

'All aboard for boating fun'

Seriously ill children enjoy a day on the water at Starlight's Boat Club Escape!

Every year, national children's charity Starlight brings fun, laughter and distraction to over half a million poorly children spending time in hospitals and hospices. As the summertime can be a particularly gloomy time for children undergoing medical treatment, the charity is always looking for ways to bring some fun, laughter and summer sunshine into the lives of some of these poorly children.

For the first time, Starlight has taken to the water to hold an amazing pirate-themed summer boat party for fifty seriously ill children from Berkshire. The escape was held on Saturday 8th June and was generously hosted for Starlight by The Upper Thames Motor Yacht Club, which is based at Sonning on the River Thames.

The young guests were invited with their families for a day of fun, which included a delicious BBQ, pirate-themed games, a water fight and even a voyage on the Thames! The Upper Thames Motor Yacht Club had really pushed the boat out and the beaming smiles on the children's faces confirmed that it had been a wonderful day and a much-needed escape from the hospital ward.

Starlight also grants wishes for children with serious and terminal illnesses and a number of the children had been invited because the charity is granting their once-in-a-lifetime wishes. There were also children from Royal Berkshire Hospital, who had been invited to enjoy the day with their families.

Dave Biggin, Commodore at The Upper Thames Motor Yacht Club, said, "It was a delight to see so many smiling faces at the club. Our members all love motor boating on the Thames and it was wonderful to be able to share our enthusiasm with such a deserving group of children and their families. We are also very grateful to The Rivertime Boat Trust who loaned one of their specially adapted boats which was able to accommodate three wheelchair bound young guests."

Sue Wildman, Head of Wish Granting at Starlight, said: "What an amazing day! There really is nothing quite like messing about on the river and the children absolutely loved their pirate adventure on the Thames. Starlight is all about helping seriously ill children to forget their illnesses for a while and simply have a bit of fun; thanks to the warmth and generosity of The Upper Thames Motor Yacht Club, this is exactly what they did at Starlight's Boat Club Escape!"

In addition to hosting Starlight's Boat Escape, The Upper Thames Motor Yacht Club fundraised for Starlight during the weekend. Members of the club and their guests had the opportunity to win some amazing raffle prizes kindly donated by Citizen Watches and Thames and Kennet Marina. *The monies raised over the weekend* will be presented to Starlight and will be used to provide fun and laughter for some more very poorly children!

Information

To refer a child for a wish or to make a donation, please go online at www.starlight.org.uk. For every £1 you donate, 93p goes towards helping Starlight's very ill children.

For more information, please contact Janet Lindsay at janet@starlight.org.uk / 020 7262 2881 # 230.

Starlight grants once-in-a-lifetime wishes for seriously and terminally ill children, restoring the magic and fun of childhood and giving the whole family happy memories to share, whatever the future holds.

Starlight also creates entertainment in every hospital and hospice throughout the UK. Sick children go to Starlight parties, laugh their way through pantomimes, go out on Starlight Escapes, play games and watch films on the Starlight Fun Centre, and enjoy the toys and puzzles of the Starlight Distraction Box. Happy children respond better to treatment and Starlight helps children to forget about their illness and simply have a bit of fun.