

THE BUZZ!

FOR ALL THINGS NEWSWORTHY AT WACOSA



WINTER
2024

WACOSA



BEANS!

A GRANITE CITY WILD WEST SING-ALONG
AN EMPOWERED STARS PRESENTATION



Greetings everyone:

I love the season changing – it brings an opportunity to reflect on the past events at WACOSA and look forward to what is possible in the future. In this issue of The Buzz, you will get a glimpse of what we have been up to. WACOSA had the honor of kicking off St. Cloud City Granite Days with a sing-along play, “Beans”, in partnership with the Paramount Center for the Arts. You will also learn about how our Whitney Senior members of the Kiwanis Aktion Club provide support for our community members in need through their acts of service. And we celebrated another successful and fun Annual Bash fundraising event.

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE

As the leaves swirl in the changing winds, I can't wait to celebrate the season of giving and goodwill here at WACOSA. Please, take a moment to appreciate all the little activities happening here daily that accumulate into big achievements for those we serve and our fellow community members. Just look at what we have accomplished so far with your support! Til next year – when we will have many more stories to share – Happy Holidays!

Nancy J. Betts



2024 WACOSA BASH

EVENT SPONSOR



AUTOMOTIVE PARTS HEADQUARTERS, INC.

SPONSORS

DIAMOND

Eich Motors Co.
Shift Technologies, Inc.

PLATINIUM

Bernick's
Bremer Bank
Coborn's
D.J. Bitzan Jewelers
First Fuel Bank

HMA Architects
Johnson Materials, Inc.
Minnesota Driveline, Inc.
Northstar Tire & Auto
Quality Care Services, Inc.
Ron and Marlys Howard

SILVER

Jack, Kim, and Leah Stinogel
Audio Video Extremes
Eyecon Graphics
FaceTime Business Resources
Heartland Glass
Kiwanis Club of St. Cloud
Knights of Columbus STC Council #961
Minser Chiropractic Clinic
Martin and Nancy Betts
North Central Bus & Equipment
North Risk Partners
Robert Gardetto, DDS
Sal's Bar & Grill
St. Cloud Toyota
Steve and Patricia Howard
TC/American Crane Company
West Bank

GOLD

Bob and Mary Kovell
inteleCONNECT
Malco
MCI Carpet One
Microbiologics
Minnesota Gold and Silver Exchange
ML Consulting Foster Home
Peters Body Shop
Stang Precision
Tri-County Pallet & Crate, LLC
Trilogy Transportation Services, Inc.
William Dingmann Family Funeral Home

2024 WACOSA BASH

The WACOSA 2024 Bash, held on September 14th at the Moose Lodge in Waite Park, was a resounding success! This annual event is our largest fundraiser and a highlight of the year, bringing together friends, family, and the WACOSA community for an afternoon of fun and celebration.

Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, silent auction donors, attendees and, of course, our incredible WACOSA clients, we were able to raise nearly \$50,000! These funds will directly support WACOSA's mission of creating life enrichment and community connections for the individuals we serve.

BASH PHOTOS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made the Bash a memorable event. Your support is invaluable and makes a significant difference in the lives of our clients. Thank you!



WACOSA EMPOWERED STARS ROPE IN A WILD WEST SHOW!

Saddle up, folks! The Empowered Stars

BEANS! A GRANITE CITY WILD WEST SING-ALONG

lassoed their own production, **BEANS! A Granite City Wild West Sing-Along**, and rode it straight into the heart of St. Cloud in June 2024.

As the sun rose on Granite City Days, St. Cloud's City Festival, a star-studded cast of over 40 actors kicked off the four-day celebration with a fantastic journey to Granite City, where all that was on the menu was beans. Fun ensued as the city folk demanded more rights, and more options than just beans. With special guest appearances by Senator Aric Putnam, Mayor Dave Kleis, and County

Commissioner Joe Perske, the Paramount Center for the Arts was the place to be.

Over 400 folks packed the historic theater to witness the tale of **BEANS!** unfold. A heartfelt thank you to our project partner, Paramount Center for the Arts; our generous sponsors: The Zaun Family and Stearns Bank; and all the hardworking hands who made the production possible.



CENTRAL MINNESOTA'S AKTION CLUB MEMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Kiwanis Aktion Club, a dynamic group of adults with disabilities, is making a significant impact on the lives of youth in Central Minnesota.

Established in 2018, this local chapter, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of St. Cloud, has dedicated countless hours to community service projects.

Cathy Wogen, Lt. Gov. Kiwanis Division Three and Club Secretary for the Kiwanis, shares, "The Kiwanis Club of St. Cloud is proud to sponsor and partner with the WACOSA Aktion Club. The club

members take great pride in making such a positive impact in the community, from Anna Marie's Alliance food drives to fleece blankets for the Tri-County Humane Society. Their energy and enthusiasm is

contagious when they join our club meetings to share their accomplishments and to learn about ours."

"The Aktion Club helps me feel safe while helping others," shares Pat Munson, the club's president. "Knowing that we're making a difference brings me joy."

AKTION CLUB: CHANGING LIVES, ONE SERVICE PROJECT AT A TIME

Brenda Frieler, Aktion Club Coordinator and WACOSA Team Lead, is equally impressed by the club's members. "I'm amazed by their thoughtfulness and willingness to help," she says. "It's inspiring to see them support each other and grow as individuals."

To learn more about the WACOSA Aktion Club and how you can support their efforts, follow WACOSA's Facebook page for updates on upcoming fundraising initiatives.



AKTION CLUB OF ST. CLOUD OFFICERS

- Pat Munson**
President
- Jim Sybilrud**
Treasurer
- Kathy Oerhlein**
Vice President
- Tom Nelson**
Secretary
- John Gruber**
Historian

SPOTLIGHTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO TRAVIS REINHART: WINNER OF THE MOHR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL ENRICHMENT AWARD

Travis, a dedicated member of the WACOSA team, was honored with an Enrichment Award presented by the MOHR (Minnesota Organization for Habilitation and Rehabilitation). One of his most notable accomplishments is the creation of "Project Camp Ripley." Through research and collaboration Travis secured tours for his clients at Camp Ripley, allowing them to explore the military base and honor the brave men and women who serve.

These experiences have provided clients with a valuable opportunity to learn about the history of the U.S. Military, the different branches, and the significance of military service. Through these tours, over 60 clients have developed a deeper appreciation for those who protect our country and a better understanding of the values they represent.



Thank you, Travis, for your dedication to WACOSA and those we serve. We are honored to have you on our team!

WACOSA'S FUTURE, YOUR LEGACY

By including WACOSA in your will or estate plan, you can help guarantee that we never have to turn away those who depend on us. Legacy gifts provide crucial long-term support, ensuring that WACOSA's mission of dignity, inclusion, and opportunity for adults with different abilities continues far into the future. With your help, we can make sure WACOSA never falters.

Leave a lasting impact – contact us today to learn more about securing WACOSA's future.

LEGACY GIVING

To learn more, contact
Meghan Hines at
320-257-5193
or mhines@wacosa.org

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

APH AND SUPPLIERS TEAM UP FOR RECORD-BREAKING WACOSA FUNDRAISER

Automotive Parts Headquarters, Inc. (APH) recently hosted its annual fundraiser for WACOSA, where their supplier partners generously donated to support WACOSA's mission. The incredible show of support didn't stop there. All donations were matched by both APH and the Bartlett family, bringing the total raised to a record-breaking \$454,000.

APH LOBSTER FEED

This significant contribution will make a real difference in the lives of adults with disabilities served by WACOSA. "The support of organizations like APH is critical," shared Nancy Betts, WACOSA Executive Director. "Donations like this allow us to offer opportunities we simply wouldn't be able to otherwise."



A highlight of this year's event was the participation of award-winning artist, Dan Mondloch, who led an art experience similar to the classes he creates for WACOSA artists. Participants from APH and its suppliers worked together to create collage pieces that Mondloch will incorporate into a final artwork.

WACOSA extends its deepest gratitude to APH, their dedicated supplier partners, and the Bartlett family for their unwavering commitment to supporting adults with disabilities.

To learn more about APH and their Auto Value Parts stores, please visit www.autopartshq.com.

MOSAIC – WACOSA ART



Mike K. has been passionately exploring the world of pinwheels. With dedication and creativity, he researched, designed, and crafted this incredible pinwheel that's now dancing in the wind.

Mike's enthusiasm for learning and his determination inspires us all. We're so grateful for our dedicated staff and our supporters who encourage our clients on their journeys of growth and discovery. We can't wait to see what Mike creates next!

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Nancy Betts
Executive Director

Traci McKinnon
Finance Director

Lynn Nicholson
Human Resources Manager

Ann Kennedy
Sales & Marketing Director

Lynn Welle
Program Director

Mary Rothstein
Program Director

Meghan Hines
Development Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sandie Westergren
Chairperson

Jennifer Johnson
Vice Chairperson

Matt DesJardins
Secretary

Peggy Bayer

Ron Brandenburg

Curt Gainsforth

Mollie Garden

Laura Krueger

Thad Olsen

Joe Perske

Lindsey Rennie

Herb Trenz



310 Sundial Drive
P.O. Box 757
Waite Park, MN 56387

Policy Revision Notice
For updated 245D Policies, please visit wacosa.org/client-services or contact us at 320-251-0087 to request a written copy.



PO Box 757
Waite Park, MN
56387

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1304
ST. CLOUD, MN



SHRED SMARTER!

PICK-UP OR DROP-OFF!

RELIABLE. SECURE. CONFIDENTIAL.

With over 30 years of experience in the destruction of business and personal information, WACOSA DocuShred provides the total security and reliability you require.



WHY DOCUSHRED?

- Protect yourself and your customers
 - Save time and money
 - Have peace of mind!
- (All documents are turned to pulp)



321 SUNDIAL DRIVE, WAITE PARK

BENEFITS

- Meets HIPAA and other Federal destruction requirements
- Consoles available for on-going or one-time projects
- AAA Certified NAID
- No quantity too big or too small
- Over 30 years of experience
- Controlled access
- 24/7 surveillance

WACOSA is an EEO/AA Employer

WACOSA provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, familial status, membership or activity in a local human rights commission, or status with regard to public assistance. We will take affirmative steps to ensure that all of our company's employment practices are free of discrimination.