



THE GIRLS & BOYS
BRIGADE

Stories from the GBB

WINTER EDITION 2022

You give children memories to last a lifetime.

Jim Thompson is one of many generous supporters – like you! – who make it possible for The Girls & Boys Brigade to provide a safe space for children and youth in need. But Jim is no ordinary donor – he used to attend the GBB as a boy.

Although Jim grew up with a park nearby his home, it was often the site of trouble. Games like touch footy weren't allowed, and Jim recalls several unwelcome encounters with Park Rangers. Thankfully, there was another place where Jim could go that was inclusive, safe, and fun – the GBB!

Every afternoon, Jim would join the swell of kids waiting excitedly for the doors to open – their cue to stampede upstairs and begin the fun. Jim's days at the GBB concluded with a game of dodgeball in the basement, and a sigh when told that it was time to go home.

"At closing time, we would trudge out with thoughts of returning tomorrow," said Jim. "On my recent visits, you only need to see the kids to know that they probably feel the same way now as I did back then."

Because of you & Jim, children and youth will be able to access opportunities and make fun memories just like Jim's. Thank you!

Dodgeball wasn't the only subject of Jim's memories of the GBB. He made a lifelong friend, and still recalls the names of the staff who looked after them. Once, staff coordinated an overnight trip to Orange where they were billeted by locals. For many children, this was their first opportunity to leave Sydney, and Jim remembers this trip very fondly.

"Having been there as a kid, I understand the good work, commitment, and passion that was delivered then, as it is now," said Jim. Recognising this, Jim became a regular donor to The Girls & Boys Brigade, helping to give children and youth the same memories and experiences that he benefitted from.

"My only regret was that I did not start much earlier, but hey, it's never too late!" said Jim.



You bring Sunshine to bad-weather days!

Continuing with the unusually wet weather we've had so far this year, the forecast for the July school holidays was disappointing. But thanks to you, our programs staff were able to bring the fun indoors with a trip to Inflatable World!

The children absolutely love Inflatable World. As advertised, the venue is full of inflatable objects that children can run, jump, leap, fall and run into, almost all without physical consequence.

Not only did the children have an opportunity to show off their impressive stamina, they also showed off their creativity by inventing game after game.



Their proudest creation was a game called survivor, which happened to be the one game the staff – who were not allowed on the inflatable objects - were also able to play.

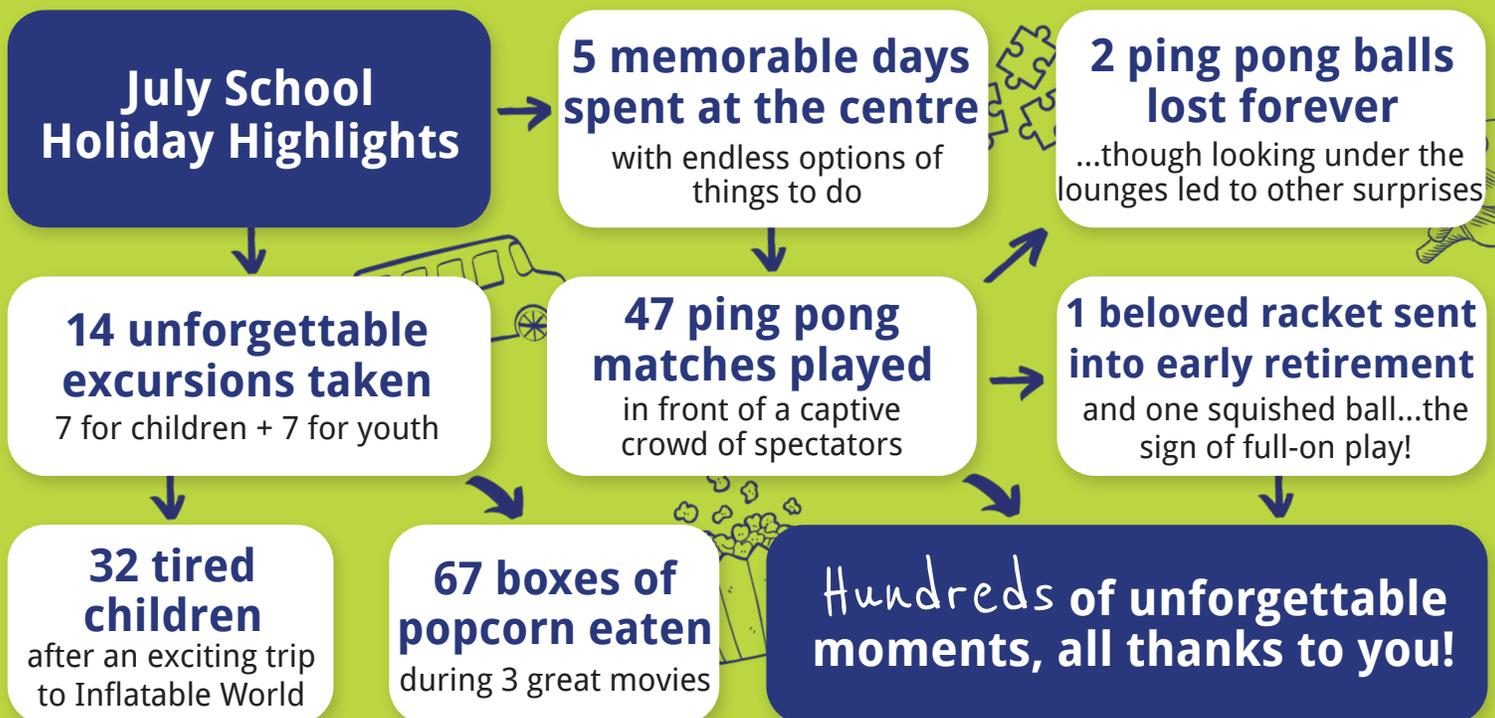
Survivor starts with the children lining up along the wall of an inflatable castle, with staff standing on the ground opposite the wall.

The staff then push, pull, and run into the wall, shaking it back and forth as much as possible until they can knock all the children off the wall.

As you may guess, the last child standing – or survivor – is the winner.

While the staff needed frequent breaks to catch their breath, it was only at the end of the two-hour session that the children realised they were hot, sweaty, and exhausted. They were having too much fun to realise they were exercising for two straight hours!

Thank you for ensuring that all kids, no matter what kind of storms they face, can make fun memories during school holidays!



Your kindness is felt by the families we help.

Like you, we believe everyone deserves dignity. But for families facing complex challenges, dignity sometimes feels lost. It's a horrible feeling with a simple remedy: connection, kindness, and a helping hand.

Thanks to you, we can provide services in a way that empowers these families to know that they are worthy, trusted, and capable of overcoming the challenges they face.

Supporting people with dignity calls for compassion for others' hardships and struggles. It relies on unconditional respect. It offers a hand up rather than a handout.

Thank you so much.

-Stefan Lamour-Jansson, Executive Officer

Because of you, people experiencing complex challenges can walk through our doors and access help without compromising their dignity.

You helped us create a table with room for everyone to have a seat. It means the world to us, and to the families we help.

Knowing that kind-hearted people like you exist makes me feel hopeful about the world we're creating for our children and young people.



MENU

Thank you for giving youth a taste of new experiences.

For some, going for lunch may sound like a typical outing – but for many of our youth, it was a unique opportunity to exercise independence and try something new.

During the July school holidays, we took five youth to China Town for lunch. We all sat together at an Asian noodle restaurant and ate Laska.

Three of the youth had never tried Laska before. Two of the youth told us they had never sat to eat in a restaurant before, or had the opportunity to choose their own meal.

Because of you, youth were able to experience the satisfaction of ordering for themselves. They were able to try something new and learn a little bit about a culture that was unfamiliar to them. The smiles on their faces were indescribable.

Thank you for giving these young people opportunities to learn more about themselves and the world around them.





“I had a good day, mum! I got to feel like I fitted in – like I didn’t stand out for the wrong reasons.”

This is what Spencer said to his mum after the first time he brought his new laptop to school. Spencer’s previous computer had broken, and his family couldn’t afford to buy him a new one.

The Girls & Boys Brigade recognised that Spencer needed a laptop to keep up in high school. Thanks to you, we were able to provide him one.

Spencer continued, “my laptop, mum. It’s just as good as other people’s, and my battery lasts. I was less stressed and could focus better on my work.”

Your generosity made it possible for Spencer to succeed in school with dignity. His mum, who was under significant financial stress due to personal health challenges, was finally able to let go of some of the guilt and anxiety she felt for struggling to provide for Spencer’s educational needs.

“I really just want to express how thankful we are,” she said. “We hope that you – the GBB and their generous supporters – know just how much of a positive impact it has made to our whole family, but especially to Spencer and his future.”



Classical Music Evening Thursday, 1 September 2022

We would be delighted if you would join us at the iconic Tea Room at the Queen Victoria Building for this can’t-miss event! With music by internationally renowned classical singer Holly Holyoake and a delicious dinner, it is sure to be exquisite.

Thanks to you, we raised nearly \$50,000 at last year’s event, and we are thrilled to have another opportunity to help children and youth in need!

9th Annual Golf Day Wednesday, 19 October 2022

With you there, we’re sure this year’s Golf Day will be a hole-in-one! Hosted at St Michael’s Golf Club with breathtaking views of Little Bay, our Ninth Annual Charity Golf Day will be one to remember. Complete with great food, great competition, and great company – all for a great cause.

Tickets always sell out, so get in quick. See you on the green!



While the stories in this newsletter are true, names and other identifying details of children mentioned have been altered to protect their privacy. Thanks for your kind understanding!
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