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Technology Corner



Grace loves art and created this masterpiece during a recent play session. Using a new computer, with a large screen and built-in touch window, Grace was able to draw her chicken with her finger. Lekotek “equalizes the playing field” and makes it possible for every child to experience success.

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY | AUGUST 24TH | 2024

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I Won The Lottery

(Alex Fouries' unlikely journey from a Ukraine orphanage to the U. S. Adaptive Open)

Having worked at Golf Digest for more than 13 years, I've been fortunate to interview plenty of big names. It's an incredible perk that never gets old, but none of those chats has left me feeling as in awe as I was after talking to Alex Fourie. Alex isn't a PGA Tour star or celebrity golfer, but he's one heck of a player and he deserves to be famous for what he's doing on and off the course.

"I won the lottery," Fourie says. "That's what I tell people." Most would argue otherwise. Fourie was born near Chernobyl in 1992, six years after the biggest nuclear disaster in history. Radiation seeped into the rivers of Fourie's hometown and is believed to have caused him to be born without a right arm and with a cleft lip and palate that would require 22 surgeries.

Following his birth, his biological parents gave up custody and he lived in orphanages for nearly seven years. That's when he got the good luck he talks about. A Ukrainian law prohibited children from being adopted after the age of 7, but Fourie was adopted by a pair of South African missionaries from the United States, a month before that pivotal birthday. He weighed just 34 pounds when he moved more than 5,000 miles to Alabama with his new family. He recalls scarfing down three quarter-pounders at McDonald's and playing sports. He excelled in soccer and was the kicker for his high school football team. He found immediate success at golf when his adopted dad, Anton, placed a golf club in his left hand.

Golf remained an important part of his life. He played in high school and became a club pro in Knoxville, TN where he now lives. He has a handicap of .6 and has played in many tournaments sponsored by the U.S. Adaptive Golf Alliance. Players have diverse special needs that range from autism to physical disabilities but what they have in common is a love for the game. "The golf community is a family; we cheer each other on and grow the game." In 2022, when "Grow the Game" was more of a disingenuous rallying cry of rich tour pros, it was nice to hear it used properly.

Fouries created a Foundation to help kids with disabilities through golf. "I want them to know that they can do anything they put their mind to. I want to give them hope and a clear picture of what's possible." Fourie's passion is reflected in the "one arm, zero handicap" motto on the Foundation's website. Thanks to his efforts, there will be others saying they too hit the lottery, even if they never hit a golf ball.

(This article was written by Alex Myers, published in Golf Digest, and edited with permission.)

Meet the Adams Family



Mom Chelsea, Dad Corey, Luke 11, and Alana 2 live in Lawrenceville, Georgia and have been a Lekotek family for 10 years. Both children were born with a severe hearing loss. They received cochlear implants before their first birthdays. When Luke was 5, he was also diagnosed with autism. Lekotek was able to meet all his needs. Luke looks forward to Lekotek's annual summer camp and Alana is excited to join him this year. As a family, we attend Lekotek community events and benefit from meeting other families at Zoo Day, The Pumpkin Patch, Easter Egg Hunt, baseball games, and park play dates. These activities not only make a difference for Luke and Alana but for us, as parents.

During our play sessions, our Lekotek leaders provide opportunities for our kids to have fun

and learn along the way. Being able to borrow developmentally appropriate toys and educational materials, following each hour-long session, has helped Luke and Alana develop language and cognitive abilities. This fall, Luke will be in 6th grade and Alana in Pre-k after graduating from the Atlanta Speech School. Lekotek has been a big part of their success. We appreciate the kindness and support from everyone at Lekotek. To quote Alana, "thank you so much!"

Lekotek Welcomes 5 New Board Members



We're excited to introduce five new members to Lekotek's board of directors. From left to right are Kym Hadzick, Senior Vice President and Management Liability Department Manager of RSUI Group - Evin Gordon, Director of Sports Marketing at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta - Kristi Fuqua, Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Pharmacist at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta - Tim Lynn, Realtor with Harry Norman Realtors and Miller Majors, Senior Investment Associate with Capital Investment Advisors.

Their time and expertise will strengthen our efforts on behalf of Lekotek kids and families.

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Fun Spring Events

Each spring, the Kennesaw and Peachtree City Lekoteks conduct Easter Egg Hunts and the Duluth site conducts a family play date at McDaniel Farm. Families from all six Lekotek centers are invited to attend. In fact, several families attended the Duluth Park Play Date in the morning and then the Kennesaw Easter Egg Hunt in the afternoon.

Lekotek Easter Egg Hunts include hundreds of eggs filled with fun surprises. Some light up, making them easier to see for a child who has a visual impairment. Others are velcroed to the wall so a child who uses a wheelchair can grab them easily. Our spin art and bubble machines are adapted so a child can create a masterpiece and/or blow bubbles with the press of a button. Lekotek Easter Egg Hunts and play dates include adaptations so children with disabilities can collect eggs, enjoy arts and crafts, water play and adapted playground equipment.



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