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Kurn Hattin Homes **FALL CONFERENCE**

Did you know that every fall, Kurn Hattin Homes hosts a professional development conference and renowned speaker for people who work with children? A delicious lunch is served as well!



Follow us on:

For more information about the Fall Conference, including registration details, visit conference.kurnhattin.org or contact Terry Andrews at tandrews@kurnhattin.org or (802) 721-6913.

CE CREDITS ARE AVAILABLE
for educators, social workers, therapists, and counselors.

ABOUT KURN HATTIN

Since 1894, Kurn Hattin Homes for Children, located in Westminster, VT, has helped thousands of children and their families by offering a safe home and quality education in a nurturing environment. To learn more, please visit kurnhattin.org.

KURN HATTIN HOMES *for* CHILDREN
Bulletin
 2024 VOLUME 1

Save the Date

SECOND ANNUAL

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On the Cover:

Second grader, Logahn, displays his clay hand in art class.

Photo Credit:

Kurn Hattin Archives

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New England Kurn Hattin Homes Donor Privacy Statement

Your privacy is important to us. When you supply personal, identifying information for various purposes, we only use that information for the purpose for which it is provided. Kurn Hattin never shares its mailing list with other organizations.

WHICH EGG HOLDS *Today's Woe?*

“Which egg holds today’s woe?” This is a question asked in an indigenous Cree story. The inquisitor is pondering which egg to select for breakfast, perhaps hoping not to select an egg that holds problems for the day.

This isn’t so different from many of our lives, as we choose what time to go to bed, what clothing to wear to work, what route to drive to work, which calls or emails to answer first—all the while hoping that our decisions might bring the best results and stave off negative outcomes in our daily life. There is much written today about how to organize our lives and make the best decisions to find success and happiness in all facets of life. Much of this advice can be contradictory and may not seem to help at all.

Ultimately, we have to choose for ourselves the best way to navigate our daily trek through life’s challenges. Whether this trek is pleasurable or miserable, though, depends largely on our own attitude, much more so than deciding which egg holds today’s woe. How we view the world (and our daily routine) determines significantly what our path will be—easy or hard, smooth or rough, happy or sad. No matter the circumstances of each day, we can control our own attitude toward whatever we encounter and can make the day brighter or darker for ourselves and even for others. Our attitudes make the difference. Happiness and contentment come more from within rather than from something on the outside of ourselves.

This is just one of the “social skills” that we try to teach our children here at the Homes. Role modeling, direct instruction, and on-going reminders of how to view the world and get along amiably with others make life at Kurn Hattin Homes a little better for us all!

In the service of children,



Stephen B. Harrison, Executive Director



*A collaboration by
students, Mikayla and Trace*

KHH 1959: *Realization of Happiness*



This video, KHH 1959: *Realization of Happiness*, which is available for viewing at youtu.be/Y1Qq1OBDke8 provides a fascinating perspective on the history of our organization. I hope you’ll take a few minutes to watch and enjoy it!

Even though it includes some old-fashioned ideas and it may seem quite out of step with the world as it is today, it demonstrates very clearly that, 65 years later, we remain true to our Core Values of Hope, Sense of Worth, Perseverance, Compassion, and Nurturance.

Watching this was fun, nostalgic, and it brought home the fact that our Core Values remain the basis of everything we do, and while the video portrays a different era at KHH, these Core Values also provide the foundation as we build for our future.

As some of you may already know, our Core Values are “translated” for the benefit of the children into what we refer to as “We” statements: *We are kind, We are proud, We keep trying.* These statements are part of daily life in every aspect of the program.

For example:

We are kind. An 8th grader noticed that two little boys were struggling to find their assigned spots on the stage during a musical performance. She quietly stepped in to show them exactly where they needed to be, much to their relief.

We keep trying. A 1st grade boy did not know how to tie his shoes and was having a very challenging time learning. After many, many, many attempts, he did it.

We are proud. An extremely shy and reserved 3rd grader overcame her fears and took an active role in the annual Night of Giving event by speaking into a microphone at the podium as she represented her cottage. Her pride in this accomplishment was mirrored on the faces of everyone in the room.

These fundamental Core Values reflected in the 1959 video are a key part of what has made KHH so special for so long. They inform the work that we do to give the children in our care the experience that they deserve while they’re here, and they also prepare and serve them well as they move on and out into today’s world!



Susan Kessler, Assistant Executive Director

Memories OF KURN HATTIN

I arrived at Kurn Hattin in Saxtons River—the girls department at that time—the summer before 3rd grade. I learned how to do housework and later participated in The Glee Club. We learned many songs and traveled occasionally to sing at area nursing homes. We were nicely dressed and looked very professional with our cupped hands in front of us.

The school building had an in-ground swimming pool in the basement. I learned to swim and earned several swimming certificates. Upstairs, we learned to sew. The girls made their own identical graduation dresses.

Behind the school building was the basketball court/gym/stage for graduation. Under the stage were roller skates! It was so much fun skating around the gym. We played basketball in the fall and softball in the spring. In the fall, we held Field Day games with three-legged relay and sack races.

Warner Cottage was remodeled, and the new section was named Cone. Cone had a huge kitchen where we learned to cook. I am so thankful for this skill! KHH instituted a long week and short week, as we called it, for 7th and 8th graders. On long week, we went to school as usual. On the short week, we learned life skills—sewing, cooking, etc. in the morning, and went to school a little later in the day.

Practice Class was an institution at KHH. At 4:00 pm, we all had assignments. The chores centered on cleaning the cottages and cooking. Practice Class ended at dinner time. The girls who didn't do the breakfast dishes washed the dinner dishes. It was very organized.

When I got to 5th grade, I learned to read music and to play the clarinet. I participated in the concert and marching bands. We marched in parades and took part in special band concerts. Once a week, the kids got together for square dancing.

I lived with structure and routine, which I did not have at home. I value many of the life skills I learned and that I still practice these days—cooking, cleaning, sewing, and music appreciation. My sports and band background helped me integrate easily into high school. In my senior year, I was the ball handler on the varsity girls' basketball team and 1st chair 1st clarinet.

I always felt safe at Kurn Hattin, and I'm grateful for my time there.

Eva Zonczyk Morel, Class of 1970



2023 Charles Albert Dickinson Award

Laura Duquette and Ivan Villavicencio are the 2023 recipients of the Kurn Hattin Homes Charles Albert Dickinson Award.

The Dickinson Award was established in 2013 and is awarded annually in recognition of an organization or individuals whose philanthropic commitment embodies the mission of New England Kurn Hattin Homes for Children. Named for our founder, The Reverend Charles Albert Dickinson, this award recognizes those who make a significant contribution to the field of child welfare and assistance in an effort to transform the lives of children and families forever. A beautiful cast crystal relief sculpture honoring the award recipient(s) features an image of Reverend Dickinson. The sculpture was designed and created by Vermont artist Robert DuGrenier.



Laura and Ivan became involved with Kurn Hattin Homes several years ago through their work with The St. Nicholas Project and their associations with Father Lance Harlow of Corpus Christi Parish in St. Johnsbury, VT. This award recognizes their selfless dedication to the St. Nicholas Project in support of Kurn Hattin Homes, their untiring support of our children, their spirit of graciousness in all matters, and their wonderful efforts spreading the good news of Kurn Hattin Homes throughout the state of Vermont and beyond.

The St. Nicholas Project is named after the patron saint of children, who was renown during his lifetime for his charity towards children and families in need. While the aim of the Project is to provide financial and material aid, it also serves to disseminate information about Kurn Hattin throughout the Vermont region to potential benefactors. The 2023 award recipients have been Projects champions on behalf of our children.

They have worked incredibly hard traversing the state and visiting almost all the Catholic churches in Vermont on behalf of Kurn Hattin Homes. They have spent countless hours at the Champlain Valley Fair and Expo over the last several years in addition to using their own personal finances for mailings to donors, travels, lodging, food, etc.

In their words of appreciation, Laura and Ivan stated, “We believe, in times of need, the more the community supports each other, the better off we'll be. That's especially important when it comes to children who depend on a safe environment to learn, to grow, and to thrive. Our goal during our many interactions with people over the years has been to inspire them to do what they can to help the children, to help Kurn Hattin, and your mission. The more we put into helping somebody else, the more we get in return.”



The students spend several hours each week in the SmartLab. The younger students have classes three days a week and the older students have classes twice a week. There is also a daily group of students, of mixed ages, in the SmartLab exploring afterschool activities three days a week that include a Dungeons & Dragons game on Fridays. Projects include 3D prints, custom creatures in Minecraft with bespoke coding, Lego dioramas depicting historical events, Robots from the VEX Continuum, and a lot more! The students recently built and tested bridges made of 100 popsicle sticks and glue. The SmartLab aims to prepare the students for a world of rapidly changing technology, centered on communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.



Earlier this year, the children planted pumpkin seeds, hoping to get a few pumpkins for carving in October. Thirty-two plants were put in the ground after starting them in the greenhouse. They had a bumper crop and harvested 52 pumpkins for carving! The children also enjoyed other Halloween traditions, including a dance, a parade, and trick-or-treating.





The children engage in a wide range of recreational activities that promote both fun and personal growth. By offering a variety of activities, Kurn Hattin Homes instills a sense of adventure, resilience, and teamwork in the children. We aim to inspire our children to dream big, overcome challenges, and become confident individuals who can positively impact their communities.



On October 12, Kurn Hattin Homes held its annual Adopt-A-Cottage Sponsor Dinner. This program began as a way for sponsors (businesses, clubs, and individuals) to provide funds for the children's cottage residences, and more importantly, provide an opportunity for the sponsors to spend time with and get to know the children. It's a win-win for all involved. This year, the donated funds will provide each cottage with a gas grill for outdoor cooking, and several basketball hoops to be installed around campus. Thank you to our Adopt-A-Cottage sponsors: Cota & Cota, Keene Elm-City Rotary and Dave and Lisa Therrien; Mascoma Bank; Savings Bank of Walpole; and Streeter Contractors, LLC. Pictured with the children from Cota & Cota are Tammy Manning (back right), Jesi Bashaw (front left) and Casey Cota (front right) with Warner Cottage houseparent, Nicole Clark (back left).

Kurn Hattin Homes was fortunate to receive funding to purchase 30 new ukuleles to expand its music program. Serendipitously, renowned musician Jake Shimabukuro, aka the Jimi Hendrix of ukulele, was performing nearby. Several Kurn Hattin students had the opportunity to sit in on Shimabukuro's sound check at his show in Stowe, Vermont. There, Jake spent time talking with the children about the importance of finding one's passion and the dedication it takes to become successful. Then, Jake and his band played a private, all-request ukulele concert. The children witnessed firsthand how technology and talent come together to make beautiful music.





Signs of Gratitude—Veterans received a heroes’ welcome as they approached campus for the 2023 Veterans Day Observance event.

Saluting the Flag—Students and staff recite the Pledge of Allegiance together with local veterans and other special guests at the Veterans Day Observance held on November 10.



This holiday season began with trees donated by Christmas Trees of Vermont and decorating activities in the cottages and across the campus. The festive décor was a fitting backdrop for the Night of Giving. At this annual gathering, children from each cottage presented their projects and explained how they intend to give back to the community. Later, the Chester Rotary Club contacted the North Pole and arranged for Santa, Mrs. Claus, and helpers to visit each cottage. Then it was Holiday Visitors Day, which included a luncheon and musical performance. Afterwards, a select group of KHH singers participated in the Vermont Academy Candlelight Winter Concert, then traveled throughout the community singing songs of cheer. The season’s events culminated with an encore holiday concert performed by the children for their families.



Kurn Hattin Homes’ middle school grades English and Language Arts Teacher, Laurel Harrison, utilized her past experience as an environmental educator to enrich the 5th grade unit on reptiles. She provided a lesson on reptiles using her two live snakes—a ball python and a black rat snake. Many questions were answered and everyone ended up touching a snake, even the photographer!

Virgil is a 1½-year-old black Labrador Retriever therapy dog who visits the 3rd/4th grade social skills class with Abigail, his human-assisted counselor. They help KHH’s Director of Counseling, Leah Gordon, with classes about emotional regulation. The children learn about deep breathing benefits, five senses in mindfulness practice, progressive relaxation, yoga, hand massage/acupressure, and why our brains work best when calm. They play animal yoga, animal charades, animal “I Spy,” and dance freeze with “Who Let the Dogs Out”—Virgil’s favorite song! It takes a special type of canine personality and disposition to become a certified therapy dog. Virgil is calm, smart, gentle, and very soft! He is in tune to others’ feelings and has a gift for giving support to those who need it. The children love Virgil!



Thank You FOR TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S LIVES

Philanthropy is about promoting the welfare of others by choosing to support a cause that is meaningful to you. Thank you for choosing to support Kurn Hattin Homes for Children!

Our annual fund goal this fiscal year (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024) is \$625,000. We rely on your support to transform the lives of children and their families. There are many ways to give, such as with individual donations, cash, stock, grants, trust, IRA & Donor Advised Fund distributions, bequests, beneficiary designations, and charitable gift annuities. Make it easy and set up monthly donations. The support from your gifts of cash and in-kind donations provide the necessities and special treats for the children and their cottages. Thank you to everyone who held their own holiday, birthday, and Giving Tuesday fundraisers to support the Homes. These incredible acts of kindness and generosity make everything possible.

To discuss your gift to Kurn Hattin Homes, please contact Kim Fine, Director of Annual Fund & Special Projects at (802) 721-6914 or kfine@kurnhattin.org. Thank you!

THANK YOU *Corporate Supporters*

Kurn Hattin would like to thank our corporate supporters for their good citizenship and offer them our sincere thanks. Donating between July 8, 2023 to January 12, 2024:

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NEW ENGLAND KURN HATTIN HOMES IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

Contact Kim Fine at (802) 721-6914 or kfine@kurnhattin.org if you would like to discuss including Kurn Hattin in your will or other beneficiary designation.

Thank you.

Memorial GIFTS

We are thankful for memorial contributions which help us help the children. The names of those being remembered appear in BOLD CAPITAL letters and are followed by the names of those who made the gifts. Bold names followed by a year indicate graduates of Kurn Hattin. The gifts listed were received between July 8, 2023 and January 12, 2024.

IN MEMORY OF MY PARENTS, JOHN E. & TRUDY O. ABBOTT
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IN MEMORY OF JAMES BARSCHDORF, CLASS OF 1944
 Russell & Nancy Quetti

IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER, WILLIAM BARSCHDORF, CLASS OF 1944
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IN MEMORY OF NANCY BATCHELDER BAND, CLASS OF 1975
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IN MEMORY OF OUR PARENTS, DAYTON "DOC" HENSON, CLASS OF 1928 & JOSEPHINE WOODHULL HENSON, CLASS OF 1929
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Mr. Byron M. Roscoe

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Christopher Williams

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Jean Beauchaine
Joan Willey



Honor GIFTS

A gift to the Homes may also honor a memorable occasion in someone's life. A wedding anniversary, arrival of a new baby, a birthday, a promotion or retirement—all offer an opportunity to commemorate those who have touched the lives of others. Kurn Hattin will be pleased to notify the person(s) about your kind gesture at your request. The gifts listed were received between July 8, 2023 and January 12, 2024.

IN HONOR OF OUR SON, JOSHUA BARDWELL, ON HIS BIRTHDAY
Mr. '73 & Mrs. Jerry L. Bardwell

IN HONOR OF MY WIFE, LINDA BARDWELL, ON HER BIRTHDAY
Mr. Jerry L. Bardwell '73

IN HONOR OF LISA BIANCONI
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