

# Gaming corporation jumps in to try to save summer camp for blind kids

BY DENISE RYAN , VANCOUVER SUN APRIL 6, 2009 4:02 PM



Howard Blank, spokesman for the Great Canadian Gaming Corporation.

**Photograph by:** Ian Smith, Vancouver Sun

METRO VANCOUVER - The Great Canadian Gaming Corporation has jumped in to donate \$50,000 to the CNIB in the hope of saving the Bowen Island Summer Camps for the blind.

The camp will be closed unless a funding shortfall of \$140,000 can be raised.

"We're all in tough economic times, but that shouldn't affect the youth, especially those that are disadvantaged," said Howard Blank of the Great Canadian Gaming Corporation.

Blank is urging other donors to come forward and match their donation.

Blank was moved by a story in the Vancouver Sun that detailed the shock and dismay of families reeling over CNIB cutbacks that mean the closure of the annual summer camp that has been a haven for blind kids.

The camps offer kids from toddlers to teens opportunities to learn and play music, to bond with other visually impaired children, build community and learn independence skills.

“So many great artists and musicians, like Andrea Bocelli, are not sighted — if opportunities like this are taken away from these children, it’s a crime. We’re hoping some of those kids may grow up to grace our stages in the future,” said Blank.

“This is wonderful news,” said CNIB board chair Rob Sleath. “We don’t want to take anything away from these children, but the CNIB has been hit hard by the economic downturn.”

Many Vancouver Sun readers have called in to express their wish to try and save the camp.

Anyone wishing to make a donation large or small should contact the CNIB’s John Mulca or Joy Yorath, at 604-431-2121, and indicate that the donation is specifically for the Bowen Island Summer Camp.

[dryan@vancouversun.com](mailto:dryan@vancouversun.com)

© Copyright (c) The Vancouver Sun