
Camp Knutson

ANNUAL

Report
2022

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.



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

A Note from the Directors



Jared Griffin
Jared.Griffin@lssmn.org

This year felt like a homecoming – for our campers, retreat guests, volunteers, supporters and everyone at Camp Knutson. Our camp schedule was full for the first time since 2019, and our events were once again held in person.

“Digging In and Building Up.” That was our theme this camp season, and it was what we needed to do to get back in the swing of things. We had a wonderful group of summer staff – including cooks, maintenance team, housekeepers and program staff – who jumped into their roles with enthusiasm and ensured that each week of camp ran smoothly.

Our talented, dedicated group of volunteers are also an integral part of Camp K. They planned our successful fundraising events, worked to beautify camp’s grounds, and interacted with campers.

In terms of building up, we announced an exciting project that we had been impatiently waiting to share: the new Fischer Cabin! With 52 beds, two great rooms and a spacious laundry room, this accessible two-story cabin will allow more campers to experience Camp Knutson in comfortable, updated quarters. You can learn more about Fischer Cabin, and the family whose generosity made it possible, on page 6 of this report.

Welcoming new and returning retreat groups to camp in the beautiful fall weather brought our year to the perfect close.

Thank you for being a part of Camp Knutson. Your gifts of time, donations and friendship allowed us to “dig in” this summer to create memorable and nurturing experiences for our campers. Your partnership has also advanced our plans to “build up” Camp Knutson to touch even more lives in the future. Together, this work is not only possible, but attainable.

With Deep Gratitude,

Jared Griffin
Jared Griffin
Camp Director

Caitlin Malin
Caitlin Malin
Program Director

"This year, we are filled with gratitude for the ability to open our doors to all of our campers, retreat guests, volunteers and supporters once again."

~Jared

THANKS TO YOU!

As we reminisce about our favorite camp memories of 2022, we know that our ability to reunite this summer was due to the support of our Camp Knutson community. Your enthusiasm for our mission and our campers shows in all that you do for us – in time spent volunteering and your generous contributions.

Because of you, this year we welcomed:

- 13 camp partners
- 17 in-person camps with 927 campers
- More than 600 retreat guests

Thank you for your unwavering support of Camp Knutson!





WELCOMING CAMPERS TO 'THEIR FAVORITE PLACE ON EARTH'

Enthusiastic greetings sounded throughout the grounds as American Academy of Dermatology's Camp Discovery campers returned to Camp Knutson after being absent since 2019 due to the pandemic.

"There were great reunions when campers saw people they hadn't seen in years," remarked Ally Garin, director of Camp Discovery. Many of these reunions took place at the airport since Discovery campers travel from across the United States.

"Coming to camp is always a lot of fun," said AJ, a third-year camper. When he heard that camp wouldn't be held in-person in 2020, he recalled feeling disappointed. "I was shocked and mad."

Camp Discovery campers have chronic skin conditions, and many have threatened immune systems. For that reason, Camp Discovery was held virtually during 2020 and 2021.

Camp Knutson is one of the few medically-sound camps that campers with specific medical needs can attend. "It's a week of fun and freedom," said Ally. "They get to create friendships that are unique in that level of understanding."

"Everyone here has something," AJ said. "We just want to have a good week at a judgment-free place."

When it's time to leave, campers are often already looking forward to returning. "Campers are so excited to come back to their favorite place on earth – we hear it called that a lot," said Ally.

**"Camp is their happy place,
their safe space."**



Third year Discovery camper AJ



QUILT AUCTION

We raised more than \$100,000 for the first time ever at the 36th Annual Quilt Auction! More than 200 bidders attended virtually or in person.



ICE TEE OPEN

Thanks to Moonlite Bay Family Restaurant for organizing the 21st Annual Ice Tee Open in February. Camp Knutson supporters played golf on frozen Cross Lake to raise funds for camperships – \$52,000 was raised this year!

NIGHT UNDER THE STARS

Camp Knutson supporters, donors, and volunteers gathered in person for the first time since 2019 for Night Under the Stars. Once again, our generous community came together to raise a record-breaking \$370,000!



FAMILY SUNDAE FUNDAY OPEN HOUSE

We treated our Camp K community to ice cream, tours, games and activities to start our summer camp season.



PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Neighbors, volunteers, supporters and camp families gathered at Camp Knutson over Labor Day weekend to enjoy a pancake breakfast with all the toppings – our way of saying thank you for yet another successful camp season.



MUSIC ON THE DOCKS

Singer-songwriter Mike Derus performed on the Camp K docks for our second annual Music on the Docks concert, the kickoff event for Night Under the Stars



REBUILDING FOR THE FUTURE OF CAMP KNUTSON

Camp Knutson has been an important part of Dave Fischer's life since he and his wife, Marie, retired to Minnesota's Whitefish Chain of Lakes two decades ago. Dave's mother, Cora, had become involved in the camp through her friendship with the mother of then-director Rob Larson.

"When we told my mother we were moving back to the area, her first words were, 'You both need to volunteer at Camp Knutson,'" Dave recalled. "When you get a mandate from your mother, you know you'd better comply!" The couple jumped in and never looked back. Dave has participated in projects ranging from shoreline restoration to serving on the camp's advisory council. Marie, an avid quilter, chaired Camp K's annual Quilt Auction for 15 years, raising more than \$750,000 throughout her tenure.

When Marie passed in 2019, the family suggested that memorial gifts be directed to the camp she had tirelessly supported. Dave pledged a lead gift to help rebuild one of the camp's oldest structures, Crosslake Cabin, in his wife's memory. All three of Dave and Marie's children chose to join their father by donating a portion of their own inheritances to the project. "It was a family decision," Dave said.

The Fischer family's generosity made it possible for construction to begin immediately after the summer camp season concluded in 2022. The Fischer Cabin is scheduled to be ready by the

time campers arrive in 2023.

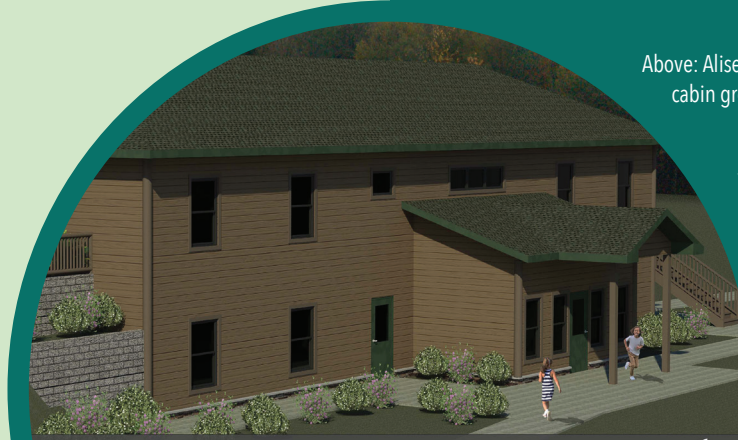
What began as a favor to his mother has become a deeply personal commitment to Dave. He is grateful knowing that campers who might not otherwise get the opportunity to connect with nature and community will always have a place at Camp Knutson.

"How can you have an impact on generations to come," Dave asked, "beyond your own life?" For him, just as it was for Marie, the answer is Camp Knutson.

The project is more than two-thirds funded through the generosity of the Fischer family and other supporters. You can contribute to the building fund at campknutson.org/donate.



Above: Alise Fischer, David Fischer, Eric Fischer and Craig Fischer at the new cabin groundbreaking on September 9. Crosslake Cabin stands behind them.



The rebuilt cabin will be nearly twice as large as Crosslake Cabin. It will feature paved entrances, wider doorways, accessible bathrooms, indoor gathering areas and improved laundry and storage facilities. By upgrading its infrastructure to support more accessible housing, Camp Knutson will maximize its potential to be a leading provider of fully inclusive, accessible, medically-sound camp experiences as well as a destination of choice for retreats.

JERI SCHOONOVER'S IMPACT ON CAMP KNUTSON

Over her 35 years at LSS, Jeri Schoonover made an incredible impact on Camp Knutson. Jeri retired in June 2022 after serving as LSS Chief Service Officer.

"Jeri helped make Camp Knutson what it is today," said Jared Griffin, senior director of Camp Knutson. "From the growth of its services, improvements to the grounds and buildings, collaboration with partners, to – most importantly – her vital role in helping establish and support the Camp Knutson culture and reputation for excellence in service to others."

For Jeri, there is a spirit to the camp.

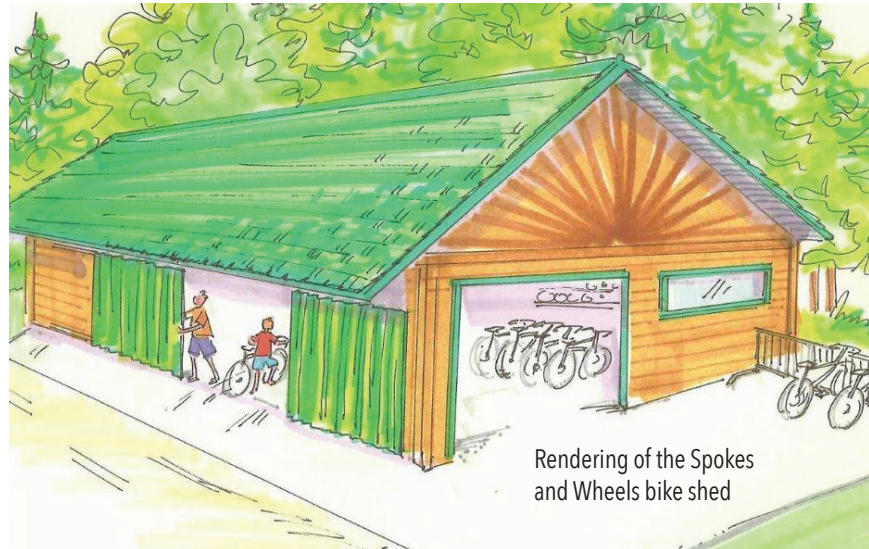
"It's a very magical place," said Jeri. "People establish friendships there. When you see that – the laughter and the engagement and the enjoyment of the whole environment – to me, it just melts your heart."

Jeri's leadership and "can-do" attitude has contributed to Camp Knutson's many successes. One of Jeri's biggest contributions to camp was the construction of the Spokes and Wheels building. In one weekend, Jeri brought together friends and family to take an old storage shack and make it a beautiful – and useful – bike shed for campers.

"It is one of the first buildings you see when you drive into camp," said Jared. "With Jeri being such a welcoming person, it's no surprise that that she made this a personal project to give this space special care and attention to make all campers and guests feel more at home," said Jared.

While Jeri's time working at LSS has come to an end, she still has plans to return to see the progress Camp K is making.

"I have a love for Minnesota lakes," said Jeri. "It is just so heartwarming to really see individuals that may never have had a chance to be on a lake or experience the Northwoods activities, have this opportunity and see the impact on their lives."



Rendering of the Spokes and Wheels bike shed



Jeri Schoonover



BEST WISHES TO PAT AND SARA!

This fall, we bid farewell to our food service co-directors: the mother-daughter team of Pat True and Sara Larson. Pat joined Camp Knutson's staff in 1993 as the evening cook. Sara would come help her mom as assistant cook as a teenager, later spending several summers as Camp K program staff. In 2005, Pat and Sara shared the role of lead cook before transitioning into co-directors.

While we're excited for them as they embark on new paths – retirement for Pat and a move to North Dakota for Sara – we were sad to say goodbye.

Thank you, Pat and Sara, for your years of service to Camp Knutson!



Sara Larson & Pat True



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Camp Knutson is grateful to our many supporters. This list recognizes outright gifts, pledges and in-kind gifts that were given between October 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022.

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Camp Knutson truly has the best volunteers around. Thanks to each of you who helped plan our successful fundraising events, performed building and yard maintenance, grilled and served food on tailgating nights, and put an abundance of time and energy to help make camp an unforgettable experience for our campers.



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Marie and Anthony Wagner
Kristine and Greg Wammer
Maureen Warren
Sharene Gossen Watsen
Shelley and David Weaver
Deanne Weber
Charleen* and Donald* Weidenbach
Curt Weitnauer
Gretchen and Todd Wenzel
Jerilynn Wenzel
Mary Werft
Linda and Dennis West
Sally West
Sheryl West
Barbara and Don Wetter
Rebekah Wharton
Donna and Paul Wheeler
Anita A. Whichello
Anja and Gene White
White Family: Maggie, Zach and Alex
Lucy and Richard Wilhoit
Colin Williams
Mary Kate Williams
Ann and Don Wilson
Ellie Wilson
Lynda Wilson
Marc Wing

Florence Wodarz*
Colleen and Kevin Wojciechowski
Judith and Randy Wojcik
Charlie Wolf
Lo Anne L. Worth
Diane and Paul Wotta
Cheryi and Kevin Yager
Jay Young
Julie and Robert Young
Linda Youngs
Mary Zajicek
Kathleen and Leon Zender
Theresa Zeug
Susann Zeug-Hoese and Joel Hoese
Sandra and Donald Zimmel
Pamela and Ervin Zinter

BUSINESSES

66 Marine North
Andy's Bar and Grill
The Animal House
B and B Farmco
Bertha Boatworks
Border View Lodge
Brainerd Glass Company
Breezy Point Golf Course
C & C Boat Works
C & L Distributing
Cancion Tequila
Cashwise Liquor
Cedar Chest
Chanhassen Dinner Theatre
The Chocolate Ox
CoCo & Co
The Cottage Place
Crosslake ACE Hardware
Crosslake Auto Body
Crosslake Coffee
Crosslake Dairy Queen
Crosslake Drug
Crosslake Hair Company
Crosslake Heart Safe Community
Crosslake Sheetmetal
Crosswoods Golf

Crow Wing Kayaks
Dahlheimer Beverage
Deacons Lodge Golf Course
Eagle's Landing Golf Club
Eide Fox and Fur
Emily Greens Golf Course
Encompassing Beauty
First National Bank North
Fladeboe Advancement
Focus Sales
The Fun Sisters Botique
General Store of Minnetonka
Glory Hill Studios
Golden Eagle Golf Club
Goodin Company
Grand Champion Meats
Grandview Lodge
Great Furniture Gallery
Herregan Distributors, Inc.
Highline Hardwoods
Holly's Hair & Nails
Hy-Tec Construction
It's a Wing Ding Thing
Kicks On Route 66
Lakes Area Gallery and Frame Shoppe
Lakes Country Craft and Cones
The Landing Marketplace
Lands End Development, LLC
Landsburg Landscape Nursery
Larson Group Keller Williams
Leslie's Botique
Lundrigan's Clothing Inc.
Manhattans
Maucieri's Italian Bistro
Merritt Jewelers
Mike's Tree Company, LLC
Minne Lake Canoe Co.
Minnesota T's Inc.
MN Adult and Teen Challenge
Moonlite Bay Family Restaurant
Moonlite Square
North American Banking Company
North Country Plumbing and Heating
Northland Pet Lodge

Northland Press
Outlet Recreation
Phillips Wine and Spirits
Pine Peaks Restaurant
Pine River Riding Stable
Pinetree Patchworkers
Quirks
Rafferty's Pizza Restaurant
RBA Consulting
Red Raven
River Valley Restoration
Salon Couture
Serenity Spa at Brezy Point Resort
The Sheek Boutique
Signature Signs, LLC
Simonson Lumber
Simply Rustic Floral Design
Snarky Loon Brewing Co.
Spirits of Nisswa
Squirrely Mama
Structural Buildings
Sysco
Trana Masonary
Ulteig
Valeri Ann's
Wannebo Excavating
Waterfront Services
Whitefish Area Property
Owners Association
Whitefish Automotive, Inc.
Whitefish Golf Club
Whitefish Lodge & Suites
Whoot Designs
Wildwedge Golf and RV Park
The Wine Group
The Woods Landscaping

CHURCHES

Bear Creek Lutheran Church Women,
Grand Meadow
Bethlehem Lutheran Church,
Brainerd
Bethlehem Lutheran Church,
Proctor

Christ Lutheran Church,
Lake Elmo
Community of Grace Lutheran Church,
White Bear Lake
Crosslake Lutheran Church
Crosslake Presbyterian Church
Eidsvold Lutheran Church,
Bay City
First Lutheran Church Women,
Fergus Falls
First Lutheran Church,
Little Falls
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church,
Saint Paul
Holy Cross Lutheran Church,
Duluth
Incarnation Lutheran Church,
Shoreview
Lord of Life Lutheran Church,
Baxter
Mansfield Lutheran Church Women,
Alden
Marshall Lutheran Church Women,
Adams
New Life Lutheran Church,
Rothsay
Our Savior's - Ten Mile Lake Women,
Dalton
Our Savior's Lutheran Church Women,
Outing
Trinity Lutheran Church,
Brainerd
Trinity Lutheran Church,
Cass Lake
Zion Lutheran Church Women of Amor,
Battle Lake
Zion Lutheran Church Women,
Grand Rapids
Zion Lutheran Church,
Milaca





DONORS continued

FOUNDATIONS / ORGANIZATIONS

American Legion Club
 Edward R. Bazinet Foundation
 Bergquist Sunshine Fund
 Brainerd Lakes Area
 Community Foundation
 Camp Knutson Volunteers
 Charles Aid Foundation
 Conway Charitable Lead Annuity Trust
 Crosslake Quilters
 Ecumen Seasons Retirement
 Community at Maplewood
 Emily Loon Crafters Quilt Guild
 Emily Quilters Group

Friday Morning Coffee Group
 Goodin Company Foundation
 Grace Quilters
 Hardenbergh Foundation
 The Clarence Holden Charitable Trust
 KJ Living Trust
 LASAC Inc Senior Morning Club
 Carl and Aune Lind Family Foundation
 Margaret Rivers Fund
 Patch Foundation
 River Valley Quilters
 Louis and Mary Kay Smith
 Family Foundation
 Team West

Third Saturday Club
 Thomas Kemp Foundation

* deceased

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
 EXTRAORDINARY SUPPORT
 IN FISCAL YEAR 2022!**

If we have forgotten a name or made
 an incorrect listing, we apologize.
 Please let us know. 218.543.4232

IN HONOR OF

Sandy and Jerry Bilski
 Judith and Randy Wojcik

Stacie Bishop
 Sarah Calatayud

Jonah Davis
 Jenny and James Davis

**Alyssa Ducatelli and
 Logan Schultz**
 Joan and Ernest Myer

David Fischer
 Andrea and Robert Barbknecht

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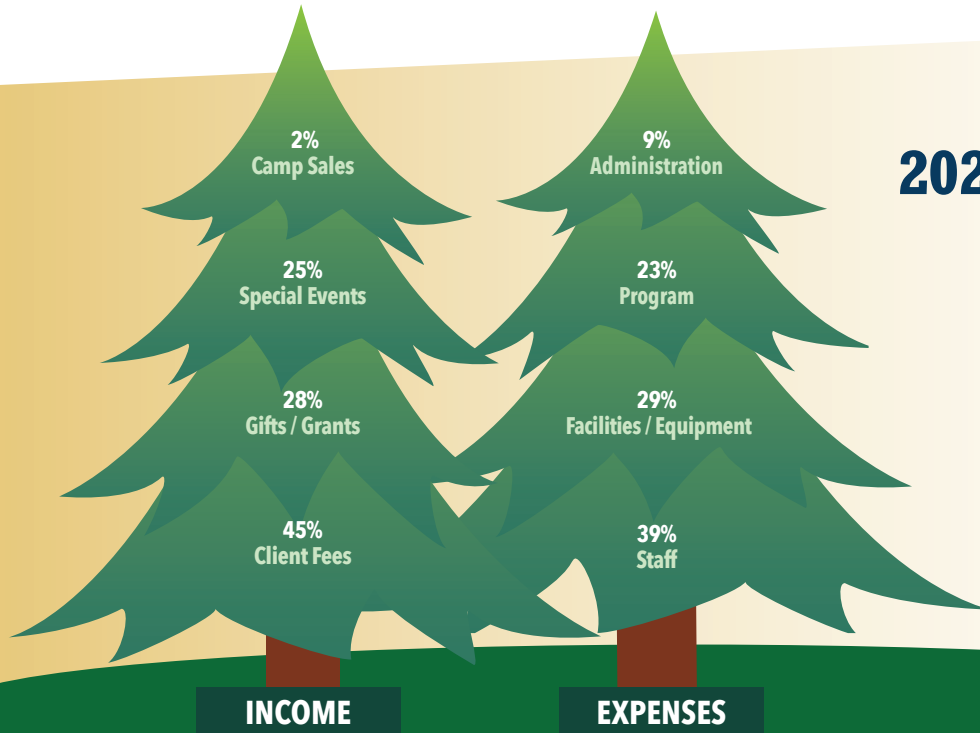
David Holzemer
 Lois Holzemer

Nikki McBrien
 Kelly Taschler

Layla Nick
 Judy and Steve Nick

Carol and James "Jay" O'Neill
 Joan and Ernest Myer

Margaret Pederson
 Judith A. Morgan



2022 FINANCIALS*

\$1,299,460**

total amount raised by
 community fundraisers,
 gifts and grants

670

number of donors

*unaudited numbers

**portion of proceeds designated for new cabin fund

IN MEMORY OF

Joseph E. Polaczyk

Sandra and Robert Klas

Lynda Rocheford

Michael Rocheford

Viola and Arnold Schlecht

Saundra and Ralph Fedor

Betsy and Gary Simons

Catherine and Gary Simons

Janet L. Strand

Mary Ann Strand

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Marie and David Fischer Family

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Beverly and Halvor Jerde

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Elizabeth and Jeff Bartholomew

Cynthia and Jefferson Bernards

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Carole Taylor

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Tom Williams

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Judith A. Morgan



Camp Knutson

11148 Manhattan Pt. Blvd.
Crosslake, MN 56442
218.543.4232

camp.knutson@lssmn.org



campknutson.org



Camp Knutson is a service of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota



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 Foundation 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

