

25 YEARS OF JASON'S HOUSE

Community supports gift of family trips

BY JIM AND LINDA LEWIS

Jason's House recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, beginning the 26th year of providing free vacations on the Grand Strand for families of children suffering from cancer. The program is sponsored by Surfside United Methodist Church with support from the entire Grand Strand.

In the past 25 years you have provided free vacations for more than 1,600 families at a retail value of about \$4.5 million. Since the entire program is run by volunteers, if you were to add a reasonable amount for

salaries for all of the people who work to make this happen, I'm sure that the total value of this program would reach \$7 million.

When we moved to Myrtle Beach shortly after Jason's death, we marveled at the beauty of the Grand Strand and all of the exciting things there were to do. Everywhere we went we would say, "Wouldn't Jason have loved this?" Then the idea occurred to us that other children suffering from cancer would love it, too. We approached our church with the idea and Jason's House was born. I can honestly say that never in my wildest

imagination did I ever believe that it would become what it has become. I can't imagine how year after year, and in spite of our problems with the economy, so many people and businesses pour out their time, effort, money and goods to continue to make this happen.

We would like to express our heart-felt gratitude to God, the Surfside United Methodist Church, all of the volunteers who work so hard, and all of the donors who make this happen. Thank you, Grand Strand! We love you!

The writers are Jason's parents and live in Panama City, Fla.