

Carl B. Kern Fund

Camp Founder Continues to Inspire a Love for the Outdoors More than a Century Later



Horseback riding is just one of many outdoor activities campers can enjoy at Camp Kern.

When YMCA Boys' Work Secretary Carl "C.B." Kern and his colleague, Chris Kunz, decided in 1910 to take 28 area youth on a camping trip to Fort Ancient, Ohio, little did they know the excursion would lay the groundwork for Camp Kern. This local campground has helped youth experience the great outdoors for more than 100 years.

Sadly, C.B. passed away eight years into his tenure with the YMCA and didn't get to see his idea blossom into the beloved campground destination it is today. Reading the tributes written at the time of his untimely death at age 37, one can sense the undeniable mark he left on the community.

"Dayton has lost an exceptionally competent boys' secretary," said George B. Smith, president of the YMCA of Greater Dayton in 1917. "He was beloved by all the boys in the city and could exert a wonderful influence over them for good. He had a kindly disposition, and his love for the outdoor life and for boys' sports endeared him to the heart of every boy who knew him."

Pancoast continued

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— James R. Pancoast

service it provides to charitable individuals and organizations.

"They are good people doing great things," said Jim, who also established a Charitable Checking AccountSM through the Foundation. "Once I really understood what the Foundation does for our community and for charities across the nation, I could see the human side to everything they do. I wholeheartedly recommend The Dayton Foundation for anyone who just wants to help others."

Looking forward, which is at the core of Jim's goals as chair, he doesn't see a need to change the course already set in motion by his predecessor, Craig Brown. "Continuing to push down the road, finding areas in the community where help is really needed, starting a task force or providing seed money to develop a plan – The Dayton Foundation can make a difference," Jim said. "The methodology works, as we've shown over and over. I've never been part of something so big, with so many individuals who just want to make the region better. The Dayton Foundation stands for community, philanthropy and helping our fellow person. It's such a powerful feeling to lead the Board and staff alongside Foundation President Mike Parks.

C.B.'s legacy stretches far beyond the youth he influenced more than a century ago. Thanks to his thoughtful leadership and vision, he continues to touch the lives of thousands of children each year.

"I had the pleasure of being a camper, staff member, board member and volunteer for Camp Kern. My experiences working with children played a key role in my decision to become a pediatrician," said Dr. Stuart Weinberg, who began attending Camp Kern at age eight. "The positive impact that one person can have on youth cannot be underestimated. C.B. considered summer camp an especially valuable environment to provide guidance and leadership to youth."

Camp Kern had such an impact on Stuart's life that in 1987 he established the Carl B. Kern Fund of The Dayton Foundation to honor the man whose vision was the setting for many of his fondest memories, including meeting and marrying his wife, Anne. With the support from Kern's relatives in Germantown, he chose The Dayton Foundation because it is a "well-respected Dayton institution with deep ties to the city's history, leadership and civic interests with a long tradition of responsible financial stewardship." To date, the fund has awarded nearly \$160,000 to enhance the camp's operations and provide summer camp opportunities for local youth who may not otherwise be able to attend.

"To see the transformation from when we dropped her off, to the buzz of excitement when we picked her up was amazing," said Julie, whose daughter was able to attend Camp Kern, thanks in part to support from the Carl B. Kern Fund. "Words can't express how thankful we are for the generous donation that allows children to have a week to just



Carl B. Kern

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— Dr. Stuart Weinberg, Dayton Foundation donor

think about being a kid, have fun and create memories that will stay with them forever."

The fund relies on donations from friends and alumni of Camp Kern to build its endowment. A significant estate gift was received in 2005 from famed *Dayton Daily News* columnist Roz Young, whose husband, Bill, was a long-time director for Camp Kern. To encourage additional donations and estate gifts, a matching gift of \$30,000 recently was announced in honor of the fund's 30th anniversary.

"We are so thankful for the hundreds of gifts received over the years," Stuart said. "I would like the fund to reach \$1 million to ensure financial support for camperships and for the camp to develop its programs and facilities in the years to come."

He also stresses the importance of honoring C.B. and the legacy he left to Greater Dayton.

"With Fort Ancient on the east side of the river and YMCA Camp Kern on the west, there is a sense of timelessness when one can stand on the riverbank, listen to the water's current, stare in awe at fireflies across a field, search for fossils underneath your feet and surround yourself with the same wildflowers and Pawpaw trees that were described in the area 100 years earlier," Stuart said. "I think C.B. would greatly enjoy sitting down with children and staff who have attended the camp bearing his name, hearing about all of the wonderful experiences that they continue to enjoy." 🌿

To help support Camp Kern, please consider a gift to the Carl B. Kern Fund at daytonfoundation.org/ccgift.html. For more information, visit www.kernfund.org.

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racial equity within the region.

"We all have different ways of approaching issues and topics, but we all want the same things – a good home, to raise our children well and the opportunity to provide for the people we care about," Jim said. "Understanding that we have the same goals and embracing what makes us unique, that's what will keep our region current, vibrant and productive.

"It's important to just keep doing what the Foundation does best – facilitating giving to help others and being part of a bigger

"The region has many challenges," Jim continued. "While significant work is underway in the areas of education, employment and food insecurity, we don't want to run out of steam. At the same time, we need to spread resources to address other issues."

To Jim, this includes bolstering



Jim and Mary Pancoast with their daughter, Hanna Rask

movement of good for the region," he added. "We have our ears to the ground. If we're not helping the community, if we're not trying to figure out how to solve problems that aren't being addressed by other means, then we aren't living up to our promise to the community. Dayton, meaning the entire Miami Valley Region, is fortunate to have such a well-respected and well-run organization as The Dayton Foundation. They have nothing but the best interests of the region at heart." 🌿

For "Five Fun Facts" about Jim, go online to daytonfoundation.org/5funfactsPancoast.html.