

## IN MEMORIAM

### **Andrea Urbon** **(May 6, 1946 - October 22, 2023)**

It is with heavy hearts we announce the death of our beloved Andrea Urbon. A founding member of Thursday's Child, Inc., she served on its Board of Directors for 38 years, leaving us just last year to move to the Twin Cities where she could be closer to her children. We join her family in mourning the loss of a beautiful, vibrant soul, who lit up every room she entered. We will miss her forever.



### **Fredric T. (Coach) Williams** **(March 8, 1937 - January 24, 2023)**



The Madison College Turkey Trot was founded in 1986 by Madison College teacher and coach Fred Williams. Over the next 34 years, thousands of dollars were raised for Thursday's Child and the Madison College Foundation.

We have many memories of his November Turkey Trots. A designated Board member fired the shots that started the race, energetic and enthusiastic runners of all ages joined in the fun, rain or shine, and most of all we appreciated Fred and his entire family for their selfless dedication to each year's successful event.

We thank Fred's family for choosing Thursday's Child as a beneficiary of memorial contributions. We reflect on the accomplishments of a man whose generous heart touched countless lives, including many of the children served by Thursday's Child.



## KRISTIN GOES TO VEGAS!

On October 1, a very excited Kristin Coggins, Janesville, her mother, sister and brother, flew to Las Vegas for a whirlwind adventure culminating in the Lady Gaga Jazz and Piano performance at the Park MGM on Oct. 4.

Kristin kept us in the loop, sending us daily updates and pictures, evidence that she was having a real good time!

It was Caleb's Wipperfurth's wish (July 28, 2004-November 7, 2022) that some other young person would get to have a wish like he had in 2022. Kristin was that girl. And not only was she the perfect choice for the contribution his family made in his memory which covered the cost of her special wish, but also his mother, Debbie, who is a travel agent, planned the whole trip, from start to finish.

For the two years and six months of Kristin's treatment, Lady Gaga was always on her playlist. Her medical team encouraged her to submit a wish to go see her and we were very happy to make it happen for her.



**Board member Dr. Paul Dvorak greets Kristin with a bouquet of flowers upon her return to Dane County Airport, Oct. 5, 2023**



**"I found the perfect JAZZ dress for the concert! It fits like a glove and the sleeves are so jazzy and flashy. I thought I'd show you guys a sneak peak before I wear it to the concert!"**



**"She was Spectacular! A natural born performer! We had a wonderful time and the concert was the perfect send off to an awesome fun filled trip! Thank you all so much!"**

## Board of Directors

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Noël Ferguson  
Mt. Hope, WI  
noel@chorus.net

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Co-Founder of Thursday's Child  
President from 1984 - 1999

### Directors Emeriti:

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### Acknowledgments:

Kay Schmitz, Mt. Hope

### Website Design:

WebWise Design & Marketing  
Fennimore, WI  
Travis Washburn, Web Developer

## Welcome, Valerie!

We are very pleased to welcome Valerie Martin to our Board of Directors. She and her husband, David, live in Platteville with their children Ivy and Eli.

Valerie teaches Business Education at Mineral Point High School and prepares our annual newsletter.

In her spare time Valerie likes to travel, spend time supporting her children in all their extracurricular activities, and read a good book!



## Dr. Puccetti Retires



Our Thursday's Child Board of Directors President Diane Puccetti recently retired from American Family Children's Hospital after a remarkable 30-year career.

The following is an excerpt from the University of Wisconsin Department of Pediatrics online news:

*"She was the medical director of the Pediatric Neuro/Oncology Clinic, the director of the Caring for Life Clinic and the director of Comprehensive Pediatric Neuro-*

*cutaneous Disorder Clinic. With the retirement of just one dedicated, extraordinary physician, Diane Puccetti, MD, professor in the Division of Hematology, Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant, all three positions will require that new clinicians step up and serve."*

Diane is a nationally and internationally recognized and highly-respected researcher and clinician in the field of neuro-oncology. Her contribution to the pediatric oncology program at

American Family Children's Hospital, and indeed worldwide, will continue to resonate for many years to come.

Beloved by her patients and their families, she will be deeply missed.

And now it's time for Diane to spread her theatre wings, becoming involved in community theatre and taking voice lessons. She is excited for this new chapter in her life and we can't wait to be in her audience!

## Hospital Meals

Since 2003, Thursday's Child has funded six evening meals per year for parents of seriously ill children who are patients at American Family Children's Hospital in Madison. Each meal serves 50-60 people. A meal at the end of a stressful and exhausting day is appreciated by parents who want and need to stay close to their child's bedside. Thursday's Child's annual contribution is \$3,000.

## The Santa Cause

The 2022 Santa Cause was held on Saturday, Dec. 3, in Platteville, raised \$1600 for Thursday's Child. In the words of organizers Melissa and Jenni Martinez:

"The day was filled with family and friends who gather for fitness, fun and the giving power to help others. This donation is only possible due to the commitment and generosity of our participants and sponsors. We hope this helps some wishes come true."

They certainly know how to work some magic and yes, Christmas wishes are coming true.

**Cardinal 4-H Club**, Mt. Hope, a loyal contributor to Thursday's Child for many many years, sent a \$200 check to us in April. We know raising money takes teamwork and organization as well as volunteer hours and energy. Even with busy lives these young people make it happen and come through every year with a gift for Thursday's Child.

We appreciate our good neighbors and our good friends.



## Santa Project

For 39 years now Thursday's Child has worked with the social workers at American Family Children's Hospital in Madison and Santa to make the holidays a little more special for children who can use an extra helping of Christmas cheer. Thursday's Child provides \$50 Target gift cards for each child in the family, through age 18, with a maximum of four cards per family. This year we have 75 families on our list.

## Goodbye, Joyce!

For 18 years it has been a pleasure to work with American Family Children's Hospital Pediatric Clinic Social Worker Joyce Kilgore-Carlin, MSW, CAPSW, Hematology / Oncology / Transplant / Caring for Life Clinic.

She retired on November 2, and is looking forward to more time with her children and her grandchildren as well as volunteer work, especially at her church. She assures us she will not be bored!

We thank Joyce for all the years we've shared, working to bring wishes to children who desperately need a wish or two in their young lives. We will miss her very much.



## Thank you, Santa..

We receive many heartfelt thank you notes from parents who tell us how much the Target gift cards help them provide gifts for their children at Christmas time.

One from last year stands out:

Thank you so much for sending the Target gift cards for my son, Andrew. He was so excited to receive them. He doesn't normally have a Christmas list, but he wrote one this year. We will be able to use the cards for his gifts. Thank you very much for your kindness, generosity and thoughtfulness. We really appreciate it, especially during this time.

(Andrew's brother, who was treated at AFCH, died shortly before Christmas. His mother thought Andrew was no longer eligible to receive a gift card. That's not how it works with us at Christmas time. We sent both cards to Andrew.)

And here is one from Solomy Ntambi, MSSW, CAPSW, Pediatric Clinical Social Worker, AMCH.

You do great work and I truly appreciate the generosity of Thursday's Child. Please let everyone know how much we appreciate the continued support and understanding of our patients and their needs especially around the holidays. Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones.

## GIFTS IN THEIR MEMORY

*from their loving friends and family*

*Dorothy Ferguson*  
Mount Hope, WI

*Ronald Hunter*  
Dodgeville, WI

*Kelly Meier*  
Potosi, WI

*Lloyd Mueller*  
Crystal Lake, IL

*Nicolas Seta Ratsimihah*  
Madison WI

*Morgan Turnquist*  
Madison, WI

*Andrea Urbon*  
Madison, WI and St. Paul, MN

*Frederic Williams*  
Madison, WI

*Caleb Wipperfurth*  
Cambridge, WI

*Shirley Woolf*  
Potosi, WI



## OUR MISSION

Thursday's Child makes wishes come true for seriously ill children and young adults living within and/or treated within Southwest and South Central WI.

Contributions are tax deductible and can be sent to:

Thursday's Child, Inc  
PO Box 95, Mt. Hope, WI 53816

[www.thursdayschildwisconsin.org](http://www.thursdayschildwisconsin.org)



## A Christmas Wish for Ross



Many times our older "wish kids" want to meet their personal hero, the one who, unknowingly, keeps their spirits up when difficult treatment threatens. Thursday's Child tries to make that happen. It almost always involves going through agents, who go through other sources, and, if we are lucky, the hero agrees. But we HAVE been incredibly lucky most of the time—a Star Wars stalwart, and his wife, a band who kept in touch, a NASCAR driver whose mother helped with the wish! It seems, once we can break through the PR representatives and agents and call upon people who might just know them, the famous are warm and welcoming people who understand.

However, we just had a wish that I term "The Edgewater Miracle". A teen boy who has been fighting cancer since he was five years old wanted to meet Katie Noël. I'd never heard of her, she started as a Kentucky YouTube rap star who now has legions of fans, and my experience



(Katie Noël with Ross Ducat)

with music of today generally involves piano accompaniment for high school and college singers. Fingers crossed, because Ross was in a precarious health situation, we asked author Susan Masino to help, who spoke to Katie Noël about meeting him. Then, his oncologist and social worker agreed he shouldn't travel. We told Katie Noël.

She could have left it at that, or sent an autographed picture. Instead, she bought her own plane ticket, flew into Madison, went with him to his UW Hospital appointments, and gave Ross and his family what they needed most at that time—a bit of hope, a ray of sunshine. The family and Katie met at The Edgewater, whose staff did everything they possibly could to help.

Katie Noël. Noël of course, means Christmas in French, and I can only say that this girl was our Christmas miracle of 2023.

-noël



(Katie Noël with Ross and his family, at the Edgewater, Madison, November 14)



*May the magic and wonder of the season fill your heart and home.*

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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