



Kern Family News

YMCA CAMP KERN, OREGONIA OH

FALL 2015

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Summer Recap - A Record Year for Camp Kern

What a summer! With more campers than EVER before, our counselors had a real opportunity to create magic... and boy did they deliver! From utilizing the camp's brand new library with our Taste of Kern and First Camp Reading Program, to Survivor campers growing in character in their new Adirondack Village. In addition, our Trailblazers staff delivered a magical summer to dozens of special needs children through our partnership with the Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Overall, this was certainly a summer to remember!

Our teen program was also busier than ever. More than forty CIT's got hands on experience with our campers, preparing them for life as a senior counselor, while our new 'Hobbit' and 'Comic Book Hero' Literary Camps gave our campers a fully immersive literary experience full of magic and friendship.

2015 was also a record year for our Scholarship Program,

as we provided financial assistance and camping essentials to more than 220 families. We are proud to say that we do not deny children the opportunity of a magical summer camp experience because of an inability to pay.



A Testimonial...

"My 10 year old son has been diagnosed with asperger's, tourettes, ADHD, dyspraxia, along with many other learning disabilities. I have always been hesitant to send my son to any programs like this because of the many struggles he faces, and in the past things like this have always turned out to be disappointing as the staff were not trained to understand and handle children like my son. I really wanted him to experience the camp atmosphere but he has never stayed anywhere

overnight without me or his Dad, so I was a little worried. The staff were very friendly, understanding and supportive with my son. He had some issues, but the staff never made it seem like they were "giving up on him" or that they did not want him there, or ask me to not bring him back - as this is what has happened many times in the past. The Camp Kern Staff made camping a positive

experience for my son and I will always be grateful to them for that. I'm also very grateful for the scholarship funds available to be able to give my children this opportunity. Thank you Camp Kern for having such a positive impact on my children's lives."



2015 CAPITAL PROJECTS IN PROCESS OR COMPLETED

- New Cabin Roofs for Main Camp and Sugar Woods
- Expansion of the Brown Barn at Ranch
- New Horse and Tack Purchases
- Survivor Village (4 Cabins) Constructed at Brisben
- Camp Kern Library Constructed
- Ranch Work Truck Purchased
- Website Upgrade
- New Canoes Purchased

2016 PLANNED CAPITAL PROJECTS

- New Walk-In Freezer
- Elk Lodge Renovation
- Moore Building Main Room Renovation
- Log Cabin Repairs
- New Health Center Roof
- New High Ropes Elements
- 2 New Low Ropes Courses

Nov. 18th: Kern Family T-shirt and Hoodie Sale

Nov. 20th - 21st: Kids Night Out

Nov. 22nd: Pre Thanksgiving Feast
5.30pm at Singerman Lodge

Dec. 5th: Arctic Dash Mud Run in support of our Annual Campaign

Dec. 11th - 13th: Winter Camp (Ranch and Main)

Dec. 31st - Jan. 1st: New Years Eve Kids Night Out



IN THE SPOT-LIGHT: Catherine 'Grandma' Young

Born at home with her grandmother as the midwife, Catherine came into this world near the peak of the Great Depression. Her family lived where the last of the narrowing gravel road ended into the mountain, well outside Berea, Kentucky, a rural community where her father delivered mail from horseback. When Catherine was five, the family moved to Miamisburg, Ohio. Catherine went to school, married, and started her career. She worked as a machinist, raised her family, and went to church.

After retirement Catherine spent more time cooking. Her daughter Connie, who worked in the Kern kitchen, pointed out that camp cooking would be “just like being at home.” So in 2007 Catherine started working at Camp Kern in the kitchen. Into work by six in the morning with her bright smile and indomitable stamina, Catherine is the key ingredient in the making of breakfast and lunch for hundreds of campers every week. She, and her husband, Junior, are the mainstays of the morning shift.

Outside of camp Catherine’s greatest passions are church, where she plays guitar and sings gospel music, and gardening where she tends the flowers while Junior cuts the grass. Easily the most fashionable member of the camp staff, Catherine confesses a modest amount of vanity by simply saying “I like hats.” As for future plans, Catherine makes clear that she “likes to cook,” and that she will continue cooking our meals at Kern “as long as it is fun.”



Circle K Ranch Is Getting An Upgrade

Circle K Ranch is having a great year! With an incredibly successful summer behind us, we are excited to make summer 2016 even better! We finished out our fall season with plenty of trail rides and some great events, like our first ever Fall Fest and our regular Open Horse Show, with both events drawing a bigger crowds than expected.

Earlier this year, we were fortunate enough to receive a grant from the Y of the USA, and, combined with our Golf Outing fundraiser, were able to break ground on our brown barn expansion. This project will extend our capacity, giving us enough indoor tie stalls for our whole herd, allowing us to provide more trail rides year round. Our maintenance team are working incredibly hard to complete the project my year end. We would like to thank everyone who has been a part of this journey, and we hope to see you for a visit very soon!



2016 Kern Family Events

April: Spring T-Shirt Fundraiser

May 22nd: Alumni Work Project Day

June 9th: Strawberries and Ice Cream

June 11th: Family Campout in the valley at 'Camp Ozone'

August 14th: Alumni Pool Party

September: Fall T-Shirt Fundraiser

October 16th: Alumni Work Project Day

November 20th: Pre-Thanksgiving Feast



The Founding of the Forest Hills OE Program

The happiest childhood memories of retired teacher Jerry Lotz are of time spent playing in the creek and woods behind his house, learning about nature first hand and developing a passion for experimentation and discovery. Fast forward to the mid 1960's and Mr. Lotz was fulfilling his dream of teaching 5th grade, science being his specialty, in the Forest Hills School District, going on to spend 26 years at Wilson Elementary, but also Summit, Newtown and Maddux. In 1969 the Superintendent, Mr. Wolf, gave Mr. Lotz the assignment to develop an extracurricular program to enhance the traditional school teachings.

Ablly assisted by fellow teachers (specifically Mr. Roger Peterson), Mr. Lotz created and proposed the 'Camp Kern Program'. The primary goal, inspired by a very diverse population, was to allow students from all Forest Hill Elementary Schools the opportunity to bond before they began Junior High. The secondary goal of the program was to give students the chance to explore the wonder of nature, as Mr. Lotz had done as child.

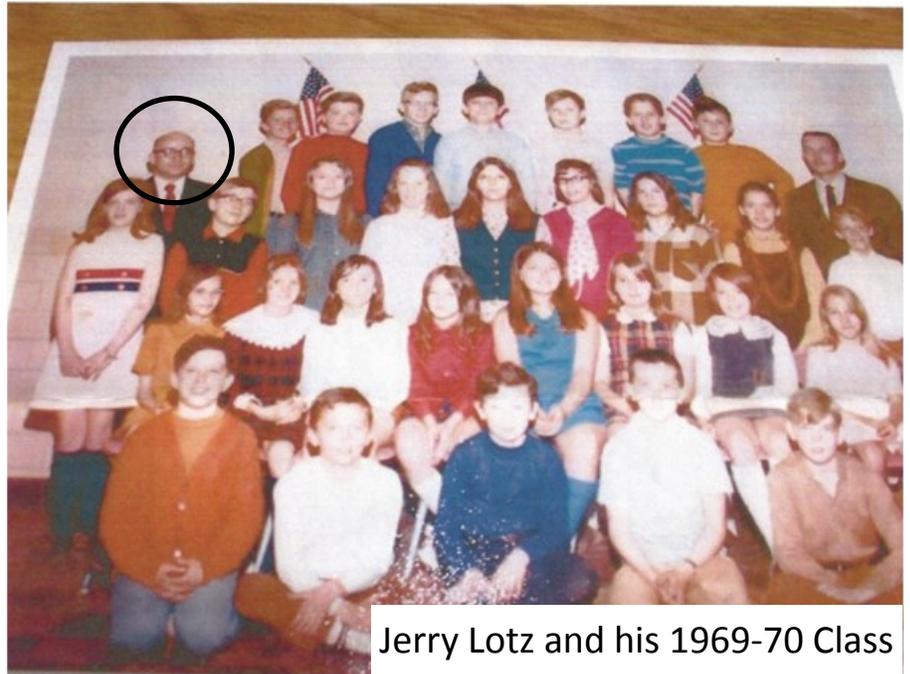
The inaugural program launched in the spring of 1971. Mr. Lotz and Mr. Peterson took the lead in all programming, specifically the Fossil Hike and Pond Study, but more importantly in the teambuilding aspect of the trip. They facilitated Snipe Hunts, told Headless Hatty Stories, manufactured 'Jupiter' sightings and conversed with the owls, all of which bonded the kids together, through shared experiences and challenges in a safe setting.

For 27 years Mr. Lotz participated in the Camp Kern / Forest Hills Program, and in the intervening 45 years, the program has given more than 25,000 Forest Hills students the same eye-opening and meaningful experience that was envisioned in 1971. As one of the first school districts to participate in the Outdoor Education program at Camp

Kern, Forest Hills helped start a program which has ultimately served almost 400,000 children to date.

Mr. Lotz's obvious passion for teaching has given the world so much more than this short article can hope to convey. From his niece (a State Teacher of the Year in Illinois), to the Nuclear Physicist he inspired as a 5th grader, Jerry's foresight and determination as a teacher will live on for years to come in the Camp Kern Program.

Whenever Mr. Lotz is asked, "What did you teach?" (meaning which subject or grade), his response, "Children. I taught children," perfectly encapsulates the nature of this pioneer.



Jerry Lotz and his 1969-70 Class

Kern Family Committee

**Kara Barton
Erin Crosby
Craig Jolley
Andrea Kaercher
Nancy Bortle
Michele King
Traci Hale-Brown
Natalie Schiavone
Dave Moran (Kern Staff)**

Volunteers Needed:

In an effort to build a strong committee, we are seeking additional volunteers to help us with our 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: campkernfamily@gmail.com