A Presbyterian Child Care Agency since 1914

KEMMERER VOICES

July 2021





Summer Camp is a *splash!*

Camp Carew has been helping Kemmerer Village fulfill our mission of helping children for decades; this year Kemmerer Village has begun helping Camp Carew. **Kemmerer Village's first year managing Camp Carew is going swimmingly!** Camp Director Dan Kingery eagerly greeted the first campers of the

season on June 13. He was pleased to return to the energetic in-person camp and went above and beyond to keep our youth, staff, and volunteers safe. Everyone enjoyed spending the week learning new skills in canoes and archery, playing games, and having fun in the water!

Camp Carew offers Christian camping to children from kindergarten through 12th grade in June and July. There are general camps, Horseback Camp, Discovery Camp, Photography Camp, High Adventure Camp, and Music Art & Drama Camp each summer. Camp Carew is located in Southern Illinois nine miles south of Carbondale. Camp Carew is a Presbyterian summer camp providing quality Christian camps to children since 1952. The amazing views, wildlife,

hiking, fishing, and other outdoor activities blend with Bible study, arts, crafts, and special programming to give children memories that last a lifetime.

This summer we are anticipating approximately 200 children, 8 staff, and several volunteers on-grounds. Kemmerer Village will be taking 23 Foster Children. Our beautiful camp is an ideal place for retreats, family reunions, weddings, and all of your event needs. To learn more about camp or facility rental visit www.campcarew.org.



Tears Through Campus

Right in the middle of an ordinary day in May, Kemmerer Village was shocked by a destructive storm. A tornado touched down on the North end of campus. Roofs were damaged, and cars were crushed. We are very fortunate that no one was injured. The Kemmerer Village campus is 60 acres surrounded by farmland. Our rural location leaves us vulnerable to wind damage every year, but we have never seen this much damage. Several news reporters covered the damage at Kemmerer including the Chicago Tribune and the Weather Channel.



Kemmerer Voices

Autumn Warren......Editor
Publication No 292-240

Kemmerer Village is a Mission Agency of the Synod of Lincoln Trails, Presbyterian Church (USA)

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'Kids will do well if they can.'

Supporting kids to 'do well' could be a simplified version of the Kemmerer Village Mission. A primary focus of my role as Executive Director is to find effective ways to support our staff and the families we work with, so that they can follow Ross Greene's advice above. Kemmerer Village staff and the families of our Residential and Foster Care children are guiding kids to 'do well' every day.

Creating a supportive environment is at times as straightforward as providing a handmade quilt or ice cream and cake in our dining hall for a child's birthday. At other times, creating this environment takes months of planning and coordination to ensure that an adoption can be finalized, despite courthouse COVID restrictions. While the first step is simple and the second complex, the one thing these actions share is the commitment of dedicated Kemmerer Village staff members.

Over the last several months, the most significant challenge to supporting Kemmerer Village children and families has been hiring staff. Most people reading this article are aware of many businesses who are struggling with staffing. Kemmerer Village has had to make some tough decisions in the last several months to adapt our service provision based on a lack of staff availability. We will continue to honor our long history of providing high quality Residential and Foster Care services for many years to come. To ensure the quality of our services, despite staff shortages, we have decreased the number of children and families we serve, on a targeted basis, in both the Residential and Foster Care programs. Our planning for the remainder of 2021 and into 2022 includes growth, as we can hire qualified and committed individuals to contribute to our Mission.

As dedicated Kemmerer Village supporters, you can help our efforts by referring staff to work at Kemmerer Village. We have current openings on every shift for Residential Counselors. Residential Counselors are the Kemmerer Village staff who are there every morning when kids wake up and work with the children throughout the day and overnight. These staff guide and support our Residential kids to 'do well' literally every hour of every day. Openings in our Community Services Department are currently primarily for Foster Care Caseworkers. Foster Care Caseworkers require a Bachelor's degree in a related subject and provide case management for children in foster care as well as their biological families. Caseworkers contribute to children's stability and movement toward permanent, forever families. New graduates can gain excellent, wide ranging experience in working with both children and adults, providing support for the entire family to 'do well'.

Over my 28 years with Kemmerer Village, I have been extremely proud to be part of a program which offers such comprehensive support to so many children and their families. The Kemmerer Village Mission has impacted hundreds of children since 1914. I am confident that as we implement new hiring techniques and continue to dedicate ourselves to our hiring process, we will be able to again grow the Kemmerer Village program soon.

Anyone wanting information on our current open employment positions can visit our Website (kemmerervillage.org), or our Facebook page facebook.com/kemmerervillage.

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From the Director of Development...

My first year as Director of Development has literally been a whirl wind. We began with a pandemic and wrapped it up with a tornado. I have met incredible supporters of this mission and look forward to meeting with more of you.

For 107 years, Kemmerer and those who support us have supported children helping to foster the distinctly warm and vibrant community that is the Village. In the classroom, on the playing field and in our caring homes, Kemmerer community is giving families and children what they need to succeed. I am so blessed to be a part of this chapter of story of Kemmerer Village.



If you have time to talk about what connects you to the mission of Kemmerer, or have a group that would like to hear some of the amazing stories we are accomplishing together, I would love to speak with you.

It is true it takes a village. The children of Kemmerer have people who brought them into this world, people who care for them, people who feed them and protect them. They also have people like you who pray for them and support them. Together we are the village they need.

Thank you for your part in building this village.

Meet the Director of Community Operations-Jeannie Karbach

An Illinois girl by history, I attended school to earn both a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Education in Counseling at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas. I remained in Texas for several years after completing my education, working in the fields of community mental health, residential treatment, and briefly in substance abuse services. While I truly love West Texas, the pull to return to Illinois to be closer to my family was stronger. Kemmerer Village has been a perfect fit for me as I welcomed nieces & nephews, and then started a family of my own. My journey with Kemmerer Village started in 2001, at which time I joined the team as a Clinical Supervisor for North Cottage, later moving to Clinical Supervisor for Tate Cottage. In 2005 I moved into the position of Clinical Milieu Manager for Residential Treatment. While I have served as a supervisor in several settings both in & out of Kemmerer Village, the CMM position helped me recognize and utilize my strengths and skills as a manager and administrator. I moved into the role of Director of Community Services in July 2016, serving as supervisor and director for the Kemmerer Village Foster Care program. Since 2016, our program has experienced tremendous growth. We have successfully more than tripled the size of our department, and I look forward to continued growth in the future.

In moving into the Community Services Department, I was excited to learn something new and was ready to utilize and expand my clinical and supervisory knowledge. The experience overall has taught me so much more than I expected. Prior to moving into Community Services, I had no direct knowledge or experience with the foster care system outside of a very basic understanding that many of the youth in residential treatment may have been in foster care prior to their stay in treatment. I quickly learned how closely foster care and residential treatment are connected. At the same time, I recognized just how little is known about foster care, whether within a treatment facility like ours, in the child welfare system as a whole, or within our communities. I recognize the responsibility and privilege involved in having information about the life events, trauma, and experiences of the youth we serve and utilizing that knowledge to make good decisions for the lives of the families we serve. Additionally, I feel called to share information with others in order to build awareness about child welfare. I am dedicated to the mission of Kemmerer Village, and I believe in the important work we do. I strive to be a leader who inspires others to achieve the same degree of commitment to the clients we serve. I am excited for the opportunity to serve as the Director of Community Operations for Kemmerer Village, and hope to utilize this position not only to maintain the long-established integrity and strength of our current programs, but also to grow additional programs and services, and even more importantly to inform and engage our communities.

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Mighty Ducks Score Again!

Kemmerer Village's Therapeutic Recreation Department recently held a couple of Mighty Ducks movie nights. The kids got to wear their Mighty Ducks jerseys while practicing their shooting skills. They enjoyed Knuckle Puck Ding Dongs, Quack Corn and a MD themed cake! The Mighty Ducks movies teach the values of teamwork, good sportsmanship, and playing a sport for the fun of it rather than winning at all costs.







"It Was Our Home"

"It was great to see all my family that could be here"

"Kemmerer provided stability, guidance & a lot of good friends"

"Coming back and seeing all my good old friends"

"Home sweet home"

"Home is where the heart is, love Kemmerer"

"It's always nice to see Family, when asked about my childhood,

I tell people, "I am a Kemmerer Kid."

May 1, 2021, a small group who refer to themselves as "Kemmerer Kids," gathered at the Kemmerer Village Retreat Center. They try to do this on an annual basis. This core group left Kemmerer in the late 1970s. Above are comments from some of those present. Several members of this group were the final kids to live in the original orphanage. These girls were some of the last to call the original building on-campus home. They moved from the upstairs dorm of the orphanage to a newly built Marsch Cottage in 1976. One member of this group came to Kemmerer at age three and remained until young adulthood. These visits are nothing less than a family reunion. Kemmerer kids share memories of friends and staff that made a difference in their lives. The term staff does not do justice to the role these people play. They gave tender loving care and guidance to young people in need. Building positive relationships continue to be paramount at Kemmerer Village.

Attending these reunions also were Jim and Sony Bugg. The local farmers were Sunday School teachers at Memorial Presbyterian Church where the Kemmerer Village youth attended. Jim has stayed connected with the Village as a Board Member. Sony was an original member of the Kemmerer Village Auxiliary. Holly and Will Weitfeldt were also in attendance. They served as house parents at a Kemmerer Village group home with some of the girls. They have remained close and supportive.

There were also comments about the Retreat Center. During their early years at Kemmerer, the Barn Retreat was an actual barn with animals which meant a place for chores. There were great memories and stories of horses, pigs, and chickens. Approximately thirty years ago, the barn was converted into a living space for volunteers and mission groups who were visiting Kemmerer Village. There are plenty of beds and space if your group is looking for a rewarding project.

There are children, youth, and families that continue to benefit from the programs Kemmerer Village provides. Our hopes and prayers go with each person whose life we touch. Kemmerer looks forward to hosting these reunions for generations to come.

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Softball is Swinging

Our children had their first IIAA Softball Game in over a year. Our staff did an incredible job creating this opprotunity. They have been working with the kids on the rules of the game with only a few practices under their belts with the team. They have been instilling in our young people the importance and the values of sportsmanship. In their first game, our kids were very uplifting to each other. No one fixated on the score, and instead they worked on helping each other get better and were complimentary of their opponents. One moment was especially impressive. The catcher on the other team helped a young boy from Kemmerer Village with his batting form. Our child thanked him and asked him his name; he does not always respond well to help. He then hit the ball hard into the outfield. He was proud of himself. The whole team had wonderful moments of encouraging their peers and demonstrated leadership.



Track Meet Victory



The children of Kemmerer Village were able to participate in the IIAA (Illinois Inter-Agency Athletic Association) Track Meet. They learned about good sportsmanship, teamwork and gained self-esteem. The IIAA, a program of Kemmerer Village, has done an incredible job holding virtual events while our children were not gathering. Those events including basketball drills, song writing, and bingo were great, but it was so nice to meet in person. This was the first event we were able to hold for over a year. The children had a great time and brought home some well-deserved medals.

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Horses, Heroes & Happiness at Kemmerer Village

We were happy to have our Horses & Heroes Program running this Spring in the Franchois Stable at Kemmerer Village. We adapted to individual and small group sessions with additional health safety measures. The ongoing support of donors including the Elks and the United Way of Christian County enabled this program to persist, on a smaller scale, through most of the COVID-19 pandemic. The individual sessions have continued to support children with disabilities including Cerebral Palsy, Autism, and Attention Deficit Disorder. Riding challenges them both physically and socially. The Program improves their core strength, posture, balance, coordination, and even speech. They gain pride and a feeling of accomplishment as they improve their skills. The emotional benefits are even more noticeable as every one of the children smiled and laughed during their time with the horses.

The children who live at Kemmerer Village are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to help the riders and families. We are looking forward to welcoming back all of our volunteers soon. If you would like to join this group of heroes please contact our Volunteer Coordinator at (217) 226-2231. In the meantime, the horses are still spreading happiness at Kemmerer Village.



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In Honor & Memory of Those We Love

January 28th, through June 10th, 2021

There are occasions of joy & sorrow in the lives of our family & friends that call for a response from us. A Memorial Gift or an Honor Gift to Kemmerer Village is a way to express love & respect at appropriate times.

Your gift, large or small, is an investment in the lives of troubled children. These gifts help to provide for their day to day care: food, clothing, medical care, educational needs, & Christian ministry.

The name of the deceased or honored is in bold type; the donor names are listed below in regular type. Please notify us of any errors.

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www.kemmerervillage.org

You can view & print the Kemmerer Voices from our website

107 Years of Making a Difference in the Lives of Children & Families!

A mission of the Presbyterian Church USA

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Non-Profit Org. Pst. Std. U.S. POSTAGE PAID Assumption, IL Permit No. 22

Our children love receiving mail! Please consider sending a birthday card & a prayer for the following kids:

Girls:

Arianna T....9/06/08

Boys:

Chase D.....8/03/06

Christian K..8/08/05

Along with many children in care who's names we can not share:

July — **22** Children

Aug. — **21** Children

Sept. — 12 Children