

wishful THINKING

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
MAKE-A-WISH® WISCONSIN
2025 ISSUE 1

UPLIFTING & EVERLASTING

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

**WORLD WISH
MONTH®** *WishMakers Wanted!*

WishMaker Impact
Grateful Hearts at Hail & Farewell

Make-A-Wish®
WISCONSIN



wishful THINKING

Since 2004, Wishful Thinking has showcased the hope, strength and joy found in every wish story. From the medical professionals who refer a child, to the trained volunteers from across Wisconsin who aid us, to the donors whose gifts fuel our mission, it takes an entire community to make a wish come true for a child with a critical illness.

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wish.org/wisconsin

Dear Make-A-Wish champions – Just over twenty-five years ago I began the dream job of my lifetime, serving as President & CEO of Make-A-Wish Wisconsin. Never could I have imagined the IMPACT we would have had on thousands of children and their families over the years. This equates to more than 7,500 wishes granted in the 25 years since I've been here, and nearly 8,800 since Make-A-Wish Wisconsin was founded in 1984!

It is with bittersweet emotion that I write my final newsletter column for you as Wisconsin's head Fairy Godmother. I will be retiring at the end of March. Rest assured, I will always be a wish kid champion and supporter of Make-A-Wish Wisconsin and our life-affirming mission that brings hope, strength and joy to wish kids and their families when they need it most. It's part of my DNA.

I will leave Make-A-Wish Wisconsin in great hands with a devoted, hard-working staff, committed Board of Directors and yet-to-be-named CEO, plus dedicated volunteers, medical professionals, and generous donors who make all the magic happen! No one creates success alone. There is much work to be done – and I know you all are the special people who can accomplish it.

I am so very proud of our team's accomplishments over the years. I have worked hard to lead with integrity, grit, grace and guts. Together, we have grown Make-A-Wish Wisconsin to be a leader among the 58 chapters that make up Make-A-Wish America. We have grown from about 100 wishes granted annually, a \$1M budget with six staff to more than 450 wishes granted in 2024, a \$9+M budget plus investments and a dedicated, tenured 28-person staff in three offices across the state.

Here's to a new generation of leaders who will continue to create magic and memories for the courageous wish kids and their families, of whom I am in awe.

Our work together has been tangible, personal and joyful. It has been my supreme honor and privilege working with you over the years to make wishes come true. I will always look back on this time with love and nostalgia, and ahead with hope for a bright, healthy and happy future.

With a full and grateful heart,



Patti Gorsky
President & CEO



WISH NIGHT: HELP NEEDED

Our largest fundraising event is on April 10, 2025. We need auction items that will help raise funds to give kids battling critical illnesses hope through a wish come true.

Please sign up now to donate an auction basket at wish.org/wisconsin/auctionbaskets or donate auction items at wish.org/wisconsin/auction. Note: We need the items at our Wauwatosa office no later than March 6.

For questions or to arrange item pick-up, contact Mallory:

mmadison@wish.org

wish.org/wisconsin

WORLD WISH MONTH®



It started with a single wish on April 29, 1980: 7-year-old Chris, struggling with leukemia, wanted to be a police officer for a day. Six people answered the call, rallied the entire community, and granted a wish that lifted Chris up during his darkest days. These original WishMakers were inspired by the impact the wish had on Chris and vowed to do more. A global movement was born.

Today, over a half-million children have received wishes that replace fear with confidence, sadness with joy and anxiety with hope. The connection, optimism, inspirational generosity and kindness surrounding each wish have united countless communities.

This April, in honor of the founding wish and the original WishMakers, **Make-A-Wish is recruiting the next generation of mountain movers, heart-forward make-it-happeners, donors, volunteers, partners and collaborators.**

Everyone has the power to help make a wish come true. Everyone has the power to be a WishMaker. It's as easy as sharing your unique talents or giving some of your precious time or treasures. Every little bit makes a difference. But we need more. We need you. Because all it takes to make wishes come true, is you.

WishMakers Wanted: wish.org/wisconsin/wishmakerswanted



40 YEARS OF WISHES

This past year, we celebrated Make-A-Wish Wisconsin's 40th birthday. The year was filled with inspiring stories and joy-filled events, including nine birthday receptions across the state, a Wild Wishes Birthday Party at the Milwaukee County Zoo and numerous other celebrations.

Thank you to our Birthday year sponsors, including **ABC Supply Co. Inc., Bergstrom Automotive, EveryDayGood Foundation, Green Bay Packers, The Jendusa Family, Milwaukee Admirals, Molson Coors, Sartori and Yacht Blast for Kids.**

We look forward to the next 40 years of giving children battling critical illnesses life-changing hope through a wish come true.

40 YEARS OF IMPACT

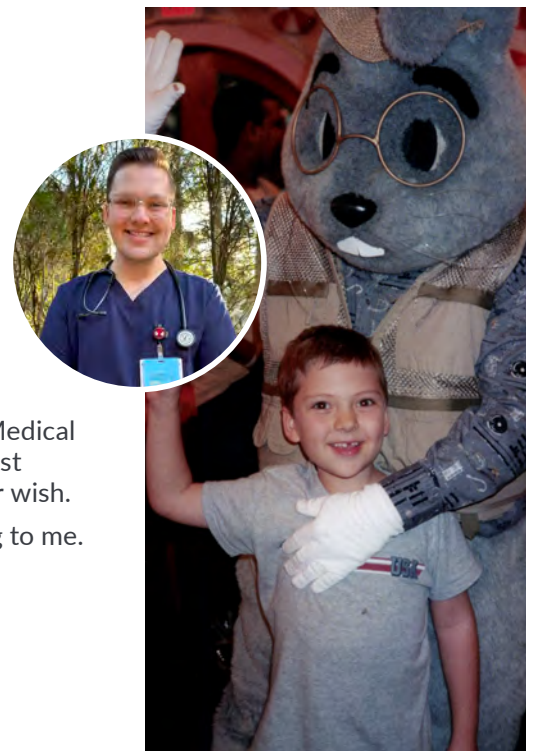
Wish Alum. Where are they Now?

Caleb's wish to go to the *Walt Disney World®* Resort was granted in 2006 when he was six years old. Now at the age of 24, Caleb shares, "I have often fondly remembered my wish trip to Walt Disney World after my leukemia treatment. To me, it was the capstone of the season I had been living – togetherness and closeness with my family through the storm of cancer.

Looking back, I recall how extraordinary, important, special and worthy of good things my wish made me feel. I am incredibly grateful to the donors who granted my wish and who continue to grant wishes today.

I am now a pediatric nurse at Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center in Portland, OR, working primarily with oncology patients. I was just last week reminiscing on my wish trip with a patient who is brainstorming for their wish.

As I get further into my nursing career, my wish increasingly grows in meaning to me. Make-A-Wish means a great deal to me as both a cancer survivor and a nurse. They truly steward joy and excitement to kids who need it most."



FEBRUARY 28 @ MARCUS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, MILWAUKEE, WI

CHEERS FOR WISHES



A Mardi Gras night of live Dixieland music, live artists, appetizer stations, king cake, casino table, interactive entertainment, silent auctions, masquerade masks and beads and more! Walk-ins welcome. For more details, visit: cheers25.givesmart.com

MARCH 1 @ KRESS EVENTS CENTER, GREEN BAY, WI

UWGB PHOENIX WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



UWGB Phoenix Women's Basketball will take to the court with a local wish kid to help raise funds. Sponsored by Bergstrom Automotive, the event features a youth jersey giveaway, raffles, pre-game wish program & more.

APRIL 5 @ TANNER'S BAR & GRILL, KIMBERLY, WI

ROCK FOR WISHES



The 17th Annual Rock for Wishes, featuring seven of the area's best bands, an auction, raffles and more, will raise funds for local wish kids battling critical illnesses. For more details, visit facebook.com/rockforwishes/

MAY 15 @ BISHOPS BAY COUNTRY CLUB MADISON, WI



Join Make-A-Wish WI Board Member and UW Athletic Director Chris McIntosh in fundraising for wishes! Meet wish kids, hear life-changing stories, and enjoy an evening of food, drinks, entertainment and more. For more details, visit wishesbythebay.com



AUDIO ADRENALINE

25 plus wishes funded over two days!

In December, we held our 16th annual Wish-A-Thon, presented by Kesslers Diamonds on iHeartRadio, including 97.3 The Game, 95.7 BIG FM and stations across the state. Over the course of the two-day event, 27 wish kids and their families shared inspiring stories, which helped raise more than \$179,000. Wish kid Darielle (pictured above with her father and 97.3 The Game hosts Armen and Billy) was one of many families to speak on-air about their wish experience.

Thank you to all of the wish families, donors, sponsors and our food sponsors for making this event a success.

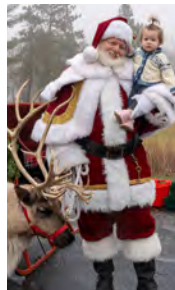


MAKE-A-WISH HITS THE ICE

On January 31, the Milwaukee Admirals hosted their annual Make-A-Wish Night, providing complimentary tickets to wish alum families and Make-A-Wish supporters.

Wish alum Morgan (above left), who wished to go to Comic Con San Diego in 2023, represented Make-A-Wish on the Zamboni and Jumbotron interview.

Thank to you to the Admirals for their ongoing support over many years!



Kids in both Neenah and Hartland enjoyed the magic of the holidays at Skating with Santa. Hosted by Wishmakers of Wisconsin, families were able to spend time enjoying the holiday season, sipping hot chocolate, ice skating and meeting Santa Claus! Thanks to our generous sponsors and attendees, more than \$50,000 was raised collectively from both events to help make wishes come true.

Mark your calendars for December 2, 2025 for Neenah and December 14, 2025 for Hartland Skating with Santa events.

Local philanthropist & Make-A-Wish committee member, Billy Weber, held **38 for 38 Running for Wishes** where he ran 38 miles in honor of his 38th birthday on October 5th.

Through his efforts, he was able to help grant two local wishes!



A big thank you to the BREAKTHRU team in Muskego for organizing the "Once Upon A Wish" Make-A-Wish Night, as part of Mukwonago for Wishes, which raised funds to bring hope and joy to children living with critical illnesses. The event featured delicious food and drinks, a silent auction, live auction, music and much more!

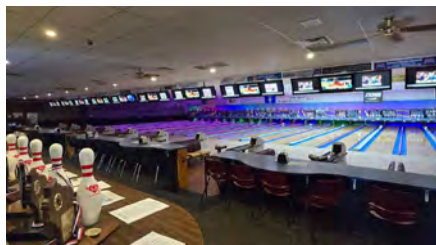


The Mukwonago basketball community, along with BREAKTHRU, raised a total of \$207,555 over two weeks for wish kids. Thank you to everyone who participated, with special recognition to the coaches, students and the Jendusa family.



The **Wisconsin Underground Contractors Association** hosted a night of delicious food, great music and awesome raffles at their annual charity dinner and auction, which raised over \$50,000 to help grant wishes for children battling critical illnesses.

Thank you for your continued support, year after year!



Thielmann's Athletic Club's Youth Scholarship Bowling Tournament raised funds to help grant wishes.



Buzz's Pub & Grill in Freedom hosted an icon sale to help support local wish kids.



Miller & Sons held their 7th Annual Holiday Open House and Silent Auction with local vendors demoing their products, all while raising \$8,187 to help grant wishes!



Holidays in Sheboygan held their annual **Guest Bartender Night!** Complete with raffle baskets, tips, donations & more, they raised an incredible \$15,500 for wish kids.

Donor Spotlight

SNAP-ON INC

For more than 15 years, Snap-on Inc has been a staunch Make-A-Wish champion, having impacted kids battling critical illnesses across the country by granting their wishes to have Snap-on tools.



Snap-on is a leading global innovator, manufacturer and marketer of tools, equipment, diagnostics, repair information and systems solutions for professional users performing critical tasks. Products and services are sold through the company's franchisee, company-direct, distributor and internet channels. Founded in 1920, Snap-on is a \$4.25 billion, S&P 500 company headquartered in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Over the years, Snap-on has generously granted more than 14 wishes for kids across the U.S. who wished specifically to have Snap-on tools. Snap-on donated more than \$100,000 in in-kind products. They also have significantly financially supported Make-A-Wish Wisconsin, sponsoring events like Wish Night, Cheers for Wishes, Walk For Wishes and more.

In 2021, Michael Bond, Director of Community Relations, joined the Make-A-Wish Wisconsin Board of Directors, bringing his keen insights and leadership to our Board. "We are deeply grateful for Snap-on and for all that they do for wish kids and their families," said Patti Gorsky, President & CEO. "They go all out to make each and every wish special and significant. And, their support has been unwavering," Thank you, Snap-on for all that you do to bring hope to so many across the country.

WISHMAKER IMPACT



Linda Price Topp, Patti Gorsky and Greg Marcus (above left to right) and Jim Corona and Joan Giuffre (below left to right).



At our Hail & Farewell annual Board celebration we had the privilege of presenting three awards.

This year's Marilyn Mueller Donor Award went to the Marcus Corporation and Marcus Hotels & Resorts. For more than 20 years, the Marcus team has collaborated with Make-A-Wish Wisconsin to make wishes come true. Together, they've contributed nearly one million dollars in cash and in-kind gifts to Make-A-Wish Wisconsin, and they've hosted wish kids as well as events.

We also presented the Todd Lappin Volunteer Leadership Award to two outstanding volunteers. Jim Corona has been a volunteer wish granter for the past 22 years, making a significant impact on the children, their families and our community by granting 80 wishes. And, Joan Giuffre has been volunteering her time for 30 years. Joan is devoted to the Make-A-Wish mission and the special children we serve.

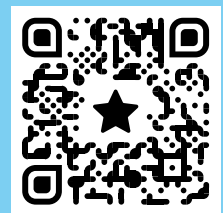
Congratulations to all of these amazing Make-A-Wish champions!

CREATE A LEGACY OF HOPE

At Make-A-Wish Wisconsin, we see how wishes have the power to transform lives every day. A wish fulfilled can bring joy, hope, and strength in ways that feel almost magical. We're thrilled to introduce a special way for you to help make more life-changing wishes possible: creating your plan for the future.

We've partnered with FreeWill to offer a free, easy tool to craft your will. By taking this important step, you can protect your loved ones, ensure your wishes are fulfilled, and include a gift to bring dreams to life for kids facing critical illnesses. Creating your free will takes just 20 minutes and can be updated anytime.

Begin your plans today, scan the QR code to incorporate a gift of any size and create a legacy of hope for Wisconsin's wish kids.



QR Code Alternate: wish.org/wisconsin/legacy

Our sincere thanks to the donors listed below and on the following pages, who made contributions and in-kind donations to Make-A-Wish Wisconsin between October 1 and December 31, 2024. We have made every effort to acknowledge these gifts correctly and completely. Please contact us and accept our apologies should any error or omission be discovered.

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

UPLIFTING & EVERLASTING

Rosie is your typical imaginative, animal-loving, LEGO®-playing, energy-filled, 6-year-old kid. Except, unlike most kids, Rosie has experienced dozens of hospitalizations in her life and has had many unplanned surgeries and procedures and more, due to a complex gastrointestinal disorder since birth.



During Rosie's wish discovery meeting, Rosie excitedly shared that she would love to meet her favorite Disney® characters, especially Stitch, Tigger and Mulan. As well, she loves going to the zoo and seeing animals, so Rosie wanted to also see the giraffes and zebras at Disney's Animal Kingdom® theme park!

Rosie's mom, Jenna, shared these details of the wish:

"Rosie's wish was an experience I do not think I could have ever given to my daughter in her lifetime.

As my daughter's full-time care taker, it's given me a great deal of anxiety, but this has given me so much courage moving forward with her that hopefully I can make another experience (not as fulfilling), but just as joyful and exciting as this was for her.

Rosie has spent too many days in a hospital room, along with the daily medical care at home, but with this wish, she truly got to experience the happiest place on earth surrounded by her support system.

Getting to meet all of the characters and having that memory maker pass were Rosie's favorite parts of the wish experience. I love capturing all of these kind of moments, and being given a fun way to remember our time at Walt Disney World® was just what we needed.

Rosie's wish, in just one word, was 'uplifting!'"

To learn more about Rosie's wish journey, turn to page 10 and read "Our wish community."



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 Charles and Tracy Bilek
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 Sarah Bonnert
 Kristin Borgen
 Calvin Brockmann
 Candleworks of Door
 County
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 Church and Chapel
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 Warren Diemer
 Deb Dodge
 Matt and Kristen Doedens
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 Michael Duchemin
 Daniel Dunn
 Debra and Jonathan Eder
 Felix and Janice Egli
 Jane Eiting
 Kevin and Wendy Entwistle
 Angela and Craig Faust
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 Fund – Koenig
 Charitable Fund
 Finance System of Green
 Bay, Inc.
 Fox Cities Retirement
 Village
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 Isthmus Engineering &
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 Ronald and Patricia Janick
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 Mary Schoenrock
 John Sobiech and Janet
 Scholl
 Rob and Linda Schuett
 Gregg and Kathleen
 Schwabach
 Gerry and Mimi Schwarz
 Ronald and Judith Shapiro
 Michael Shier



*I wish to go to
 New York City*

Christian, 15
 brain tumor

Murphy Shimek
 Anthony Sikorski
 Yvonne Smith
 William Spalding
 Dave Spika
 Karla Spika
 Eric and Tiffany Spoor
 Family
 Robert Sprengel
 Brian Stenzel
 Jason Stephens
 Kathleen Stiteley
 Robert Sucher
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 & Spa
 Give Kids The World
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 The Scan Group, Inc.
 Sheraton Waikiki
 Staab Construction
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 Avis Rent A Car System, LLC
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 Disneyland® Resort
 Enterprise Holdings
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\$1,000 to \$4,999
 Carma Laboratories, Inc.
 Crossmark Graphics Inc.
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 Encore Limousine
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 Whipsaw Sportfishing
 Worzalla Brothers

OUR *wish* COMMUNITY



Pictured left to right: Laura Bodine, Dr. Adam Brinkman, Ellen Reyerson NP, Cynthia Kruser RN, Dr. Luther Sigurdsson

Mark Grendzinski, Owner & President of Encore Limousine and Sedan, Inc.



There are many partners who contribute to the impact of each and every wish we grant. Here are some of the people who helped make Rosie's wish (page 8) come true!

The UW Madison American Family Children's Hospital SGS Team has played a vital role in Rosie's health. Ellen Reyerson, Rosie's NP, shares:

"Rosie is diagnosed with a gastrointestinal disorder where a child is missing vital parts of the small intestine, which affects the ability of the body to absorb nutrition. This means many of them are unable to get their nutrition from food, and will require IV nutrition through a permanent IV catheter in their chest.

The diagnosis is a life altering condition which results in kids missing out on many milestones – eating birthday cake, going swimming with friends or taking big vacations. Rosie missed out on many of these milestones as a younger child, but is anxious to catch up on these things. While she is still dealing with a chronic condition, she is now very active and healthy. Her wish to go to *Walt Disney World*® created memories that will last a lifetime!"

"Encore Limousine and Sedan, Inc. has proudly partnered with Make-A-Wish Wisconsin for over 15 years, providing transportation for wish kids and their families, including Rosie.

Seeing the excitement on the faces of wish kids as they set off on their adventures is incredibly rewarding, and even when they return tired, it's clear their journeys have been filled with joy and unforgettable memories.

I'm incredibly proud to support Make-A-Wish Wisconsin, and every trip we've been part of has left a meaningful impact on the wish child and their family."

– Mark Grendzinski, Owner & President of Encore Limousine and Sedan, Inc.

MAKE-A-WISH® REFERRAL SOURCES

Our thanks to those who referred and treated children with wishes granted between October 1 and December 31, 2024:

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago:
Melissa Semp, NP

Children's Wisconsin:
Michelle Honeck, MSW; Dr. Sarah Rumler, MD; Dr. Kerri Becktell, MD; Dr. Paul D Harker-Murray, MD; Dr. Nicholas Antos, MD; Dr. David Saudek, MD; Dr. Zachary Graff, MD; Stephanie Offord, NP; Christine Luckman, MSW; Dr. David Saudek, MD; Sheila M Dodds, MSW; Dr. Sarah Rumler, MD; Dr. Sara Dawson, MD; Dr. Amanda Brandow, MD; Dr. Joseph Block, MD ; Dr. Nathan Schloemer, MD; Stacy Boyce, MSW; Dr. Rajasree Sreedharan, MD; Dr. David A Margolis, MD; Stacey Lerret, NP; Dr. Matthew Harmelink, MD; Dr. Scott Van Why, MD; Dr. Louella Amos, MD; Dr. Michael Burke, MD; Nicole Barnes, MSW

Gundersen Health System:
Cheri Hill, CTRS; Dr. Antoinette Peters, MD

HSHS St. Vincent's Children's Hospital:
Kailee Hanson, CCLS; Dr. Cathy Long, MD; Billie Hermans, LPN; Dr. Peter Holzwarth, MD; Emma Lehman, MSW; Sophia Smith, CCLS; Dr. John Hill, MD

Marshfield Children's Hospital:
Jill Meilahn, CCLS; Dr. Daryl Fish, MD; Taylor Wilke, MSW; Dr. Joshua Freedman, MD; Dr. Richard Willes, MD; Jessica Stanton, RN; Laurie Weber, RN; Dr. Monica Koehn, MD

Mayo Clinic:
Meghan Wodill, MSW; Dr. Jonathan Schwartz, MD; Johannah Freund, MSW; Dr. Soumen Khatua, MD; Britt Particelli, LICSW; Dr. Wendy Allen-Rhoades, MD; Dr. Katherine Nickels, MD; Dr. Paul Galardy, MD; Dr. Nadir Demirel, MD

Prevea Allouez Health Center:
Dr. Terence Edgar, MD

UW Health American Family Children's Hospital:
Julie Strang, MSW; Dr. Sonya Kirmani, MD; Joyce Kilgore-Carlin, MSW; Dr. Christian M Capitini, MD; Craig Becker, MSW; Dr. Michael J Rock, MD; Darci Pfeil, NP; Dr. Christina Barreda, MD; Dr. Alexandra Erdmann, MD; Dr. Adam Brinkman, MD; Kim Sue Lamster, MSW; Bethany Doherty, MSW; Dr. Rebecca Richards, MD; Dr. Margo Hoover-Regan, MD; Dr. Nicholas Pytel, MD; Dr. David Hsu, MD; Dr. Jennifer Kwon, MD; Dr. Anne Marsh, MD ; Kara Michalkiewicz, MSW; Dr. Heidi Kloster, MD; Eden Jackson, RN; Dr. Kathleen Maginot, MD; Dr. Angela Steineck, MD



REFER A CHILD TODAY

Make-A-Wish® relies on referrals from caring individuals to reach more kids with critical illnesses each year. Learn more about wish eligibility, who can make a referral and how the process works at [wish.org/refer](https://www.wish.org/refer).

Above: 11-year-old Elaina's wish to go to Hawaii came true in October.

I wish to go to Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa

Emilee, 5
respiratory disorder

THE WISH LIST

Wishes Granted October 1 - December 31, 2024

...to be on "The Price is Right"

Samuel, 14
Wish Granters: Myrt Sieger & Tacy DeRouin

...to go on a California Zephyr Amtrak Trip

Joseph, 18
Wish Granters: Amber Friedrichsen & Barbara Pahlow

...to have a Camper

Rayon, 3
Wish Granters: Jeremy & Megan Kox

Winter, 4
Wish Granters: Sandra Nissen & Hnub Vue

Adilynn, 5
Wish Granters: Karen Batz & Dawn Marcott

Leah, 5
Wish Granters: Joseph & Kathy Bartel

Eric, 12
Wish Granter: Amy Reineking

Dominik, 14
Wish Granters: Megan & Jeremy Kox

...to have a Chill Out Chair

Mohamed, 13
Wish Granter: Amy Reineking

...to go to a Dallas Cowboys Game

Deidra, 17
Wish Granter: Jessica Gall

...to have Custom Golf Clubs

Benjamin, 16
Wish Granters: Laurie Wetterau & Lisa Rice

...to go to DirtFish Rally School

Colton, 16
Wish Granters: Megan Salinas & Angela Perez

...to have a Backyard Makeover

Lelyn, 11
Wish Granters: Mayme Hoffman & Michele Bergstrom

...to go to the Walt Disney World® Resort

Flynn, 3
Wish Granters: Meredith Niesen & Dana Mejic

Owen, 3
Wish Granters: Georgette Stamm & Barbara McCarthy

Hazel, 4
Wish Granters: Marie Waddell & Holly De Long

Mya, 4
Wish Granters: Peggy Van Grinsven & Carol Erdmann

Lyric, 5
Wish Granters: Shelby Robbins & Kayla Cywinski-Gendron

Halle, 6
Wish Granters: Tanya Davis & Daniel Giles

Hazel, 6
Wish Granters: Daniel Rogan, Jamie Prost & Larry Levy

King, 6
Wish Granters: Melissa Caulum & Carissa Caulum

Rosie, 6
Wish Granters: Tara Thom & Amber Friedrichsen

Zhuri, 6
Wish Granters: Bailey Jedrzejewski & Jim Corona

Ava, 7
Wish Granters: Julie Vanlaanen & Lisa Yursis

Lucas, 7
Wish Granters: Sherry Miracle & Bryan Pauls

Adelina, 8
Wish Granter: Joy Lancour

Conner, 8
Wish Granters: Cheryl Muller & Hnub Vue

Deakynn, 8
Wish Granters: Traci Steinbach & Michele Schaeztz

Elias, 8
Wish Granters: Angela Perez & Megan Salinas

Kaitlyn, 8
Wish Granters: Michele Fritsch & Mallory Fritsch

Tianna, 9
Wish Granters: Anissa Johnsen & Terese Einhorn

Aleah, 10
Wish Granters: Karen Kaempffe & Peggy Van Grinsven

Daxton, 10
Wish Granters: Carolyn & Mike Conley and John & Stacy Kokalj

Serena, 10
Wish Granters: Tanya Davis & Daniel Giles

Verity, 10
Wish Granters: Joy Lancour & Steven Hesselberg

A'kiem, 11
Wish Granters: Emily Figueroa & Mariah Abdel-Fatta

Jayce, 11
Wish Granters: Patricia & Matthew Olsen

Hunter, 12
Wish Granters: Shelby Robbins & Maurine Braun

Kylee, 12
Wish Granters: Michele Schaeztz & Meredith Niesen

Lucas, 13
Wish Granters: Mallory Fritsch & Michele Fritsch

Hazel, 14
Wish Granters: Patricia Adams, Jamie Prost & Peggy Van Grinsven

Maurice, 15
Wish Granters: Janice Holling & Laura Stella-Ames

Saizzi, 15
Wish Granters: Tara & Matt Buringa

David, 16
Wish Granters: Susan Lamprich & Holly De Long

Christian, 18
Wish Granters: Marie Waddell, Cathy Speirs & Nora Waddell

...to go to Disneyland® Resort

Elias, 6
Wish Granters: Angela Perez & Larinda Becker

...to have an Electric Passenger Bike

Elijah, 8
Wish Granters: Kayla Cywinski-Gendron & Carolyn Griese

...to have a Franck Muller Watch

Vahan, 21
Wish Granter: Amy Reineking
...to go to Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa

Elianna, 5
Wish Granter: Angela Perez

Emilee, 5
Wish Granters: Larry Levy & Shannon Seymer-Tabaska



Special thanks to The Walt Disney Company for providing complimentary admission and special perks for every family who experiences a Disney wish.



WHO GETS A WISH?

A child with a critical illness older than 2½ years and younger than 18 years and has not received a wish from any other wish-granting organization is potentially eligible for a wish from Make-A-Wish Wisconsin.

After a child is referred, Make-A-Wish will work with the treating physician to determine the child's eligibility for a wish, i.e. suffering from a progressive, degenerative or malignant condition that, despite adherence to the treatment plan, is currently placing the child's life in jeopardy.

These are the only criteria used to determine a child's eligibility.

If you or your child meets all of the above qualifications, we invite you to begin the process today by contacting the Make-A-Wish Wisconsin office at 800.236.WISH (9474), or refer online at wish.org/refer.

Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. With help from a thriving community of donors, medical professionals and volunteers, we are working toward granting the one true wish of every medically-qualified child!

Above: 11-year-old Verity's wish to go to the Walt Disney World® Resort came true this past November.

MAKE-A-WISH VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

Behind every wish are volunteers who donate their time and talents to make the impossible possible. The following volunteers have gone a step beyond:

OCTOBER 2024

JENNIE STANGEL



"Over two years ago, my daughter was granted a wish," Jennie shares. "I decided to volunteer for Make-A-Wish because of everything they did for my family when we were going through the most difficult time of our lives. The people we worked with were so caring and compassionate, while also providing a beautiful and fun experience for my family."

NOVEMBER 2024

LISA YURISIS



"I volunteer for Make-A-Wish because it reminds me to be kind to everyone all the time. You never know what people are dealing with every day," says Lisa. "My favorite part of volunteering is seeing the joy these wishes bring to kids and their families."

DECEMBER 2024

DAN GILES



"I am a wish granter, doing wish discovery and wish presentations in the Central Wisconsin area," says Dan. "It's a pleasure to meet the wish kids and their families, and being able to help them out by bringing in some fun and diversion to their current situation. The situations they are in can be very trying and all-consuming. A wish gives them some much needed relief, fun and excitement in their journey."

VOLUNTEER MILESTONES

20 YEARS

Lori Barry
Lorna Whalen

10 YEARS

Ashley Thomas Kriste Simonson
Jaime Mueller

¿CONOCE A ALGUIEN BILINGÜE?

¡Siempre estamos buscando más interpretes! Si usted conoce a alguien bilingüe que le gustaría ayudar a cumplir deseos, por favor comuníquese con nuestra Gerente de Voluntarios, Ali Schilz al 800.236.WISH (9474) o aschilz@wisconsin.wish.org.

*I wish to have
a personal
baking station*

Vera, 9
respiratory disorder

THE WISH LIST

Wishes Granted October 1
- December 31, 2024 (Cont.)

Madelyn, 7

Wish Granters: Angela Perez & Corinna Bongiovanni

Younis, 9

Wish Granters: Jennifer Yetter & Larry Levy

Lily, 11

Wish Granter: Linda Ryfinski

Ella, 12

Wish Granter: Linda Ryfinski

Jasmine, 13

Wish Granter: Angela Perez

...to go to Hawaii

Hartley, 8

Wish Granters: Jennifer DeBruin & Susan Lamprich

Colton, 9

Wish Granters: Cheryl Anderson & Lori Piekarski

Elaina, 11

Wish Granters: Tori Hrubesky & Michelle Wolfe

Noah, 11

Wish Granters: Susan & Stephen Shea

Brendan, 13

Wish Granters: Peggy Van Grinsven & Gail Fleury

Finnegan, 14

Wish Granter: Michele Schaetz

Jocelyn, 14

Wish Granters: Jamie Prost, Patricia Mehalos & Sara Zibert

Griffin, 15

Wish Granters: Amanda Burton & Thomas Bauer

Lyla, 15

Wish Granters: Patricia Mehalos, Kimberly Damp, Lynn Wagner & Donna Neeman

Ella, 17

Wish Granters: Alanna Martella & Carol Erdmann

Jawad, 17

Wish Granter: Barbara Jo Pahlow

Josiah, 19

Wish Granter: Larry Levy

Patrick, 20

Wish Granters: Joy Lancour

...to have a Horse and Buggy

Levi, 18

Wish Granters: Kathy & Joseph Bartel

...to have a Hot Tub

Easton, 7

Wish Granters: Corey & Jennifer Kuchta

...to have a Shopping Spree

Edwin, 13

Wish Granters: Larry Levy & Diana Moreno

Aaliyah, 14

Wish Granters: Michele Bergstrom, Mayme Hoffman, Lindsey Beattie & Jaime Rietveld

...to go to the Mall of America

Oaklynn, 11

Wish Granters: Ronna Monahan, Tamara Engelke & Kathy Woolford

Rylan, 12

Wish Granters: Tammy Dahl & Carley Hintz

Stallon, 17

Wish Granters: Michelle Kadow & Julie Carr

...to meet the Dallas Cowboys

Derrick, 13

Wish Granter: Peggy Van Grinsven

...to meet Mystic 7

Mason, 14

Wish Granters: Daniel Rogan, Frances Garr & Betsy Roth-Wojcicki

...to go to Miami, FL

Winona, 13

Wish Granters: Susan Lamprich, Jennifer DeBruin, Lyn-Le Buus & Kyra Willats

...to go to New York City

Mateo, 13

Wish Granter: Linda Ryfinski

Christian, 15

Wish Granter: Linda Ryfinski

Katelynn, 17

Wish Granters: Peggy Van Grinsven & Karen Kaempffe

...to have an Online Shopping Spree

Mulisha, 14

Wish Granter: Amy Reineking

Cylis, 15

Wish Granter: Katie Jakubowski

Madzhit, 15

Wish Granters: Sandy Strack & Karen Kaempffe

Jack, 17

Wish Granters: Yasari Wolschlag & Sherry Miracle

Nathaniel, 18

Wish Granter: Amy Reineking

Aidan, 19

Wish Granter: Alyssa Welch

Canyon, 20

Wish Granters: John & Linda Smedema

...to go to Paris, France

Breven, 17

Wish Granters: Julia Wahl & Evan Page

...to have a PC Gaming Setup

Ethan, 14

Wish Granters: Kelli Susee & Annette Fieber

...to have a Personal Baking Station

Vera, 9

Wish Granters: Lori Piekarski & Cheryl Anderson

...to have a Playset

James, 7

Wish Granters: Toni Palmer & Jack Kile

...to have a Sensory Room

Alexis, 9

Wish Granters: Claire Ruggiero & Renee Weiss

Aleah, 15

Wish Granters: Kristen Wetzel & Amanda Borleske

...to go to the "Sonic the Hedgehog 3" Movie Premiere

Davidson, 6

Wish Granters: Susan & Stephen Shea

...to go to a Taylor Swift Concert

Makenzie, 10

Wish Granters: Cathy Speirs & Jo Marchionda

Kathryn, 11

Wish Granters: Richard & Susan Nuccio

Alison, 13

Wish Granters: Ann Leonard & Paige Leonard

Lennon, 14

Wish Granters: Jade Pekol & Sherry McKee

Macey, 15

Wish Granters: Linette Britt & Barbara Palmby

Aubrey, 16

Wish Granters: Linda Ryfinski, Corinne Kennedy, Mary Streveler & Shelley Hess

...to go to Tokyo, Japan

Gabriela, 20

Wish Granter: Joy Lancour

...to have a Treehouse

Camron, 11

Wish Granters: Janice Moen & Kimberly James





PATTI GORSKY

25 Years of Magic

This past year we celebrated our President & CEO, Patti Gorsky's 25th anniversary with Make-A-Wish Wisconsin. We also learned of her impending retirement and honored her outstanding service by raising enough funds to grant 25 wishes in her honor and to create the Patti Gorsky Wishes Forever Endowment Fund through which a wish will be granted every year in Patti's honor, in perpetuity. Thank you to the many donors who contributed to these campaigns.

Patti has been an exceptional leader of Make-A-Wish Wisconsin and has impacted thousands of wish kids and families, volunteers, medical referral sources, staff, Board members, donors, local leaders and people across the country.

Patti will be missed, but as she is so fond of saying, "Make-A-Wish is like Hotel California. You can check out, but you can never leave."

Thank you, Patti for everything. You are loved and appreciated beyond anything you can imagine.



IN HONOR AND MEMORY

Our sincere thanks to everyone who gave gifts between October 1 and December 31, 2024 in honor or memory of the people and businesses listed below. We have made every effort to acknowledge these gifts correctly and completely. Please contact us and accept our apologies should any error or omission be discovered.

IN HONOR OF

Tracy Alpert
Jeremy Berg
Jane Bernards
DJ Blackburn
Ryan Bollig
Ethan Burant
Carolyn Conley
Melissa Derorkin and Justin's Engagement
Megan Dulin
Dominic & Joan Giuffre
Patti Gorsky's 25th Anniversary & Retirement
Michael Haddad
Lois Hurwitz
Natalie Kammer
Suzanne King
Lori Kolb's 45th Anniversary
Ken & Christina Kunda
Joy Lancour & Steve Hesselberg
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Nanette Lingsweiler
Ida & Isaac Lipton
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Joey Tuozzo
Lori Turim
Marcus Uchtyl
Mary Uchtyl
Greg Von Rueden
Bunny Winter's Special Birthday
Travis Wise
Women's Business Resource Group
Trent and Linda Zellmer

IN MEMORY OF

Liam Adkins
Jolene Anderson
Laurie Anderson
Andy Bachleitner
Jack Balogh
Rich Baukus
Margaret Berka
Gerald Binsfeld
Tyler Birenbaum
William Boerner
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Tracy Sweet
Ed Tritz
Michael Trzecinski
Alma Vacek
Kathy & Ed Ward
Belle Weinstein
Joanne Marie Wilk
Ann Worzala
Cory Zamora
Robert & Mary Zoulek



I wish to go to Hawaii
Brendan, 13
neuromuscular disorder

I wish to go to the Walt Disney World® Resort

Adelina, 8
leukemia



WISH SPONSORS

Thank you to the following sponsors who contributed at least \$4,000 or more to sponsor the wishes granted between October 1 and December 31, 2024.

- | | | | | |
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| Beau's 5th Quarter Foundation | Estate of Eleanor Darm | John & Engrid Meng, Inc. | Nick Curry – Slayer Sunset Showdown | The Kraussel Family |
| Bergstrom Automotive – June 3500 | Estate of Harry Tester Jr. | Kaden's Wish Tailgate | Nuthouse Dart Tournament | Tim & Lori Stadelman |
| Billy Weber – Running for Wishes | Estate of Mary Shea | Karen Hebert | Patricia's Annual Birthday Poker Run | Titus Talent Strategies |
| Brad & Holly Schlossmann | Fisher's Snacks & Drinks | Kraemer Wisconsin Cheese | PDQ Manufacturing | Tracy Alpert & John Burke |
| Cal Patterson | Forefront Dermatology | La Crosse Community Foundation | Hunzinger Construction Co. | Uline |
| Carma Laboratories, Inc. | Forest County Potawatomi Foundation | Ladish Company Foundation | Petal Pusher Floral Bouquet | Walter Hobbs |
| Carolyn Scherer | Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly | Landmark Credit Union | Plexus YP Charity Golf Outing | Waupun Truck-N-Show |
| Cars, Croissants & Coffee | Frederick Bock | Linda & Steve Foltz | Reich Tool & Design | WEC Energy Group |
| CC Riders | GE Healthcare | Madison Pediatric Dental & Orthodontics | Renewal by Andersen – Windows for a Cause | Wheels for Wishes |
| Central Wisconsin Equipment | Glacier Creek Middle School | Make Their Hearts Smile Truck Convoy | Richard Kessler | William & Sandy Heitz Family Foundation |
| Chi Omega – Carroll University | Greater Milwaukee Foundation – Jean and Dennis Bauman Fund | Mark Kiernan | Ruehlow Family Foundation | William Boerner Trust |
| Chippewa Falls DECA | Green Bay Packers | McKee and Associates, Inc. | Sargento | Wisconsin ATV/UTV Charity Ride |
| Chuck & Holly Miesfeld Culver's | Greg Quinn | Men with a Purpose Golf Outing | Sartori Cheese | Wish Upon a Staff |
| | Gregg & Julie Cayce | Merkel Foundation, Inc. | Scott & Linda Haag | Wishmakers of Wisconsin |
| | Gregory Cole | | | Xiogenix |

WE REMEMBER

This issue of Wishful Thinking is dedicated to the following wish kids, who have passed:

- ★ Ryland
 ★ Dulce Belen
 ★ Cassidy
★ Winona
 ★ Owen
 ★ Elaney

Inside this Issue:

Wish Alum. Where are they now? Hear first-hand the impact of 40 years of wishes.

Donor Spotlight: For 15+ years this donor has given over \$100,000 in in-kind products for wishes.

25 Years of Magic: Thank you, Patti Gorsky, as we honor your retirement as President & CEO.

Cover Story: Rosie's uplifting wish to go to the Walt Disney World® Resort.



Help keep our mailing list current!

Report address changes, receipt of multiple copies or cancellations at info@wisconsin.wish.org or 800.236.WISH (9474).

Golf Season

IS ALMOST IN FULL SWING!



Join us at any one of these golf outings and you'll help make wishes come true for children with critical illnesses. Bring your friends, co-workers, clients or family and enjoy a great day of golf.

For more information, including a complete listing of events, please visit wish.org/wisconsin/golf.

JULY 14, 2025

Golf for Wishes,
Butte Des Morts Country Club,
Appleton

AUGUST 11, 2025

Golf for Wishes,
Blackwolf Run, Kohler

SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

Golf for Wishes,
Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva