



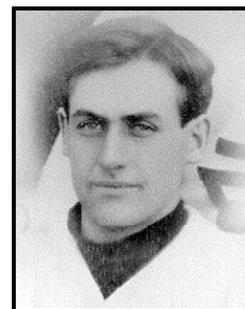
Kern Family News

FALL, 2017

Carl B Kern Fund — A Matching Gift

Thirty years ago, in November of 1987, The Carl B. Kern Fund was established with The Dayton Foundation, promoting and supporting the benefits of summer camp by paying tribute to the life and work of former Dayton YMCA Boys' Work Secretary Carl B. Kern. Since then, over 700 donations and estate gifts - many from former Camp Kern staff, directors, board members, friends, and their families - have raised nearly \$375,000 in principal. Annual distributions and gifts from the Fund to Camp Kern have totaled almost \$156,000 to date. *To celebrate the Fund's 30th*

Anniversary, the founder has pledged to match the next \$30,000 in donations in hopes of continuing to build the Fund's principal for the future. For more information, please go to www.kernfund.org or visit the Fund's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cbkernfund.



Camp Increases Community Role

One of Camp's big focuses over the last 18 months is to have an increased role in our local community. We have worked hard to build numerous collaborations, allowing us to market camp's offerings, expand our footprint and provide assistance where necessary. The past 12 months have seen us partner with the following non-profit organizations, helping us diversify our camper population and provide more scholarships to campers and families in need; Mom's Hope, Outdoor Adventure Clubs of Cincinnati, Joseph's Place, No Child Left Inside, The New Path, Interfaith Hospitality Network, the Warren County Board of Developmental Disability and Goodwill Easter Seals.

Through these partnerships, we have delivered experiential learning programming to underserved youth, given work experi-

ence to adults with special needs, offered scholarship assistance to children touched by tragedy and given summer camp experiences to more first time campers than ever before. We are so proud that this summer was another record breaking year for scholarship assistance, with more than 170 campers receiving some sort of financial aid, which is double our number in 2014. A big thank you to our donors for making this happen, and stay tuned as we have several new partnerships in the pipeline for 2018.

“There are many sunken memories left to be discovered at the bottom of the Elk Lake—a world of stories awaits us.”
 ~Dave Moran

Where has Elk Lake Gone?

“Where has Elk Lake gone?” is not a new question. Ten years ago, the water began to disappear, and the lake was saved by the quick actions of the Maintenance Crew who realized that a subsurface section of the drainage pipe had rusted through. Their decade long temporary fix is now being retired and the complete replacement of the overflow/drain pipe is underway. This surprisingly complex undertaking involves engineering firms, draining experts (our own Craig Haines), excavators, ODNR overseers, soil scientists, and a much-harried project coordinator (Chris Addison). Elk Lake was built in 1964 and on a good day it holds about 30

million gallons of water. The plan/hope is that the work will be completed in December and that generous snow melt and early spring rains will replenish the lake in time for warmer weather.



STEM Lab Update

As mentioned in the Fall 2016 Issue, our Nature Center was getting a revamp, and we are happy to show off the hard work of our Outdoor Education Team and Maintenance Team in bringing this project to fruition. The nature center front room has had a spruce up, with; new lighting, new ceiling, new roof, fresh coat of paint and some electric work. The back room has been transformed into a STEM focused classroom, filled with exciting and innovative experiments and equipment to foster a love for all things STEM in our students and campers!

Trailblazers Room-Moore Left

Our Trailblazers program very near and dear to our hearts, but the dedicated space wasn't even close to what the campers deserved, so before summer started our volunteers and staff banded together to create a brighter, safer, cleaner, more engaging and generally more suitable program area. Campers and parents have loved the changes and it had a

big effect on five weeks of memories and programming, with more engaged campers leading to a greater summer impact. The before and after pictures show what can be achieved with a little elbow grease and some imagination. Thanks to everyone who made this possible!



Before



After

Alumni Spotlight—Thomas Reel

Thomas Reel was a member of the Dayton YMCA where he learned about YMCA Camp Kern. He was a camper for three or four years in the 1950's before becoming a counselor and archery and swim instructor. As a counselor, he also drove the camp Chevy station wagon, hauling food and drinks to various outings.

Summer camp was a little different in the 50's from what it is today. The cabins were tent covered structures, with canvas tops and only the bottom half was wooden. They were hot and leaked when it rained. There was also a craft cabin, main lodge and dining hall, plus the swimming pool with the changing building.

For activities, camp had a baseball diamond, swimming pool and archery range. Many times there were picnics in the woods and camping outside under the stars. Campers carried everything they would need out into the woods and down to the river for an overnight. There, they sat around the campfire, the counselors telling scary stories.

One of Mr. Reel's favorite memories is the bugle playing Reveille every morning over the public address system. The campers gathered around the flagpole to raise

the flag and this began their day. Each evening, Taps was played and the flag was lowered. The campers played baseball and other organized activities. There were a *lot* of hikes. They would hike down to the fort, in the woods, and occasionally, campers from a couple of cabins went for a long hike—a TWENTY MILE hike, which took all day to complete! The campers hiked to the road and turned right or left, then hiked and hiked. The station wagon followed the hikers and carried lunch. Mr. Reel said this was a *long* day for him and his fellow counselors.

Another of his favorite memories was the Camp Kern Olympics. Each cabin represented a country, complete with that country's flag. It was a big deal for the new campers and they competed in archery, swimming and various running and jumping competitions. Medals and small trophies were given out to the participants during the award ceremony and everyone enjoyed the competition between "countries." When asked what was something they did at camp then that we couldn't do at camp now, Mr. Reel said probably having 17 year old counselors drive the camp vehi-

cle would be a no-no now! That was how old he was when he started driving the camp station wagon. After his years at Camp Kern, Mr. Reel went to Wittenberg University. He kept in contact with the friends he made at camp for several years after leaving, but said he doesn't remember any names now, and said, "At 77 I'm lucky to recall my wife's name!" He is retired now and lives with his wife near Atlanta, Georgia, where his children and grandchildren live.

Mr. Reel enjoyed reminiscing about his time at camp. Camp Kern made an impression on him because it was a big deal at the time and was something out of the ordinary to do over the summer. He loved spending the summer outside, in nature, catching turtles and other animals and those are some of the activities he got to share at camp. Mr. Reel thinks that Camp Kern becomes a part of you and is an experience that you never forget. He wishes the YMCA in Atlanta had a bigger presence there. If they offered it, he would send his grandchildren to summer camp there to make sure they would have the chance to experience summer camp like he did.

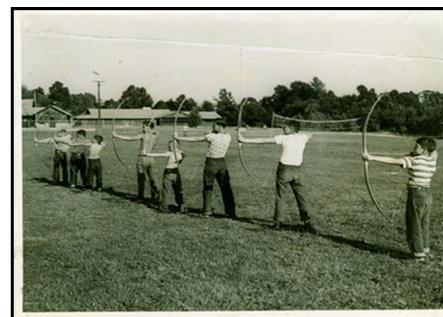
Interview by Nancy Bortle



Bunks in the 1950's.



The accommodations for campers, seen here, "were hot and leaked when it rained."



Archery competitions were part of the Camp Kern Olympics in the 1950's.

Upcoming Kern Events

Alumni Work Project Day
Sunday, April 22, 2018

Strawberries and Ice Cream
Thursday, June 14, 2018

Alumni Pool Party
Sunday, August 12, 2018

Alumni Work Project Day
Sunday, September 23, 2018

Pre Thanksgiving Feast
Sunday November 18, 2018

Arctic Dash
Saturday December 1, 2018



The Arctic Dash-Are You TOUGH Enough?



This December 2, Camp Kern will be hosting the 6th Annual Arctic Dash 5K Mud-Run on the grounds of Camp Kern in order to help raise funds for the Camp's Annual Campaign. Runners from all over the Midwest will come to brave the cold and take on nearly 20 obstacles of all shapes and sizes; from slogging through mud pits to scaling 10 feet walls, the Dash is a perfect race for competitive and casual runners alike. In 2017, The Arctic Dash had 327 runners, raising \$15,000 to help send kids to camp who may not otherwise be able to afford to go. This year the Camp Kern team is trying to go even bigger; with a goal of 400 runners, the Arctic Dash is

quickly growing into one of Camp Kern's premier community events. Registration is still open; if you want to show the world you are "Arctic Tough", visit www.kerndash.org to register today. **For a limited time, use promo code "TURKEY" and save \$5!**

The Arctic Dash is only possible through the help of volunteers and sponsors from the local community. If you have any interest in helping make the 2017 Arctic Dash the best one yet, please contact Summer Camp Director Sean Kline at skline@daytonymca.org

Kern Family Committee

Kara Barton
Erin Crosby
Traci Hale Brown
Andrea Kaercher
Michele King
Natalie Schiavone
Curtis Wright
Chris Addison (Kern Staff)
Devin Carr (Kern Staff)
Dave Moran (Kern Staff)

Volunteers Needed:

In an effort to build a strong committee, we are seeking additional volunteers to help us with are various positions. If you are interested in joining the committee, volunteering at events, assisting with the newsletter, donating, or anything else, please contact us at:

campkernalumni@gmail.com