

WISH NEWS



I WISH TO GO TO TURKS AND CAICOS!!!

In February of 2009, Marissa was diagnosed with osteosarcoma (bone cancer) in her left knee and femur. It was a life-altering diagnosis for Marissa and her entire family. The fastest girl in her school and passionate soccer player would have to endure 10 weeks of chemotherapy before having major limb-salvage surgery to replace her knee and femur with an expandable implant called Repiphysis. Following surgery, Marissa had to continue with 18 more weeks of chemotherapy along with a grueling physical therapy regimen. During her treatment, however, Marissa was told she could “Make A Wish”. That decision didn’t take long as Marissa was certain she wanted to go to Beaches, Turks and Caicos! Beaches is a family oriented resort located in the Caribbean. Her wish was to stay at the brand new Italian Village which had recently been added to the resort.

Marissa and the rest of the family had an amazing time. The weather was beautiful and the water was a spectacular color of blue. Marissa and her sisters spent a good portion of their days at the waterpark and numerous pools. They went snorkeling, kayaking and even rode the “ever-bouncy” banana boat. The whole family went on a day trip to a secluded island where they searched for iguanas and enjoyed the uninhabited beaches. It was absolutely breathtaking. She was also treated to a scratch DJ lesson, photos on the beach and a family cruise. Every night, there were many activities going on including movies by the pool, playing X-Box in the oversized game room and dancing the night away in the Nightclub for Tweens.

It was a dream trip for Marissa which included many upgrades provided by Beaches Resort, honoring Marissa as their first “Make-A-Wish” child—an incredible family experience that Marissa and her sisters will remember forever. Since her return, Marissa’s mobility isn’t quite the same, but her soccer dreams have been replaced with competitive swimming and golf. She is a beautiful, healthy 11 year old girl who is an excellent student!

The Italian Village reminded Marissa’s family of their deep Italian heritage as they enjoyed replicas of Roman architecture and delicious Italian cuisine.

“Marissa has always identified with being Italian, and is very proud of it,” Marissa’s mother said.

“This wish was the only thing she could ever think of.”



Marissa standing on the beach at Turks and Caicos

You can enjoy the magic of granting wishes!!!

Volunteering for the Make-A-Wish Foundation® is an opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child facing a life-threatening medical condition. Hundreds of dedicated volunteers throughout Connecticut bring hope, strength and joy to children by volunteering in areas such as wish granting, events, speaking, fundraising, administrative support and internships.

These individuals offer their time and skills to help further the Foundation's mission by working in partnership with staff and other volunteers.

With a small staff, our success only possible with the dedication of our wonderful and talented volunteers.

You can help make the wishes of children come true in your local community when you become a volunteer for the Make-A-Wish Foundation® of Connecticut.

We invite you to *share the power of a wish*® whether you can give a few hours each month or a few days each year.

For more information, please visit our website at www.ct.wish.org or contact our Volunteer Services Manager, Cheryl Bieling at 203-880-6965 or Cheryl@ct.wish.org.



**Photos courtesy of Tiffany Chapelle Photography*

Donate your unused frequent flier miles to the Make-A-Wish Foundation and make wishes come true for Connecticut kids!

It takes a lot of air miles to earn big rewards - but if you donate those miles to Make-A-Wish, the reward becomes immediate.

If you'd like to donate your unused miles, just visit our website at www.ct.wish.org or call us toll free at (877)-203-WISH!

Contact Us:

Make-A-Wish Foundation of Connecticut, Inc.
126 Monroe Turnpike
Trumbull, CT 06611

Phone: 203.261.9044
877.203.WISH (Toll Free)

Fax: 203.268.2168

Email: conn@ct.wish.org

Web: www.ct.wish.org



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Twitter: *@makeawishct*

CEO says "Thanks!"

Greetings friends of Make-A-Wish! I hope that you are making the most of this snowy winter here in Connecticut.

As we embark on a new year I want to thank each and every one of you for all you've done to grant Wishes in 2010... and all that you are already doing for our kids in 2011. We granted a record 150 Wishes last year and are on pace to exceed 165 this year.

We are both proud and thankful that no child had to wait for funding in order to experience their Wish last year. We have you to thank for that!

The average cost of a Wish is creeping closer and closer to \$10,000 and more than 80% of every dollar we raise goes directly toward funding our wishes. Our team of Staff and volunteers are constantly working with business partners to offset the costs through in-kind support and discounts. I want you to know that, despite the trying economic climate, our business partners continue to exceed expectations when it comes to granting Wishes!

If you are not already volunteering with us, I want to extend an open invitation for you to do so! When an eligible child is referred to us by parents or medical professionals, we assign two of our trained Wish Granting volunteers to go out and meet the family and manage the Wish process. These volunteers work side-by-side with our staff to create a truly magical Wish experience.

I helped to grant my first wish as a volunteer last year and can assure you that it is fun and incredibly rewarding. I can think of no better way for our donors to see, first hand, how their contributions are bringing hope, strength, and joy to kids who need it most.

Lastly, I extend an open invitation for you to contact me at any time. My direct dial is 203-880-6962 and my email is mike@ct.wish.org.

Warmest Wishes,
Mike Burke
Chapter CEO