

YEARS OF SERVING



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



## TOY SHOP BIKE BUILD

For the first time since the supply chain shortages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, CCC was able to buy bikes for children in our program. This dedicated group of volunteers, who had assembled bikes for several years before the pandemic, regrouped in 2023 to build 78 bikes. Funding for the bikes was provided by two generous donors.



## LONGTIME DONOR: DIANE SICKELS 'KIDS DESERVE A HAPPY CHRISTMAS'

It was an article in the Waukesha Freeman that introduced Diane Sickels to Christmas Clearing Council (CCC) a quarter of a century ago. Since then, she has helped sponsor children and donated cash every year, and is one of 13 confirmed donors who have supported CCC for 25 years or longer.

As is the case with many supporters, CCC and its mission is not far from Diane's personal experience. "I've known a couple of families that have used it" when they needed help, she said.

For the first few years, Diane sponsored children on her own, but for many years since, she has joined a sponsoring group at her church, Genesee Congregational. She has also inspired some members of her extended family to get involved, too. She and her children have sponsored, and one year, she also got her sister involved as a sponsor. Later, "I told her 'we don't need to give each other gifts. Send a check to CCC instead.'" She has also encouraged her three now grown children to donate or sponsor instead of giving gifts to her.

Her motivation? "Kids deserve a happy Christmas – and helping makes me feel good."





In 1949, when a small, but dedicated group started what became Christmas Clearing Council, they had one mission: to share the magic of Christmas with families struggling financially. Our mission remains the same 75 years later. Unfortunately, for some families, so has the struggle to make ends meet. Financial hardship looks different today than it did decades ago, and it doesn't take much to send a family on the brink right over the edge. A job loss, a serious health issue, a fire, homelessness, rising mortgage rates – these and other major losses can impact a family's finances for years. We have policies to ensure client families meet our criteria, while remaining focused on our mission: that every child, regardless of their parents' financial circumstances, experiences joy at Christmas.

**Sarah Hein**  
Executive Director



Another successful Christmas season is behind us. Our 2023 numbers (see pages 4/5) were impressive and encouraging. Two major fund-raising events – our 2nd annual Jingle Bell Jog and our weekend at the Ingleside Hotel's Country Christmas – provided resources to help provide a joyful Christmas to almost 4,700 Waukesha County children. We are blessed with support from many individuals, families, school and scout groups, churches, organizations and businesses. So take a bow – all of you who volunteered, donated cash or gift cards, sponsored children, or participated in an event. Together, we made magic happen. With your partnership, we'll do it again in 2024.

**Ron Weber**  
President, Board of Directors

# SAVE THE DATES



THE  
INGLESIDE  
HOTEL

## SUPPORT OUR MISSION & HAVE FUN IN 2024 JOIN US AT THESE TWO EVENTS!



**AUG. 4, 2024**

**3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL JINGLE BELL RUN AND WALK**

5K run, 2-mile walk, kids fun run

Sign up today:

<https://www.christmasclearingcouncil.org/jinglebelljog>



## EXCITING UPDATE FOR 2024:

**TWO WEEKENDS...**  
**TO EXPERIENCE THE COUNTRY CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ON FOOT**

**Nov. 15-17 & 22-24, 2024**  
5-9 p.m. each night

See Southeastern Wisconsin's most spectacular Christmas lights display up close as you walk the nearly one-mile route. \$2 from each ticket sold during these two weekends will go directly to the Christmas Clearing Council. Mark your calendar and watch for more information this fall on how to purchase tickets.

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

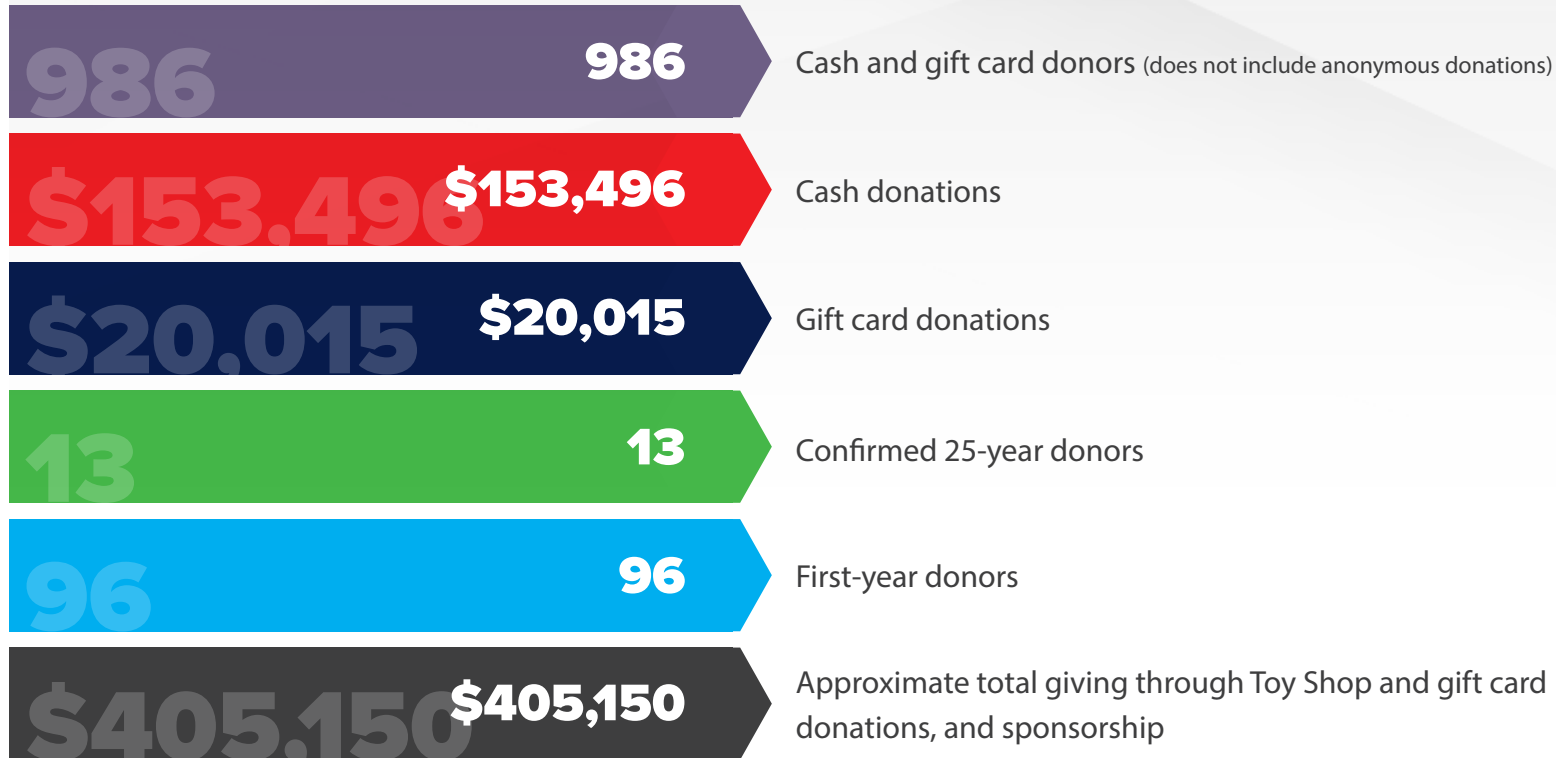
Whether you are a sponsor, a donor or a volunteer, we hope you will join us for our 2024 season. Here are some key dates to note:

- Aug. 4** Jingle Bell Jog and Walk at The Ingleside Hotel
- Sept. 3\*** Applications for 2024 Christmas assistance and sponsor signup are available at [www.christmasclearingcouncil.org](http://www.christmasclearingcouncil.org).
- Oct. 7** CCC office opens; sponsorship matching begins
- Nov. 1** Toy collection begins
- Nov. 15\*** Deadline to apply for Christmas assistance is at 11:59 p.m.
- Nov. 15-17** Country Christmas walking nights at The Ingleside Hotel
- Nov. 22-24** Country Christmas walking nights at The Ingleside Hotel
- Dec. 8** Deadline to sponsor a family is at 11:59 p.m.
- Dec. 18** Deadline for gifts to be delivered to sponsored families; last day to donate toys at drop-off sites.
- Dec. 21** Toy Shop
- Dec. 23** CCC office closes at noon for the season

\* Please share these dates with anyone you think might benefit from our services.

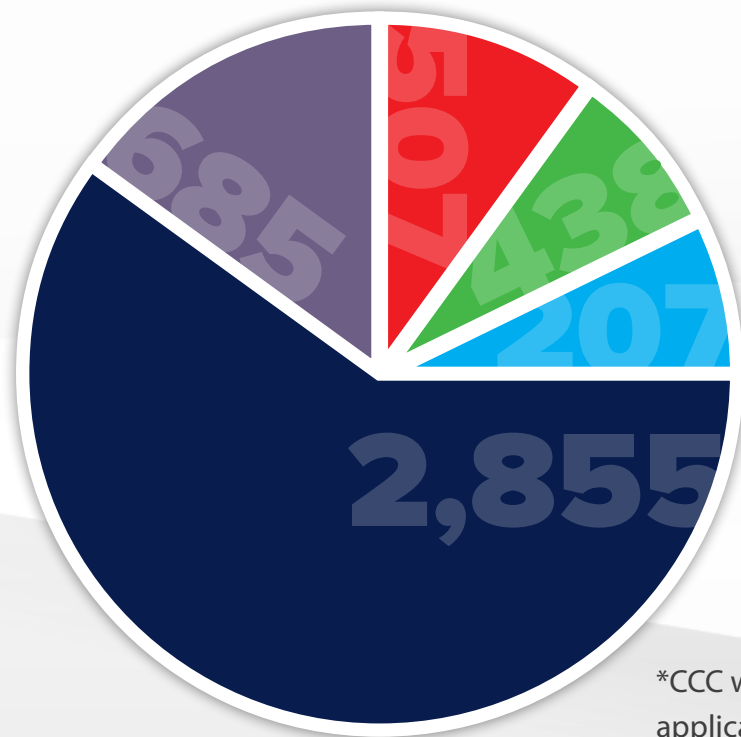
# 2023 AT A GLANCE

## DONORS



## COORDINATED GIVING

TO 4,692 CHILDREN



\*CCC works with the Waukesha Salvation Army to process its applications and ensure there is no duplication of services.

## SPONSORS



Our sponsors provided more than  
**\$285,500**  
 in gifts to the children they helped.



In honor of our 75th season of giving in 2023, donors were asked to consider increasing their donation by \$75 or more, or make a first-time donation of \$75 or more. In total, 84 supporters accepted this challenge, resulting in an astonishing \$33,548 in additional donations! We are humbled by your generosity.

## WAYS TO HELP ALL YEAR

### DONATE CASH

See how to help on our website.

### DONATE GIFT CARDS

\$10, \$15 or \$25 from Walmart, or Target.

### SPONSOR

Starting in September you can choose how many children to help.

### VOLUNTEER

Check our website starting Oct. 15.

### SHARE

our contact information with someone who could benefit from our services.



# ANGELS AMONG US

Each year, we like to share stories of some of the many angels who help make Christmas brighter for thousands of kids in Waukesha County. These are some of our many 2023 angels.



## LAKE COUNTRY FAMILY FUN & LITTLE DIPPERZ

A double scoop of “thank you” to Little Dipperz ice cream shop and Lake Country Family Fun for donating proceeds from the annual Swim With A Mermaid event Sept. 24, 2023, at Goldfish Swim School in Brookfield. These generous donations helped support our 2023 giving program.



## FIREFIIGHTERS

Chris Cass, Deputy Chief EMS/Training and Michelle Garcia, Community Risk Reduction Officer with the Brookfield Fire Department, dropped off toys they collected at the fire station. Many municipal sites around the county generously serve as toy drop-off sites.

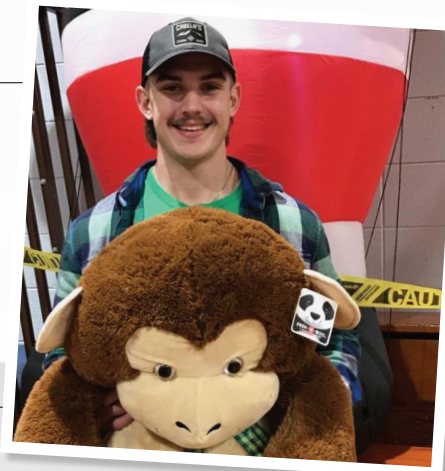


## QUILTERS

Judy Patti, left, and Mary Crown are two members of the talented and dedicated First United Methodist Church Piecemakers. For many years, the Waukesha church group has donated dozens of beautifully handmade quilts for our Toy Shop.

## MATTHEW

Though he’s just 20, Matthew Conrad has been serving CCC since he was very young. Now a firefighter/EMT, he is finishing his degree at Waukesha County Technical College. For many years, he helped organize toys in our Toy Shop. Now he’s a key part of our Toy Shop setup team. Thanks, Matthew, for sharing your heart, your energy and your volunteer spirit.



## THE INGLESIDE HOTEL

Barrels of thanks to The Ingleside Hotel for partnering with us again during its annual walking nights at its spectacular Country Christmas lights display. More than 6,000 people walked the mile-long path in 2023; \$2 from each ticket was donated to CCC.

## BOYS VOLLEYBALL

A Santa-sized thank you to the Arrowhead Warhawks boys varsity volleyball team for hosting its second annual Holly Jolly Volley on Sept. 27, 2023, to support CCC. The team and spectators made toy, gift card and financial donations on this holiday-themed night of play.



## BIKE BUILDERS

For some, the bike build is a family affair. Bill Wisniewski, in the Rotary shirt, brought his wife Jodi, his son Theodore, far right, his grandson Mac Mueller and Mac’s dad Michael (in the baseball cap).

## GENERAC

Generac, one of the world’s largest producers of residential and industrial generators, supports CCC through the Generac Foundation. CCC Executive Director Sarah Hein accepts the company’s 2023 donation.







**Christmas Clearing Council**  
of Waukesha County

Christmas Clearing Council of Waukesha  
P.O. Box 791  
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[www.christmasclearingcouncil.org](http://www.christmasclearingcouncil.org)  
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