallgang.org/benefitevents](http://www.holeinthewallgang.org/benefitevents), or contact Director of Special Events Jennifer Weeks at [jennifer.weeks@holeinthewallgang.org](mailto:jennifer.weeks@holeinthewallgang.org)



## FANDANGO BENEFIT GALA September 20, 2025



The annual Fandango Benefit Gala tradition our Founder Paul Newman began to support Camp programs has evolved over time, but the touchstone and culmination of the festivities remains—a variety show with campers performing musical numbers, families sharing inspirational stories and celebrity friends joining them center stage. Our Fandango show once again returns to Hole in the Wall's Theater in Ashford, Conn., with a simulcast stream available in our Dining Hall. Guests will enjoy an afternoon and evening filled with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, food trucks, interactive culinary stations, spirited silent and live auctions, music...and more!

## PUSH AGAINST CANCER October 5, 2025



Prepare to flex your muscles for a great cause during our 40-minute pushup challenge in Westport, Conn.! Whether you want to go all out and see how many pushups you can do, work towards a personal pushup goal, or cheer on your athlete, this high-energy, family-friendly event is a great way to support Hole in the Wall. Create a team or join as an individual!

## BIG APPLE BASH November 8, 2025



We look forward to welcoming longtime and new Camp friends back to Manhattan for an unforgettable evening at Tavern on the Green packed with a "hole" lot of fun for the entire family including cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, dinner and dessert buffets, musical performances and so much more.



## LOOK INSIDE to see how our Founders' legacy lives on today.

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