

A publication of
Make-A-Wish®
GREATER PENNSYLVANIA
AND WEST VIRGINIA

Fall 2024

Wishing Well

*I wish to hunt for
sea glass floats*

James, 6
pulmonary condition



Read about
James' wish
on page 2.



RESILIENCE MEETS THE SEA: James' Search for Sea Glass Floats

At just six years old, wish kid James has already struggled through more hospital stays and treatment regimens than most people experience in their entire lives. Suffering from a chronic pulmonary disorder, James and his family fight every day to keep joy at the forefront of their lives.

"James' life isn't always as easy as other kids," James' mother, Kelsey, said. "With his respiratory disorder, he spends hours a day doing treatments."

After so many years of keeping their spirits up, it was time for a break.

One of James' favorite things to do is collect sea glass. From bottles, glassware or even shipwrecks, sea glass is formed from the weathering caused by the crashing of the waves and the pressure of being crushed underfoot. Over time, the glass loses its rough edges, and becomes a beautiful symbol of resilience through the storms of life.

As a West Virginia native, James and his family don't often get to experience the serenity of visiting the ocean. For his wish, James knew that he wanted to have the most unique ocean experience ever.

After hearing about the Finders Keepers handcrafted glass floats in Oregon, James knew this was the right wish to choose. Unique to Lincoln City, thousands of people visit the Oregon coast to unearth these special treasures every year.

Wanting to give James the VIP experience, Make-A-Wish Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia and Make-A-Wish Oregon joined forces with the organizers of the Finders Keepers event to create a sea glass adventure that James and his family would never forget.

After being whisked off to Oregon on an airplane, James immediately wanted to set out in search of his very own, specially made, glass float. The Pacific Ocean was breathtaking, with the fierce wind and waves crashing against the sand making James truly feel like a treasure hunter on a courageous expedition.

Running along the beach, James began his quest. Although distracted in part by the abundance of seashells, feathers and rocks lining the beach, it didn't take long for him to spot the float, a beautiful melding of blues and greens to match the ocean. Sprinting toward it, the joy on his face was undeniable.

"It was so exciting! Anytime you can see your kid doing what they love is amazing," Kelsey said.

The joy traveled with them from the sand to the Lincoln City Glass Center, where James was given the opportunity to create his very own float from scratch. While building his one-of-a-kind piece, James and his family also built-up new hope, embracing the joy of new experiences that herald a brighter future for their family.

"To see that joy, it's just special," Kelsey said.

"This day is something he'll never forget."

Referrer:
Nicholas Friedman

Volunteers:
Michele Atha and
Lori Kesecker

Events Recap

Waffles & Wishes

Gabe's Wish for Pirates



Photo by Karen Bukowski Photography

On April 26, 2024, Make-A-Wish held its annual Waffles & Wishes event in Erie, PA.

It was an incredible morning of wishes — both old and new! Attendees listened to stories of wish alumni and volunteers and reveled in the reveal of Gabe's wish to meet Andrew McCutchen and the Pittsburgh Pirates. The day was filled with amazing Pirates swag, a group of swashbuckling buccaneers and a visit from The Pirate Parrot. There was even a special video message to Gabe from Andrew McCutchen, himself.

Waffles & Wishes would not have been possible without the incredible generosity of our Wishmaker sponsor, Siebenbuerger Club and our signature sponsors, The Plastek Group and UPMC Health Plan, and our media sponsor, WQLN. We wish to extend a huge 'Thank You' to Traci Teudhope of Erie News Now for emceeding the event and adding even more magic to the day.

Check out the photo from Gabe's wish on page 4.



2024 Campaign Schedule

DuBois

December 2nd - 6th

Mon. - Thurs. : 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Fri. : 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunny 106

12 W. Long Ave.
DuBois, PA 15801

Punxsutawney

December 9th - 13th

Mon., Wed. - Fri. : 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tues. : 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Make-A-Wish®

Punxsutawney Regional Office
219 W. Mahoning St.
Punxsutawney, PA 15767

St. Marys

December 18th

Wed. : 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The River 98.9

6 Franklin Center
St. Marys, PA 15857

Erie

December 20th

Fri. : 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Star 104

One Boston Store Place
Erie, PA 16501

If you want to attend amazing events like Waffles & Wishes and Light Up A Child's Life®, visit our website at wish.org/greaterpawv/our-events to find out more.

Wishes Come True



I wish to meet the Pittsburgh Pirates

Gabe, 16 ↑
metabolic disorder
Fairview, PA



I wish to meet Jack Black

Eli, 14 ↑
brain tumor
Lemont, PA



I wish to go to the Florida theme parks

Harper, 5 ←
nervous system disorder
Bellefonte, PA



I wish to have a trampoline

Mercy, 11 ↑
blood disorder
Pittsburgh, PA



A Spectacular Wish for Specters: Eliza Hunts for Ghosts



*I wish to hunt
for ghosts at the
Stanley Hotel*

Eliza, 14
brain tumor
Pittsburgh, PA

Fourteen-year-old Eliza has always had a penchant for the spooky and macabre. Since she was six or seven years old, she dreamed of visiting one of the most haunted destinations in America: the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado. This hotel famously inspired Stephen King to write “The Shining” after he and his wife stayed there in the mid-70s and had a paranormal experience.

Eliza, a lover of horror movies and paranormal stories, finds a thrill in the experience of being scared. But, when she was diagnosed with a brain tumor in April of 2022, things became scary in a not-so-fun way. After several surgeries, many rounds of radiation, a relapse of the cancer in July of 2023, more surgery and more radiation, Eliza was craving an experience that would transport her back to the spooky thrills she sought as a little kid.

This is where Eliza’s Stanley Hotel ghost-hunting wish was born.

At her request, Eliza and her family were placed in room 401, one of the most notoriously active spots for paranormal activity, according to previous guests.

They then packed the week with spooky and cozy activities, including ghost-hunting, a ghost tour, a real seance, hiking in the gorgeous Colorado mountains, drinking lots of hot cocoa and a tarot reading!

“It was an awesome trip for all of us,” said Eliza. “We appreciate [Make-A-Wish] for making my wish come true!”



THANK YOU

FOR MAKING THESE WISHES COME TRUE!

DONORS

412 Gives Back
Amy's Wish
Bergey's Subaru
cbs Corporate Business Solution
America Holiday Drive
Jared S. Peters Memorial
Golf Tournament
Pickin' for Wishes
Siebenbuerger Club

REFERRERS VOLUNTEERS

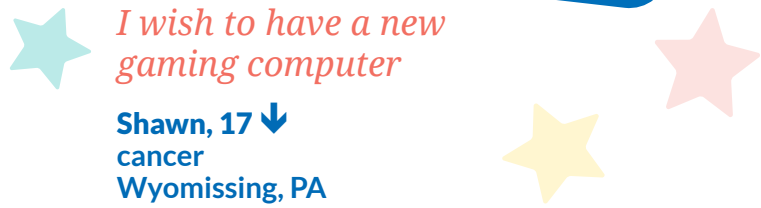
Amber Baer
Christina Cafro
Jaclyn Harmon
Brittany Henze
Jennifer Kovatch
Lyndsey Love
Sara Merrill
Rachael Salako
Kathryn Santiago
Catherine Schmidt

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Kay Light
Ashley Mackey
Mary Joan Meehan
Rae Molinsky
Danielle Mostoller
Derek Mostoller
Karen Mummert
Ali Pokorny
Angela Potter
Keith Shaneman
KC Sheeler
Sharon Staples
Lauralynn Williams



*I wish to meet
the NY Yankees*

Isaiah, 13
heart condition
York, PA



*I wish to have a new
gaming computer*

Shawn, 17 ↓
cancer
Wyomissing, PA

*I wish to go to the
Walt Disney World® Resort*

Gabe, 4 ←
leukemia
Gettysburg, PA

*I wish to go to Sephora
Headquarters in California*

Aubrey, 9 ↓
pulmonary condition
York, PA

*I wish to go to
Yellowstone National
Park*

Warren, 17
pulmonary condition
Pittsburgh, PA



*I wish to go to the
Walt Disney World® Resort*

Nasir, 17 ↓
cancer
Pittston, PA



Photo by Aaron Chang

*I wish to go to
Cape May, NJ*

Ethan, 17 ↓
cancer
Kane, PA



*What an amazing experience we
all had. All of the things we had
done were all firsts for us.
Ethan absolutely loved shark
fishing the best!*

-Laurie, Ethan's mom



Donors Make it Happen



Jared S. Peters Memorial Golf Tournament



2024 Kurt Weiss Scholarship Reception



XCA Gym and Wish kid Brynlee



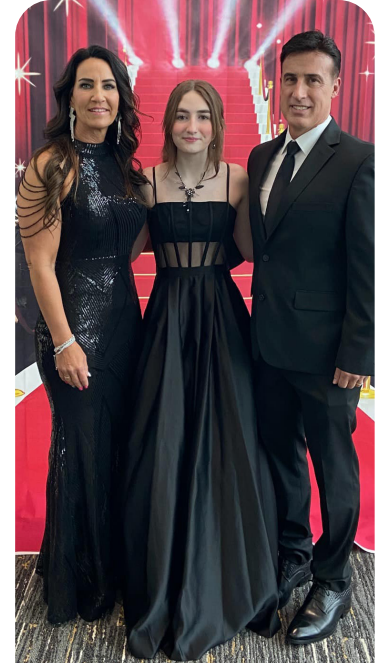
Siebenburger Club, sponsors of Waffles & Wishes and Krista's 25th Annual Motorcycle Event



Dandy Canes Holiday Campaign



Truck Convoy for Wishes



Wabtec's Bids for Kids - Wish kid Claire and her parents



Moyer's Grove Campground Make-A-Wish® Weekend



Pocono Mountain West High School Student Council Wish Party for Kenzie at Duck Donuts



Girl Scout Troop #27311



LeAnn Starner's Annual Make-A-Wish Fundraiser



Carter & Grant's Lemonade Stand - In Memory of Beth Clark



2024 World Pizza Champions



Belle Valley Elementary School
Coin Drive



NEPA Chapter
Credit Union



Dan & Emma's Presque Isle
Challenge



20th Annual Corn Dog Open



Convoy for Kidz



Fairway Subaru -
Share the Love Event



ShopRite - Westfall, PA



Connor Bobik Memorial Race



Amelia's Wish Reveal Party
with BNY



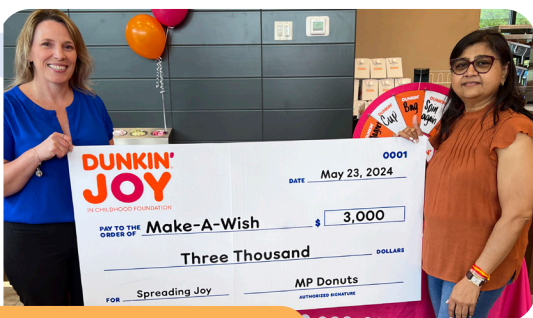
33rd Annual Moms For Make-A-Wish
Softball Tournament - Blush Bombers



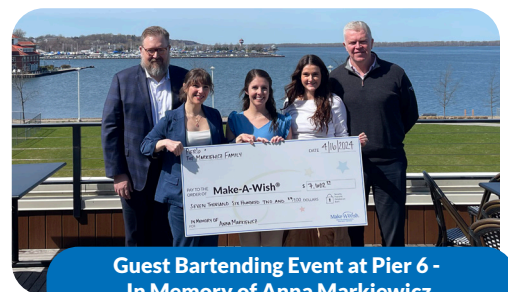
Erie Steelheads
Baseball



Franklin County Truck Convoy



Dunkin' - Hawley, PA



Guest Bartending Event at Pier 6 -
In Memory of Anna Markiewicz

Pocono Mountain School District Grants Wishes for 20 Years

A LEGACY OF COMMUNITY AND HOPE

For the past two decades, the halls of Pocono Mountain Schools haven't just echoed with the sounds of teenagers and textbooks. They have also been filled with the spirit of giving back, thanks to a unique partnership between the schools and Make-A-Wish® Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

The story began in 2002 with a young Pocono Mountain West High School (PMWHS) student named Steven Mitchel. Steven, battling a critical illness himself, dreamt of a world where other children facing similar challenges could have their wishes granted. Sadly, Steven passed away a year after his wish was granted in 2003, but his memory became the fuel for a powerful legacy.

Inspired by Steven's story, the PMWHS Student Council embarked on a mission to honor him and bring joy to other wish kids. Every March, for the past 20 years, the school transforms into a haven for Make-A-Wish. Bake sales and dining out events inject excitement and delicious treats into the community and homerooms compete in fundraising challenges as the entire school rallies behind a single cause: granting wishes.

"Make-A-Wish month in March is a well-known fundraiser at our school," Jennifer Paul, the PMWHS student council advisor, said. "Everyone knows the paper stars and quarter-sized stickers when they see them distributed at the end of February to all homerooms."

This remarkable partnership is a testament to the power of student leadership and the unwavering spirit of a community. The impact has rippled out from PMWHS; other schools in the school district have joined the effort to spark hope for local wish kids with their own fundraisers.

One of the most spectacular fundraising events of the past decade was the Harlem Wizards game hosted by Pocono Mountain West Junior High School and Swiftwater Intermediate School which raised nearly \$10,000, bringing wishes to life for more local children facing critical illnesses.

But the impact goes far beyond bake sales and friendly competition between classes. The Student Council emphasizes that supporting Make-A-Wish is not just about fundraising; it's about empathy, community and understanding the power of a wish.

"Wishes make the kids happy. It gives them a break from reality and lets them know that other people are thinking of them and rooting for them."

**-Jennifer Paul
PMWHS Student Council Advisor**

Over the years, this school district's dedication has touched countless lives. The students, faculty and staff have witnessed the joy on the faces of wish kids, the gratitude of families and the camaraderie fostered within their own school community.

"Our most favorite memories come from meeting the wish kids and their families," Jennifer reminisced. "We've even been able to support several students from our school."

Thank you to all the following schools in Pocono Mountain School District who are proving that even the smallest acts of kindness can have a life-changing impact, one wish at a time.



Pictured here is the Pocono Mountain West High School Student Council. Together, they have fundraised and helped grant wishes in their community.



Make-A-Wish Regional Manager Maggie O'Brien in the center, with a donation presented by Pocono Mountain West High School faculty members on behalf of the district.

We thank the Pocono Mountain West School District for its unwavering support for wishes:

- Clear Run Elementary Center
- Clear Run Intermediate School
- Pocono Mountain East High School
- Pocono Mountain East Junior High School
- Pocono Mountain West High School
- Pocono Mountain West Junior High School
- Swiftwater Elementary Center
- Swiftwater Intermediate School
- Tobyhanna Elementary Center

Other Ways to *Help*



Did you know there are other ways that you can help support wishes? Check out some of these other options:

Create a Wish Your Way Page



A Wish Your Way page allows supporters to raise money for Make-A-Wish® through a fundraiser of their choice.

Fundraising activities can range from collecting donations in lieu of gifts for birthdays or other special life events, participating in a race or creating an honor or memorial tribute for a loved one. Each fundraiser receives a customized webpage to share with their personal network to collect donations to help grant wishes.

To get started, visit: wish.org/greaterpawv/wyw

Donate Air Miles



Nationally, Make-A-Wish would need more than 2.8 billion miles, or 50,000 round-trip tickets, to cover every travel wish each year.

Every mile donated helps wish kids and their families travel to destinations around the world. Once donated, your miles will never expire and are used to support wishes across the country. This is just one simple way you can help grant a life-changing wish experience.

To donate air miles, visit: wish.org/greaterpawv/airline-miles

Donate Your Vehicle



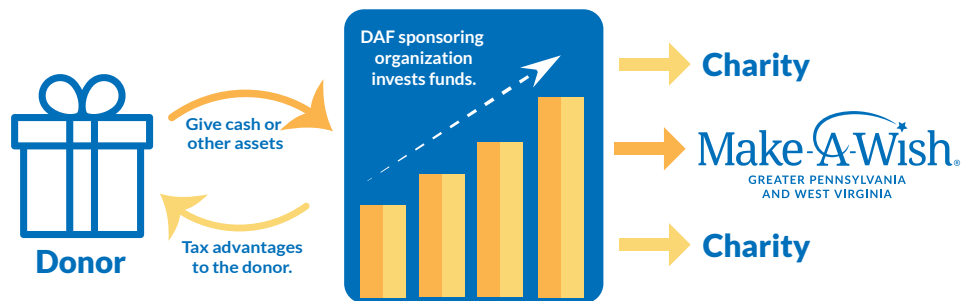
Avoid the hassle of selling or trading and donate your unwanted car or vehicle.

Wheels For Wishes is a car donation charity that benefits Make-A-Wish chapters in various locations throughout the United States. Proceeds from the sale of your car, boat, motorcycle, SUV, RV or truck donation will help fund wishes in your community.

To donate a vehicle, call 855.675.9474 or visit wheelsforwishes.org/pittsburgh

Make a Donor-Advised Fund Gift

A donor-advised fund (DAF), is like a charitable savings account that gives you the flexibility to recommend how much and how often money is granted to Make-A-Wish and other qualified charities. You can recommend a grant or recurring grants now to make an immediate impact or use your fund as a tool for future charitable gifts.



Donor-Advised Funds offer an immediate tax deduction for the donor, and some companies offer a “no minimum” initial contribution. Donors can contribute a variety of assets including cash, securities, mutual funds and non-publicly traded assets.

For more information on DAF and planned giving, contact Tara Conaway at tconaway@greaterpawv.wish.org or call 412.554.7767.

Thanks to Our Donors

The next newsletter will be sent in Spring 2025 but the donor list on our website – wish.org/greaterpawv – is always up-to-date. In the meantime, don't forget to send us your email address for news and events. We will keep your address private.

The following lists cash and in-kind donations, totaling \$5,000 and above for the months of January through August 2024. Tribute honorees totaling \$500 or more are also listed. We extend our deepest appreciation to all of you. Should you discover an error or omission, please call us at 412.471.9474.

Whenever you donate online, please be sure to go through wish.org/greaterpawv. If you do, we will receive 100% of your donation – less a nominal administration fee. If you go directly to our national organization's website, we will only receive 80%.

\$100,000 or more

Estate of Francine George
Give Kids the World
Grapevine – A Wine Tasting Event
Estate of Patsy Lee Bohn Hannah
Lamar Advertising
Estate of Richard R. Sweitzer
Truck Convoy for Wishes,
Gettysburg
Estate of Elizabeth Valgus
Walk for Wishes, Morgantown

\$75,000 to \$99,999

33rd Annual Mom's for
Make-A-Wish® Softball
Tournament
412 Gives Back
Estate of John Busko
Luttner Financial Group
Subaru of America, Inc./Subaru
Share the Love
United Airlines National Ticket
Program

\$50,000 to \$74,999

The Walt Disney Company
Franklin County Truck Convoy
Marriott Vacations Worldwide
The Roger J. Ruisi Trust
Wabtec Corporation Bids for Kids

\$25,000 to \$49,999

39th Annual Make-A-Wish
Golf Outing
Applebee's Neighborhood Grill
& Bar, Sayre
Avis Rent A Car Systems, Inc.
Bergey's Subaru
Cheers for Wishes
Convoy for Kidz, Somerset County
Corn Dog Open

Derry Area High School
Interact Club
Driveway Subaru of Moon
Township
Erie Insurance Group
Krista's 25th Annual Motorcycle
Event
Penn-Trafford School District
Plum Borough School District
Southwest Airlines
LeAnn Starnier Annual Fundraiser
Waffles & Wishes, Erie
Estate of Dorothy M. Ward
Wheels for Wishes
Wheels, Wings & Wishes
World Pizza Champions, Inc.
York Brush Brigade

\$10,000 to \$24,999

American Airlines
Big Lots, Inc
Jake Billyk's Journey Golf Outing
Blackwood Pipe Organ Concert
Busy Beaver Building
Centers, Inc.
BuzzRx
Caliente Pizza & Draft House
Calligan Family Foundation
N. David Campbell
N. David & Janet M. Campbell
Family Foundation
Cans for Wishes
Christmas Light Up Celebration
Robert and Sara S. Comloquoy
Trust
Complete Chaos Softball Team
James Cunningham
Dave & Buster's
Duquesne University
Miss Duquesne Pageant
Elliott Company
Enterprise Holdings
Enterprise Mobility Foundation
Erie Insurance Charity Challenge
Fairway Subaru
Scott Fehrs

Feld Entertainment
Valerie and Ryan Franks
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Family Foundation
Hanover Home Association
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J.P. Phillips, Inc.
The William and Susan Johnson
Charitable Fund
Samuel Justus Charitable Trust
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Fund
Neshannock Jr./Sr. High School
New Minersville Firehouse
Softball Team
New Motors Subaru
North Hills High School
James Ohr
Carol Paytas
Penn-Trafford Dodgeball
Tournament
Phillips Management Firm, LLC
The Prischak Family/Plastek
Industries, Inc.
Ride for Wishes
Estate of Andrea Romano
Partners of Sam's Club #4936,
Morgantown
Shenango High School
Siebenbuegger Club
Snee-Reinhardt Charitable
Foundation
South Hills Lincoln, Inc.
TLE Macungie Let's Grant
Wishes
United States Steel
Corporation
UPMC Health Plan
Weakland Wreckers
WVU Medicine Children's
Hospital

\$5,000 to \$9,999

15 and the Mahomies
9th Ward Republican
Social Club
ABE 2 Amazon
ABE 3 Amazon FC
Allegiant Air, LLC
Chris Allison and Jane France
Charitable Fund
Altoona Curve Booster Club
Amy's Wish
Ernestine Anania
Melissa Anderson
Matthew Bates
Bates Family Charitable Fund
Biafora's Inc.
Blue Mountain Elementary East

BNY
Andrea and Jeremy Bowersox
Thomas Boyer
Brookside Bombshells
Softball Team
Amanda and Jeremy Bucalo
Buddy's Babes Softball Team
Gloria Carlson
Carter Family Foundation
Cascade Park Club
Centimark Corporation
Employees
CGP Foods Inc.
James B. Chambers Memorial
Foundation
Charities For Children Adult
Bowling Tournament
CJR Memorial Foundation
Kristen Clendaniel Clark
Charitable Fund
Beth Clark Memorial Birthday
Fundraiser
Climate Control Storage
Plus, LLC
The Conrad Company
Foundation
James and Melanie Crockard
Foundation
DeFrees Family Memorial
Fund of the Community
Foundation of Warren
County
Delta Airlines
William Demchak
Derry Area School District
Manny and Carla DiNatale
Fund
Dollar Bank Foundation
Empire Education Group, Inc.
The Encova Foundation of
West Virginia
Erie Steelheads
Family Affair Campground
Brian Forgiore Foundation
Chelsi Fread
Cathy Friend and Family
Rosemary M. Front Charitable
Trust
G. C. Murphy Company
Foundation
Gannon University
Phillip Gasiewicz
The George W. Bowers Family
Charitable Trust
Hanover Eagles Aerie
No. 1406
The Hawk Family Foundation
Estate of James A. Heasley
Carl Hicks
Highmark Health Foundation
Hoffman Family & Lehigh
Valley Community
Zumbathon
Melissa Horner
Howard Elementary School
Daniel Hufnagel
Hyatt Regency Maui
Kathy Johnson
Craig E. Kaforey Family
Foundation
Kansas City Chiefs

The Earl Knudsen Charitable Foundation
Jamie and Neil Laslo
Cindy and Roy Laux
Estate of James R. Luzeiki
Mike Lyons
Jeffrey and Maria Madden
Memorial Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation
Make-A-Wish Celebrity Bartending Event in memory of Anna Markiewicz
Marshall Middle School
The Mascaro Family Foundation
Massey Charitable Trust
Mound Grove Golf & Recreation Inc.
New Oxford Social and Athletic Club
Nurtured By Nature
Employees of Olympic Steel, Inc.
Horace B. Packer Foundation
The Parking Spot
Margaret M. Patton Trust for Charities
Peak Integrative Medicine Softball Team
Jared S. Peters Memorial Golf Tournament
Physicians of Tri-State Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine, Inc.
Pocono Mountain West Junior High School
Premier Wealth Partners
Employees of Range Resources
Reynoldsville Fire Company, Inc.
Robertshaw Charitable Foundation
Shear Family Foundation
Ryan Smith
Saul Ewing, LLP
Snowflake Cruise-In
Southside Transfer Services, LLC
St. Louis Blues
Steger Masonry
Jax Stone Benefit Fund
Subaru of Morgantown
Sugarwish, Inc.
Earl W. & Ina G. Tabor Foundation
Universal Studios Hollywood
Valley Pool & Spa
Jaime Vick-Moran Memorial Fund
Washington Financial Charitable Foundation
Waste Connections of Pennsylvania-Chambersburg
The Weidmann Family
Wincore Windows & Doors
World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.
Erica and Frank Zappala

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Dorothy A. Calabro
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Tom Sajko
Jax Stone
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Lawrence Whiteman
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In Honor

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Dennis C. Brechbill
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Brynlee A Jacoby
The Jairath, Abebe, Moorthy, Meniru Families
Nancy Kratz-Minnich
Bruce Marshall
Katee Monahan
Jessica Smeltz
Judith A. Stone

In Memoriam

Harold "Rick" R. Auker
Glenna Bartlett
Donald Bennett

WE REMEMBER

We dedicate this newsletter in memory of the following wish kids. Each has touched our lives and hearts.

Aiden
Ajamu
Alexander A.
Alexander Z.
Aimee
Amy Jo
Andrew
Benjamin
Clayton
Cole
Elliana
Guy
Jackson
Jakari
Jayden
Jayshaun
Joshua B.
Joshua H.
Kaitlyn
Karson
Layla
Lennox
Lolita
Miranda
Molly
Oliver
Payton
Shaun
Sofia
Tristan
Tyler
Wesley
Wyatt
Yitzchok
Zoey

Make-A-Wish® Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia

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Pottsville, PA
570.622.6962

Punxsutawney, PA
814.938.8888

Scranton, PA
570.341.9474

York, PA
717.757.9474

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Our Mission

Make-A-Wish® Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia creates life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. We are proud to have served more than 21,500 children in 57 Pennsylvania counties and West Virginia in our more than 40-year history.

Make-A-Wish®
GREATER PENNSYLVANIA
AND WEST VIRGINIA

FREEWILL

Your contribution can continue to give smiles to every eligible child in need.

Make-A-Wish Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia is excited to share a free estate planning resource from our partners at FreeWill.

FreeWill guides you through the process of creating your will in 20 minutes or less from the comfort of your home. While you're making your plans, you will also have the option to include a gift to Make-A-Wish Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia at no cost.

Your contributions ensure that we can continue to spark joy and bring life to the imaginations of wish kids.

Visit wish.org/greaterpawv/freewill-NL

Connect with Us

 wish.org/greaterpawv  email@greaterpawv.wish.org

