

Best Wishes

Fall
2009

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED FOR FRIENDS OF THE MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION® OF THE MID-SOUTH

CEO Welcome and Chapter Update

Happy New Year! We have never been more excited to leave a fiscal year behind and begin another as we are this year. September 1 marked the beginning of our 2010 Fiscal Year. However with that said, I am so very proud of the volunteers and the staff with all that was accomplished during these very tough economic times. We kept our focus on granting quality wishes to the very special boys and girls we are so privileged to serve. Sure, it would have been easy to deny a child's wish based on its cost but then are we staying true to our mission? I think not.



Make-A-Wish® CEO Liz Larkin with Wish Child Kellie

Pictured with me above is Kellie. Her wish was to meet the princesses at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort. Schilling Farms Middle School granted her wish and this past summer, Kellie and her family experienced the time of their lives – spending a week forgetting that she has a

life threatening medical condition – but rather focusing on spending time as a family.

For our friends in the Memphis area, we have retired *Stories of Light*® and are proud to announce that we will be participating in *Season of Wishes*. It is a

national campaign that focuses on our mission of granting wishes for children with life-threatening medical conditions through medical outreach, volunteer recruitment and fundraising. We will once again be partnering with FM100 and new this year, The Commercial Appeal.

So thank you whether you have given your time, talents or treasures to our organization. Together we will continue to grant the wish of every eligible child referred to us.



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MAKE·A·WISH®
MID-SOUTH CHAPTER

The Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-South grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy.

I wish...



Wish kid Stevi along with family members and Make-A-Wish Volunteers.

On August 29, the Make-A-Wish Foundation® of the Mid-South and the Paragould Jaycees built a gazebo with a swing to grant Stevi's wish.

Steven Jr., a 9-year-old from Paragould, AR, received a wonderful gift in his backyard.

"Steven could not say what he wanted, but he loves being pushed in a swing," Steven Sr. said. "When he was younger, I would push him around all the time. I thought this would be a nice gift for Steven, and it is also something that can grow with Steven as he gets older."

Stevi, as he is called by his family and friends, received his wish on a sunny Saturday afternoon. Stevi really enjoyed sitting in the gazebo and listening to the wind chimes.

The gazebo has windows with flowers attached to the sides, a wind chime, and a swing made especially for Stevi with straps at his feet

to hold him in while he has the time of his life.

In addition, Stevi was given a number of gifts that were tailored to his preferences. He enjoys sounds and textures and likes toys that he can throw, such as a suede pillow case, a ball that lights up and plays music, cars, and maracas.

"This meant the world to him. I could hardly keep from tearing up. I am so thankful to everyone who helped make this wish possible for my son," said Steven Sr.

Steven Sr. would like to thank "Make-A-Wish, Paragould Jaycees, and all the volunteers who made this event possible. No one understands how much it means to the kids."

Wish kid Elisabeth, a ten year-old from Little Rock, wished for a Walt Disney Cruise. In May 2009, her wish was granted. She was anxious and excited, knowing that she would be living her dream.

The trip was exciting from start to finish. On her first day in the Bahamas, she was granted the opportunity to be a dolphin trainer for a day. For several hours, she swam and interacted with dolphins at the Atlantis Resort at Paradise Island. According to Tim, Elisabeth's father, she felt amazing and had never smiled like that before. Tim said, "There is no description or price for what this means to a child. As a parent, there is no better feeling than to see your child so happy." The cruise lasted five days and from the great food to the tremendous hospitality of the Disney staff, the experience was an amazing dream come true for Elisabeth.

Even after the ship had ported, the excitement was not quite over. While flying back home to Little Rock, Arkansas, the steward-

ess recognized the Make-A-Wish shirt and began talking to Elisabeth and wanted to know more about her battle with Cystic Fibrosis. The stewardess informed the pilot of their special passenger, who then announced, "I would like to announce that we have a celebrity on board our flight. Please welcome Elisabeth McClintock, who was sent on a Disney Cruise by the Make-A-Wish Foundation." The passengers on the plane gave her a round of applause. After landing at the airport, the flight attendant also gave Elisabeth one last special gift, her wing pin from graduation. This precious moment was both exciting and emotional for Elisabeth.



Wish kid Elisabeth at her wish reveal.

To refer a child in Arkansas call
888-376-9474

I wish...

Seven-year-old India of Memphis, TN arrived at the Memphis National Golf Club for the Big Rigs for Little Kids Golf Tournament under the impression she was going to help start the tournament.

But members of the Tennessee Trucking Association had a surprise in store for India. Along with the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-South, they granted India's wish to have a Nintendo DS™.

Members of the Tennessee Trucking Association, which has been the sponsor of 17 wishes, waited until India came up to the microphone to start the tournament to reveal their surprise.

They told India they had a prize for her for helping in the tournament. From around the corner, Dora the Explorer rode up in a golf cart loaded with presents in the back, including India's Nintendo DS.

"She was just smiling and happy," said India's mom, Angela. "She was very surprised."

"India has played with her Nintendo DS every day since," Angela added.

"She has been showing it to everyone and playing it so much I have to tell her to stop."

India suffers from dermatomyositis, a connective-tissue disease. She is currently doing well, but the disease is a constant battle for India and her family.

"India's wish was a good source of encouragement," Angela noted.

"She deserves to be happy because she's been through a lot," Angela said. "It was good for her to have something to take her mind off everything."



Wish kid India with a Dora the Explorer character.



Wish kid Taylor sitting by the fish.

Wish kid Taylor loves fish, fishing and anything related to aquatic life or activities. So after being referred to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Taylor had the opportunity to think about what his one true wish would be and he just knew it had to include fish. Taylor wished to go the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta.

The day Taylor's wish was granted, he arrived at PetsMart where he walked around to look at fish, which his mom said is his favorite thing to do. PetsMart staff had been excellent at taking

him around and letting him see animals," said Mandi Stutsy, wish-granting volunteer. Taylor received an aquarium, fish and supplies to care for the fish from PetsMart as well as items for his trip. "Taylor's facial expressions were priceless," said Stutsy.

He and his family toured the aquarium where he saw so many different fish; he could not believe his eyes! Taylor and his family also had the opportunity to tour the Coca-Cola plant and the Imagine It Children's Museum.

To refer a child in Tennessee or Mississippi call
800-264-9474

Get Involved!

You have the power to help make wishes come true!

There are countless ways for you to contribute to our chapter and help make wishes come true for a very special child in your community including:

Host a fundraiser • Donate auction items • Purchase holiday cards • Donate hotel loyalty points • Donate frequent flyer miles • Donate toys to our wish closet • Purchase a Make-A-Wish calendar • Make a donation in honor or in memory of a loved one • Get your child's school involved • Get your company involved • Attend our annual events • Sponsor a Child's Wish

Visit our website to find out other ways you can help support the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-South!

Tennessee/Mississippi



Felicia Willet with her special chefs at Dishes for Wishes

Dishes for Wishes

On April 26th over 300 guests gathered at Felicia Suzanne's restaurant for the 4th annual Dishes for Wishes event. Honorary Chairman, Felicia Willet, joined with eight of Memphis's finest downtown restaurants to prepare a spectacular culinary experience. Steve Conley and Karen Perrin were the masters of ceremonies for the evening and Joe Birch served as auctioneer for the exclusive live auction. Special guests and past wish recipients, Abby, Caroline and Isabelle helped assist Felicia in the kitchen and greet guests. This year's event, chaired by Dean and Linda Underwood, raised over \$125,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-South.



Bill Rosson and Shaun Micheel with wish kid Team Captains

Shaun Micheel Make-A-Wish® Golf Classic

The Sixth annual Shaun Micheel Golf Classic was another successful event! The Pairings Party presented by the world famous Rendezvous was a night filled with great food, entertainment and a fabulous live auction led by John Roebuck. The next day, TPC Southwind played host to 112 golfers, 15 Wish Kid "Team Captains" and many volunteers who played a vital part in this

year's event. The wish kid team captains sent their teams off and then enjoyed their own "golf" party, sponsored by the Great American Home Store. But the highlight of the day came once the tournament was over, when six-year old Bryce's wish to go to Walt Disney World Resort was granted. Overall, the 2009 tournament, chaired by Nick Vergos, was a great event that raised more than \$200,000! Thanks to everyone who helped make it a success!



The Mid-South Chapter is excited to present *Season of Wishes*, a six-week campaign designed to raise awareness and funds to grant wishes for children in the Mid-South. Efforts will include cause marketing promotions, local events, media outreach, online activities and sharing the powerful Make-A-Wish mission throughout our community. We hope you will join this year's effort. There are many ways to help (please contact us **before** you start planning):

Become a sponsor • Sell Make-A-Wish stars • Host a Make-A-Wish night and donate a percentage or dollar amount of sales • Purchase our holiday cards • Create a fundraiser at your school or workplace

Contact us for more exciting ideas!

Arkansas



Pictured above: the Digital Print & Imaging Team with Wish Kids Jaelyn, Emily and Ethan.

The 2009 Make-A-Wish Golf Classic was held on May 30 and June 1. At Pockets Full of Wishes on May 30, we granted Daryon's wish to go to Walt Disney World Resort®. The following day was filled with food, fun, prizes and, of course, golf! Thanks to our sponsors, we were able to raise more than \$47,000!

This marks the fifth year the Arkoma Basin Oilfield Fishing Tournament has benefited the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-South. This year, the three day tournament raised \$25,000 to benefit children in the Fort Smith area! To date, they have raised over \$95,000 for us!

The A.O.O.B.s granted a wish during an Arkansas Travelers game to Rocky, who wished to have a Yamaha Rhino. To date the AOOBs have

donated over \$83,000.

With the help of volunteer, Jerry Jamrich, the Hot Springs Village Rotary gave the Make-A-Wish Foundation a \$1,000 grant!

For the second year in a row, the Student Nursing Association at the University of Arkansas at Monticello donated \$5,000 and granted a wish!

Farm Fresh Wishes was held on August 2, 2009 at the Argenta Market in North Little Rock, AR and raised \$2,000. This inaugural event celebrated the inspirational mix of connoisseur chefs with locally grown food, fresh off the farm. The chefs prepared dishes inspired by the wealth of our Arkansas soil grown by members of the Certified Arkansas Farmer's Market.

Lorey and David Phillips, parents of Lawson who passed away before receiving his wish, rallied Lawson's school, Bayou Meto Elementary, and his football team, The Junior Twisters, together to raise money in his memory. All together, the Phillips helped raise over \$10,000!

The Benton County School of the Arts worked hard all year long to raise over \$5,000 by holding various

fundraisers such as Penny Wars!

The Missouri-Arkansas District of Key Club chose Make-A-Wish as their charity for the second year in a row and raised \$2,000!

The Jonesboro Magnet Schools raised money during Have A Heart and were able to raise enough to grant a wish of one of their own!

Marmaduke Schools raised another \$5,000 to grant a wish! To date they have raised over \$28,000!

Bismarck Elementary school raised enough to grant a wish in memory of one of their own students who received a wish from another chapter. They granted a wish to Kiana from Cabe Middle School in Gurdon. Cabe Middle School was so touched, that they turned around and raised a Wish Sponsorship and will grant their wish this year!

The CAP-CASI held a Chili Cook Off at the Arkansas Big Buck Classic and together they were able to donate \$3,500!

Frequent Flier



Do you want to do something for the Make-A-Wish Foundation but don't know what? Well we have an idea for you: donate your frequent flier miles. So many people have unused frequent flier miles that they are too busy to use. The Foundation needs over two billion miles every year to help grant wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions. With your miles, you can help a grant a precious child's wish to go on their dream vacation. You could be the hero, helping make wishes come true. Please visit www.midsouth.wish.org and click on the frequent flier mile link or call 800-264-9474.

Update

This coming year, we are aiming high to recruit more volunteers than we ever have.

While media will spread our name, we plan to maximize the connections we already have with our supporters.

As our wish families, current volunteers and donors tell their personal stories, people everywhere will *share the power of a wish*.

A big part of our recruitment will seek those who want to fund wishes through organizing fundraisers. Small groups raise large amounts for us everyday, and those are the volunteers we need this year more than ever.

Of course, we will maintain our rigorous training schedule by

holding at least one training session in each of our 10 zones based on need.

As we grant more wishes, we continue to need more Wish Granters to make that happen.

Last April, we awarded more than 60 individual pins for the many years of service our volunteers completed.

This October, we are on track to award almost twice that many for years of service, as well as the many projects our volunteers have completed.

We couldn't be more excited with the popularity of this program, all in an effort to show the magnitude of the work our volunteers do year-round.

Become a Volunteer

"When you see that child smile from ear to ear because their wish got granted, it does more for your soul than you could ever imagine."

– Teresa Golding, Wish Granter

"Volunteering has been a great way for me to teach my son about helping others and giving back to the community."

– Misty Carr, Wish Granter

"The best part of [the] wish experience was seeing the smiles on the faces of the entire family..."

– Jerry Jamrich, Wish Granter

For more information, visit our website at www.midsouth.wish.org

Have you ever had a nightmare airline experience?

Imagine the anxiety that comes when you travel with a child who has a serious medical condition.

Thankfully, our families have a volunteer to guide them!

Airport Greeters are volunteers who see our families off on their trip of a lifetime or greet arriving families.

A typical airport greet requires some leg work, knowledge of the local airport and a lot of patience

The volunteer comes to our office prior to their assigned greet to pick up the trip money, Make-A-Wish t-shirts and the flight details. Volunteers in other zones receive the trip money by FedEx. The night before departure, they contact the family to introduce themselves and make arrangements to meet up the next day.

At the airport, they meet the family, help check luggage and print ticket information and make sure the family gets the funds their trip will require. Lastly, the volunteer shows the family where to check in for security and sends them on their way.

In all four airports we use, these volunteers accompany our families through what could be a hectic experience and bring some peace into their much-anticipated trip!



Wish kid Devon, age 4, of Osceola, Ar., got his wish when he received a motorcycle!

Calendar of Events

Make-A-Wish Radio-thon

Friday, November 20
Starbucks on Vann Drive
Jackson, TN

Coke Castle

Tuesday, November 24
Fort Smith, AR

Iron Mountain Christmas Lights

November 27-December 31
Sundown-10 p.m.
Iron Mountain Lodge & Marina
Arkadelphia, AR

Celebrity Wait Night

All tips and donations go to
support the Chapter
Monday, November 30
5:30-8:30 p.m.
Fairpark Grill
Tupelo, MS

Northeast MS Wish Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 1, 6:30
p.m.
Lee County Library
Tupelo, MS

West TN Wish Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 1, 6 p.m.
Jackson, TN

Northwest Arkansas Wish Council Meetings

Every third Tuesday of each
Month
3612 Southern Hills Blvd
Rogers, AR

Chi Omega Swish For A Wish

University of Arkansas
All info TBD

Chi Omega Kickball Classic

University of Arkansas Little
Rock
All info TBD

Season of Wishes

Come to Holiday Ham* for
Wish Wednesday Celebra-
tions! Enjoy lunch, music, prizes
and holiday magic as FM100
broadcasts live from 10 a.m.
- 2 p.m.!

November 11

Hacks Cross & Winchester

November 18

Union Avenue

December 2

Poplar & Germantown Rd

December 9

Poplar & Erin Drive

*20% of sales on Wish Wednes-
day will benefit the Mid-South
Chapter.

Heart-Filled Wish-A-Thon

February 5, 2010
6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Rumba Revolution
Little Rock, AR

Have-A-Heart Wish-A-Thon

February 12, 2010
6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Triple FM Studios
Jonesboro, AR

Check midsouth.wish.org for updates on these events. For more information, call 901-680-9474 or 501-376-9474.