



Camp Knutson

ANNUAL

Report
2021

CAMP MISSION

Camp Knutson is dedicated to nurturing the well-being of persons with identified needs in a setting which celebrates God's love for community and creation.



Photo (and cover) provided by Emily Brownson, Children's Cancer Research Fund

Camp Knutson provides camping services for individuals with disabilities and medical needs. Camp is open year-round, also hosting retreats, conferences, meetings and trainings September through May.



A Note from the Directors



Jared Griffin
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After spending a summer without campers on-site in 2020, it's an understatement to say that we were overjoyed to open Camp Knutson's doors once again. However, to ensure the health and safety of our campers, staff and volunteers, we knew that we would need to get creative with our programming and schedule.

With additional health measures in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, certain aspects of camp were a little different this summer. Some, like eating every meal at picnic tables outside, were a fun change we may incorporate every summer going forward. Others, like reducing the number of campers on-site, we hope we won't have to repeat. Thankfully, our precautions ensured that COVID-19 stayed off the camp grounds.

Having some open time on our schedule this summer, we found a new way to welcome campers who were missing their time at Camp K. Family Camp provided the chance for current campers and their families – along with some friends of Camp K – to have a signature Camp Knutson experience: horseback riding, trying out our new archery range, evening activities, tubing and waterskiing, and so much more. This time at camp provided families with a much-needed (and fun!) respite after a full year of the pandemic.

We also welcomed our newest camp partner – Children's Cancer Research Fund's Camp Norden – and look forward to many more years with them as their camp grounds.

While we're already looking forward to the summer of 2022 with the hope of opening our doors to even more campers, we're immensely grateful to every member of our Camp K community for what you've helped us accomplish this year. Through your support and generosity – especially during this challenging time – Camp Knutson continues to be a beacon of light for all of us.

With Deep Thanks,



Caitlin Malin
Caitlin.Malin@lssmn.org

Jared Griffin
Jared Griffin
Camp Director

Caitlin Malin
Caitlin Malin
Program Director

**We are so thankful for
our Camp Knutson
community. Because
of your support, our
campers experienced a
summer to remember in
2021 at Camp K.
~Jared**



VIRTUAL CAMP

While they couldn't attend camp in person, Camp Discovery campers gathered in community through two online programs.



CAMP HAND IN HAND

Campers joining us from Camp Hand in Hand reveled in all the fun Camp K has to offer over three separate weeks.



Caitlin's dog Cooper joined in on the fun at Camp K whenever he could.

Family Camp was hosted three times throughout the summer, offering Camp K's signature programming for current campers and their families, along with other friends of Camp Knutson.





**K STAFF
PYRAMID**
With enough K staff to build a pyramid, campers once again experienced this famous farewell at the end of camp.



20 Things We Love About Camp Knutson

BY CAMP ODAYIN CAMPERS

1. Seeing people like me.
2. Place to build a family full of nonjudgmental, lifelong friendships.
3. Tubing, skiing, volleyball, pontoon rides.
4. Supportive, accepting.
5. Beach Dance – we don't feel embarrassed to dance it out; we jump in the water together.
6. Enthusiastic K Staff.
7. Nature Trail.
8. Delicious food.
9. Green vs. Blue.
10. K Staff singing us "Goodnight, Sweethearts".
11. Building relationships with K Staff.
12. A place to just be a kid and not worry about disabilities or other difficulties.
13. Well-planned programs – even through COVID.
14. Constant improvements and upgrades to the grounds, always clean and well-maintained.
15. Cares about nature and takes care of it.
16. Positive and FUN.
17. Love – we are all connected.
18. Special – there is no other place like it.
19. Campers, new and old, do not feel alone here.
20. There is no competition. Safe. We are all here to support each other.

CELEBRATING
20 YEARS
of Camp Odayin



QUILT AUCTION

The 35th Annual Quilt Auction was our most successful yet – raising more than \$97,000! With bidders attending virtually or in person, we had supporters around the world.



ICE TEE OPEN

Moonlite Bay Family Restaurant organized the 20th Annual Ice Tee Open in February. With beautiful weather, Camp Knutson supporters played golf on the frozen lake to raise funds for camperships.

MUSIC ON THE DOCKS

As a kickoff to Night Under The Stars, Camp Knutson hosted the first ever Music on the Docks. Guests listened to folksinger-songwriter Kelley Smith and multi-instrumentalist Don Gorham from their boats on the Camp K docks on Trout Lake.



VOLUNTEERS

From planning fundraising events to tending the gardens each week to putting up new siding on Hilltop, we couldn't do what we do without our amazing volunteers. Thanks for everything you do for Camp Knutson!



NIGHT UNDER THE STARS

Our amazing Camp K volunteers, donors, sponsors and supporters helped us surpass our goal by raising more than \$200,000. This year's theme was "That's Amoré" and while it was a virtual event, volunteers assembled an Italian-themed party box for those who hosted a gathering of friends and family for Night Under the Stars.



CAMP NORDEN EXPANDS CAMP K REACH TO INCLUDE KIDS AFFECTED BY CANCER

"There were so many smiles that I think their cheeks all had to have been sore by the time they went home," reminisced Mindy Dykes, Community Outreach Coordinator at Children's Cancer Research Fund (CCRF). Mindy, along with Sam Bingea, Camp Norden Director, led the creation of Camp Knutson's newest partner: Camp Norden, for children affected by cancer.

Sam has spent considerable time at Camp Knutson, having worked as Camp K summer program staff for four summers. It was during his first summer as K staff that the idea for Camp Norden originated. "The first partner that came to mind was Children's Cancer Research Fund (CCRF), and that's how I connected with Mindy," said Sam.

Initially planned as a family camp model to introduce parents to Camp Knutson in 2020, CCRF decided to change gears for their first camp.

"We agreed that we didn't want to delay the kids-only camp, so we made the decision to move forward with it for 2021," said Mindy. Twenty-three campers ages 8-15, who either have a current cancer diagnosis or have undergone treatment in the past, spent four days at Camp Knutson for the inaugural Camp Norden.

"Horseback riding, fishing, canoeing, archery – they really experienced it all," said Sam.

"To ensure the health and safety of the campers, we had our medical director, Dr. Karim Sadak, and five nurses from M Health Fairview Masonic Children's Hospital travel around with the cabin groups all day," said Sam. He noted that camp programming was scheduled in a way to make sure the unique needs of each camper were met.

As they were preparing to leave, Mindy overheard campers doing the math to see how many more years they would be able to come back to camp. "What a huge testament to the kind of experience they had," Mindy remarked.

"Camp Knutson has been an amazing partner, and we're really excited about the years to come."



FORMER CAMPERS RETURN AS CAMP K PROGRAM STAFF

When Charlie Nelson saw the list of the new Camp Knutson summer program staff, he was surprised to see that he'd be working with his friend from Camp Odayin, Steph Dalueg. Charlie was a camper for eight summers, Steph for 10. Many of their summers at Camp Knutson overlapped.

Camp Odayin provides a safe, fun summer experience for children and teens with heart disease. While the younger camper groups stayed home for the second summer, Camp Odayin graduates, teenagers attending for the final time as campers, spent three days at camp this summer.

"It's so fun to have campers back and to be able to connect with them again," said Steph.

Both Charlie and Steph had originally planned to work as Camp K staff during the summer of 2020, so they were thrilled to hear that Camp Knutson would once again welcome campers on grounds in 2021. "When I was younger, I had a really great experience at camp," said Charlie.

"It's just a really special place. I wanted to provide that experience for kids in similar situations as me. I made really great

connections with great people here, and ideally I wanted to give that back to the campers."

Steph had a similar reason for wanting to come back as Camp K staff.

"As a camper, I always felt how happy camp made me, and I wanted to be able to facilitate that for other kids," she said.



Charlie Nelson during his time as a camper at Camp Odayin.



Steph Dalueg and Charlie Nelson on Camp Knutson's dock.

THANKS TO YOU!

As we look back on 2021, we are incredibly grateful for the ability to reconnect with the Camp Knutson community. Camp has always been about connection – to our campers, to our community of supporters and volunteers, to our mission. The pandemic made gathering in person a challenge; in 2020, we kept our space in order to develop solutions that would allow us to come together safely. With your support, we overcame so many of the challenges presented to us.

While our successes cannot yet be quantified with record numbers, we are once again able to see the positive impact that Camp Knutson has on our campers. Because of our extended camp community, Camp Knutson can continue to bring joy and light into the lives of so many. Thank you for all that you do!





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Our fiscal year runs October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

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Char & Dick Erickson at their home near Camp Knutson



Dick & one of his granddaughters at Camp Knutson

SHARING THE MISSION OF CAMP KNUTSON

It was the night of the big dance when Pastor Dick Erickson, his wife Char and their oldest daughter first stepped onto the grounds of Camp Knutson.

He recalls that joyful evening in the 1980s; "There was music, dancing and laughter. We knew this was a ministry we wanted to be a part of."

Over the years, Pastor Dick has played an important role in introducing the mission of Camp Knutson to new supporters while also ensuring the grounds of Camp Knutson were maintained. While serving as pastor at Crosslake Lutheran Church, Pastor Dick created and led a men's group of volunteers who worked on grounds maintenance projects.

"These were men with a lot of talent to do what needed to be done," said Pastor Dick. The volunteer group helped with regular maintenance needs like mowing as well as more involved projects like building repairs and staining the cabins.

Many Crosslake Lutheran Church volunteers and donors have been introduced to Camp Knutson during Camp Knutson Sunday. Because of Pastor Dick's enduring support for Camp Knutson, each summer, Camp staff attend services and share Camp's mission and camper stories with the congregation.

While volunteering, Pastor Dick made sure to connect with the campers and hear their stories: who they were, why they came to camp and what made their time at camp special. During Camp Knutson Sunday, Pastor Dick shared the journeys of the campers he met to help convey the importance of Camp K.

Many of these conversations have stuck with him over the years, including one in particular from a single mother who was spending a week at camp with her three young children. "When I asked her what Camp Knutson meant to her, she told me that 'Camp brings hope and joy to us. Sometimes we forget that there is hope; we just need the right people to remind us that it's still there.'"



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66 Marine North
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The Animal House
B and B Farmco
Bernick's of Brainerd
Bertha Boatworks
Bjorn Timeless Portraits
Border View Lodge
Brainerd Glass Company
Breezy Point Resort
Brothers Motorsports
C & C Boat Works
Cash Wise Liquor
C'est La Vie Beauty Lounge
The Chocolate Ox
Country Works
Cragun's Golf Club
Crosslake ACE Hardware
Crosslake Coffee
Crosslake Drug
Crosslake Heart Safe Community
Crosslake Sheet Metal
Crosswoods Development
Crosswoods Golf
Crow Wing Power Community Trust
D&D Beverage
Deacon's Lodge
Dr. Linda Lewis
Eagle's Landing Golf Club
Emily Greens Golf Course
Expressions Shoe Center
First National Bank North
Fladeboe Advancement
The Fun Sisters
Genereux Construction
Golden Eagle Golf Club
Grand Casino Mille Lacs
Grand Champion Meats
Grandview Lodge
Great Furniture Gallery
Herregan Distributors, Inc.
Hopkins Auto Body
Judy's House of Gifts
Kicks On Route 66
Lakes Area Gallery and Frame Shoppe
Lakes Area Rental
Lands End Development, LLC
Landsburg Landscape Nursery

Leisure Day Rental at Al's Marine
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Northland Pet Lodge
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Truffle Shuffle
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Waterfront Services
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Whitefish Auto
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The Woods Landscaping

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Bear Creek Lutheran Church Women,
Grand Meadow
Bethel Lutheran Church Women,
Battle Lake
Calvary Lutheran Church,
Golden Valley
Community of Grace Lutheran Church,
White Bear Lake
Como Park Lutheran Church,
Saint Paul
Crosslake Lutheran Church
Crosslake Lutheran Church Foundation
Crosslake Lutheran Church Women
Crosslake Presbyterian Church
Desert Hills Lutheran Church
East Chain Lutheran Church Women,
Blue Earth
Eidsvold Lutheran Church,
Bay City
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of
Swanburg, Pine River
First Lutheran Church Women,
Fergus Falls
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church,
Saint Paul
Holy Cross Lutheran Church,
Duluth
The Log Church,
Crosslake
Mansfield Lutheran Church Women,
Alden
Our Savior's Lutheran Church Women,
Outing
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Women, Hackensack
Trinity Lutheran Church Women,
Brainerd
Zion Lutheran Church of Amor,
Battle Lake
Zion Lutheran Church Women of Amor,
Battle Lake
Zion Lutheran Church Women,
Anoka
Zion Lutheran Church Women,
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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
 EXTRAORDINARY SUPPORT
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If we have forgotten a name or made
 an incorrect listing, we apologize.
 Please let us know. **218.543.4232**

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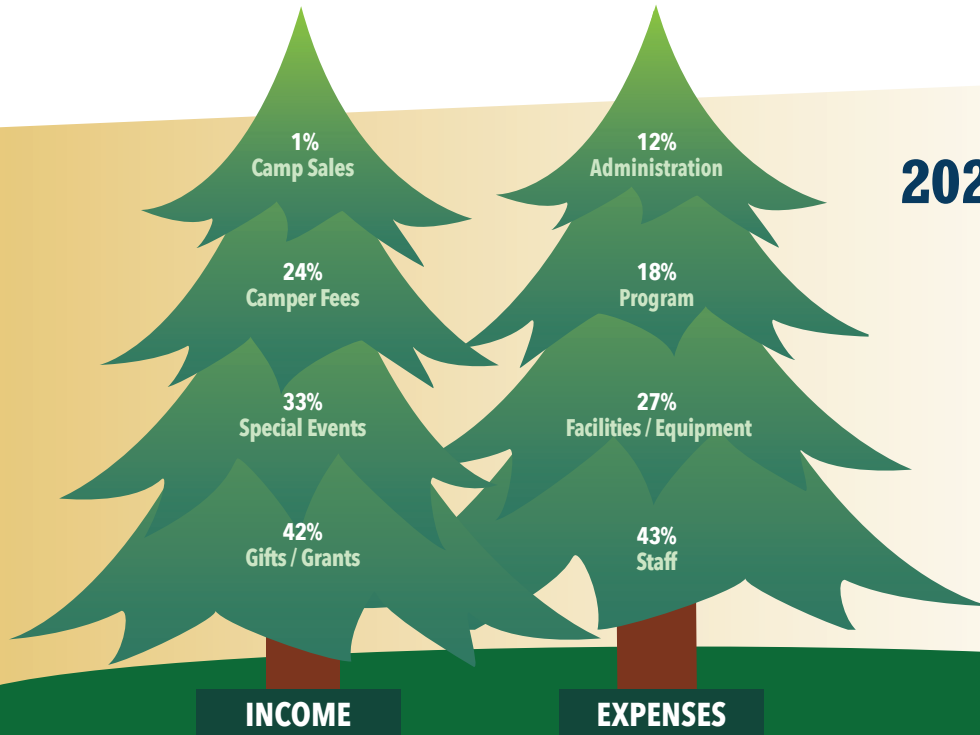
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2021 FINANCIALS*

\$433,867
 other gifts and grants

\$334,716
 total amount raised by
 community fundraisers

775
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*unaudited numbers

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Crosslake, MN 56442
P: 218.543.4232

email: camp.knutson@lssmn.org



www.campknutson.org



CAMP PARTNERS

American Academy of Dermatology / Camp Discovery
serving youth with skin conditions

Ampersand Families
serving youth who have recently been adopted
and their families

Autism Society of Minnesota / Camp Hand in Hand
serving youth and adults with autism

Bridging Hearts
serving young adults with learning differences

Camp Benedict
serving families impacted by HIV/AIDS

Camp Odayin
serving youth with heart disease

Children's Cancer Research Fund / Camp Norden
serving youth affected by cancer

Down Syndrome Camp
serving youth with Down syndrome

Firefighters for Healing / Camp RED
serving youth who are burn survivors and their families

LSS Youth Services
serving youth experiencing homelessness

Minneapolis Community Group
serving adults with mental health needs

TheShop, Brainerd
serving youth experiencing homelessness

