

The Marty Lyons Foundation, Inc.

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ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2019

Over Thirty Seven Years of Granting Wishes to Children Aged 3 to 17

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THE MARTY LYONS FOUNDATION, INC.

Mission

The Marty Lyons Foundation, Inc. (MLF) is a not-for-profit, charitable, tax exempt 501(c) (3) organization, which provides wishes to children, ages three to seventeen, who have been diagnosed as having terminal or life threatening illnesses. It's unique in that it will consider granting a second wish to a deserving child. Incorporated in 1982, over the last 37 years, MLF has provided more than 7,800 wishes. We are proud to have 10 chapters covering 13 states.

History

As a defensive lineman, Marty Lyons was a 12-year veteran of the New York Jets football team. A hero both on and off the field, Marty eventually came to unusual crossroads. "In March 1982, three events altered my life. In the period of one week, my first son, Rocky, was born; my father, Leo, passed away suddenly; and Keith, a little boy to whom I was a Big Brother, lost his battle to leukemia. Imagine being on top of the world, and in the period of seven days you are forced to see the frailty, unfairness and the wonder of life. I decided to use my name and my God-given talent to make a difference in the lives of terminally ill children."

With the encouragement and assistance of family and friends, Marty was determined to establish a foundation dedicated to helping children find the courage and strength to fight their illnesses. His idea was that through the granting of a wish, he would foster hope and inspiration in a child by making possible what had been perceived as impossible. In 1982, he founded The Marty Lyons Foundation, and for over the last 37 years, our commitment to helping those in need has not wavered.

Program Services: 1st and 2nd Wish Programs

While there are many wish-granting organizations locally and nationally which grant first wishes, MLF is unique in that it remains one of the only wish-granting organization to provide a first wish as well as a second wish to children who fall out of remission and are now facing more battles with their illnesses, including the reality of death.

These wish applicants must reside or are being treated in a geographic area where the Foundation is registered. Headquartered on Long Island, MLF currently has 10 chapters granting wishes in 13 states – Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. The Second Wish Program is to grant wishes to children who have received a first wish 24 months prior, whose condition has worsened, has developed a secondary illness due to their first treatment, or have exhausted all medical options and are essentially at end-of-life stage or receiving palliative care.

In compliance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), we respect the privacy of the children and families we serve. All information is kept confidential and will not be discussed with outside parties unless it is needed for the wish and the parents or guardians have consented.

The process begins once a child has been referred to the MLF by their parents, guardians or a social worker. After medical approval is received from their treating physician and by the MLF physician (who is also a member of the MLF Executive Board), a Wish Coordinator within the individuals' state begins working on the wish in conjunction with the MLF staff Director of Program Services, in hopes of making a dream come true. Because of particular circumstances, such as a child's medical limitations, family schedules

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(employment, school and medical treatments) and depth of the requested wish, this procedure can take some time to accomplish.

Whether a wish applicant is applying for a first wish or for a second wish, the emotional and financial tolls are significant on the patient and family. Children who suffer each and every day through their illnesses are most in need, and deserving, of some special wish that will make them smile and give them some encouragement.

Some of the various wishes sought by children include trips - to the most magical place in the world - Disney, a luxurious cruise to the Caribbean, the thrill of swimming with the dolphins and fishing on the clear blue sea of Key West – this allows the children and their families to create happy memories to savor the pure enjoyment of the activities. Children who are home-bound because of medical treatments, may request a computer or laptop to provide them a window to the world. Some exceptional requests have included a room or backyard renovation, generators to support life-saving medical equipment and a most heartfelt wish from a southern child to see snow in Vermont.

The cost of wishes can range from \$1,000 for a shopping spree to \$7,000 for a cruise for a family of four. Funding for MLF is provided by donations from individuals, corporations and foundations as well as through special events.

MLF's mission allows the community to help these families through volunteerism, wish coordination and fundraising as well as with donations of goods and services to timely fulfill wishes in our race against time to give these children happiness and their families a lifetime of memories.

THE MARTY LYONS FOUNDATION, INC.

Foundation Members

Board of Directors - Executive Committee

Marty Lyons
Chairman

John DeFranza
Secretary

Ed Powers
President

Ernest Vomero, MD
Chief Medical Advisor

Philip Lyons, Sr.
Vice President

William Corbett
Member at Large

Edward DuPre
Treasurer

Peter Michalewicz
Member at Large

Board of Directors - Members

Chapter Presidents

Lynne D'Eramo
President, North Carolina Chapter
(Also covering South Carolina)

Philip Lyons, Jr.
President, Georgia Chapter

Murray Legg
President, Alabama Chapter

Eileen Mayer
President, Long Island Chapter

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Member at Large

Paul Avvento

George Lewis

Jack Stevens

Steve Kuperschmid

Cindy McLoughlin

Warren Larkin

John Nitti

Honorary Board Members

John Bransfield, Jr.

Don Gregory

Rick Shonter

Mario Caracappa

Ken Schroy

Chip Smith

John Gaudio

John Schmitt

Board, Staff, and Volunteers

Our Board of Directors and active volunteers are comprised of caring individuals in many fields including bankers, financial experts, physicians, attorneys, social workers, nurses and business leaders. Each lends their particular area of expertise to further the Foundation's mission.

At present, MLF operates with three members of staff (Executive Director, Director of Program Services and Director of Development). While most chapters are headed by a president overseeing volunteers who function as wish coordinators, fundraisers and administrative assistants; there are a number of chapters that are coordinated through headquarters.

Financial Status

Income and Expenses for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2019

Total Support and Revenue:	\$ 728,007
Program Expenses:	\$ 992,714
Management & General Expenses:	\$ 43,463
Fundraising Expenses:	<u>\$ 44,960</u>
End of Year Net Asset Balance:	\$ 273,921

The Marty Lyons Foundation (MLF) fulfills first and second wishes. The Second Wish Program represents 87% of wish applications received. The MLF recognizes that these special children may sometimes relapse, fall out of remission or develop secondary conditions from previous treatments. This program supports their continued struggle. For those who have exhausted all medical options and are essentially at end-of-life stage or receiving palliative care, this Second Wish Program offers the family a sense of peace and a happy distraction at such a critical time.

The Marty Lyons Foundation employs three staff individuals to manage its operation. The MLF chapters are overseen by a team of volunteers. Ninety -two cents of every dollar donated goes towards program services as we try to make a difference one child at a time. Each fulfilled wish is our measure of success supported by thank you letters and pictures from our grateful families. Our gratification is seeing the pure joy on the faces of all the participants especially from our wish children.

Wish Stories

At the heart of the Marty Lyons Foundation are our special children and their stories of resilience and unwavering strength as they fight for the courage to wish for more. In 2019 the Marty Lyons Foundation was able to bring more wishes to fruition than in recent years past. The following are just a few of those special wishes from 2019.

Alec, 16 years old, Long Island

Alec is an incredible 16-year-old boy – who under-went an incredibly rough year. Last year – Alec was admitted to the hospital and received a diagnosis of AFM, a rare but serious condition that affects the nervous system. A week prior to his hospitalization, Alec was teaching karate class. Then, he became partially paralyzed and suffered respiratory failure.

While he is on the road to recovery – his journey is long and uncertain. He suffers from many other ailments following this horrific episode. To celebrate their loving “triangle” family of 3—and how far he has come, Alec wished for an NYC weekend getaway. They were able to tour major attractions, dine at fabulous restaurants and most importantly – get a much needed break. Mom said: ***“The kids and I will be talking about this forever!!! Thank you for giving us an opportunity to create such magical memories.”***

Sofia, 6 years old, Georgia

Sofia is a remarkable little girl with an incredible family. At only 18 months old, she was diagnosed with cancer. She completed treatment – just for it to return prior to her 4th birthday. Sofia went through another round of treatment only to suffer a second relapse.

Thanks to her parents unwavering dedication to find medical care that would work for Sofia, she is now enrolled in a clinical trial out of Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta – where she is feeling great and enjoying school – as any 6-year-old should.

She wished to go on a Disney Cruise while she was feeling up to it and was able to fully enjoy it! Dad said, ***“Sofia's Disney Cruise was unbelievably amazing, and we also just got back from Atlanta this week and her MRI on Monday had very good results, so we're so thankful to have this vacation while she's feeling and doing so great!”***

Megan, 17 years old, North Carolina

At only ten years old, Megan was diagnosed with cancer—and has been battling it ever since.

Now at 17 years old, she has been diagnosed with yet another cancerous tumor. While we are all hopeful treatment will work—her doctors have urged her not to delay anything that she wants to do. Megan wished to visit all of California with her best friends. This was quite a task, but one that we were happy to fulfill!!

Starting in San Francisco, Megan, her friends, and family worked their way down the state—which included stops at Yosemite, Catalina Island and Los Angeles. Her dream tour of this lovely West Coast state ended in San Diego.

It is Megan’s dream to be able to go to college to study photography—she got her start on this trip taking some amazing photos of such a beautiful and diverse area.

Highlights of 2019

The Long Island Chapter honors one of their own at its 21st Annual Golf Event

The Long Island Chapter celebrates its 21st Golf Outing and honors one of their own, John Gordon. He has been a volunteer with the Foundation for over 25 years and is one of the chapter's Chief Wish Coordinators making magic come true to countless critically ill children.

The fundraiser was once again held at the prestigious St. George's Golf and Country Club in Setauket. This course was named one of the top 100 courses in the United States.

Golfers had a beautiful warm, sunny day with a light breeze. After their day on the course, attendees had an extensive choice of raffle prizes to try their luck at. Cocktail hour featured a pasta station and a number of tasty passed hors d'oeuvres. A buffet style dinner followed with more delicious food.

The highlight of the evening was the honoree's address to our guests, which he made accompanied by a recent wish recipient, Anthony. He truly drove home the mission of the Foundation – our mission for the past 37 years is the children - their smiles, dreams, hopes and memories. This leads us to do what we do every day and inspires long lasting volunteerism as in the case of John.

We thank all of our sponsors, attendees, volunteers and St. George's for another successful event. We also thank John for many years of dedication to the Marty Lyons Foundation.

The Marty Lyons Foundation “Rocks Out” at the Tilles Center with its inaugural Concert Fundraiser

On November 2, 2019, the Marty Lyons Foundation hosted its first benefit concert at the Tilles Center on the Long Island University Campus. The night featured Billy Joel’s original band, ***The Lords of 52nd Street***, Long Island’s own comedian – Bob Nelson and Gerry Martire, DJ with Q104.3, was the MC for the night’s festivities.

The evening began with a cocktail reception where Lisa Itts, singer/songwriter, entertained VIP guests for an hour before the show. Once the doors to the auditorium opened, attendees were treated to the comedic styles of Bob Nelson.

Once The Lords of 52nd Street took the stage – there was two hours of non-stop dancing in the aisles and singing. Guests were serenaded with songs like *Scenes from an Italian Restaurant* and rocked out to others such as *You May Be Right*.

The most important part of the night was raising funds for wishes for many of the children waiting to receive a wish from the Marty Lyons Foundation. It also gave the Foundation the opportunity to share our mission with many new supporters while enforcing it with old ones – in an untraditional and exciting way!

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