

From One Trip to Nation Wide

As I grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin I had no experience or interest in hunting. I then helped a friend grant a wish to a man who had a critical form of cancer. He also had 2 young children. My heart was so moved by spending time with this special man that I decided to look into creating a charity that would give people with chronic and serious or life-threatening illnesses the opportunity to have their outdoor wishes granted. From there I founded the United Special Sportsman Alliance (USSA) from the ground level back in the year 2000, and it has since grown to be the largest outdoor with granting charity in the country.

From a single hunting trip in Wisconsin, we have expanded into both fishing and hunting across the country, and we provide special trips for nearly all species of game, including deer, elk, bear, turkey and exotics. Our goal is to help children and their families who are enduring the struggle from serious illness or disability by granting their dream hunt or fishing trip wishes. The trips are given at no cost to the participants, and we rely totally on an all-volunteer staff to make these special wishes come true.

In the course of granting outdoor wishes we provide hunter safety training and a variety of conservation awareness programs to youth who participate in USSA events. Special volunteers from around the country donate their services and their time to guide and teach these wonderful children about outdoor life and sports as they share their time in the field. There have been too many priceless moments to count as the USSA has provided trips to thousands of children to date. Many have never harvested a game animal or been on a fishing trip, but the smiles on their faces bring joy to all of those who help turn a dream into a reality for those who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

The USSA has no boundaries with any disability; we handle all forms of physical challenges and deal with many who are on routine medical treatment. We make a way to grant a wish, no matter what challenges a participant may have, and we have no limits as to how many wish trips a participant may apply for.

Our goal is to continue granting as many wishes as possible, and to carry on the tradition of faith, values, and companionship through the special friendships and connections we blessed with as we share time outdoors in the USSA.

The USSA also sets up the world's largest bear hunt, where children from all over America come to Wisconsin to harvest a bear. As well as relying on special volunteers and land owners for the event, we are always in need of hunters who may want to donate their bear tags to a child for this unique event. Taxidermists donate the mounts to those participants that harvest a bear. To donate a bear tag or to learn more about the USSA and how you can help, visit www.childswish.org.

Through hunting, fishing and the outdoors, and through the smiles and joy of so many wonderful people who are part of the USSA, my life and my heart have been forever changed. It remains my sincere hope that people continue to get involved and make a memorable difference for others by way of outdoor traditions.

Brigid O'Donoghue,
CEO and Founder
United Special Sportsman Alliance
www.childswish.com
childswish@gmail.com
(800) 518-8019