

# The Friends of Kern Chronicles

VOL. 1, No. 2

A Newsletter for Members and Guests of Friends of Kern, Inc.

FALL, 2004

## FRIENDS OF KERN WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS, DISCUSSES GOALS AT ANNUAL MEETING

Friends of Kern, Inc. held its 3rd Annual Meeting of its Membership on November 21st, 2004 at Camp Kern.

### New Board Members Welcomed

**Traci Hale Brown**, former Camp Kern Summer Camper from 1978-1982 and Camp Kern Summer Staffer in 1984 and 1985, joined the FOK Board for a 3-year term. Traci is currently a Journalism Teacher at Centerville High School.

**Tom Sydnor**, former Camp Kern Summer Camper from 1976-1978 and Camp Kern Summer Staff 1981 thru 1988 - including CIT-of-the-Year Award Winner in 1981 and Main Camp Program Director in 1987 and 1988 - also joined the Board. Tom was a Founding Friends of Kern Board Member in 2002. He currently serves as Counsel on the Senate Judiciary Committee in Washington, DC.

**John Neff** and **Tom Falter** were also re-elected for an additional term, joining current Board Members **Mike Hickey**, **Matt Hickey**, and **Jeff Anderson**.

### Thanks to Engel and Rannes

A couple of veteran alums were recognized at the FOK Annual Meeting for their support. **Mike Engel**, a 12-year camper/staffer and everyone's favorite 'Stupid But Fun' activities leader, made a significant financial contribution in 2004 which has given FOK a strong foundation to continue its work. Mike is currently a Northwestern Mutual Financial Representative in Indianapolis and would love to hear from Kern alums - both personally and professionally! - at [mike.engel@nmfn.com](mailto:mike.engel@nmfn.com)

**Jim Rannes**, Kern staffer from 1985 thru 1989, has been keeping a keen eye for Kern historical materials and has

been coming up with some gems, including a 1918 Camp Ozone medal and several great old postcards.

Thanks, Mike and Jim!

### FOK Donations to Kern

It was announced at the Annual Meeting that Friends of Kern was presenting YMCA Camp Kern a check for \$1,000 to help camp kick off its Strong Kids campaign. In August, FOK was a \$250 sponsor of the Bob Barr Memorial Golf Outing. Total Friends of Kern contributions to camp now stand at \$2,190.60.

### Survey Helps Redefine FOK Goals

In July, a brief 8-question survey was emailed to the FOK list, soliciting ideas, opinions, and feedback about Friends of Kern as the Board prepared for a Board Retreat on August 1st.

Thirty responses were received. The results have helped significantly in reaffirming some of our present activities and revising plans for additional activities. Thanks to all who responded! Complete responses from those who were willing to share their comments publicly will soon be available online.

### **CAMP IS LOOKING FOR YOUR INPUT** **from Jeff Merhige; Camp Kern Executive Director**

This January Camp Kern will be going through strategic and master planning for the 100th year celebration (June 2010). We have hired Slocum Architects to facilitate and design the plan. We are not looking at conceptual; the focus will be projects and Kern capacity to be accomplished by 2010. We will be focusing on the following areas of camp:

1. Brisben Center (Renovation of high adventure and cabins)
2. Sugar Woods (Cabin design and capacity).
3. Main camp
  - a. Cabin design
  - b. Question of bath houses versus bathrooms in cabins
4. New leadership center by high course (Pavilion and seven cabins)
5. Elk Lodge renovation or addition (from 70-100 capability)
6. Ranch Area (Bathrooms and second indoor).
7. Sewage treatment and infrastructure.

Feel free to answer the following questions and email them to Jeff Merhige. [jmerhige@daytonymca.org](mailto:jmerhige@daytonymca.org)

1. Do you feel the main camp cabins should move to bathrooms inside the cabins? Or that we should design and build really nice bath houses?
2. If you could improve the Brisben area what would you do?
3. What do you think Kern should add to its facility? And Program?
4. What needs to never change at Camp Kern?
5. What do you think Kern should do in order to get a huge turnout for the 100th year celebration?

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

## Tribute to Harold H. Prugh

After 10 years of correspondence with **Harold Prugh**, the last was dated Jan. 19, 1997 - a quick note wishing me Happy New Year, explaining that he would soon be 89 yrs old, commenting that he still taught badminton and tennis 4 days a week, and adding a footnote that his wife first saw him at Camp on the tennis court on Visitor's Day.

Harold Prugh, born March 15, 1908 in Dayton, continued to teach badminton and tennis lessons at the Glendale (CA) YMCA right up until suffering a stroke in May, 2003 at age 95. He passed away one month later, ending an 85-year association with the YMCA that began when he was a Camp Kern camper at age 10 in 1918 - the first year that Camp Kern was renamed from Camp Ozone.

Mr. Prugh was a camper for 5 years from 1918 thru 1922. He recalled one summer when **Paul 'Pop' McKee** was the director (1921-1924) and there was an all-day hike to Cincinnati, an overnight stay at the Central Parkway YCA, and a hike back the next day. He attended Steele High School and graduated in 1926. He was a counselor from 1926 thru 1929, graduated from Heidelberg College in 1930, and then served as Assistant Director to then Camp Director **Ralph Roehm** during the summer of 1932 after receiving an MA from Columbia. That was the summer when he met his future wife who came down to Visitor's Day on a Sunday - they were married 3 years later.

His YMCA career continued as Associate Physical Director in downtown Pittsburgh from 1935-40, Physical Director at the McKeesport Y from 1940-42, then on to the Williamsport YMCA 1942-44, Omaha YMCA 1944-50, and finally California. Mr. Prugh was a charter member of the YMCA Volleyball Hall of Fame, serving as referee for 29 National Tourneys in a row (1952-80) and at one point officiating the 1964 U.S. Women's Olympic trials in New York. Even this aspect of his career began at the Dayton YMCA, when **Harold Friermood** first asked him to referee an 8-team Inter Y Volleyball Tourney in January, 1931.

Thanks, Mr. Prugh, for your dedication to the YMCA, to Camp Kern, and to the countless lives you have touched.

- Stuart T. Weinberg, MD; FOK Executive Director

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## Banana Slug String Band Helps Send Kids to Camp

Looking for that great stocking stuffer and want to help send kids to camp at the same time?

The Banana Slug String Band (BSSB), featuring Kern's own **Doug Greenfield** (summer staffer mid and late 1970's) is working with Friends of Kern, Inc. to provide a special fundraising opportunity with \*all\* of BSSB's CDs, including their new CD, "Wings of Slumber":

The Banana Slug String Band received the 1996 Howard Bell Award for Outstanding Contributions in Outdoor Education, and several of their CDs have won individual awards, including the 2000 AFIM Indie Award, Children's Album of the Year for "Goin' Wild". The Band was the keynote speaker at the 2003 ACA Ohio Camping Conference, the keynote speaker at the 2003 Environmental Education Association of Indiana Annual Conference, and this year was featured at the national American Camp Association conference. In the August, 2004 monthly newsletter to YMCA camp professionals from the YMCA of the USA, the BSSB web site was listed as one of 4 Outdoor Environmental Education "Resources on the Web".

FOK has been given the opportunity to purchase \*any\* of the Band's CDs at a special price of \$10 each so that they can be resold for the regular price of \$15, with 100% of the profits (\$5 per CD) going to YMCA Camp Kern for camperships. You can pay by check or online using PayPal.

FOK is also donating the costs of mailing the CDs to everyone who signs up, preserving the \$5 campership gift in its entirety.

So join the Slugs in helping them send a kid to camp! For more information and/or to purchase the CDs online, go to: <http://www.friendsofkern.org/slugsforcamp.php>

## Carl B. Kern Fund Distributions Exceed \$50,000

Many recipients of this newsletter have contributed over the years to The Carl B. Kern Fund of The Dayton Foundation. Founded in 1987, the Fund pays tribute to Carl B. Kern and his life's work with youth camping. Interest earned from the Fund has been paid to Camp Kern since 1989 and used for numerous purposes - providing summer camp camperships and World Camp scholarships, supporting past Dayton Y capital campaigns, assisting with the Lodge renovation, and helping with expenses for new camp signage and the Climbing Tower.

Thanks to all of the Fund's donors, the 2004 distribution of \$4,000 to Camp Kern pushed the total amount distributed since 1989 past the \$50,000 mark.

As of September 30, 2004, the Fund's balance stands at \$95,679.51. For more information on The Carl B. Kern Fund, please check out the website at: <http://www.kernfund.org>

## Do You Shop At Amazon.com?

Your purchases can help support Friends of Kern if you start your shopping on the "Amazon.com" link at the top of FOK's Home Page. There are some specific items listed which may be of interest to Kern friends/alums, or you can just start your general shopping by clicking on the shopping cart! . FOK receives a small percentage of the purchase through a referral fee. Thanks!!

## Financials At A Glance.....

as of 10/31/04:

YTD Income: \$18,688.00  
YTD Expenses: \$11,530.25  
YTD Net Income: \$7,157.75

Total Cash Assets:  
.... Checking Acct Balance: \$9,059.09  
.... 100th Anniversary CD: \$1,500.00  
TOTAL: \$10,559.09

# FROM THE FOK EMAIL ARCHIVES - JUNE

The following are excerpts from postings to the Friends of Kern email list:

## June 1st, 2004

“How about some positive perks for the Kern Staff?! Former Equestrian Director **Terry (Ackerman) Jones** was very complimentary of the job being done by current Equestrian Director **Rachel Schwartzman** and Riding Lesson Coordinator **Karri Trowbridge**:

From: Terry Jones  
Date: Tue, May 25, 2004 9:13 pm  
To: friends at friendsofkern.org

Hey Stuart how the squat are you? Sarah and I recently attended a horse show at Camp. Rachel and Karri are doing a wonderful job on putting kern back on the horse show circuit. Rachel ran a well organized horse show with a great turnout.

The western needs more attendance, but whom did I compete against, but none other than **Carolyn (Tigger)** in the \$50 Open Western Horsemanship. Us former equestrian Directors did a good job....she received 1st and I received 2nd....

Terry”

## June 3rd, 2004

“Stu,

My brother **Reed** and I, are saddened by the passing of our mother, **Viola Packer** June 2, 2004.

I know she had a major influence on the lives of many of the campers and staff with whom she came in contact. As many of you probably remember, she was the nurse for a period of 10 years during the 2nd camping session [from 1959 thru 1968 - STW]. The funeral will be Monday, June 7, 2004 at Newcomer-Farley Funeral Home, 3940 Kettering Blvd, Kettering, Oh. Visitation will be from 9:30-10:30 a.m. with the service immediately following.

**Gary Packer**”

## June 9th, 2004

“It was great chatting with **Kent Barnheiser** a couple of days ago. Of course I picked probably the worst time to call since I'm sure he's rather busy, as Executive Director of the Chicago Alzheimer's Association, with the heightened activity from President Reagan's passing. But he passed along news about his 9 grandchildren, and he had some good suggestions for our Friends of Kern organization. We talked about lanyards & canteen cards very briefly...

Thanks also to **Dr. Richard Poepelmeier** for his kind note. He was a camper for 5 years from 1943 thru 1947 - and remembers walking up the hill to the new pool at the top of the hill his last year. He was then a day camp counselor at Sinclair Park for several years with **Bob Taylor** (who was a Fairview High School teacher and worked at Kern a couple of summers as Crafts Director in the 1940's). He recalls **Bob Salisbury** among many others, and states that he now has 2 grandchildren attending Kern for their fourth summer!

Received a nice note from **Kay Johnston - Kathy (Johnston) Long's** mother - who stated that her husband **Ray** had recently passed away. She also has a grandson who will be attending Kern this summer.”

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“It was a thrill to see the notice for the dedication of the Kesling Radio station/Media Center. As an eyewitness to the original station, I can attest that **"Ernie"** was definitely the force of personality behind its founding and deserves the recognition. I believe Ern would agree though that accolades also belong to his good buddy, **Todd Lecklider**, the real genius behind the tubes and wires that pushed the broadcast to cabin 16 and beyond. Without Todd, there would not have been a WKRN. If it hasn't already been done, please see that someone mentions this on Friday.

Thanks for keeping me posted on all things Kern. I am in awe of the commitment of you and so many others-  
**Mike Sprout**”

## June 21st, 2004

“This is according to the Big Kahuna himself, **Jack Singerman**: We have lost someone near and dear to us, those of us in the Kern Family... Brown Giants are no more, can't get 'em, gonzo, el finito, c ya, il morto, das ende. I stood there in stunned disbelief this past Friday as, after having knoshed BBQ pig washed down with a fine vintage Bug Juice, I turned to Jack and said "OK. Time for the BTPs. Where's the Brown Giants." "Can't get 'em anymore, they quit making them!"  
"Whhhuuuhhhuuuuooooo".

**Scha-fear** sitting next to me at the picnic table and I both immediately went into simultaneous reminisce about stories -we had heard- about late night crawls through certain loose-screened windows, destination either the Canteen cooler or the Walk In, to liberate frozen confections from the confines of heavy refrigeration. Oh sure, you can talk about Camper Stew and Bug and the weird liquid iron that goozed out of the water cooler in the Dining Hall or even surplus peanut butter by the ton... but it's the Brown Giant that was really hit the spot. Think about it! What would you rather have after having just hiked up a ravine on a later July afternoon with several metric tons of Little Miami ooze percolating in the old waffle soles? Powdered eggs or ... BROWN GIANTS? Vanilla ice milk enrobed in the finest simulated chocolate material. The arctic antidote to a half inch of solid ultra humidity generated Kern Krud encaking every square inch of your body. Nothing could possibly be better... (well, OK. Maybe lookin' at the Nurtz' Daughter). Brown Giants, we shall mourn your passing.

**Dave 'Ernie' Kesling**”

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To join the Friends of Kern Email list:

Send a message to  
director@friendsofkern.org

OR

Complete our online form at:  
www.friendsofkern.org/membappl.php

# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2004 SUPPORTERS

Friends of Kern appreciates the continued support of our Voting (paying) Members and other donors who have contributed to our efforts as we strive to achieve our goals: 1) To establish and maintain a network of communication among friends and alumni of YMCA Camp Kern; 2) To identify and implement resources which will assist in the collection, documentation, preservation, presentation and distribution of historical materials related to YMCA Camp Kern; and 3) To develop and maintain resources which will help preserve, promote, and support the resident camp experience, continuing in perpetuity the work of former Boys' Work Secretary Carl B. Kern.

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Anonymous (1)  
Carol Allenson  
Jeff Anderson  
Cheryl (Arnold) Estes  
Lynn (Arnold) Sparks  
Beth (Barnheiser) Lowy  
Debbie (Barnheiser) Alston  
Kent Barnheiser  
Doug Beattie  
Sarah (Bekofske) Sucher  
Bill Benysh  
Beth (Bethel) Konves  
Mike Boccieri  
John Bull  
Phil Burckle  
John Burk  
Pete Cade  
Deb Carraway  
Jack Clendenin  
Suzi Colt  
Amy (Daganhardt) Whitlow  
Liz Davis  
Laurie Dearworth  
Steve Dimlich  
Mike Engel  
Dale Erskine  
Melissa Eversole  
Tom Falter  
John Fiely  
Patty Fiely

Jason Gibbons  
Mark Graler  
Doug Greenfield  
Tami (Greenfield) Boehmer  
Felicia (Gregoroff) Hail  
Jeff Haines  
Traci (Hale) Brown  
Kim (Havens) Keith  
Sandy Hempel  
Greg Herbold  
Matt Hickey  
Mike Hickey  
Art Jackson, Jr.  
Kay Johnston  
Tim Joseph  
Sean Kline  
Steve Kline  
Robyn (Kopple) Pfahl  
Scott Lambert  
John Larkin  
Mark Lecklider  
Karen Lewis  
Susan Mattick  
Larry Maxwell  
Jeff McDowell  
Andy McGarvey  
Eric Moll  
Burt Moore  
Nancy (Myers) Winniford  
David Neal

John Neff  
Eric Partee  
Richard Poeppelmeier  
Erin Policinski  
Gay (Pratt) Ward  
Jim Rannes  
Pam (Reinhardt) Perrotti  
Amy (Rider) Ingram  
Amy (Root) DiMario  
Gary Saxton  
Mark Schaefer  
Mike Sherman  
Tom Shisler  
Jay Silver  
Shal Singh  
Chuck Snyder  
Michael Sterzer  
Rich Sucher  
Kathleen (Summers) Motoike  
Tom Sydnor  
Robert Terwillegar  
Bil Tonar  
John Waddell  
John Wagner  
Ed Wall  
Stuart Weinberg  
Molly (Whitney) Grant  
Megan (Wilson) Ray  
Tony 'Zang' Zangaro

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