

Equity students band together to make ?merry? for disabled campers



By Mike Rodrigues

Over the past month, G. W. Williams student Ben Williamson has coordinated and run a fundraiser in order to help the camp that touched him personally.

Camp Merrywood is an experience for children with disabilities. While attending, campers can experience outdoor activities such as archery, kayaking, sailing and fishing.

For Ben, who lives with MS, It was all about giving back to the camp and helping give other children the same experience he had there.

?For people like me every day activities are a challenge,? says Ben. ?When you go to the camp for the ten days everything that you normally have to face is stripped away. You get to make friends that are like you and have the same challenges you have.?

While attending the camp, Ben realized that he could help them give back to their campers.

?I noticed walking around the camp last summer that there were areas that could be improved upon, but the difficulty was finances,? he says. ?I said I was going to do something about this.?

In order to raise as much as he could for Camp Merrywood, Ben reached out and formed a partnership with Boston Pizza. On the evening of May 13, members of the high school's Equity Council volunteered their time to work as servers. With 10% of every receipt going towards their cause, they raised just over \$500 on that night alone.

?It was a really fun night,? said Les Kerr, a guidance counselor and advisor for the Equity Council. ?The servers were very helpful and patient with the students.?

The Equity Council is run by students and looks at issues such as awareness of LGBTQ, mental health issues, bullying and physical disabilities. The council has run awareness weeks on all issues to help promote a better environment in the school.

Overall, with the help of Boston Pizza and Friends of We Care, the fundraiser raised just over \$1,000 for the camp.

?It is only a start, but it is a great start,? said Kerr.

For Ben, his eyes are set on raising more money for the camp that has given back to him.

?I have plans to continue this fundraiser,? said Ben. ?Boston pizza has approached me to do another one. The MPP has approached my sister and I and offered their support so the next time we run a fundraiser it will be bigger,? Ben added.

For more information on Camp Merrywood visit <http://www.eastersealscamps.org/about/merrywood-camp>