

★ CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF WISHES ★



Summer of Wishes

Transforming lives, one wish at a time.

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"Live in the sunshine. Swim the sea. Drink the wild air..."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ahh summertime in the great Garden State. Fortunately for us New Jerseyans, we can do all those, and more, that Mr. Emerson encourages during these summer months. I hope that you've had a chance to check them off your June, July and August bucket list this year too. And if not to swim, at least to get a view somewhere of that vast, deep, beautiful blue sea that hugs our magnificent coastline.

Here at the castle, aside from the Nov/Dec holiday season and winter school breaks, the summer months represent our busiest time of the year, by far. In fact, we will grant almost 50% of our annual wish total in these three months alone. You can imagine then, the significant burden it places on our wish granting budget this time of year. Before I close this letter, I will invite you to be a part of our "Summer of Wishes" initiative, which will play a vital role in relieving this budget burden, and provide the crucial funding to grant each and every wish that comes through our door over the next several weeks.

But first, let me share some exciting news that occurred earlier this summer.

As I hope you recall, we are celebrating our 35th Anniversary throughout 2018. Arguably, the highlight so far occurred at the castle on June 14th at our annual Gala! If you've ever been lucky enough to have attended one of our galas, you know just how powerful an evening it can be. What with this being a special milestone year, we wanted to kick it up another notch, and the feedback we received suggests we did exactly that! No one who was in attendance is going to forget that night anytime soon. Let me share some of the highlights. We profiled one our first ten wishes ever granted, from back in 1983, when a young boy named Bobby Macaluso answered the question, "If you could have one wish, what would it be?", with, "I want to meet my hero, my favorite wrestler, Rocky Johnson!" Before the gala arrived, surely we had done some homework to see if a) Rocky Johnson was still "with us", and b) if he could attend the Gala. Fortunately we discovered that yes, Mr. Johnson is alive and well in Florida, but unfortunately was unable to attend that night. However, his son, who shares a similar nickname and same last name, sent a heartwarming video message to the audience, as well as an invitation for two lucky auction winners to attend a movie premiere with him! (Look inside the newsletter to learn who our mystery man was! ☺)

As we do each year, we also honored two very special friends of ours, two men who, along with their companies, have supported this mission about as long as anyone has in New Jersey. Frank Bolte, Chief Administration Officer, BDP International, and wish uncle, received the Humanitarian of the Year Award. Neil Barnett, President & COO, Fedway Associates, received the President's Award. Following the awards ceremony, the entire audience participated in the granting of a wish. Brandon was the young man who allowed us to share his wish with everyone—a brand new camper!

As if all of that wasn't enough, history was made that night, not merely MAWNJ history, but history for ALL of Make-A-Wish, nationally and internationally, when we introduced Linda Pauling—mother of the lil boy, Chris, whose experience merely inspired the founding of this seemingly simple but oh-so powerful mission back in 1980—to Erik Estrada of CHiPs fame, for the first time...EVER! Chris essentially "wished" to be a police officer. Men and women such as Tommy Austin, U.S. Customs Agent, Scott Stahl, Department of Public Safety and others brought his "wish" to life. Surely Chris was influenced by these and other great law enforcement officers he met during his short life, but he was also influenced by what he saw on TV, especially his favorite show, CHiPS. Imagine how thrilled we were then, indeed, honored and deeply humbled, to bring Linda and Erik together, along with Tommy & Kay Austin (two other founders of MAW along with Linda) for the first time anywhere, but especially at the castle! We imagined, dreamed and envisioned sooooo many amazing happenings to occur at the castle back when we were dreaming of what it could be, what it WOULD be for our mission, in a word—a game-changer, but I'm not sure any of us imagined this happening! 😊

Finally, Megan Crowley, a wish child herself, as is her younger brother, Patrick, gave an inspirational speech as she shared what the power of a wish means to her. If you haven't yet seen it on our social media platforms, look for it on our website as you'll want to see it!

The night closed with an invitation to help us through the summer months. And although it was a successful night, we are still in need of support to reach our goal of 550 wishes by August 31st, which would be another record for our chapter. If you are interested and able to assist, won't you visit our website at <u>nj.wish.org/donate</u> or call 609-371-9474 to make a gift or adopt a wish, and help us reach this ambitious goal.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of our mission. Here's wishing you and your family a fun and safe rest of the summer.

- Tom

Thomas P. Weatherall *President & CEO*

Dwayne Johnson Shares His Family's Legacy of Wish Granting



elebrity status is often associated with wealth (commonly referred to as "fame and fortune"), but in certain occurrences, celebrities like Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson demonstrate that wealth can also be defined as a richness in human character. Dwayne Johnson has, for many years, continuously exuded the spirit of Make-A-Wish and has enhanced the lives of over **140 wish kids** around the globe.



His relationship with Make-A-Wish runs deep—35 years in fact, back to when he was only eleven years old. Dwayne's father, famed wrestler Rocky Johnson, granted one of the first ten wishes in the history of Make-A-Wish

New Jersey back in 1983—the chapter's very first year. Dwayne himself was present for the wish experience. He met wish kid Bobby and his family, and described it as something that would impact him for the rest of his life.

Dwayne immediately rose to the opportunity to be a part of the New Jersey chapter's 35th Anniversary celebration, and **shared a compelling video message** with Bobby's family along with over 500 guests at the annual chapter Gala in June.

"I remember my Dad telling me and Mom, 'There's a little boy, and he wants to meet me, and he's really challenged right now, and he's fighting hard, and his one wish is to meet me,' and I was blown away," Dwayne shared as he refl ected back on his family's legacy with Make-A-Wish. "And I remember meeting Bobby and his family, and my Dad was holding him, and it was a very special moment and time in our lives."

Dwayne Johnson is proud to be a "2nd generation wish granter." As recent as this past year, Mr. Johnson granted the wish of a young girl from New Jersey named Emily, along with two international wish kids, who spent the entire day visiting with him on his movie set.



"I've got a pretty cool job and I'm a real lucky guy," Dwayne also shared in his video address. "I've got beautiful kids and I've got some people who love me in my life and who I lean on for support. But the best part of my job, the best part of my job is granting wishes. It's the best part of my job and it's the best part about what I do."

History Made in a 1st Time Meeting



ake-A-Wish history was made during the 35th Anniversary Gala at the Samuel & Josephine Plumeri Wishing Place. Linda Pauling, the "Matriarch of Make-A-Wish," met one of her son's celebrity heroes for the first time. In 1980, Linda's son, Chris Greicius, who battled leukemia, was given the experience of a lifetime when his "wish" to be a police officer was made possible by law enforcement officials in Phoenix, AZ. Chris' experience sparked a global movement



that would become the inspiration for the Make-A-Wish organization. Since that day in April 1980, over 300,000 children in the United States have experienced the hope, joy and transformation Make-A-Wish provides to children with critical illnesses. Chris' desire to become a police officer was inspired by many things, one of which was his favorite television show **CHiPs**, starring Erik Estrada. On Thursday June 14th, Linda was greeted by Mr. Estrada as he and Tommy Austin, U.S. Customs Agent and Co-Founder of Make-A-Wish, made their way through an honor guard of wish families, New Jersey & Federal law enforcement officials, past and present board members, honorees and special friends of Make-A-Wish, to meet Linda on stage in a moment filled with hugs and tears of joy. Linda reflected on what a thrill watching Mr. Estrada on TV gave Chris:

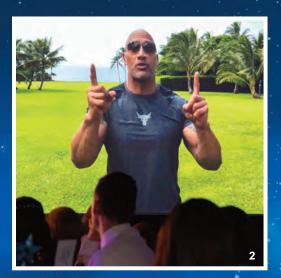
"Never in my life did I expect to meet you. Chris would just sit in front of the TV and watch CHiPS and he knew everything about your bikes. He was dedicated to becoming a cop. You were his favorite, you really were."

– Linda Pauling

Erik Estrada shared his pride and honor in being a part of the special night, and thanked all in attendance for being "first responders" and holding a special compassion in their DNA, always answering the call when wish kids need them.

A Night To Celebrate 35 Years!

Annual Gala Makes Make-A-Wish History



Make A Wish

celebrating

35 years of wishes







Guests enjoy cocktail hour, silent auction and red carpet interviews at the Samuel & Josephine Plumeri Wishing Place before gathering for dinner. Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson <u>shares a</u> <u>video message</u> about his family's legacy of wish granting and their involvement in one of New Jersey's first ten wishes in 1983.



Two special guests are honored for their dedication to the Make-A-Wish mission. Francis X. Bolte, Chief Administration Officer of BDP International and Chairman of the Board for Make-A-Wish New Jersey is presented with the Humanitarian of the Year Award, and Neil Barnett, President & COO of Fedway Associates is presented with the President's Award.

Klara's wish for an **Action Trackchair**—the chapter's 10,000th wish—is celebrated with a special video, and Klara surprises President & CEO Tom Weatherall by being in attendance that night.

The 10,001st wish is granted in a surprise moment for Brandon, who wished for his very own camper. Brandon's camper is escorted into the Gala by way of a police motorcade from the Monroe Township Police Department.











Linda Pauling meets Erik Estrada of **CHiPS** fame—one of her son Chris Greicius' heroes and an inspiration behind his "wish" to be a police officer for the first time in Make-A-Wish history. Wish kid Megan Crowley, diagnosed with Pompe disease, gives an inspiring speech that reflects on the impact of a wish on not only her, but her entire family. She and her father John Crowley, Chairman of the Board & CEO of Amicus Therapeutics, Chairman of the Board for Make-A-Wish America 2014-2016, and the inspiration for the Major Motion Picture Extraordinary Measures, announce their family's commitment to a significant fundraising initiative towards the chapter's future growth, inspired by the chapter's ambitious 5-year plan to reach 100% of eligible children.

Live auction excitement includes items from Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Max Weinberg of the E-Street Band, and other exclusive experiences, raising vital funds for future wishes.





The Make-A-Wish New Jersey 35th Anniversary Gala raised over \$1 MILLION to create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. Thank you to all who joined in this special celebration!





HELP US make another 10,000 wishes come true!

Visit <u>nj.wish.org/donate</u> or call **800-252-WISH**.

A Milestone Wish

Make-A-Wish New Jersey Grants 10,000th Wish

ife is filled with simple pleasures, but when you are a child battling a critical illness, the enjoyment of a simple pleasure can be life-changing. For 8-year-old Klara, who uses a wheelchair due to a rare muscle disease since birth, that simple pleasure was a wish to go on family hiking trips without relying on the need to ride on her mother's back. For Klara, these adventures were nearly impossible.

Until now.

In a historic milestone celebration in May at the Samuel & Josephine Plumeri Wishing Place, Klara's life was forever changed, when she was surprised with her one true wish—to own her very own *Action Trackchair*. A fully equipped, motorized outdoor wheelchair, the *Action Trackchair* is designed to take on rugged terrain and give kids like Klara the freedom she had only dreamed of in the past. "When you have a child with a disability, you want to do everything you can for them, but it's hard. Her wheelchair and her scooter have limitations to where she can go. But this Action Trackchair opens up a whole world of possibilities and independence for her, and her sister. To see Klara's excitement, and to see her in that chair and have that independence, it means so much to us. Now she can be a typical 8-year-old kid. It breaks down so many boundaries, and it's reassuring that there are organizations out there like Make-A-Wish that can do this for parents who can't. Thank you Make-A-Wish."

- Emily & Darren (Klara's Parents)

Klara's wish was the **10,000**th wish granted by Make-A-Wish New Jersey since it began in 1983. Among those at the surprise celebration were volunteers, staff, friends, family, and even fellow wish kids, parents and siblings to welcome Klara into the Make-A-Wish family.



WALK & ROLL EVENT

REGISTER TODAY! NJ.WISH.ORG/WALK 800-252-WISH







JOIN US AT TWO UNIQUE LOCATIONS!

Help make wishes come true by walking and rolling in a Walk & Roll For Wishes® event! Sign up as an individual or start a team of family, friends and co-workers.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22 LIBERTY STATE PARK JERSEY CITY

SUNDAY OCTOBER 14

SAMUEL & JOSEPHINE PLUMERI WISHING PLACE MONROE TOWNSHIP



"Along with [my heart], all of my other internal organs are completely mirrored as well. The result is a lifelong respiratory disease with chronic infections of the lungs, sinuses, and ears. On the outside, I look like a typical teenager, but on the inside swarms chaos.

My wish was to go to the Pro Bowl in Hawaii to meet all the top football athletes. My brothers have the same

rare medical condition and have also been granted wishes. During my entire wish, I never felt self-conscious about my condition; I only felt special. From that point on, I wanted other kids with medical conditions to feel as special as I did."

- Wish Kid & Team Captain Matthew



"We are walking for the 5th year in memory of our son, brother, and uncle John Amendola who was tragically taken from us at 39 years young on December 11, 2011. We adopted Giulianna's wish to go to Walt Disney World through our first fundraiser held in John's name and have since formed

Team Giulianna to honor her at the walks. We hope to continue to walk every year in her honor and in memory of our beloved son John Amendola."

- Team Member Marie Amendola



"When we returned from Harold's trip to Disney in June, there was a flyer in the mail talking about the walk. Upon reading though it, we noticed the date of the walk was October 5th, Harold's birthday. Jokingly, I told Harold that Make-A-Wish was having a birthday party for him at Liberty State Park. Little did we know that Harold would not be with us to celebrate.

My wife and I initially decided to walk as a way of saying "thank you" for everything that Make-A-Wish did for Harold, but once he passed, the impetus changed to include a celebration of his life and has grown over the years as his classmates and our community really jumped on board."

- Harold's dad, Mark



"My brother Antonio wished to meet the New York Football Giants. The Make-A-Wish experience was not only important to Antonio, but my entire family. We learned how a wish and their family a sense of normalcy and also a sense of hope. These are only a few of the reasons why I walk and roll for wishes!"

– Antonio's sister, Isabella



Make-A-Wish[®] New Jersey Samuel & Josephine Plumeri Wishing Place 1384 Perrineville Road Monroe Township, NJ 08831

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Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.



GET INVOLVED!

Refer A Child Make A Gift Adopt-A-Wish® Volunteer Join An Event

Visit nj.wish.org or call 800-252-WISH