

Magical Trolley Ride to the North Pole Event for Lakeshore CAP and CASA

A. Describe in detail the proposed project or event including at least the following:

- **The goals of the project or event**
- **The target market or demographic for the project or event**

This is the 6th year for the Magical Trolley Ride to the North Pole event. This is a fundraiser for two non-profit agencies in Manitowoc, Lakeshore CAP and CASA of East Central Wisconsin (formerly CASA of Manitowoc County). The funds raised for this event go to Lakeshore Family Resource, a program under Lakeshore CAP, which provides services to vulnerable children and families and to CASA. CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocate, provides specially selected and trained volunteers to advocate for abused and neglected children who are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system in Manitowoc County. The profits from this event are divided equally between the two programs.

This event started small selling out with 60 participants. Last year this event had 700 participants. Although the event has grown throughout the years, there is still room for extensive growth and expansion. With the funds for marketing, this event has the potential to draw participants from outside of the county and NE Wisconsin resulting in overnight hotel stays.

The participants purchase tickets in advance through Eventbrite and register for a trolley departure time. The ticket price is ages 1-13 \$23 and ages 14 and up \$28. On the day of the event the ticket holders arrive 15 minutes before their departure time to the “train depot” also known as Manitowoc Coffee. Once there they check in with each child receiving a hard bound copy of a Christmas classic book and a gold ticket. They are then escorted to their trolley. There are 4 trolleys that depart at staggering times. Each trolley has a conductor. The conductor meets the ticket holder outside the trolley and punches their golden ticket. The conductor engages with the families, especially the children while the trolley is in motion to the next venue. The conductor sings Holiday classics and is dressed up as a train conductor. The trolley takes the families to the North Pole, also known as the Holiday Inn. However, before the families arrive to the North Pole they make an unexpected stop to the home of Mrs. Claus (also known as the Masquers). The families stay on the trolley; however, Mrs. Claus briefly boards each trolley. There she gives the children a gift from Santa, a bell. The trolley then leaves for the North Pole. Once at the North Pole there are many activities for the children. Santa is there to greet them. A photographer is there to take a professional photo of the children with Santa. The picture is then printed on site and given to the families. There are also numerous crafts, games, cookie decorating, hot chocolate, music and a balloon artist. Additionally, Hatrack Storyteller performs shows during the event on both nights. All of the events at the North Pole are included with the ticket purchase. The participants can stay at the North Pole until the last trolleys depart which is 9:00 p.m. The departing trolleys then take the participants back to the starting venue.

We have 4 trolleys scheduled for both nights of the event. Holiday Inn and Manitowoc Coffee are confirmed as our train station and North Pole venue. Manitowoc Coffee stays open for the event. Ticket holders can purchase beverages while they are waiting. Additionally, Holiday Inn has historically given a room discount for those that would like to stay. Upon check in the participants show their ticket

to the event in order to receive the room discount. This event requires the need of many volunteers for both days. This year Silver Lake College Athletes will be partnering with us to fill the specific volunteer shifts during the event. Over 100 athletes will be volunteering to help with the success of the event. Furthermore, teachers from Manitowoc, Two Rivers, and Mishicot and community leaders commit to cover the role of trolley conductors, for all of the trolleys for both nights.

In addition to being a fundraiser for the two programs, the participants in programs for Lakeshore CAP and the children in CASA are able to attend the event at no charge with their families or foster families. Lastly we also conduct a PJ drive before and during the event. A collection box for pajamas is placed in the Mishicot and Two Rivers School District and at the Manitowoc Starbucks. In the past years over 200 sets of pajamas were collected and disbursed to Manitowoc County Foster families and to the Salvation Army for children in need. Participants of the event are asked to bring an extra pair of new pajamas to the event to donate. This PJ drive has been extremely successful.

The goals of the event are to raise funds for two non-profit agencies in Manitowoc County that serve families and children in the programs. A secondary goal of the event is to be able to offer the event at no charge to the families and children that are engaged in services in our community.

The primary target audience is families with children and grandparents. The primary geographic target areas are Manitowoc, Brown, Calumet and Sheboygan Counties.

B. How will the project or event attract visitors to Manitowoc?

- Describe plans and timeline for marketing, promotion, etc
- Describe the media to be utilized

Billboards: \$3,500

Billboard placements in Brown, Calumet and Sheboygan counties.

- Run time: One month before event for four weeks in each location
- One billboard in each county
- Billboard design and coordination
- Placement and production costs

Earned Media: \$2,500

A variety of earned media tactics will be used, including:

- News release development and distribution; announcing event (distribution to traditional, social and online media, including family/mommy/senior bloggers throughout NE/SE Wisconsin)
- Outreach to morning TV and radio programs as well as Noon show to encourage booking interviews. Ideally, we'd like one of the trolley conductors (or Mrs. Claus) and a program chair to do these interviews. We will prep participants and coordinate all arrangements.

- Event listing development and distribution sent to online media outlets and tourism bureaus

Social Media: \$2,500

- Facebook page verification
- Creation of content calendar, detailing focus areas, etc. for posting in August through December.
- Development and scheduling of social media posts, graphics and photos (Assumes L&F will have access to photos from previous years). The posts will vary in content, including promoting ticket sales, thanking sponsors, showcasing previous year photos/participants and, in December, sharing event photos and again thanking sponsors.
 - **August 2019:** 2 posts total
 - **September 2019:** 1 post per week (4 total). Two of the posts will be boosted for targeted audiences/geography
 - **October 2019:** 3 posts per week (12 total). Two of the posts will be boosted for targeted audiences/geography
 - **November 2019:** 2 posts per week (8 total). Two of the posts will be boosted for targeted audiences/geography
 - **December 2019:** 1 post per week (4 total)
- End of year analytics report (complimentary)

Radio Advertising: \$1,500

Radio advertising on WCUB radio, as well as Midwest Communication or Cumulus in NE Wisconsin. Includes copywriting, production and placement costs.

C. Have you previously received funding from the City of Manitowoc?

No, neither Lakeshore CAP nor CASA have received funding for this event.

D. Is there opportunity or willingness for this to become a multi-year project or event?

Yes. There are plans to conduct this event every year.

E. Who are the key project team members who will be responsible for coordinating the project or event?

There is a committee for this event that consists of staff of Lakeshore CAP and CASA in addition to CASA Governing Board Members and community members. There are 10 members of the committee and half of the members have been on since the first year of the event. The committee consists of event co-coordinators, Executive Directors of Lakeshore CAP and CASA. Colleen Homb, the Executive Director of Lakeshore CAP, is on the committee and oversees the ticket sales for the event. Julie Ribley, Executive Director of CASA, is the event coordinator and the marketing coordinator. She will work with Leonard and Finco (public relations firm) to implement the marketing plan detailed above. The accountant coordinator is Marjorie Senfleben and will be the bookkeeper of the records and receipts of the marketing budget and the grant money. Kathanie Strathmann, Fiscal Director of Lakeshore CAP, will oversee the remaining budget of the project. Maria Crass, community member, is the volunteer

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coordinator. The CASA governing Board will also assist in implementing the tasks of this event. The Board is comprised of Lisa Stolp, Jackie LaBre, Jackie Sehloff, and Gina Krahn.

F. How will you measure the success of the event?

The success of the event will be measured by the number of participants. Additionally, a monkey survey will be sent to the participants after the event to receive immediate feedback of the event. Room night tracking can be conducted to determine if there is an increase of hotel stays during the event time period. Lastly, there will be a analytic report conducted by the marketing firm that can be shared with the City of Manitowoc.

Section 3: Event Budget

Detailed Budget of the event is attached

It is important to note that business sponsors will be secured to offset the cost of the event. Last year \$10,000 was received through business. It is anticipated that these businesses will again sponsor the event for 2019. These sponsors included:

- Advanced Family Chiropractors
- Aurora
- Holy Family Memorial
- Prevea
- Forefront Dermatology
- Grand Rental/TA Motorsports
- Holschbach Excavating
- Smile Clinic
- Just Orthodontics
- Kaeden Services
- Lakeside Foods
- Shoot for Coop
- Red Arrow Products

Section 4: What is the dollar amount being requested from the Discover Manitowoc Grant ?

The total amount of the grant requested is \$10,000 to be used exclusively for marketing as outlined above.

Describe exactly for which budget items the requested grant funds will be used including itemized breakdown of amounts.

Billboards: \$3,500

Earned Media: \$2,500

Social Media: \$2,500

Radio Advertising: \$1,500

The City of Manitowoc with the approved logo will be included in all marketing and advertising for credit and recognition.

Section 5: Post Event Reporting

The Project team will communicate the event results to the City of Manitowoc within 90 days of completion of the event, December 7th 2019. This report will contain an overview and general accounting of how the allocated funds were used with direct examples. The report will be signed by the Project Event Coordinator, Accounting Coordinator and Reporting Coordinator.