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GIVE A TRULY INVALUABLE GIFT — THE GIFT OF CAMPI!

GRACIE: Camp's Country Girl



Sitting at a picnic table alongside her parents in the shaded area between the dining hall and chalet, Gracie is immersed in her art project, decorating a large rock with vibrant colours. Mixing the paint for a perfect shade of orange, almost identical to her t-shirt, Gracie's decorated rock is shaping up to be as unique as the rest. Once complete, it will join the abundant rock collection that brightens the walking paths and flower beds throughout Camp Easter Seal. Very much in her element, Gracie's second time visiting Little Manitou Lake for Camp Easter Seal's Family Camp is full of activity, connecting with familiar faces, and a lot of country music!



Since 1954, Camp Easter Seal has been providing a safe and inclusive space where campers can be themselves, play, explore, and experience an environment very different from their everyday lives. The only fully accessible camp in Saskatchewan, Camp Easter Seal is dedicated to providing a safe, fun, and barrier-free experience to all campers, including Gracie.

Always striving to adapt to the needs of current and future campers, Camp Easter Seal recently introduced a new initiative called Family Camp. This type of camp provides opportunities for campers to experience the joy and adventure of Camp with the support of their choosing – often parents, guardians, or siblings. These programs are made possible because of generous donors like you!

An energetic 16 year old, Gracie lives south of Swift Current with her parents in a cozy rural community. Very much a country girl, Gracie loves her western tunes, takes part in barrel racing, and has at least one cowgirl hat in her closet. Like many teenagers, her calendar is filled with activities outside of school, including swimming, attending SaskAbilities' Summer Fun programming at the Swift Current Branch, and participating in community events like SaskAbilities' AbilityBowl. Gracie was even recognized as one of the top fundraisers for the event, raising over \$1,245 in 2024.

"Gracie loves to dance. She's very social and has a great sense of humour," shares Robyn, Gracie's mom. "She also enjoys playing tricks on us," adds her dad, Stacey, with a smile, "Gracie really likes being outdoors, quadding and snowmobiling in the winter." As their only child, Gracie has the full attention of her parents, who are grateful their daughter has overcome some incredible challenges. "According to the doctors, after she was born, she wasn't going to make it. She was only three pounds. They didn't have much hope for her. We stayed in the neonatal intensive care unit after she was born and then transferred to pediatrics until she was five pounds. Then we were able to take her home. But it was a lot of back and forth between home and Saskatoon for a while," explains Stacey of a very uncertain time for him, his wife, and newborn daughter.

Despite the early challenges, Robyn and Stacey never take a single day with Gracie for granted. The parents have committed to ensuring their daughter lives a full life, even if that means some extra travel to take her to swimming lessons or other activities. "There are limited programs and services for Gracie. Her school is amazing, she has one-on-one support with an educational assistant. Gracie has great relationships with her classmates, but there isn't anyone else in the community her age with the same challenges," shares the parents.

After hearing about SaskAbilities through word of mouth in their community, Robyn and Stacey took a chance and enrolled Gracie in the Summer Fun program at the Swift Current Branch when she was 14 years old. Knowing their daughter well, it was no shock to the parents that Gracie enjoyed the activities and outings while interacting with peers and connecting with staff members. Since then, Gracie has also participated in SaskAbilities' Social Leisure Youth Program (SLYP-Out), where she enjoys community activities and opportunities to develop new friendships.

Monthly Giving is the simplest way to make pre-authorized contributions in support of Easter Seals™ Saskatchewan's work to enhance the independence and community participation of children and youth experiencing disability. By making your gift to Easter Seals™ Saskatchewan a monthly donation, you will make an even more powerful difference in the lives of individuals experiencing disability.

MONTHLY GIVING

THE EASTER SEALS™ MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

YES! I would like to help kids experiencing disability all year round by

Joining the **Easter Seals™ Monthly Giving Program:**

\$15 (50¢ a day) \$21 (70¢ a day) \$40 (\$1.33 a day) My choice \$_____ (minimum \$5)

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"I don't think there's an activity that Gracie doesn't like at Camp"

– Robyn and Stacey, Gracie's parents

Summer Fun recreational programming is offered at SaskAbilities' branches across the province. This program provides children and youth, just like Gracie, the opportunity to engage in a variety of community-based, outdoor, and group recreational activities that foster community inclusion, encourage social skill development, and increase the self-confidence of participants.

By building trust and familiarity with staff members and talking to other families, Gracie's parents started to learn more about other programs and services offered through SaskAbilities including Camp Easter Seal. Once Robyn and Stacey learned about Family Camp, they knew it would be a great option for their family. "I don't think there's an activity that Gracie doesn't like at Camp," shares the couple laughing, "The first year was good, and we stayed the whole week. The second year we could tell Gracie was more comfortable and confident in her surroundings. She recognized familiar faces and knew what to expect which was a benefit for all of us." While Gracie has made friends and connected with staff members, Robyn and Stacey have also felt welcomed into a broader community of families across the province who share similar stories and experiences.

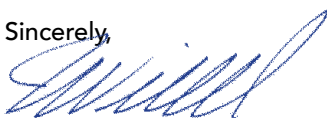
As the 2025 camp season inches closer, Robyn and Stacey know Gracie is all in. "It's not a question of whether or not Gracie wants to go; it's just a matter of getting our application submitted as quickly as possible when registration opens," say the pair, who are keeping a close eye on the Camp Easter Seal website for updates. With family being a top priority for Gracie and her parents, it is important for them to have opportunities to participate in activities together, whether at community events like AbilityBowl or through recreational programs like Summer Fun and Camp Easter Seal.



Your support of Easter Seals™ Saskatchewan creates opportunities for children and youth experiencing disability to access essential programs like Summer Fun, Adaptive Technology Services, and Camp Easter Seal.

Each summer hundreds of children and youth take part in Summer Fun day camps happening across the province or make the trek to Little Manitou Lake for a week of fun and adventure at Camp Easter Seal. Your generous donations stay in the province ensuring that as many children, youth, and adults as possible have the best summer ever!

We know Gracie and her parents are looking forward to continuing to attend Camp Easter Seal's Family Camp, with all the country music tunes ready for their return!

Sincerely,


Ian Wilkinson,
 Executive Director



When you support Easter Seals™ Saskatchewan, you are supporting essential programs like Summer Fun, Adaptive Technology Services, and Camp Easter Seal.



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS TOGETHER