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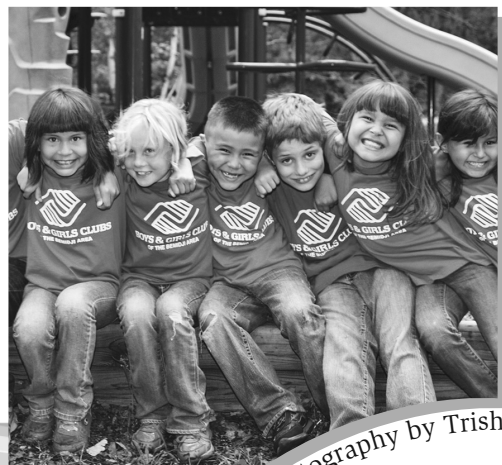
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
OF THE BEMIDJI AREA  
PO Box 191, Bemidji, MN 56619

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Bemidji, MN



## Save The Date

Holidays by Hand Festival, December 5  
Bowl-A-Thon Fundraiser, January 24  
Annual Gala Fundraiser, February 12  
National Boys & Girls Club Week, March 21-25



Photography by Trish

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& donate

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Thank you!



You MEAN the WORLD to US.

Boys & Girls Club of the Bemidji Area

WINTER 2015

## Ahava Fricke finds a place like home at the Club

Ahava Fricke was 11 years old when she moved from St. Paul to Bemidji with her mom and younger sister so her mom could finish a master's degree at Bemidji State University.

"That was really hard for us," says Ahava, now 16, who left behind all that was familiar and came to a place where she didn't know anyone.

"My sister and I didn't really have a place to hang out and my mom told us to come to the Club," says Ahava.

At first, the Club was a place for Ahava to do homework after school and work with a math tutor. Soon, though, she started helping staff serve snacks, clean up and work with the younger children.

Last year, Club staff – Josh Kujava and Shelby Weckwerth – helped her find her first paid job.

Your support helps teens  
like Ahava make successful  
life transitions

Ahava, though, continued to make time for the Club, always helping wherever help was needed. So Josh recommended her to the Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) to help eligible youth gain employment and mentorship.

Through CEP, Ahava works at the Club 29 hours a week in the summer and 10 hours a week in the school year.

"I try to come every day that I can because this place is like my second family," says Ahava who especially appreciates time to chat with Josh and Shelby. "Every time I come, they're here and always willing to talk to me and my sister about stuff going on. And the younger



Photography by Trish

kids here feel like siblings."

Ahava, an 11th grader, plans to pursue a degree in the social humanities so she can work with children who struggle with mental health issues. Until then, she plans to work at the Club.

"It's good to have a place to come where no matter what's going on, I always have someone to talk to," says Ahava.

Your gifts are an investment in our mission:

"To inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most,  
to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens."



# How do you get kids to eat their veggies?



(L to R): Club garden tour with Amber Klemish, Marilyn Heltzer, Sidney Lavoie, Dennis Doeden, Steph Matton and Brooke Lavoie.

## TEACH THEM HOW TO GROW THEM.

“We see it at the Club all the time,” says Amber Klemish, Club academic success assistant director. “The kids who work in the garden are the ones who can’t wait to eat what they grow.”

Club members served 2,400 meals at the Club this year with produce grown in the Club garden. They also sold 128 pounds of vegetables to serve at J.W. Smith and Central elementary schools where the Club gardeners were introduced to their schoolmates.

Those gardeners encouraged friends to try their veggies, including the more unusual varieties. “I would hear kids tell their friends, ‘This is a purple carrot and it still tastes like a carrot,’” says Amber. “The more they see in the garden, the more willing they are to try new things.”



## HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN INVESTMENT GROW?

Exponentially. When you support Club children, you not only help them grow great vegetables and fruits. You also help grow a new generation of gardeners like sixth grader Steph Matton, and fifth graders Brooke and Sidney Lavoie. They

worked closely with Deb Dilley, a University of Minnesota Extension educator, who spent 10 hours a week at the Club teaching members how to plan, plant and maintain the garden.

Planting starts again in April. To learn more, contact the Club for a tour. Steph, Brooke and Sidney would love to share the garden with you.

## THANK YOU FOR BOUNTIFUL RESULTS

- Harvested 1,100 pounds of produce
- Sold surplus produce to Club families
- Earned \$437.25 from produce sales
- Installed vertical growing systems (The tomato and pole bean plants climbed six-foot high.)
- Served 83 Club members and guests at the Harvest Dinner

NOTE: Grant funding for professional support in the garden will not be available next year so the Club is looking for new partnerships for the garden program in 2016. If you have ideas, please contact us.



## Bob Lowth Ford 11th Annual Golf Championship raised a record \$25,600

Thank you Bob Lowth Ford; Fund-A-Kid Sponsors - Jimmy John’s, Lueken’s Village Foods and TEAM Industries; Program Sponsors – Ace on the Lake, Knife River Materials, Lucachick Architecture and Sanford Health



## BSU students make a difference in the gym

Every Wednesday Donna Waliczek and eight of her physical education students from Bemidji State University, lead a Triple Play session in the Club gymnasium. Waliczek, a BSU adjunct instructor, wanted to give her students a hands-on learning experience. The Club gym allows them to interact with children, plan lessons and practice strategies to get children engaged with physical fitness. Plus Club members meet positive role models in BSU students.

## CLUB WISH LIST

Check out the 2015 Club wish list at [bgcbemidji.org](http://bgcbemidji.org)

# Children say the darndest things... And volunteer Julie Arnold loves every minute

Julie Arnold knew she wanted to volunteer at the Club when she retired several years ago. This year, the time was right. Julie joined the Club this summer and spends three afternoons a week in the Club library.

“I love it,” says Julie. “When I walk in the door and hear all the noise and see all the children, I feel right at home. This is where I belong.”

Julie helps Club members with their reading skills. She enjoys finding books that fit their interests and reading levels and reading aloud to each listener.

She also enjoys candid questions from curious youngsters who want to know if she’s “completely deaf” and whether they can “try on” her hearing aids. The answer to both is “No.”

“Oh, but they like to test me,” says Julie. “They’ll walk a few feet away and ask, ‘Can you hear me now?’ and then a few feet more and try again.”

One day, Julie told a couple of misbehaving boys that she needed them to be leaders and help her out. “So many children just need someone to pay attention to them,” she says. “The best part is that those two boys later came back with a book and asked me to read to them.”



## Aubri and Julie enjoy a good read

These days when Julie calls her son on the west coast, she finds herself talking about the Club. “I can’t wait to tell him about the children I meet,” she says. “I have so many great things to share about what they say and what they do. I think I get as much from the Club as the children do.”

Thank you, Julie, for your time and talent. The Club depends on volunteers in many capacities. If you are interested in volunteering contact Karl Mork, [kmork@paulbunyan.net](mailto:kmork@paulbunyan.net), or 218-444-4171.



## Thank you Harvest Dinner volunteers

Sue Doeden, food writer and blogger, and her husband, Dennis, publisher of The Bemidji Pioneer, spent an afternoon at the Club helping prepare apple crisp for the annual Harvest Dinner. Other volunteers include Michael Holleman, chef from InHarvest, and Deb Dilley, University of Minnesota Extension educator.

The annual Harvest Dinner is a chance to meet the Club gardeners and share a meal of fresh-grown produce straight from the garden. If you would like to be added to the guest list for next fall, contact Kim Smith, [ksmith@paulbunyan.net](mailto:ksmith@paulbunyan.net).

## Attention Thrivent Members

The Club is eligible for Thrivent Choice Dollars.



Consider directing your choice dollars to the Club for the Kids.

Since August 6, 2014:

11 Individuals gave a total of \$2,221

## Planned giving: Your legacy starts here

If you are planning your estate or thinking of charitable giving as part of your legacy, please consider a planned gift to the Boys & Girls Club of the Bemidji Area. We can help you explore planned giving options that benefit you, your family and a future generation of Club kids.

For inquiries, contact Andrea Ohnstad, executive director, at 218-444-4171 or [aohnstad@paulbunyan.net](mailto:aohnstad@paulbunyan.net). For more information visit [www.bgcbemidji.org](http://www.bgcbemidji.org).

## RENT CLUB FACILITIES FOR YOUR NEXT EVENT

- The Boys & Girls Club offers its facilities for rent for a variety of uses
- such as trade shows, birthday party celebrations, office gatherings,
- exercise classes and other group events.
- Facilities include a gymnasium, multi-purpose room, commercial kitchen, games room and more. Rental rates available at [bgcbemidji.org](http://bgcbemidji.org).
- For more information or to schedule a rental, contact Andrea Ohnstad, executive director, at 218-444-4171 or [aohnstad@paulbunyan.net](mailto:aohnstad@paulbunyan.net).

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**BareBonz Design**

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