



# **New Details Announced: This Weekend Is Hot Chocolate “Walk For Wishes” In Highland**

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter  
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HIGHLAND - A Hot Chocolate “Walk For Wishes” fundraiser to support Make-A-Wish is coming up soon from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. this Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023, at Highland Town Square. Sue Messerli with Make-A-Wish recently shared new updates and more information about the event and the purpose behind it.

Messerli said this will be her fourth year organizing the walk, and that the proceeds support a good cause. Registration fees are \$25 for adults, \$15 for youths aged 5-17, and free for children ages 4 and under. [Register online at this link.](#)



*I wish to visit  
Walt Disney World*  
**Charlie**

“This will be the fourth year to be able to grant kids’ wishes with life-threatening illnesses, and all the proceeds ... will go to Make-A-Wish Illinois in Chicago,” Messerli said. “I’m not accepting the money and then handing it out to grant wishes individually, but trust me, all children in the state of Illinois who qualify for a wish will get a wish.”

In addition to cups of hot chocolate and a stroll through a holiday lights display adorning Highland Town Square, the event will also feature a free scavenger hunt activity for children ages 5 and under and a meet-and-greet and photo opportunity with Santa.

Local youths will also help with some all-new additions for this year’s event. Messerli said the Highland Music School will also be performing from 11:30 a.m. to noon, which she described as “kids playing for kids.” She added that for the first time this year, there will also be a few local “Wish Kids” present at the event, including two who will do “Wish Reveals,” explaining more about what their wishes are.

The full schedule of activities is as follows:

- 11 a.m. - Check-in (at the north side of the gazebo)
- 11 a.m. - Check-in for Scavenger Hunt for ages 5 and under
- 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Highland Music School performance
- 12 to 3 p.m. - Meet and greet, photos with Santa
- 12 p.m. - Leisurely walk along the path

Messerli said she’s seen first-hand the positive impact that granting a child’s wish can have on them.

“When you find out it’s been granted, the medical team approves it - oh my gosh, the look on these kids’ faces,” Messerli said. “If they go on a trip and come back, that is probably the first time in a long time where they don’t have a doctor looking at them, they’re not in the hospital, their parents aren’t separated ... it’s a family connection and it just really warms my heart. That’s what Make-A-Wish is all about.”

To register for the upcoming Hot Chocolate ‘Walk For Wishes,’ donate to a walker, or find out more, [visit this link](#). For more information about the event and Make-A-Wish, see the full interview with Messerli at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com/video](http://Riverbender.com/video).