

# From The Heart

A Quarterly Publication from Mooseheart Child & City School, Inc.

[www.mooseheart.org](http://www.mooseheart.org)

Fall 2015



Education is what we are all about at Mooseheart, but we all know that education is not just about what you learn from books. Values are a big part of what we endeavor to teach the children at Mooseheart, values that will last a lifetime. We do this by focusing on a value each month, and for November and December we have focused on Compassion. The value of Compassion is appropriate to emphasize during our Christmas Season as we share the “Christmas Spirit” throughout our community.

What is compassion? Someone once said that “Compassion is doing something for someone who could never repay you...” The Bible says “greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for a friend.” Christ lived compassion – healing, helping, loving those who could do nothing for Him in return.

I am proud to work with people who are FULL of compassion. I believe that recognizing compassion in its many forms can help us realize how blessed we are. I witness compassion in the hearts and lives of Family Teachers each day who “live where they work and work where they live,” because they care about touching the lives of children.

For our school teachers, compassion is often shown by never giving up on a child, always looking for methods that might help them to be successful, and being in their corner even when they are not motivated to learn!

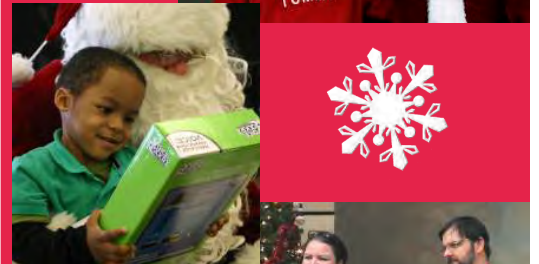
Compassion as an Administrator can be shown by being supportive of staff, “going that extra mile” to do something that will comfort or maybe re-energize them. Providing a word of encouragement or a kind gesture toward someone who is in need is sometimes the greatest gift we can give.

Compassion as a Moose member can be shown by being the “heart” of your community. Compassion is shown every moment that Mooseheart and Moosehaven operate, and you, as a member make this possible for those who could NEVER repay you!

My challenge to you this year is: don’t put your compassion away when you pack up your Christmas decorations! Put COMPASSION in your hearts. Christmas comes and goes, but compassion needs to stay burning in our hearts. Make compassion your passion, and see how your life, family, school, lodge or chapter, workplace, and your community changes.

May you continue to celebrate the greatest act of compassion – God freely giving His son for our redemption – throughout this entire new year. Let compassion be your passion in 2016.

— Gary Urwiler, Mooseheart Executive Director



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# Fun facts

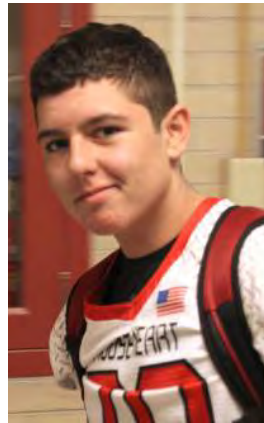
**1** Mooseheart received Turkey dinners from the Jewel Grocery chain for all the children and staff at Mooseheart this year. Jewel provided approximately 500 lbs. of turkey, 6 gallons of cranberry sauce, 52 lbs. of dressing and enough mashed potatoes and gravy for all. What a Thanksgiving blessing for Mooseheart students and Family



**3** The Mooseheart Recreation Department keeps a Costume Room with HUNDREDS of costumes to choose from. Choosing your costume is almost as much fun as visiting the homes to Trick or Treat!



**2** Mooseheart enjoyed good weather for Halloween. Mooseheart had 43 students 5th grade and younger who were able to trick or treat in the Mooseheart "neighborhood."



**4** As of December 18th, Mooseheart Seniors have only 99 school days left until Graduation!



**5** Mooseheart welcomed 46 new students in 2015! That number included 5 sets of twins!



**6** Mooseheart students received over 400 Barnes and Noble gift cards during the Christmas Season! This will help to provide a lot of great educational gifts for the Mooseheart children and our school library will also get matching funds to spend on Barnes and Nobles products.

# Exciting Events

## Illinois Day

Each year the second Saturday of September brings with it a whole host of food, fun and fellowship for the children of Mooseheart courtesy of the Illinois Moose Association.

Seniors Calvin Hunter and Ryan Young were up bright and early to serve guests a breakfast treat at the Mooseheart concessions stand. Residents of Baby Village were all smiles while visiting with the clown unit of Mascoutah Lodge 815.



## Trick or Treat 2015

The annual candy grab always presents a wide array a kooky characters to be reckoned with. Winnie the Pooh and his cast found plenty of sweet treats at Mooseheart. Executive Director, Austin Powers Urwiler, preferred a cup of Joe to all the candy. Lucky for him he ran into Moose International's Assistant Director of Heart of Community & Activities and barista extraordinaire, Cherie Mondrella. Mooseheart Family Teacher, Lisette Keller, enjoys trick or treating with her little band of heroes.



## Turkey Olympics

Thanksgiving week at Mooseheart was kicked off with some friendly competition with the 1st annual Turkey Olympics. Sia Mahoney twists and shouts in the hula hoop event. Victor Edgington is ready to toss a touchdown. Ashlyn Cranfield and Ari Flood wait their turn for a chance to throw a pass to head football coach Zach Meeks. Don't be fooled, it was not a beauty contest, Mamie, Suriah and Destiny just took a time out to pose for this shot before seeing how high they could stack these apples.

# From the Mouth of a Child

Mooseheart students share their thoughts on Mooseheart School and all it offers.

*Each year in the fall we enjoy the beautiful colors as the seasons change. What has been the most beautiful or awesome change that you've seen in your own life since coming to Mooseheart?*

"I've met a bunch of wonderful people and gotten to know myself better. I can finally see a future for myself thanks to Mooseheart..

— Julie, 9th grade



"My behavior has really changed. I was immature when I came. Since coming to Mooseheart I've learned how to calm down and take life one step at a time."

— James, 11th grade



"Both the diversity (of people) and landscape of the campus are beautiful. Mooseheart has opened my mind to bigger and better opportunities. Every day is a new challenge."

— Esperancia, 11th grade

"I have learned responsibility since coming to Mooseheart. I know what I am looking for in life now."

— Remy, 11th grade



"I now have a stable home environment. It has meant a lot to me to receive such generosity from the Moose organization. It has definitely changed my life. I look forward to going to college after leaving Mooseheart."

— Sam, 11th grade



"My English has improved a great deal since coming to Mooseheart. I've also learned to obey authority and I talk more with others."

— D'Mark, 11th grade



# Rambler Roundup

Visit facebook for the full collection of Mooseheart photos.



◀ In conjunction with the Thanksgiving holiday and Mooseheart's value of the month, Compassion, the girls and staff of Community 2 packed meals at Feed my Starving Children near campus right here in Aurora. Family Teacher Shanlyn DeGroot and Nyma Richardson of Washington Home enjoy an opportunity to serve others.



According to Family Teacher Brittany, it's one big happy family at South Carolina home where the girls in the Mooseheart maternity program reside. Both Sia and Diamond are set to graduate in the spring of 2016. The girls expressed appreciation for the opportunities and safe haven afforded them at Mooseheart.



The Mooseheart children are enjoying regular visits from the furry friends of Anderson Animal Shelter in South Elgin, IL. The partnership with Mooseheart's recreation department began this fall and now sees puppies from the shelter visiting with the children of Mooseheart on a weekly basis.



◀ Resident of Pennsylvania Baby Village, Ari Flood dove right into the beautiful colors of the fall season here at Mooseheart.

The Michigan Moose Association continued their tradition of donating a truckload of food each year for our children. The Mooseheart staff welcomed them this year on October 23rd at the Texas Building.



## Enter to Learn ...

### *True stories of two families' paths to Mooseheart*



Rosa began using drugs in her young teens and gave birth to her first child at 14. Before she had turned 35, she had given birth to 9 children with 6 different men. She had not stayed clean for a solid year since she had her first child. One of Rosa's children, Michael, went to live with her father Oscar. Although Oscar love Michael and provided the best care her could, he too was a regular drug user. Unable to read and write, Oscar struggled to provide for Michael and so they moved frequently to stay ahead of evictions. After Oscar died in 2013, Michael was entrusted to the care of Rosa's sister, aunt Rita. But Rita had troubles of her own. She had already raised two children of her own and also served as guardian of one of Rosa's older children since she was 6. Rita's marriage had been on the rocks prior to Michael's arrival but with the stress of another young child to care for and her recent job loss, Rita was desperate for help. A family friend and former employee of Mooseheart told Rita about the Child City. Michael is now a well-adjusted resident of Mooseheart.

## ... Leave to Serve

It was 1985 when he stepped foot on the Mooseheart campus for the first time. Four years earlier he had lost his mother and been left to the care of an inept, alcoholic father. His uncle, a member of St. Charles Moose #1368, had seen enough to know that without a change of environment the boy would not have much to look forward to with his most impressionable years lying just ahead. Thankfully, the Child City welcomed 10 year-old Billy Pendzinski with open arms.

A year later, still reeling from effects of a painful divorce and increasing medical & financial problems, Deborah Schroeder called on Mooseheart to care for her four children. Her oldest, an 11 year-old daughter, had taken on much of the motherhood responsibilities for her younger siblings and so she struggled when the group was separated into different homes. But the structure, new friendships and sports teams at Mooseheart proved to be the salve young Ericka Nickels needed at this vulnerable time of her life. By the time she was a freshman in high school, her mother had been able to put the pieces back together and provide stability for her children once again. And so Ericka was reunited with her mother in the early months of 1991.

By this time Billy was a thriving high school student totally immersed in Mooseheart life thanks to the care of his loving houseparents, Rod & Cathy Ross, and what he calls a "whole bunch of brothers". In 1993, Billy graduated from the Mooseheart program and used his scholarship to attend truck driving school. But it was the structure and chores that Billy credits with building in him his most valuable trait gained from his Mooseheart experience; his work ethic. That work ethic, coupled with the skill of reading blueprints he gleaned from the Mooseheart vocational program, helped him establish his lifelong career in the construction industry.

As life outside the gates of Mooseheart unfolded for Billy and Ericka their paths crossed again at the annual Mooseheart homecoming festivities. With both living as single parents, they developed a friendship that led to marriage in 2012 and later a beautiful church ceremony in 2014 at the Mooseheart House of God. Today Billy and Ericka are active members of the Moose (Ericka presently serves as Senior Regent of Chapter #3001 and VP of the Mooseheart Alumni Association) and love spending time with and serving the children of Mooseheart on a regular basis.

They added, "Being a member of the Moose isn't just about being part of a Lodge or Chapter, it's about being a part of a family that saves children. At the end of the day, that's what matters the most. Never give up on your (sponsored) kids even after they leave. Mooseheart will always be home to those who have lived here."



## On the Web

Our top news on [www.mooseheart.org](http://www.mooseheart.org)

### Mooseheart, IL, October 9

Thirty-one members of the Mooseheart Class of 2016 recently toured a pair of manufacturing plants to mark National Manufacturing Day. The students and school chaperones toured Scot Forge in Spring Grove and Illinois Blower Inc. in Cary on October 2nd during tours arranged by members of

**McHenry, IL Lodge 691**, including Lodge 691 Governor Rick Diamond and Illinois Moose Association District 3 President Bruce Preston, who has worked at Illinois Blower for 20 years. The students enjoyed the tours, had a pizza party sponsored by Lodge 691, and also met U.S. Rep. Randy Hultgren, R-Plano. The visits were also featured in the Northwest Herald! To read more about the Mooseheart students' introduction to modern manufacturing, click here. <http://mooseheart.org/2015/News/ManufacturingFieldtrip.asp>.



### Mooseheart, IL, October 20

Support the Mooseheart School Library by shopping at Barnes & Noble in Geneva, IL. In an effort to raise funds for our Library, Mooseheart is working together with Barnes & Noble Booksellers by hosting a bookfair at the Geneva Commons store location.

On January 16, 2016 from 9:00am - 11:00pm, Barnes & Noble will contribute a percentage of every sale made with a special bookfair voucher to the Mooseheart Child City & School Library! Vouchers are available online and in hard copy at the Mooseheart School Library.

Can't attend our Bookfair at Barnes & Noble in Geneva? Support us online from January 16, 2016 - January 21, 2016 by entering Bookfair ID# 11681202 at checkout. A percentage of your Barnes & Noble purchases will benefit the Mooseheart School Library. For more information contact our Librarian Mary Miller at (630) 906-3646.



<http://mooseheart.org/2015/News/BookFair.asp>



### Mooseheart, IL, November 2

As U.S. Navy Commander (Ret.) Joe Hankins worked his way through Mooseheart's Naval Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps (NJROTC) company during Friday's (Oct. 30) Annual Military Inspection, he found a seemingly never-ending list of things to mention.

He pointed toward shoes that needed fresh polishing, noted placement of insignia and medals that needed to be improved. He even noted a mark on a shirt from what appeared to be an iron that had been left in one spot a bit too long.

But when he finished his review for the first time as

NJROTC Area Three Manager, Hankins said he was pleased with what he saw.

"I'm always very impressed when a company of cadets stands before me in their uniforms, and wears that uniform with pride," Hankins said. "I got a sense that they're proud of who they are and that they are proud of what they represent."

[http://mooseheart.org/2015/News/NJROTC\\_AMI.asp](http://mooseheart.org/2015/News/NJROTC_AMI.asp)