



# Kemmerer Village Voices

## Transforming Lives

### Kemmerer Village's Foster Care Program Thrives Through Community Support

In the 1980s, recognizing the changing landscape of child welfare, Kemmerer Village expanded its services to include

foster care, marking a significant chapter in our rich history. Today, Kemmerer Village's Foster Care program stands as a testament to the power of community support, with an estimated 150 children in Kemmerer foster care on any given day and an inspiring tally of nearly 200 adoptions. The evolution from orphanage to fostering reflects a commitment to adapt and innovate, driven by a deep dedication to the well-being of every child. At the heart of Kemmerer Village's success is the comprehensive support system it provides. Supporters play a pivotal role in making this possible. Through generous contributions, individuals and businesses enable Kemmerer to offer vital training, counseling, and therapeutic recreation. Unique programs, including equestrian therapy, and specialized sports teams, provide children with transformative experiences, fostering growth and resilience.

The commitment to excellence in foster care is evident in Kemmerer Village's emphasis on personalized training for foster parents. The organization ensures that caregivers are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complexities of fostering and creating stable and nurturing environments for the children in their care. Community collaboration is a cornerstone of Kemmerer Village's approach. Whether through volunteer efforts, fundraising events, or advocacy initiatives, supporters play a vital role in sustaining and expanding Kemmerer Village's reach.

As Kemmerer Village continues to celebrate achievements and milestones, the unwavering support of the community makes each success possible. Personal testimonials echo the profound impact of Kemmerer Village's Foster Care program on the lives of children and families, emphasizing that the organization continues to transform lives and build brighter futures through the collective efforts of supporters.

# ADOPTION

is a journey of

# Faith

Ready to take a step?

217-226-4451

[jeannie.karbach@KemmererVillage.org](mailto:jeannie.karbach@KemmererVillage.org)



# Words from a child who called Kemmerer Home recently



During my time at KV, my favorite Rec/IIAA activities were soccer, basketball, softball, track, swimming, dodgeball, volleyball & and bowling. I love sports. I have always played sports throughout my life. But, in the past, I was only worried about winning. Now I try to show good sportsmanship & and still win. I think that's a great part of the IIAA. I enjoy helping my teams in sports and as one of the leaders I try to make others feel good about themselves. I love playing for the IIAA and my coaches. Mrs. Amy and Mr. Brandon are awesome coaches. They bring me up when I'm down and I appreciate them.

Learn more about the Illinois Inter-Agency Athletic Association  
[www.kemmerervillage.org/iiaa](http://www.kemmerervillage.org/iiaa)

Thank you IIAA!!



## Gallopng Towards Healing: Horses and Heroes Equine Therapy



In the heart of our community, a program is making waves in the lives of children with disabilities—Horses and Heroes. This equine therapy initiative is providing profound benefits to children facing various challenges.

Equine therapy has long been recognized for its therapeutic impact, offering physical, emotional, and psychological benefits. For children with disabilities, this program becomes a haven of healing and empowerment. The gentle presence of these majestic animals not only instills a sense of confidence but also fosters physical strength, balance, and emotional well-being.

With immense gratitude, we extend our thanks to all our donors, with a special acknowledgment to the Elks for their consistent support. Your generosity is the driving force behind the smiles, laughter, and newfound abilities of these incredible children.



The Horses and Heroes program goes beyond conventional therapy, creating a unique bond between the children and their equine companions. As they ride, groom, and interact with these gentle giants, the children experience a sense of freedom and accomplishment that transcends their disabilities.

Through your contributions, we've witnessed incredible transformations—children who were once reserved are now beaming with confidence, and those who faced physical challenges have discovered newfound strength and mobility.

The impact of Horses and Heroes is a testament to the incredible things that can happen when a community comes together to support a shared vision. To all our donors, especially the Elks, your commitment to making a difference in the lives of these children is truly commendable. Your contributions have created a lasting legacy of compassion and empowerment, and we are profoundly grateful.



As we look ahead, we invite others to join us in this journey of making a positive impact on the lives of children with disabilities through equine therapy. Together, we can continue to provide a source of joy, strength, and hope for these remarkable children, proving that with a little support, they can conquer any challenge that comes their way. Thank you for being the heroes behind Horses and Heroes.

# Kemmerer Voices

Autumn Warren

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Transform the future with a legacy of compassion. Kemmerer Village, championing children and families



since 1914, invites you to consider leaving a lasting gift in your will. Your support sustains vital services such as residential treatment, foster care, adoption, equestrian therapy, recreational therapy, and community initiatives. Join us in expanding our impact with the upcoming

community childcare center.

Seeding hope in the hearts of children has been our mission for over a century, and your legacy gift is an opportunity to nurture that mission into the future. I encourage you to consult with your financial advisor to explore the strategic ways your legacy can enhance the lives of those we serve. Your generosity will not only make a difference today, but will resonate in the laughter and dreams of generations yet to come. Join us in shaping a legacy of compassion at Kemmerer Village.



# Meet the Director

Chelsea T. Wood, JD



In November 2023, Chelsea Wood was hired as the new Executive Director for the Kemmerer Village Foundation. Chelsea is a mother of two active boys, a 23-year Air Force Veteran, and a graduate of Southern Illinois University School of Law. Chelsea is also a former Kemmerer Village employee. Before attending law school, Chelsea worked in the Therapeutic Recreation Department at Kemmerer for four years. She credits her previous time at Kemmerer as the draw that brought her back.

“I loved my time at Kemmerer Village, and I’ve felt like something was missing since leaving in 2012. I enjoyed practicing law full-time, and I am grateful that my journey took me to law school, but I am even more grateful that it has brought me back here. I know that the work we do here makes a difference and being part of that is an incredibly fulfilling feeling. I look forward to using my experience in estate planning and public relations to work with donors and families who wish to continue the mission and the legacy of Kemmerer Village, and I feel fortunate to work every day in a place that I believe in.”

–Chelsea Wood, Executive Director, Kemmerer Village Foundation



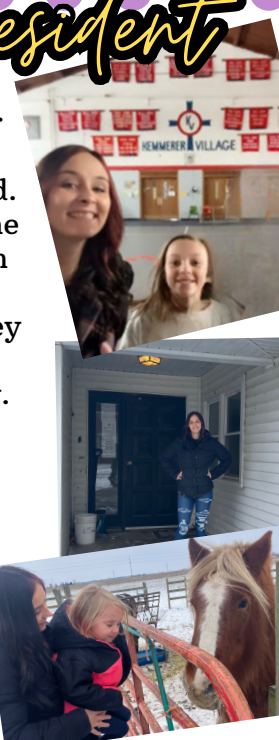
## Visit from former resident

My name is Alyssa Huffman, and I was a Kemmerer Village resident for two years. Growing up, my parents were not able to take care of me, and I ended up in an emergency shelter. After 23 days in the emergency shelter, I was placed at Kemmerer Village. My new home was in North Cottage. The staff and the girls were nice, but I didn’t like it at first. Finally, I settled in, and had a schedule and routine that my previous life had been lacking. Looking back now, the schedule and structure are just what I needed most in my life. At Kemmerer I always had food, I was safe, and I made it to school every day. I also got to play sports. Playing sports with my team and my coaches was definitely one of my favorite things about being there. While at Kemmerer we were also given privileges for good behavior. Some privileges included dining off campus, going to the movies, swimming at the Y, and even my first and only trip I’ve ever taken to 6 Flags! After I worked my program at Kemmerer, I was not able to return to my family, so I was placed with a foster family through Kemmerer Village. I was 16 and lived with my foster family until I was 18.

As an adult now, I am very grateful for my experience at Kemmerer Village and don’t know where I would be if Kemmerer hadn’t been available. I grew to love many of the staff there over the years as they cared for me, built bonds with me, and made sure my needs were met when I had nobody else. I made lifelong friendships with some of the other residents who were there with me.

This January, I came back to Kemmerer to visit one of my former staff, and to show my kids and my fiancé where I lived. Being able to walk the campus and see the place that changed my life forever was an absolutely amazing experience. My kids and fiancé got to see a part of my life they never knew existed, but a part of my life that helped build me into who I am today.

Kemmerer helped me be successful and prepared me to go out in life and be a responsible, and respectful adult. I’m thankful for the time I spent at Kemmerer and I’m happy to share my success story as I hope Kemmerer is around for a long time to keep helping kids like me.



Pictured on the left is Alyssa holding Chelsea’s son at the State Basketball Tournament in 2010. On the right, the three took an updated photo together with their families when Alyssa visited campus recently.

# BIRTHDAYS OF KV KIDS

## Girls

Savannah J 3/21/08  
 Abigail B 6/12/09  
 Miley M 7/27/07

## Boys

Kage J 3/7/11  
 Jayden S 3/29/08  
 Preston S 3/29/10  
 Evan S 4/9/09  
 Conner K 6/18/08  
 Domyntyk L 6/23/09

Along with many children in care, whose names we cannot share:

March - 7 children  
 April - 10 children  
 May - 9 children

June - 16 children  
 July - 18 children



# CAMP CAREW

Christian Summer Camp for Kindergarten - 12th Grade

Registration now open Scholarships Available

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CAMP  
 AND CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION



## ECLIPSE EVENT

*at Camp Carew-in the path of totality*

April 8, 2024

[campcarew.org/eclipse](http://campcarew.org/eclipse)

[www.kemmerervillage.org](http://www.kemmerervillage.org)



Remember the original  
 orphanage with an engraved  
 brick in the memorial

217-226-2130

[www.kemmerervillage.org/memorial](http://www.kemmerervillage.org/memorial)

# In Honor <sup>and</sup> Memory of Those We Love

A Memorial or Honor Gift to Kemmerer Village is an expression love & respect.  
Your gift, large or small, is an investment in the lives of the children we serve.  
The name of the one being honored or remembered is in bold type; the donor is in regular type.

Oct. 1, 2023 thru January 31, 2024

## Honors

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Mrs. Dorothy M. Andersen  
**Baby Schmidt**  
Mr. and Ms. Brian Luecht  
**Mr. and Mrs. Gary Heaton**  
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*Thank you for  
honoring your  
loved ones by  
supporting our  
children!*





Kemmerer Village  
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Assumption, IL 62510

Proudly a mission Agency of the Synod of  
Lincoln Trails, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
since 1914. Please send mailing updates to  
[amie.sparks@kemmerervillage.org](mailto:amie.sparks@kemmerervillage.org)  
217-226-2130

Find us online!

[WWW.KEMMERERVILLAGE.ORG](http://WWW.KEMMERERVILLAGE.ORG)



*Kemmerer Village has been  
caring for children since 1914.*



*Kemmerer Village Foundation  
has been ensuring the mission of  
Kemmerer Village since 2009.*



OCTOBER 19

**Fall Festival & Open House**

*Come see the incredible mission you make possible!*