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Bemidji, MN 56619
218.444.4171 • bgcbemidji.org

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STEM Day | October 24th

To schedule a tour of the day's festivities, contact Andrea Kent, executive director. Individuals and groups welcome from 3-5 p.m.

Gala | February 21st

Hampton Inn & Suites, opens with 5 p.m. social hour and silent auction. Interested in sponsorship or reserving a table? Contact Jamie Boyles, special events and marketing coordinator.

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An Evening of Love for Our Kids

FEBRUARY 21, 2020 • HAMPTON INN & SUITES OF BEMIDJI, MN



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

the VIP experience

With an additional contribution of \$300 your table will enjoy...

- 16 complimentary drink tickets
- expedited food service
- 2 complimentary bottles of champagne
- tableside drink service
- premier white glove service
- preferred seating

PRESENTED by

Hampton Inn & Suites
First National Bank Bemidji

Paul Bunyan Communications
Sanford Health

WE LOVE OUR TEAM

In August, **Karl Mork**, impact and administrative director, was inducted into the Great Plains Area Council (GPAC) Hall of Fame for his outstanding career contributions to Bemidji's youth, the Boys & Girls Club Movement and his community. He also married Ann Ollila in a June ceremony. Congratulations, Karl!

Our executive director made a name change in August when she married Larry Kent. **Andrea Ohnstad Kent** will soon be in your inboxes as Andrea.Kent@bgcbemidji.org. Don't delete her! In August, Andrea also celebrated 10 years with the Club and received the National Service to Youth Award from the Boys & Girls Club of America. Congratulations, Andrea!

In June, we welcomed **Emily Fairchild** as our new resource development director. She comes to the Club with a background in higher education and non-profit organizations. Welcome to our team, Emily!

Would you help us lead?

Get your board application now.

Board applications are open now through December 15. Our board meets from 5:30-7 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month. Board members also serve on at least one committee. Contact Andrea Kent at 218-444-4171.



You inspired Jordan to stay engaged with youth

"I give many thanks to the Bemidji Boys & Girls Club for being so supportive of the new girl in town," Jordan said. "The Club kids, staff and even the parents have all impacted me in such an inspiring way."

When Jordan, a graduating senior, headed for college in August, she took her love for the Club with her. Once she settles into the challenges of being a college freshman, she hopes to find a job with a Boys & Girls Club near her so she can pay it forward and help other children.

"Without the Club, I wouldn't be the young adult I am today," said Jordan. "I'd have probably dropped out of high school or just be built up with so much stress and anger."

Jordan joined our Bemidji Club in 2015 when she moved to Bemidji with her mom and three younger siblings, a transition that included a brief stay in a women's shelter. She found support at the Club when she felt like the "new girl" in town. She also found a job working at the Club's front desk, a position funded by Rural Minnesota CEP, which pays wages to help youth build job skills.

An achiever at heart, Jordan took advantage of the Club's leadership opportunities. She competed for the Club's Youth of the Year twice, attended the Youth of the Year Retreat for future leaders and twice completed the Club's nine-day canoe trip with Laketrails Base Camp. She volunteered at Club events and was active at Bemidji High School in track and field, cheer squad, musicals, speech, show choir and the Link Leader program.

Looking back, Jordan thinks the Club played a big part in helping her get through high school. The Club was "always there to help take some weight off my shoulders," she said. "The Club was a constant in my life, the place I could go and know I'd be greeted by smiling faces."

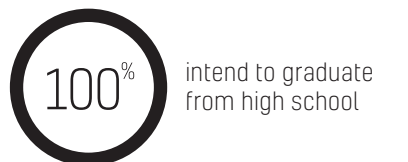


Jordan

2019 CLUB ALUMNA

at Viterbo University in
La Crosse, WI

DID YOU KNOW of our Club teens



Drum roll please...

Our very own Lorelai Hensel, a Bemidji fifth grader, has been selected as a Boys & Girls Club of America 2019 National Fine Arts Exhibit winner with her watercolor submission *Winter Birch Trees*.

Lorelai received the top national honor in the watercolor category for children ages 6-9. Her artwork will be professionally reproduced and displayed at the National Art Gallery at BGCA's National Headquarters in Atlanta and will tour regional and national conferences throughout the year.

"Lorelai is our first Club member to advance from the regional to the National Fine Arts Exhibit," said Shelby Weckwerth, unit director. "We are very excited, very honored and very proud of her."

Lorelai, accompanied by her parents, Sarah and Graham Hensel, received a commemorative plaque at the Club's September board meeting to celebrate her achievement.

Thank you for giving Lorelai a place to explore her creative vision.



Lorelai receives a commemorative plaque from Shelby Weckwerth, unit director, in celebration of her accomplishments in the National Fine Arts Exhibit.

welcome ELEXUS BUNTLEY



Patrick with Elexus, who joined the staff this summer as healthy lifestyles assistant director. She holds a degree in advertising and public relations from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

What Elexus appreciates about the Club: "Having a team that works well together. I have not interacted with a single person here who would not go above and beyond for the benefit of the Club members." Her biggest success story so far: Patrick, a reluctant second grader, who prefers reading to interacting. With Elexus' encouragement, Patrick agreed to invite at least one person to play with him each day. Little by little, Patrick is gaining confidence and friends.

THE AVERAGE DAILY CLUB ATTENDANCE
in September 2019

149 youth

4th-5th graders spent an afternoon at the Headwaters Science Center

30

1st-3rd graders learned about pollinators and bees at Bemidji State Park with photographer and master naturalist Janet Nelson

19

4th-5th graders learned about wild ricing at Bemidji State Park

18

We enjoyed the dog days of summer...

WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS



Sharon Fruetel
Club donor and volunteer since 2003

For Sharon Fruetel, an investment in the Club, is an investment in a better future not only for children but for the whole community.

She started investing in the Club from its inception in 2003 and became a volunteer for what has grown into the annual gala, the Club's biggest donor event of the year.

"I remember when it was outdoors next to the current site, very casual," she said. "It's just evolved into such a wonderful event, and it's fun to work with the rest of the team to pull it together."

Sharon is also a founding member of the Club's Heritage Society with a planned gift she made in 2011. Giving to the Club, she said, "helps me set my assets behind what I value."

As a lifelong educator and public health dietician, Sharon values the Club's efforts to encourage healthy lifestyles, including the Club's garden.

"I love the focus on healthy eating, but I think it's the character building that is so important," she said. "I see the Club as such a vital part of the community that enhances our quality of life. I get so many good, warm feelings about being part of that."

"I wish for Club kids to develop the skills and attitudes that will help them live out their dreams as happy and productive members of our society."

Sharon is one of nearly 500 volunteers who help us keep our hearts and doors open to every child who needs us. Would you like to volunteer? Contact us at 218-444-4171.

OUR WISH LIST

scientific calculators (new or used), board games (preferably new), official size hockey net
for the complete list visit www.bgcbeidji.org/give

fun to know

We gave backpacks to 42 children in a Back-to-School Family Night in August. "We had 23 Club families attend, 63 people in total," said Shelby Weckwerth, unit director. "This is such an important event for many of our families with financial struggles." Donations were made possible by a Caring Tree grant, Menards and the Bemidji Pioneer. The Club also hosted Pack for School in partnership with Beltrami County Bi-Cap, Youth Build and the Salvation Army with 338 backpacks given to eligible families.

We survived a week without our gym when the gym floors were stripped and waxed in August. The wax took a week to cure but the results were well worth the wait. Our kids are back in action with math dodgeball, basketball and other court games.

Club kids hosted three on-site farmer's markets to share fresh garden produce with Club families. In 2019, the Club also sold fresh produce to ISD #31 and Bemidji Bed and Breakfast. By October, the Club gardeners had harvested over 1,000 pounds of produce with more expected before the season ends. Harvest this year is late due to a cold Bemidji spring.



More than 100 Club members dug into the garden this year.

6th-12th graders got out on Lake Bemidji this summer through a partnership with Let's Go Fishing

34

Club teens and a staff member volunteered at the Lake Bemidji Dragon Boat Festival in July

4