

# THE KINDRED SPIRIT

KINSHIP OF POLK COUNTY



## THREE YEARS & GOING STRONG

A lot can change in three years. That was obvious when I initially walked right by Justin and Kevin waiting for me at Ellie's. The young man who glanced up couldn't possibly be the young, apprehensive boy the Smiths matched with nearly 3 years ago. Later over ice cream, it became clear the growth that had happened in this young man hadn't been limited to height and appearance. Their match had evolved and deepened, leaving a friendship worth celebrating.

Kevin remarked that one of the most rewarding parts of their match has been simply watching Justin grow up. Watching him grow from the young boy who was relentless in one-upping Kevin, to someone eager to learn and try new things. Likewise, Justin added that one of his favorite parts of being matched with the Smiths has been getting to learn and experience a variety

of different things- things he would likely not have tried on his own.

The Smiths and Justin have enjoyed many activities together- from going out on the pontoon to joining Kevin at the variety of Amery High School sports he helps with. One highlight has been Kevin helping Justin get his snowmobile safety certificate. Kevin admitted that at times he had been concerned about the struggle of finding new things to do together, until he came to the conclusion that their time together didn't need to be flashy or full of new things- "we're just friends." And although their time together is full of fun things, even sometimes a new experience for one of them, it is the genuine comfort and friendship shared between them that makes this match so special.



### In their own words

"I enjoy that I have gotten to learn a lot that I wouldn't have bothered to learn. I didn't know I'd actually like some things until we tried them together."

— Justin

### Mission Statement

Kinship of Polk County works to improve the quality of a child's life by establishing a relationship with a caring volunteer, for the purpose of promoting stability, support, friendship and community.



### Table of Contents:

- 1 Feature Story
- 2 Upcoming Activities  
Coupons  
Thank yous  
Waiting Mentee
- 3 Event Highlights  
Thank yous, cont..  
2026 Partner Campaign
- 4 Cooperate Sponsors  
givBIG

### Kinship Staff

Lisa Thanig  
Karalee Tollakson  
Amy Danielson  
Shara Anderson

### Board of Directors

Debra Rudquist  
Andrea Skinner  
Rick Palmer  
Jacqueline Schommer  
Paula Johnson  
Matthew Carey

Upcoming Activities

# March

BOWLING

**WHEN:**  
Friday, March 27  
6:00-8:00 pm

**WHERE:**  
McKenzie Lanes, Centuria

**COST:** FREE

**RSVP:** please RSVP by Monday, 3/23



# April

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

We are excited to have the opportunity to participate in a Feed My Starving Children Mobile Packing event. If you haven't had the opportunity to serve with this organization you are in for a fabulous experience.



**THURSDAY, APRIL 23 -- 5:30-7:30**

Polk County Fairgrounds {FFA Building}

\*please note: an RSVP is required for this event. We have a limited # of spots available and will give them out in order of responses

# May

MENTOR TRAINING

Cell phones and technology affect each of us. Join Kinship staff and mentors as we learn from each other how to navigate the minefield of technology!

**Monday, May 11**  
**5:30-7:00 pm**

Alliance Church of the Valley  
St. Croix Falls



Please RSVP by 5.7.26

Spring Coupons

**ELLIE'S ICE CREAM & COFFEE**

BUY ONE MENU ITEM,  
GET ONE\* **FREE**

*\*of equal or lesser value*

Located in downtown Amery

Expires: 5/31/2026

MENTORS AND MENTEEES CAN ENJOY 1 HOUR OF PLAYING AT:

**ST. CROIX PICKLEBALL**

**& recreational sports facility**

1330 220TH ST UNIT B, ST CROIX FALLS, WI 54024

Valid the month of May: Call (612) 860-3184 to set up an appointment

# thank you

We are blessed to have a fabulous community surrounding us! We extend a heartfelt thank you to the following individuals and businesses for their donations to Kinship!

Bob & Sherri Rasmussen  
Bradley & Susan Johnson  
Steve Schletty  
Barb & Mark Boyken  
Dresser Trap Rock  
Dennis & Renee Thanig

Tangen Drug  
Kyle Wheaton  
John & Adrienne Gyllen  
Balsam Lake Lodge  
Congregatonal Church of Amery  
Bradley Johnson

## WAITING MENTEE: MEET COLE



*Cole, 12 years old, lives in Amery. This young man is a lot of fun! He has many interests including fishing, baseball, gaming, riding bike and Pickleball.*

*If you would like more info on mentoring and how you can invest in a young person's life, call the Kinship office at 715.405.3900.*

Summer Activites

- June // The Amazing Race in Osceola
- July // Wild Mountain
- August 6 // Luau Fundraiser
- August 11 // Kinship Fishing Night

Winter Activity Spotlight

*Holiday Craft & Swim*



*Paint & Sip*



Thank you to **Wood Goods Industries Inc** for your generous \$7,000 donation to Kinship. We are grateful for your support!

**Thank You**  
**Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation**

*for the years of supporting the mission of Kinship of Polk County. Your donation of \$15,000 impacts many youth in Polk County!*

*Trollhaugen Tubing*



**BECOME A 2026 KINSHIP PARTNER**

**2026 Partners** are individuals and businesses who believe in the power of mentoring and invest financially into the mission of Kinship. Every dollar raised impacts local youth by providing them with support and hope through a caring mentor. Relationships impact lives, and mentors build relationships.

**Partner with Kinship today**

**Real People. Real Lives. Real Change.**

**Partner Campaign Update**

**2026 Goal: \$45,000**

**Current Pledge Amount: \$23,035**



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Balsam Lake, WI  
PERMIT NO. 3



# TOGETHER WE STAND STRONG IN 2026

**GIVEBIG IS AN ONLINE, 24 HOUR OPPORTUNITY, TO GIVE AND DOUBLE YOUR DOLLARS!**

**Your support changes lives!**



**JOIN US ON TUESDAY, APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>. TAKE YOUR PHONE AND SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW FOR A SIMPLE AND EASY WAY TO SUPPORT MENTORING IN POLK COUNTY!**



**GOAL: \$15,000**

