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Joppa Hill *Living*

A SOCIAL MAGAZINE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE JOPPA HILL ROAD COMMUNITIES



Read about the Friends of Aine Foundation on page 22

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YOUR STORIES. YOUR PHOTOS. YOUR COMMUNITY.

Making a DIFFERENCE

The Friends Of Aine Foundation



Aine Phillips

"I don't think we could have been prepared for our experience. From the sight of the cones and balloons upon entry, to the first volunteer we saw in the brightest pink shirt I have ever seen making our kids giggle with his windmill arms directing us where to park. We couldn't believe how special the day already felt and nothing had happened yet. They both had the most amazing first triathlon experience ever. My husband and I couldn't be more thankful for that. You should be proud, you took what is every parent's worst nightmare (I understand this is a huge understatement) and turned that into the most beautiful, love filled day. Congratulations and we can't wait to be back next year, thanks for the memories!"

Parents of Try-athlon participants



Darlene Boyd photo

On August 10, 2010, David and Christine Phillips lost their 8 year old daughter, Aine, due to undiagnosed Pulmonary Veno Occlusive Disease (PVOD). Their younger daughter, Bella, was five at the time. What they discovered through this tragedy was the need for ongoing support groups for the surviving siblings to help them with the grieving process.

David and Christine envisioned a permanent center where children struggling with the loss of a sibling or loved one could gain support and interact with other children having the same experience. From this idea, the Friends of Aine Foundation



Darlene Boyd photo

KID'S TRY-ATHLON

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2015

SWIM BIKE RUN JUMP



Alexa Rainey photo

was established with the primary goal to raise funds to support grieving children, particularly the Good Grief program at Home Health and Hospice Care (HHHC) in Merrimack.

In April of 2013, David and Christine proposed the idea of a kid's try-athlon and within four months, their idea came to fruition. The first Friends of Aine Kids' Try-athlon took place on August 18, 2013, with 200 participants and 80 volunteers. Their efforts were extremely successful. In December 2014, The Friends of Aine Foundation presented a \$25,000 check to HHHC. The following year, in October 2015, they presented another \$25,000 to HHHC.



Christine's Mom



Bella, David, and Christine cheering on the participants

This past August marked the third annual Try-athlon. The Try-athlon is designed specifically for children ages 4-15 years, in memory of Aine. The event started at the Bedford town pool and ended at the Bedford High School. Participants ages 4-10 years swam twenty-five yards, ran a half mile, and biked one mile. Older participants, ages 11-15 years swam fifty yards, ran one mile, and biked two miles. This year's event raised over \$20,000. The community support each year has been amazing.

We had the opportunity to chat with Christine about The Friends of Aine Foundation and this is what we learned...

How can others get involved with this organization? Others can get involved by helping to coordinate fundraisers with us, by volunteering at the fundraisers, helping to spread the word of who we are and what we do, and of course, donations.

How has establishing the Foundation helped you thus far? We get the opportunity to say our daughter's name and honor her memory. And we get to help other

children, like our daughter Bella, who miss their siblings or moms or dads so much.

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? We've lived here for 15 years and chose it mainly because it felt right and we liked the feeling of community. Since Aine's death, we have come to understand what a truly amazing community we live in, both our neighborhood and the Town of Bedford. We are grateful to be here.

For more information or to donate please visit www.friendsofaine.com



The Friends of Aine Foundation

In Aine's memory to help grieving children
www.friendsofaine.com