



# Bringing hope *home.*

Make-A-Wish<sup>®</sup>  
EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

FISCAL YEAR 2022 ANNUAL REPORT  
*Serving the Triangle to the Coast.*

*I wish to have a princess ball*

Journi, 8  
Pitt County  
congenital heart  
condition



*“She wakes up smiling, she goes to bed smiling, she wants to do nothing but play & play & play some more!” – Rachel, wish mom*



## Letter from the *President.*



Just recently, I had the privilege of listening to one of our wish kids recount his journey to Disney. While listening to him share tall tales of dinosaur rides and Mickey Mouse encounters, it was the look on his face that struck me. He lit up; his words were so animated. It was as if I was watching and listening to the very embodiment of hope.

You, our wish community, are the very reason these trips to Disney, along with so many other extraordinary wishes, happen. As you read through this Annual Report, princess balls will come to life, backyard makeovers will unfold, and even, a wish-to-walk will be realized. I constantly find myself in awe of the sheer creativity that our kids bring to their wishes. The opportunity to bring hope home begins right away with the wish discovery process. Through wish discovery, each child is encouraged to dream about what might be possible through the granting of a wish. We then embark on a magical journey of preparing to grant that wish, and when the wish is delivered, volunteers, donors, and staff have all played central roles in bringing hope home to each and every child that we serve.

Trailblaze Challenge is one of our signature events annually – an event that presents the dual challenges of a 26-mile hike and a \$2500 fundraising goal to each participant. This past spring, I had the opportunity to take on the challenge with my son and 70+ other hikers. As we spent a beautiful North Carolina spring day hiking from

Hanging Rock to the summit of Pilot Mountain, I reflected on the journey taken by each of our wish kids. The final three miles is the climb up Pilot Mountain; it mirrors the mountains that wish kids are routinely conquering. On that day of hiking, we cling to the hope of those final steps across the finish line and get a small, but meaningful, lesson on the power of hope. The impact of hope on the human spirit is difficult to define yet always so readily apparent. Each of you in our wish community is an integral piece in the delivery of that hope to wish children. Hope truly is the engine that powers all of us.

As I look back on this year, I am humbled with gratitude for the efforts of our Board of Directors, our volunteers, our medical advisors, our corporate partners and our donors. This simply would not happen without the determination and commitment of every one of you. The final piece that makes each wish journey whole is our staff. I have the privilege of standing alongside a staff that is passionate about the mission, highly skilled, and filled with servant-leaders.

The stories in this Annual Report are our gift to you. I am sure they will inspire you, as they inspire me, to keep granting the next wish and to continue to *bring hope home.*

Sincerely,

**Chris Winter**  
President & CEO  
Make-A-Wish® Eastern North Carolina



# 36 years of wishes coming true.

## You bring commitment.

A child facing a critical illness impacts the entire family. Normalcy, as families have known it, is stripped away as children embark on an unknown journey. A wish provides kids with the opportunity to look beyond their illness and is a spark of hope empowering the wish child. Every wish experience is unique, not just a moment in time but a robust experience crafted specifically for each wish child. *Creating that experience requires a great deal of time, brainpower, creativity, innovation, and generosity that would not be possible without the commitment from members of our wish community like you.*

For 36 years, Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina has served all medically eligible children who reside in the 49-county chapter area east of the Orange/Alamance County line – *servicing the Triangle to the coast*. Our goal is to reach **every eligible child** in our chapter area and grant their wish. We operate solely through generous donations from individuals, corporations, organizations, and foundations and with the help of more than 250 volunteers, including our Board of Directors. When you help grant a wish for a child in eastern North Carolina, you create the greatest joy possible – and an immediate turning point in their treatment and recovery. More kids need the hope and joy of a wish – and **YOU** have the power to create it. From wish kids and parents to their doctors and even you, a wish has the power to improve the emotional well-being of everyone involved.

### To be eligible to receive a wish, the child:

- ★ Must be diagnosed with a critical illness, i.e., a progressive, degenerative or malignant condition that is placing the child's life in jeopardy.
- ★ Must be older than 2½ years and younger than 18.
- ★ Has not received a previous wish from Make-A-Wish or another wish-granting organization.



### VISION

To grant the wish of every eligible child in our chapter area.

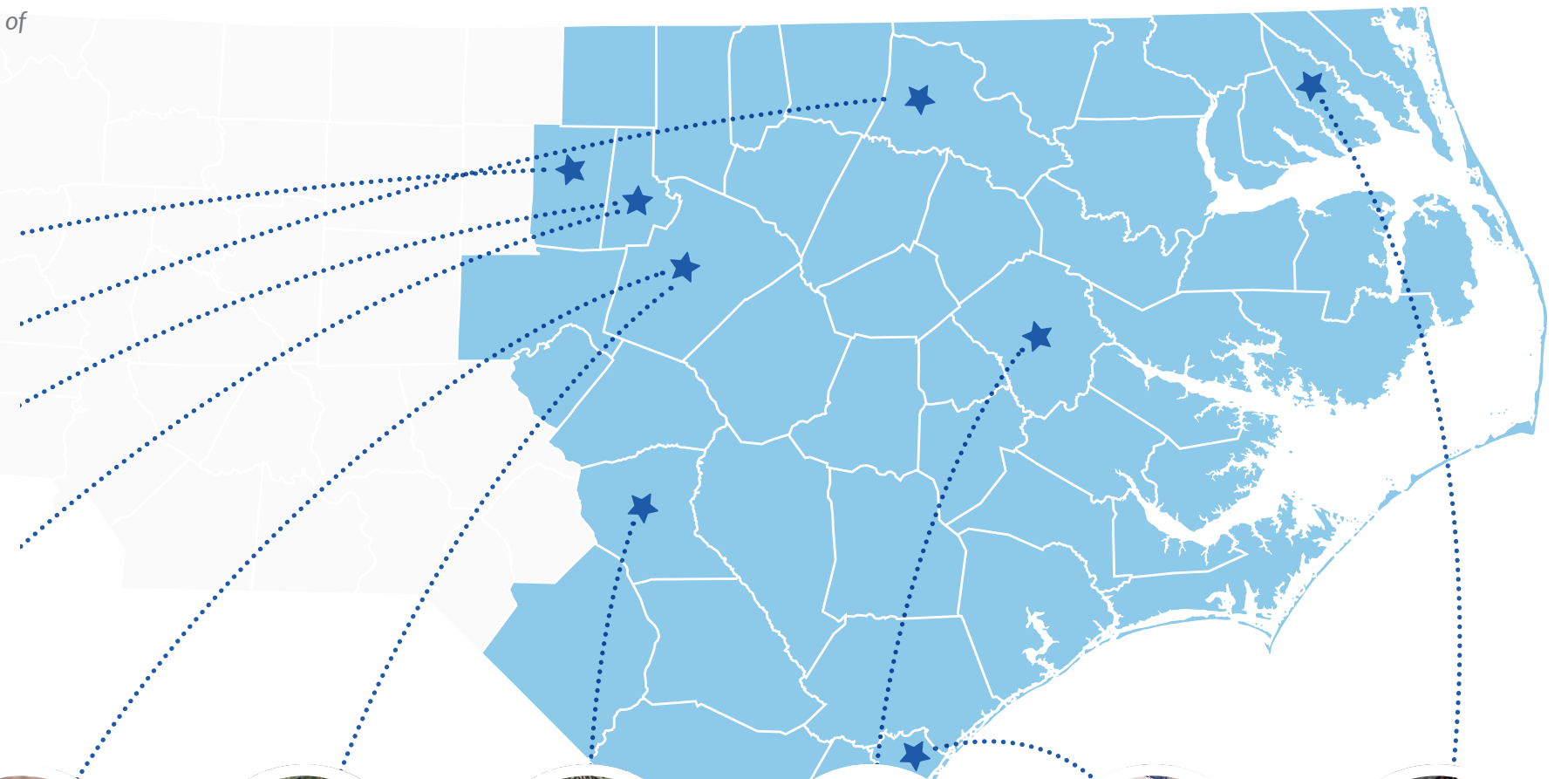


### MISSION

To create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

### DESIRED OUTCOME

Make-A-Wish® shines a light of hope for children fighting critical illnesses when they need it most. A wish helps a child replace fear with confidence, sadness with joy, and anxiety with hope.



Wyatt



Ethan



Marcy



Osaze



Preston



Lorena



Olivia



Journi



Jannifer



Amelia

# You bring innovation.

## Ethan's Extreme Backyard Makeover

We all know the exhilaration of a roller coaster ride. Where excitement meets suspense, typically with a dash of fear. Whether you experience that sensation from a giant roller coaster, a slide at your neighborhood park, or driving down a hill that makes your stomach drop, we are all familiar with the giddy feeling that follows a thrill. Eight-year-old Ethan has always been full of life and loves these kinds of adventures. Amusement parks, specifically the roller coasters at Kings Dominion, bring him the most joy.

Although joyful and adventurous, Ethan has already overcome numerous health obstacles in his short life. He was diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy after being born prematurely and was almost immediately placed on a ventilator, which remained the case for two years. Duchenne muscular dystrophy is a genetic disorder described as progressive muscle degeneration and weakness due to protein alterations that keep muscle cells intact. Eventually, Ethan will not have the ability to use his muscles at all.

Desiring that his love of adventure stay alive, Ethan, with the help of his mother and therapy support teams, created a space that would suit his needs and meet his love of adventure for a long time to come. Because of your support, Make-A-Wish is *bringing hope home*.

By transforming his backyard into an accessible adventure park now fully equipped with a wheelchair-accessible swing, handicap-accessible sandbox and a crocodile water spout, Ethan can live adventurously each day from home.

Bringing hope home to Ethan not only gives him access to daily adventure but also helps him play and interact with other kids. When Ethan's health necessitates the use of a motorized wheelchair, his backyard adventure will still be accessible for him, allowing his wish to live on for years to come.

Wishes have the power to bring joy back into a child's life and give them the strength they need to get through difficult treatments. You provide joy, strength and hope that goes home with every child.

***Bringing hope home to Ethan not only gives him access to daily adventure but also helps him play and interact with other kids.***

***I wish to have a backyard makeover***

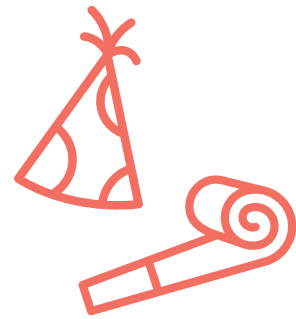
Ethan, 8  
Halifax County  
Duchenne muscular dystrophy



# You bring celebration.

## A Look Back at 2022...

We want to celebrate a few of the best moments from 2022 with you, the community that made them possible.



### We granted 170 wishes in 2022!

This year we saw a return to wish granting as it was pre-COVID-19. A long-awaited return! Wish children who had waited patiently during the global pandemic took off on adventures, met their favorite celebrities, and attended events in first-class style.



*I wish to go to the Super Bowl*

Preston, 9  
Wake County cancer

### We celebrated our return to in-person events with Wish Upon a Chef, Trailblaze Challenge and Wish Ball.

Our in-person events serve as a meaningful time of connection for our wish community as a whole. At our Wish Upon a Chef and Wish Ball events, we gathered in celebration of wishes as we raise vital funds for reaching more children in our community. With our Trailblaze Challenge, our supporters experienced an endurance hike like no other, walking a mile (or 26) in the shoes of a wish child and family, while joining together as a team to ensure more wishes will come true. We are grateful to have successfully returned to hosting these events this year!



*I wish to go to Hawaii*

Osaze, 21  
Durham County bone marrow transplant



### We were recognized as the #1 Most Trusted Nonprofit Operating Locally Across 50 States.

We are thrilled to announce that Make-A-Wish America has been recognized as the #1 Most Trusted Nonprofit Operating Locally Across 50 States! We are proud to uphold this mark of quality and excellence based on 2022 Morning Consult data. Thank you for your support and for positioning Make-A-Wish to be the nation's leading children's wish-granting organization, operating in every community in the United States.



### YOU contributed more than ever before in the history of our organization!

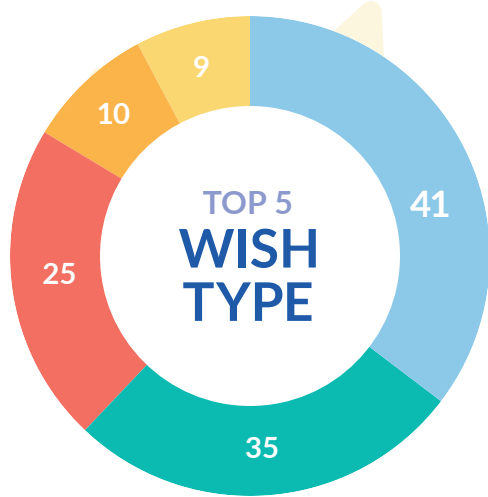
Thanks to you, our valued wish community, we had our most successful fundraising year to date. This is a testament to the ongoing commitment each of you demonstrates to granting every eligible wish in eastern North Carolina. Your support enables us to be creative in fundraising efforts, engage across the chapter and positions us for continued success in the years to come.



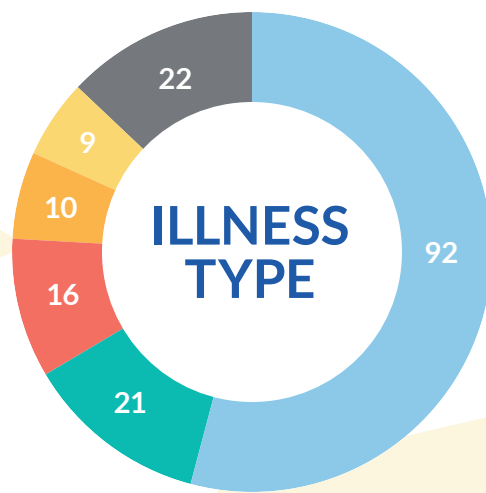
# You bring bravery.

Wish kids are some of the bravest and sweetest kids you'll ever know. They wish to visit a tropical island, become a mermaid, custom design a golf cart or a dream backyard play set, and attend the biggest sporting event of the year. **Now more than ever**, the world needs the hope of a wish come true.

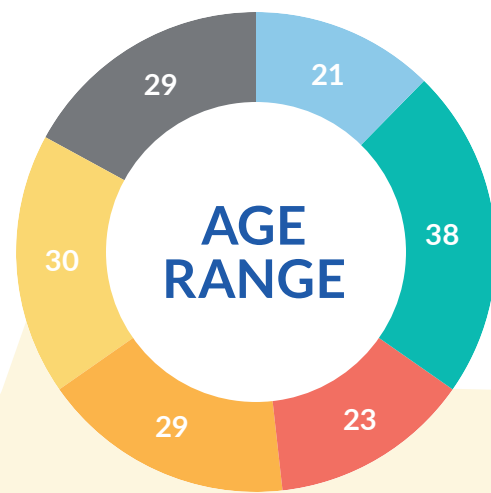
Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina has granted **4,232** wishes and counting since our inception in 1986. Each wish that we grant is at zero cost to the wish child and family. This year we reached **170** children in eastern North Carolina with a wish inspiring bravery in their fight against a critical illness.



- Domestic Travel
- Walt Disney World® Resort
- Shopping Spree
- Room Redecoration
- Playhouse/Playset



- Cancer
- Nervous System disorder
- Blood Disorder
- Congenital Anomalies
- Transplants
- Other



- 2.5-5 Years
- 6-8 Years
- 9-11 Years
- 12-14 Years
- 15-17 Years
- 18+ Years

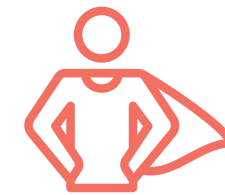
*Wish kids are some of the bravest and sweetest kids you'll ever know.*

## FY2022 FINANCES



■ Public Support (Cash)	\$ 2,571,277
■ Public Support (In-kind)	\$ 737,683
■ Investments/Grants	\$ 93,820

■ Wish Program	\$ 2,219,461
■ Fundraising	\$ 541,976
■ Management and General	\$ 451,066



## FY2022 WISHES GRANTED

**170**  
wishes granted in 2022

**\$7,500**  
average cost of granting a wish

**4,232**  
total wishes over organization's history

*I wish to have a shopping spree*

Amelia, 6  
Pasquotank County  
blood disorder



# You bring teamwork.



At Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina, we know that our work would not be possible without the commitment, creativity, and generosity of countless donors, partners, volunteers, and champions of our work. We are humbled to have partnered with new supporters and to have continued relationships with existing partners. **You bring hope home.**

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

We are thrilled this year to partner with **The Leon Levine Foundation**, a Charlotte, North Carolina-based foundation that invests in nonprofits across North Carolina and South Carolina.

Through its investments, The Leon Levine Foundation supports organizations to create positive community impact, facilitate opportunities for growth, and invest directly in local communities. This year, wishes like Marcy's to have a wish-to-walk experience were made possible by our partnership with The Leon Levine Foundation.

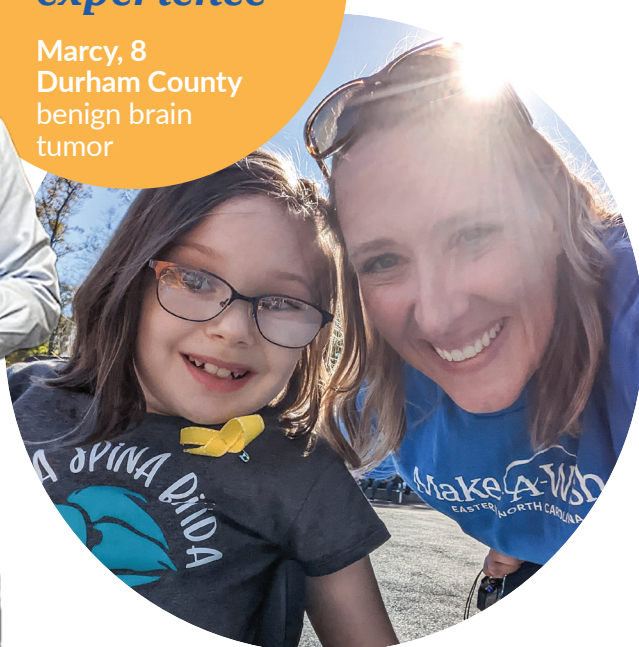
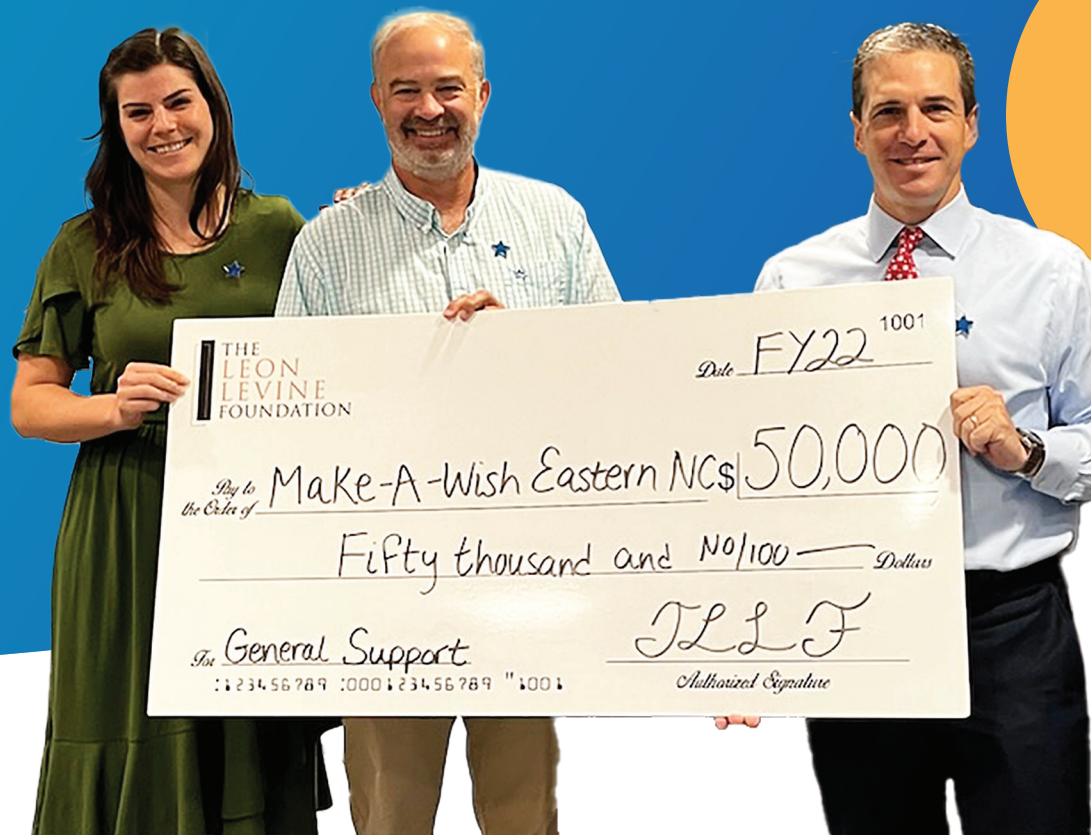
Wishes are transformative. We are strengthened by the support from The Leon Levine Foundation to grant wishes and are grateful for their generosity in creating a life-changing impact.

*“One of the things she always said was ‘I can’t wait until I’m older and I can walk.’ And there’s a way you can do that. Make-A-Wish can make it happen.”*

— Sarah & Dustin, wish parents

**I wish to have a wish-to-walk experience**

Marcy, 8  
Durham County  
benign brain tumor



## BRINGING HOPE HOME THAT LASTS.

When a community of corporate teams and consumers come together to grant wishes, it creates irresistible joy for everyone! Just one spark of hope has the power to improve the emotional well-being of a child, their family, their medical providers, and our community partners, helping build hope for a brighter tomorrow. Our generous corporate partners, business owners and employees, and their customers are crucial to granting wishes throughout the year.

Balfour Beatty is one of the longstanding partners of Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina helping create life-changing wishes for children through hosting their annual golf tournament – to date raising over \$475,000 – and by providing creative design support, building expertise, and construction supplies for wishes like Manny's to have his own custom man cave!

Together, we will reach every eligible child from the Triangle to the coast with the hope of a wish.

## Balfour Beatty Construction



## NATIONAL PARTNERS



## LOCAL PARTNERS



We are inspired by the courage and creativity we see every day from our wish kids. A wish begins with hope. ***And hope begins with you.***



## Bringing hope home begins with **you.**

Commitment, innovation, celebration, bravery, teamwork... **you.** Bringing hope home begins with you, and you make all the difference. Your support, time, and talents are critical to bringing strength and hope to wish kids, and we are beyond grateful for the way our Make-A-Wish community has stood beside families in eastern North Carolina. We are excited for many more families to bring hope home. Check out a few events you can join us at in 2023!

### A LOOK AHEAD: **2023**

Visit [wish.org/eastnc](http://wish.org/eastnc) to learn more!

- 1. Wish Upon a Chef on March 16!** Our signature event at the coast brings together the top chefs and restaurants in our Wilmington community for a delicious evening granting wishes.
- 2. Take the Trailblaze Challenge in May!** The beautiful Sauratown Trail is host to this endurance event May 5-7 and 19-21 where participants tackle 26.5 miles in one life-changing day.
- 3. Wish Ball: A Celebration of Wishes – coming August 17!** Our annual Wish Ball event is an ever-evolving celebration of wishes. Each year is different from the year before – a great reason to never miss it!

#### ***I wish to have a room redecoration***

Jannifer, 8  
New Hanover County  
end stage renal disease

*Jannifer's medical equipment often takes up a lot of room and she needed a space to call her own. Her new room fits all her favorite toys while still prioritizing her safety.*



#### ***I wish to celebrate my Quinceañera***

Lorena, 15  
Wake County  
cancer



*Lorena celebrated her Quinceañera with a limo ride, custom decorations, a mariachi performance, dinner, and dancing.*

#### ***I wish to have a Christmas light display***

Wyatt, 7  
Orange County  
leukemia

*When thinking of his wish, Wyatt said, "I love watching my favorite movie The Grinch! I want colored lights all over my porch rails, posts, and around all the doors! And I want a BIG light-up tree!"*



## ***Thank you for being our partner in bringing hope home.***



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McKinsey & Company



*I wish to  
have a  
playset*

Olivia, 8  
Cumberland  
County  
blood disorder

**Make-A-Wish®**  
EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

3809 Computer Drive, Suite 201 Raleigh, NC 27609 | (919) 821-7111 | [info@eastnc.wish.org](mailto:info@eastnc.wish.org)  
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