



Easterseals client Dempsey, 6, prepares to practice his drive at Oglebay's Speidel Golf Club, where Kalkreuth Roofing & Sheet Metal will host two events this weekend: a Vendor Invitational scramble today and the annual Kalkreuth Amateur Golf Championship Saturday and Sunday.

## Kalkreuth Event Takes Place 'Fore!' Easterseals

July 21, 2023 — WHEELING, W.Va. — Six-year-old Dempsey squints at the cameraman, one eye shut against the sun, red head tilted, arms extended to his pint-sized driver as he awaits his cue.

"Three!" the cameraman counts down. Dempsey lowers his head.

"Two!" He settles into his stance.

"One!" He grips the club just so, and — thwack!

The driver connects, and the ball soars an impressive distance into the fairway at Oglebay Resort's Trent Jones Course. Family members, the camera crew and nearby golfers applaud. "That was the money shot," someone quips.

Dempsey, a physical therapy client at Easterseals Rehabilitation Center in Wheeling, is the star of this year's Kalkreuth golf tournament commercial on WTRF-TV. He re-created the above scene — minus the

ball — on stage at Oglebay's Glessner Auditorium Thursday for the patrons of the Kalkreuth Vendor Invitational dinner in advance of today's scramble.

Over the years, between the vendor tournament and the Kalkreuth Amateur Golf Championship, Kalkreuth has raised over \$260,000 for the nonprofit Easterseals and its clients, like Dempsey.

"Our ability to make a significant donation to such a charitable life-changing organization that supports so many families right here in the Ohio Valley makes me proud of all of the fine employees we have here," Kalkreuth President and CEO James Hurley said. "It's always been important for Kalkreuth to generously give back to Wheeling's local community and to institutions like Easterseals that touch the lives of so many children, including many of our own friends and neighbors."

This year's major tournament sponsors are ABC Supply Co. Inc., Johns Manville, and Carlisle Construction Materials.

"Easterseals is deeply grateful for the generosity of Kalkreuth Roofing and Sheet Metal and its vendors. Through their hard work, hundreds of children will have access to medical care," Easterseals President and CEO Eric Filberto said. This event makes a direct difference in the lives of the families we serve and allows us to continue our mission."

Dempsey was born three months early and spent 10 weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. When he was 3, his parents, Shelly and Dan, noticed he was having trouble keeping his balance.

Turns out, his left leg was slightly shorter than the right. A neurologist diagnosed him with mild cerebral palsy and referred him to Easterseals for physical therapy. For the last three years, Dempsey has seen physical therapist Krystal Wilson as well as Easterseals medical director Dr. Ellen Kitts, a physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist.

At Dempsey's "exercise classes" with Wilson, he works on hopping, jumping, balancing and other gross motor skills to strengthen his legs and loosen up the tight muscles in his left ankle. He wears a soft, removable cast at night.

Dempsey's successes at Easterseals include improved balance and hitting his developmental milestones.

"With the help of Miss Krystal, he has been doing wonderful at participating in things that all the other children participate in," Shelly said. Dempsey enjoys playing tennis, swimming with his cousins and playing golf with his dad. He has participated in several seasons of the West Virginia First Tee golf program at Oglebay.

Wilson said he keeps her on her toes.



“Dempsey is very inventive. His brain is always working, and he loves puzzles — not physical ones, but figuring things out.” Wilson tailors his sessions to his interests. She has turned the Easterseals therapy gym into an “escape room” for him. He completes certain exercises to find the secret code to “escape.”

Administrative assistant Judy Schoolcraft even hides his favorite flavor lollipop — butterscotch — for him to find using the “hot” and “cold” game after his sessions.

Shelly added: “I would definitely recommend Easterseals to any child that needs any kind of assistance. The amount of love and care that everyone there gives these children is amazing, and I wouldn't choose to go anywhere else!”

*Easterseals Rehabilitation Center in Wheeling was founded in 1937 and is one of 70 affiliates of the national Easterseals organization. We create life-changing solutions for children and adults with disabilities or other special needs and their families. Our clients range from having minor developmental delays to more significant disabilities. We also have offices in Steubenville, Weirton, New Martinsville and Parkersburg. All commercial insurances are accepted, and a sliding fee scale can be arranged. No one is ever turned away for inability to pay.*

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