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# 2024 Annual Newsletter

July 2024

***Wishes & More® enhances the life of a child fighting a terminal or life-threatening condition by providing extraordinary experiences including wishes, scholarships, memorials and more.***

Dear Friends,

If you haven't already heard the news, this fall will be our 20th Anniversary of supporting MN kids and families. It seems like yesterday and yet it also seems like a long time ago. I think anniversary memories are like that – they can contradict the pace of passing time. I vividly remember our first wish kids and now we are celebrating over 2000 families served; that is a great accomplishment worth celebrating! Inside, you will see a graphic of our accomplishments and that's more fun to read than my paragraph of words. However, I don't want you to lose the takeaway - Wishes & More is an outstanding charity, and yes, I'm a little biased. But dang it, this group of incredible volunteers and staff do everything possible to give personalized and compassionate attention to the kids and families who are going through an extremely tough time.

AND, the exceptional percentage of how much goes to the program expense, rather than unchecked and excessive spending, is further testament of how a true charity should be run.

AND, we're local! Our attention is 100% to those who live or are treated in Minnesota and that's where our dollars go – your dollars. They stay here and they are spent well - it doesn't get better than that!

I could not be more proud to be one of the leaders of this fine organization and to take this moment to say thank you to the volunteers, the staff, the board and the donors. We could not do the great work that we do without all of you and if you're looking for a charity to give your time and your dollars, here's the place! Go for it - check us out and then answer my question. Who's your charity?! 😊

With great pride,

Karla Blomberg  
Volunteer President



After her cancer diagnosis, Sierra wished for an All-American road trip with her parents to the Golden Gate Bridge & back!

**Wishes**



10-year-old Frank wished for a Canadian fishing adventure. Now he's using his Scholarship of Hope to study Education!

**Scholarship of Hope®**



Madison was 12-years-old when she passed away from heart failure. We gave Memorial funds to her grief-struck family.

**Memorials**

# Wishes for local kids!

(Continued from back page.)

...outdoorsy kid, who is the youngest of a very active family, he loves adventuring with his parents and three siblings. His medical equipment limits him in being able to engage in his passion for freely exploring outdoors, so his wish was for a red 2-up 4-wheeler which will allow him to ride with his brother or dad to access places he would otherwise not see. We can't wait to hear about all of the outdoor activities Kristian gets to enjoy thanks to the freedom he has with his new 4-wheeler.



Josiah's playset provides endless giggles in his backyard!



CeCe shared BIG smiles during her week in Florida!



Soren's Bass Boat was a dream come true for this avid fisherman!

## Scholarship of Hope®

All *Wishes & More*® wish recipients are eligible to receive \$2,000 to put toward their post-secondary education.



(Continued from back page.)

...she not only took a full load of classes, she also joined the women's soccer team as their starting goalkeeper and won player of the week twice! Her mom shared that this talented young lady helped her team defeat the number one ranked team in their conference for the first time in five years! Nothing can slow this girl down and *Wishes & More* is so happy to be a part of it as we fulfill her wish for a tuition allowance. We are also proud to provide additional support with our *Scholarship of Hope*® funding! Wishing this amazing student well in her academics, sports and health journey!

### 2023 Scholarship of Hope® Recipients

**Adasyn**, North Dakota State University  
**Alexander**, St Johns University  
**Angie**, Century College  
**Austin**, Creighton University  
**Charlie**, University of Northwestern St Paul  
**Evan**, Rochester Comm & Tech College  
**Frank**, University Wisconsin - Stevens Point  
**Garrett**, Riverland Technical College

**Hayley**, Anoka Ramsey Community College  
**Jasmine**, University of North Dakota  
**Jordan**, Bethel University  
**Laura**, University of Minnesota - Duluth  
**Linae**, University of Arizona  
**Lucy**, College of St Benedict  
**Luke**, St Cloud Tech Community College

**Madelyn**, North Hennepin Comm. College  
**Matthew**, Inver Hills Community College  
**Owen**, Mayville State University  
**Sabrina**, University of South Dakota  
**Sarah**, Crown College  
**Stone**, University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse  
**Tate**, Cedarville University  
**Trevor**, Dakota State University

# Memorials

If a wish child does not survive to experience their wish, *Wishes & More*® provides a financial grant to the parents to use at their discretion.



*(Continued from back page.)*

...Elli's family heard the news that no one should ever hear - a diagnosis of Leukemia. Fortunately, her parents learned that it was a very treatable form of cancer and they started chemotherapy immediately. However, Elli was also experiencing flu symptoms which led doctors to discover a lung infection and eventually brain bleeds. Ten days after her cancer diagnosis, surrounded by her loving family, Elli took her final breaths. Our hope is that we have the opportunity to bring joy to our families with the experience of a wish. This young lady who was so full of life and adventure deserved to see a wish fulfilled - just like all of our kids. Sadly, time doesn't always allow for a wish, which is why our unique and financial memorial gift is available for families like Elli's. May she rest in peace.

**You can "Adopt a Wish" and become personally attached to a wish child for a \$7,500 donation.**  
*(Our actual average wish cost, including in-kind donations, is approximately \$11,100).*

**You can underwrite a Teen's Scholarship of Hope® with a gift of \$2,000.**

**Memorial grants may also be adopted with a \$1,000 donation.**

**A \$10,000 donation in one calendar year will underwrite all three of the above and have you become a member of our esteemed Champions Circle.**

**To make an impactful donation in any amount, please complete the enclosed donation envelope, visit [www.wishesandmore.org](http://www.wishesandmore.org) or call the office at 763-502-1500.**

## "MORE" Opportunities

From last minute tickets to concerts, shows and family events - to using your resources & connections to bring a smile to the face of a child - we would love to have you work with our team to do "MORE"! If you have unused tickets to concerts, sporting events, plays or other activities, contact us!

Read on to see just a few of the opportunities we were thrilled to pass on to kids this past year.



Marilyn is just one of many of our wish kids who have received a themed head-piece compliments of Whimsical Wigs! From Elsa to Stitch to Mickey to Moana - these wigs are handmade with love!



Wish Kid Grayson met his pal Batman compliments of the Superheroes with Super Kids Foundation, a treasured partner of Wishes & More!



Jennie & Kayla from the Girl Scouts of MN & WI River Valley Troop 18206 donated Girl Scout cookies with heartwarming hand-written notes for us to share with wish kids during their interview process



Aubrey was able to attend the Taylor Swift concert thanks to a generous supporter who passed on unused tickets to Wishes & More!



# This year, more than ever, we need your support!

I have now had the privilege of serving for a year as Executive Director of Wishes & More. In that short time, I've witnessed amazing wishes take place, been touched by heartfelt words of thanks, enjoyed exciting graduation photos of students using their scholarships, and read the grateful and grief-stricken words from memorial parents. I've seen firsthand the impact of our work, and the importance of ensuring that we are here for every family who comes to us for support.

In recent years, the cost of our wishes has gone up dramatically as well as with the number of kids and families we serve. These families need our support, and our promise is to be there for them. Please help us in this effort by making a donation through the QR code or the enclosed envelope. Also, see below for a few of our "Superhero" programs that we'd love to have you join.

Additionally, please consider what you can do to help grow our community of supporters. Are you involved with or know any:

**Business owners** who may want to grow awareness through advertising or sponsorship, or have the desire to engage employees through volunteering or giving programs?

**Civic organizations** who could make a charitable grant to fund wishes or provide an opportunity for us to speak at a meeting and share our stories?

**Individuals** who may not know about us. Please help us spread the word about Wishes & More and encourage your friends and family to support us as well. You could even share this newsletter with them and tell them why you support Wishes & More.

Please reach out to me if you are willing to introduce our organization to any potential community partner. Doing so will help ensure we never have to turn away a deserving kid or make them wait for their wish. I look forward to hearing from you!







Thank you for being a part of this incredible organization!

Nate Mueting  
Executive Director



Hover your phone camera over the QR code and tap the link to make a donation.

## Will you be a WAM Superhero?

-  **Sponsors** are vital to the success of our events and we go above & beyond to ensure that our partnerships are mutually beneficial! Will you become one of our treasured sponsors?
-  **Champions** are top tier donors who donate \$10,000 or more in a calendar year. These donors are given the option of adopting a Wish, Scholarship and a Memorial to personalize their generous gift. Will you join the Champion's Circle?
-  **Ambassadors** are annually selected to represent Wishes & More and to introduce our charity to their networks. Are you interested in becoming an Ambassador?
-  **Give & Save:** You can minimize taxes by making qualified charitable distributions - tax-free donations directly from a traditional IRA. People 70½ or older can use these donations to satisfy required minimum distributions.
-  **Legacy Gifts** help us sustain our special and important programs. There are many ways to include Wishes & More in your planned giving. Please contact us for more info!
-  **Volunteers** ensure the success of our organization. We always need individuals & groups to help in-office, at events, and in fulfilling our mission. Would you consider volunteering for Wishes & More?



# Wishes & More®

# THANK YOU

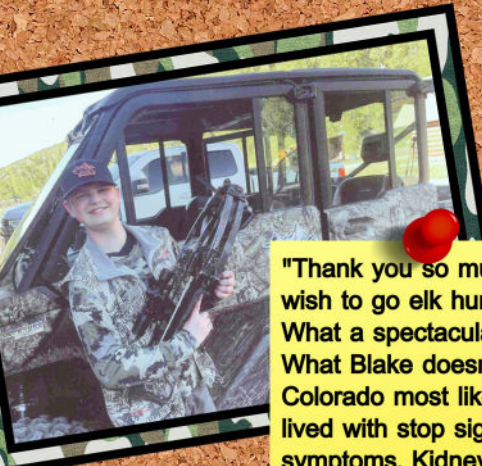
Wishes & More -  
 Thank you for  
 wanting our family  
 not gift of money  
 when we lost our  
 daughter, Genym.  
 It was such a  
 generous gift @  
 such a difficult  
 time & we are grateful.  
 May God bless you  
 for blessing us.  
 Chris & Kristin  
 & Family



Thank You!



Hope and her Family would like to say  
 "thank you" to Wishes & More for your  
 kindness and generosity.  
 Yesterday Hope was thrilled when she  
 received your letter formally announcing  
 the scholarship and today we received  
 this encouraging series of emails from  
 you.  
 Hope has so many memories from the  
 cruise you provided, and she is extremely  
 excited about the Scholarship opportunity.  
 Your help in making Achieve possible for  
 Hope is much appreciated!" - Hope's Dad



"Thank you so much for providing Blake his  
 wish to go elk hunting.  
 What a spectacular experience!  
 What Blake doesn't realize is that his trip to  
 Colorado most likely changed his life. He has  
 lived with stop signs his entire life. Cardiac  
 symptoms, Kidney Failure, Kidney Transplant,  
 Nocardia, Central Lines, etc. - they all tell him  
 what he can't do. But [his wish] showed him  
 what he CAN do, what he can work with, and  
 work around. And that is HUGE!  
 Is is far more than he ever would have had the  
 potential to realize with just Mom & Dad,  
 teachers and doctors telling him he wasn't  
 limited. You showed him he can work within his  
 limits and still live a fulfilling life!"  
 - Blake's Mom

"Thank you so much  
 for giving our son and  
 family this wonderful  
 gift of freedom! Andy  
 (and his brother) are  
 having the best time  
 exploring together!"  
 - Andy's Mom

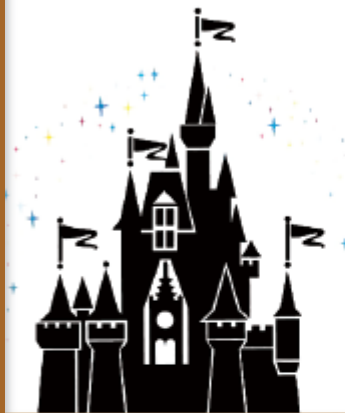


Thank you for reaching out,  
 and thank you for the  
 generous gift. Having some  
 of the financial burden  
 lifted is a blessing to us.  
 This week is a flurry with  
 funeral preparations, but I  
 wanted to reach out to  
 simply say, Thank you!"  
 - Jack's Dad

# 20 Years of Impact for Local Kids!

NUMBER OF  
DISNEY WISHES  
GRANTED

**229**



FARTHEST WISH  
LOCATION –  
JAMES IN 2008

**SOUTH  
AFRICA**

NUMBER OF KIDS SUPPORTED  
WITH A  
SCHOLARSHIP  
OF HOPE®

**169**



NUMBER  
OF MILES  
FLOWN BY  
WISH FAMILIES

**1,508,822**



NUMBER OF  
MEMORIALS  
TO SUPPORT  
FAMILIES

**997**

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPACTED  
BY OUR MISSION

**203,900**



NUMBER OF  
MINNESOTA  
COUNTIES  
WHERE WE'VE  
SERVED KIDS

**83  
OF  
87**



NUMBER  
OF DISNEY  
CHARACTERS  
MET

**2292**



GROWTH  
IN FAMILIES  
SUPPORTED –  
IN 2ND DECADE

**197%**



NUMBER OF  
VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

**70,510**

= 33 YEARS OF  
ONE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE

PROGRAM  
EXPENSES  
TO OVERALL  
BUDGET

**82%**  
OR  
HIGHER



## 2024 Leadership Board & Advisory Board Members

**Christopher Ames**  
Managing Partner,  
Landmark RE Group

**Russ Bridges**  
Vice President, Finance,  
United Health Group

**Christopher Harristhal,**  
J.D.  
Kistoff the Magician

**Ann Mueting, Ph.D.**  
Past Chair  
President, Mueting  
Raasch Group

**Mark Robbins, J.D.,  
Ph.D.**  
Kodiak Strategic  
Consultants, LLC

**Governor Jesse and  
Terry Ventura**  
Former Minnesota  
Governor & First Lady,  
Actor, Businessman

**Ben Bina**  
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Advisor, Eagle Point  
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**Mike Deasey**  
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Senior Vice President,  
Client Advisor, Huntington  
National Bank

**Nancy Lambert**  
Sr. Vice President  
and General Counsel,  
Americas DormaKaba

**Jason Muhlstein**  
Principal - National  
Regions Leader, Wipfli  
CPAs and Consultants

**Jim Roehl**  
Board Secretary  
Business Initiatives  
Consultant, Wells Fargo

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Hathaway Home Services  
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**Randy Ehleringer**  
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Echelon Wealth Partners

**Tony Leung**  
United States Magistrate  
Judge, District of MN

**Tom Reid**  
MN Wild Broadcaster,  
Tom Reid's Hockey City  
Pub

**Cindy Sontag, CPA,**  
Board Treasurer  
Retired

**Clay Matvick**  
Broadcaster, ESPN



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Wishes & More Children's Wish Foundation



@wishesandmoremn



**Kristian is an 11-year-old who was born with multiple challenges...but he was also born with his signature smile that everyone in his community knows well. He's always up for a social activity and ready with a high five and a hug for anyone who crosses his path. Not even a combination of epilepsy, respiratory failure, kidney issues, and severe scoliosis, along with a trach and a vent can keep this kid down! What does this young man from Lindstrom wish for? As a total...Continued on page 2.**

**Sam is a bright young woman who loves sports and excels in playing soccer! She was diagnosed with cancer in high school and, as you can imagine, it turned her world upside down. Despite her battles, her faith and positive attitude helped her overcome this unexpected challenge and she is now in her first year of college at the University of Northwestern. We're excited and proud to share with you that in her first semester this Fall,...Continued on page 2.**



**Elliana loved animals beyond the average kid. Over the years, she kept spiders, frogs, mice, hamsters, gerbils, fish, cats and dogs. Her inquisitiveness led her to research each one and she shadowed the neighborhood veterinarian on surgery / procedure day. She also shared her sense of adventure with friends, teaching them how to catch crayfish (and eat them) and fish. Elli also composed her own music and included friends by playing duets. Sadly, at just fourteen...Continued on page 3.**