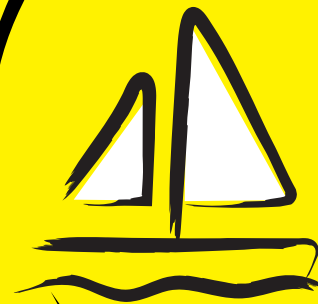


Summer in Review 2025



CNIB
LAKE
JOE



**Thank
you for an
amazing
summer.
We are stronger
together!**

A message from our Executive Director

Stronger Together. It's more than a theme. It's the spirit that defined our 2025 season at CNIB Lake Joe.

This summer marked an exciting new chapter at Lake Joe. Our community came together in remarkable ways to bring even more innovative programs to camp like adventure tripping, new adaptive sports, and info-packed learning retreats.

With most programs fully booked, over 730 people impacted by sight loss enjoyed everything Lake Joe has to offer – **a 30% increase from last year.** Participants and guests made 3,014 visits to Lake Joe, with some campers traveling internationally.

We also celebrated a **\$3 million investment** and the **groundbreaking of Hogarth Hall**, a new multi-purpose facility that will house **Canada's only purpose-built goalball court!** This marks the start of an exciting new era for our community as we become a **year-round** destination for learning, recreation, and connection.

Lake Joe has always been a place where people of all ages who are blind, Deafblind, or have low vision can try new things, make friends, and feel at home. This year reminded us that when we lift one another up, amazing things can happen.

To our campers, volunteers, donors, and staff, a heartfelt thanks! You've made this a summer to remember.

Monique Pilkington
Executive Director, CNIB Lake Joe



Executive leadership staff and National Board Chairs from CNIB, VLRC, and DBCS hold a new flag that now flies at the CNIB Lake Joe Welcome Centre.

CNIB Lake Joe was the recipient of a brand new "Stronger Together" award which celebrates the spirit of collaboration amongst CNIB, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada (VLRC), and Deafblind Community Services (DBCS). The award acknowledges the innovative Orientation & Mobility / Guide Dog Immersion program hosted at Lake Joe in cooperation with our colleagues at VLRC, CNIB's Guide Dog Program and DBCS.

**Lake Joe's
a magical place
where everyone is so
accepting and
you can be
yourself.**



They shoot, they score!



Young participants took to the ice this summer in our first-ever Intro to Blind Hockey program. Led by experienced coaches, the program transformed the rink into a place of discovery and belonging for young athletes with sight loss.

“A lot of these kids don’t get many chances to play competitively,” said Jade Lipczynski, Coordinator, Camp Programs. “Most of them only get one tournament a year, sometimes just three or four games. So bringing that experience to camp - scrimmages, skill challenges, even trophies and medals - gives them the chance to play, grow, and feel part of something bigger.”

Special thanks to JumpStart for helping bring young skaters to camp and providing them with coaching and the chance to discover the joy of accessible sport.





Going off the grid

Our Young Adult Wilderness Trip brought together campers from across Canada for an unforgettable outdoor adventure. Embracing the demands of backcountry living, they navigated trails, portaged gear, and cooked meals over open flames.

"I used to be a solo traveler," camper Chase shared. "After my sight loss, I thought those days were over. But **this trip reawakened something in me. I feel like I can be independent again.**"

Accessible adventures for all campers

Through a special partnership with CNIB Deafblind Community Services (DBCS), we were thrilled to host a dedicated Adult Deafblind Week designed by and for the Deafblind community. Many campers arrive uncertain, hesitant to try new things. But as the week goes on, those doubts fade.

"I remember going for a walk one night and seeing clients out together at 10 p.m.," said Sarah Fallis, intervenor with DBCS. "They didn't need anyone guiding them. They were just walking, chatting, and being independent. **That level of freedom is rare, and it's amazing.**"





TVI attendees getting hands-on experience using Perkins brailers.

Literacy for all retreat

The **Literacy for All: Canadian Vision Teachers Retreat** marked a major milestone as the first camp-based, in-person professional development opportunity created specifically for TVIs (teachers of the visually impaired) from

across the country. Across Canada, TVIs work in relative isolation. Most serve students spread over wide geographies, often working alone without a network of colleagues nearby. For many, the retreat was as much about connection as it was about curriculum.

At the retreat, TVIs immersed themselves in braille workshops, learning new approaches and brushing up on their own braille skills as sighted adults. But just as importantly, they experienced the same accessible camp activities their students could one day enjoy: swimming, boating, hiking and more.

**“Now I can go
back and tell
families, ‘I’ve seen it.
I’ve done it.
Your child can too.’”**

Beth Button, TVI, New Brunswick

Building our community - Lake Joe Live

Music, laughter, and community spirit filled the air at Lake Joe Live 2025, featuring The Trews. CNIB Lake Joe partnered with friends throughout Muskoka and across Canada to **raise more than \$400,000 to support the camp and provide transformative experiences** for people with sight loss. Guests enjoyed a Puppy Pit, interactive experiences,



The Trews get guests on their feet playing international hits like “Not Ready to Go.”

auctions, celebrity chef Ted Reader’s BBQ delectables, and gourmet food and beverages.

An event highlight was the **Bonfire Campaign, where guests contributed over \$160,000 for camperships**, ensuring more children and youth can attend camp.

The event was an extraordinary success thanks to the overwhelming generosity and unwavering support of donors, sponsors, community partners, staff and volunteers.

Special thanks to:

Presenting sponsor: IG Private Wealth Management – Throssell Group


Encore sponsor: The Ground Guys of Barrie and Muskoka

Front of Line sponsors: RBC Wealth Management, Rahfish, Sofina Foods, Select Surfaces, Skyline Electrical Supply Inc., Susan Creasy Financial Inc., and Tasco Appliances

Bravo to the stellar Lake Joe Live committee:

Genevieve Roch-Decter (Co-Chair), Jayne McCaw (Co-Chair), Lauren Cooper, Jack Creasy, Helen Hunt, Sylvia Mantella, Kristi Pahapill and Graeme Secord.

Why camperships matter...



“My child absolutely loves Lake Joe. He would spend all summer there if he could. He's made friends for life. We couldn't be happier that he has a place like this to grow up at.”

Investing in the future

Building today for the Lake Joe of tomorrow.

We celebrated the **groundbreaking of Hogarth Hall**, a new space that will transform CNIB Lake Joe into a year-round operation. Once complete, this facility will be home to Canada's first purpose-built goalball court, along with a fitness centre and a teaching kitchen.

Tim Hogarth and his fellow dedicated leadership volunteers Bob Buchanan, Susan Creasey, John Firstbrook, Helen Hunt, Joan Kelley Walker, the late Randall Oliphant, and Nancy Siminot helped raise several million dollars for the Second Century Capital Campaign, supporting the camp's capacity to support people with sight loss for years to come.

A dream come true, Hogarth Hall will smash barriers to inclusion through adaptive sports, recreation and skill development.

"Together we will make sure that the sun shines brightly on this camp for all of the campers and their families, 365 days a year," said Tim Hogarth.



Diana Hogarth, Lesley MacAulay Hogarth, Tim Hogarth, Angela Bonfanti, and Ross Bonfanti at the Hogarth Hall groundbreaking ceremony.

Major milestones!

The Ontario government announced a **\$3 million investment to build Canada's first-ever purpose-built goalball court at Lake Joe** - a game-changing step toward inclusive, world-class recreation and sport.

Goalball is a fast-paced Paralympic sport designed for athletes who are blind or have low vision. Players track the ball by sound and dive across the court to block and score goals. For the first time in Canada, we'll have a dedicated home for this sport where CNIB Lake Joe can better introduce goalball to our young participants and their families.

In partnership with Lions International and Lions Clubs across Ontario, we welcomed a **brand-new accessible minibus** to the Lake Joe fleet, improving transportation access for guests from near and far. The dedicated Lions, our "Knights of the Blind" worked hard to raise over \$90,000 and to secure a matching grant from the Lions Club International Foundation. With hundreds of participants relying on Lake Joe transportation to get to camp, this minibus makes a life-changing trip to camp possible.



Together we can change lives.

Here's how you can continue making a difference.

Endowment Gifts: Create a lasting legacy at CNIB Lake Joe with an endowment gift that ensures transformative camp experiences for people who are blind, Deafblind or have low vision today and for generations to come.

Camperships: Help make camp accessible for everyone by funding camperships that open the door to barrier-free adventures, independence, and lifelong friendships.

Naming Opportunities: Leave a meaningful mark by naming a space or program at CNIB Lake Joe, celebrating loved ones while inspiring our vibrant community.

Operational Support: Keep CNIB Lake Joe's life-changing programs running strong with operational support that empowers campers through adaptive recreation, skills training, and unforgettable experiences.

Legacy Gifts: By including CNIB Lake Joe in your will, you're building a lasting legacy that supports our transformative programs, services, and advocacy for years to come.

Bring the magic of camp to life: Purchase specialty items from the Lake Joe Wishlist and make dreams come true.

Donate now!

Your support in action.



The Salex staff team's "Volunteer Day" brought joy to children in our PLAY program.



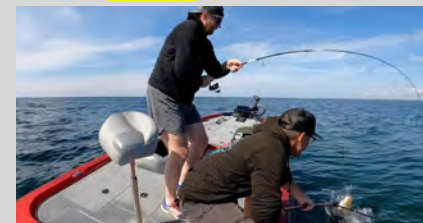
Cablz contributed 1,000 adjustable eyeglass retainers to guests.



Alva Family Foundation funded a new, super popular inflatable water trampoline.



Participant Mike Sanders (left) presented a donation from his workplace (Power Union Workers).



Gbay Team Series, a fishing competition presented by Leadbetter Foods in partnership with Rahfish, raised money and awareness for Lake Joe.



Joan Kelley Walker (right) hosted a Muskoka Fashion Week event at her cottage, shining the spotlight on Lake Joe and accessibility.

Keep in touch

cniblakejoe.ca
LakeJoe@cnib.ca



4 Joe Finley Way, MacTier, ON P0C 1H0
1-877-748-4028

