

FEATURED

Camden Bailey Cancer Foundation to launch Sunday

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Camden Bailey, 21, of Jackson, is looking forward to Sunday's launch celebration of the Camden Bailey Cancer Foundation at Tuckerman Brewing Co. in Conway Village from 3-6 p.m. (COURTESY PHOTO)

CONWAY — Camden Bailey has long been considered the ultimate teammate by those who played sports with him. He's been a leader on and off the playing field and always put the needs of others ahead of his own. Now he wants to start a scholarship for students who have "grit and resilience."

In March of 2018, Camden, now 21, the son of Jen and Chris Bailey of Jackson, was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, and less than three months later, Cam underwent a state-of-the-art surgery called rotationplasty, which is a partial amputation of his left leg, and which preserved a cancer-free lower leg and foot.

The always upbeat young man went on to play football (earning All-State quarterback honors) and tennis for Kennett High School and was the Class of 2022 salutatorian.

Less than a month after graduation and excited to be attending his dream school, the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, N.C., that fall, Camden's cancer returned. He had a cancerous nodule removed from a lung in July and has been bravely battling the disease ever since.

Last December, after three more surgeries and taking part in a six-week new drug trial at Duke University, his oncologist in Boston told him the cancer remained.

His father, Chris, a social studies teacher at Kennett and a standout athlete in his own right, told the Sun on Tuesday: “In what was not a very good day, Camden says to Jen he wants to start a scholarship.

“That’s who he is — always thinking of other people,” he said of his son.

From the idea of scholarship — for “someone who has shown grit and resilience to overcome challenges in their life” — in his name for a graduating Kennett High senior (the first will be awarded in June of 2026), the Camden Bailey Cancer Foundation was born.

The foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, will hold its launch event on Sunday, May 18, at Tuckerman Brewing Co. at 64 Hobbs St. in Conway Village, from 3-6 p.m.

A host of festivities are planned, including live music, silent auctions, raffles, food trucks, and the Foundation’s pop-up shop. Admission is free.

“Sunday is an opportunity to introduce the foundation to the community,” Chris said. “Camden will be there along with a few of his friends from UNC. ... We want to do this to pay things forward to our community for all it has done for Camden and our family.”

He added: “It would be great if we had a couple hundred people show up.”

In order to get a rough count of how many will be attending this free event, the Baileys are asking attendees to RSVP to tinyurl.com/bdd2sxht.

Everyone who RSVPs will have their name entered into a free raffle.

Serving on the board of the foundation will be Chris Bailey (president), Camden Bailey, Kelly Bailey (Camden’s aunt), Danny Mulkern, Victoria Noel Blake, Gina and Mark Miller and Sean Minton. Kevin Walker is on the golf tournament committee.

The Camden Bailey Cancer Foundation, according to its mission statement, “is dedicated to advancing the fight against osteosarcoma through comprehensive support for research, advocacy and patient care. We strive to provide essential resources to fund innovative research, lobby for increased government funding for osteosarcoma research, offer compassionate support to patients and their families and empower the next generation through scholarships. Guided by our commitment to hope, progress and education, we strive to create a world where osteosarcoma no longer threatens the lives of children and young adults.”

The first Camden Bailey Cancer Foundation Golf Tournament is planned for Monday (9:30 a.m. with Bailey teeing off from the first tee) at the North Conway Country Club with a full field of 128 golfers.

“The response from the community has been incredible,” Chris said. “Word of mouth spread and the tournament filled up quickly. The silent auction and raffle prize donations have been amazing.”

A host of businesses and individuals stepped up as tournament sponsors.

“We can’t thank them enough,” Chris said, mentioning Vigilant Wealth Management, Infinger Insurance, Smith, Costello & Crawford Law Firm, White Mountain Oil & Propane, the Valley Originals and Yesterday’s Restaurant.

Among the silent auction prizes is an autographed football by New England Patriots quarterback Drake Maye, a friend of Camden’s. They were at UNC together for Camden’s freshman and sophomore years, with Camden working with him and the football team in the fall of 2023 as a team manager.

“We invited Drake to the tournament but he had a training obligation,” Chris said.

Other prizes include an autographed guitar by country and western singer Jake Owen, a host of overnight lodgings, Boston Red Sox, Bruins and Celtics tickets, a weeklong Caribbean vacation and a Salty Dog golden retriever puppy.

“Camden is very excited about all of this,” Chris said. “He’s looking forward to seeing a lot of people he hasn’t seen in a while.”

If you are unable to attend the launch celebration but would like to make a tax-deductible contribution, you can donate at tinyurl.com/2v2aw2ar.

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Editor