



Zlata rybka

*Annual Report
2023*

General Information

Name: Zlatá rybka, z. ú.

Established: 24 February 2015, registered with the Prague Municipal Court

Registered office: Na Ořeškovce 572/15, 162 00 Prague 6

Business ID: 03824829

Website: www.zlatarybka.cz

People at the Golden Fish

Founders: Katarína and Ondřej Vlček

Board of Directors:

Ondřej Vlček, Chairman

MUDr. Katarína Vlčková, Member

MUDr. Irena Závadová, Member

Auditor: Bc. Martina Břeňová

Statutory Representative, Director: Mgr. Karin Pospíšilová

Deputy Director: Ing. Tomáš Hornek

Implementation Team:

Communication and Support: Ing. Tomáš Hornek, Stela Ambrosová, Bc. Kristián Jindra, Linda Machalová, DiS., Alžběta Nasková, Ing. Kristýna Vítovcová

Communication with Children and Families: Mgr. Kristýna Pelcová, Mgr. Jakub Chramosta, Aneta Borková, Mgr. Martina Gregorová, Ing. Tomáš Hornek, Mgr. Josef Nedorostek, Mgr. Magdalena Šilarová, Mgr. Barbora Šitinová (Kožnarová), Mgr. Zuzana Vaculíková, Ing. Kristýna Vítovcová, Michal Zborník

Production: Bc. Martin Kladiva, Mgr. Klára Besuchet, Bc. Tomáš Cahel, Bc. Alžběta Dopitová, Mgr. Matěj Čermák, MA, Bc. Jana Horáková, Bc. Lucie Pekárková

Donor Relations and Project Management: Mgr. Jitka Chalupníčková, Mgr. Anna Kaločová, MBA

PR and Brand Management: Ing. Marta Plecítá, Mgr. Zuzana Lebedová

Graphic Design: Jan Bárta, B.Th., Ivana Čeljuska, MA, Mgr. Silvie Endlicherová, Tereza Soldánová, Ing. Jan Pospíšil

Accounting: Ing. Kateřina Ježková

Our Mission

The Golden Fish grants wishes to critically ill children. Our goal is to make an interest in the dreams and desires of sick children become part of the care they receive. We do the utmost to make the wish of every single ill child come true.

Foreword

It's now been 10 years since the idea of the Golden Fish (Zlatá rybka) started to take shape in our minds. What began as a small seed has since grown into a full-fledged organization with far-reaching importance and impact, not only for us, but, more significantly, for the 1,200 families whose wishes the Golden Fish has granted during its existence.

A gift from the Golden Fish matters on multiple levels.

Our initial idea stemmed from a simple question: "How can we transform figures on a bank statement into genuine joy?" Namely, joy experienced by children who otherwise have little reason to be joyful, who at the same time are able to charm others with their genuineness and humanness, despite the troubles they face. Children who know how to dream and believe what they see in their dreams – critically ill children.

We enjoyed figuring out the details of transforming a simple gift into a dream come true. From the very beginning, we believed that joy plays an important role in a person's life, especially in times of distress. The Golden Fish has validated the outcome of various studies that conclude that a gift can have major therapeutic potential if important circumstances are taken into account. There is a theory that the actual effect of a gift depends on the effort expended in its delivery. Rather than being directly proportionate to the financial value, the effect depends on the attention given to the recipient. That's what Golden Fish excels at! Formulating a wish, looking forward to having it granted, enjoying its receipt, and remembering the experience are a small, but ever so important part of treating a serious illness. All in all, it's a wonderful undertaking!

The magic of the Golden Fish, however, is not one-sided. Dreamers themselves are capable of giving great gifts, regardless of their age and the illness they are battling. Children infuse

the Golden Fish with a magic power by returning much of the energy passed on to them through the gifts, because they are able to dream their dreams even in the hardest of times. Their imagination and trust in the Golden Fish are the greatest magic imaginable. Their ability to enjoy life here and now is by far the greatest gift for their families, for the Golden Fish, and for us, the founders.

We want to thank all of the members of the Golden Fish team for their immense effort, as they oftentimes leave their heart with the little dreamers. This is because their work really bears fruit.

Likewise, there are many others who contribute to the Golden Fish's magic power. Parents, doctors, nurses, volunteers, associates, suppliers, celebrities from the worlds of entertainment, sports, and politics who help the Golden Fish make the dreams of children come true at the most precarious moments. They are people with hearts of gold. They donate their time and attention despite leading busy lives. We extend our thanks to them as well.

So it happens that even though it was initially us who wanted to bring joy to sick children by giving them gifts, we now feel like the joy is all ours thanks to the waves after waves of positive energy that flow into the Golden Fish to produce powerful magic with a strong therapeutic effect. Even though it might not cure bodily afflictions, it enriches the soul of the sick children and all of us around them.

Happy reading!

Katarína and Ondřej Vlček



In 2023.

every 32 hours
one application came in and
every 42 hours
one big wish came true

every
14 hours
we met in person
with the dreamers and
their families

Path of Wishes

In 2023, the Golden Fish granted 210 wishes of seriously ill children. That translates into 210 stories that involve a large number of people, each of them affected in one way or another. Together, the stories depict the entire process of making a child's wish come true. The Golden Fish's magic stems from its ability to consolidate everyone's efforts to achieve a maximum aggregate effect. Everyone taking part in the process experiences this magic: there is no need to talk about it; it is simply there, omnipresent.

This Annual Report is dedicated to all those whose paths cross on the journey toward granting the wishes of ill children. Their dedication, feelings, and experiences are an integral part of the process.

The Golden Fish was established by Mr. and Ms. Vlček. Thanks to them, we have been granting wishes for the past nine years. Each individual wish the Golden Fish receives, discusses, and grants reflects the objective to provide support to ill children and their families at a difficult time, with sincerity and modesty.

The others who accompany us on the journey are our donors. They are people captivated by the stories of our little dreamers, who, like us, believe in the power of a wish. Moreover, their donations show, day after day, that becoming a donor does not require a bombastic media campaign. We are grateful to them for the humility with which they adhere to the Golden Fish's values, and we trust that it is these values that have prompted them to support our endeavors.

Two things are needed for every important decision we make in our lives: information and courage. That's why the moment at which the families of little dreamers find out about the Golden Fish is so important. The context and circumstances in which it happens often decide whether the family or the dreamers themselves will end up contacting us. For that reason, we are grateful for partnerships with specialists who see the Golden Fish as a useful treatment tool and, together with us, encourage children to dream their dreams.

No one knows a child better than his or her parents. We therefore use every communication tool at our disposal to assure parents that the wellbeing of their dreamers is of primary importance, and that protecting their family's privacy is the Golden Fish's primary consideration. Parents are our closest allies. It is often their unique perspective that allows us to innovate our processes, modernize our approaches, and, most importantly, monitor the effect of a granted wish on the life of the whole family.

When a family approaches the Golden Fish, they are served by the team responsible for Communication with Children and Families. Conversations between this team and children, which are sometimes long and oftentimes many, are at the center of the whole process of granting a wish. Establishing trust and openness in communicating with a child is of paramount importance. Communication team introduce something to the lives of children facing numerous restrictions, something that they miss the most: the opportunity to dream about all the things that are possible.

Once a dreamer writes his or her wish on the Golden Document, the Production team takes over. Their dedication, creativity, flexibility, and partnerships with suppliers and volunteers can sometimes make a dreamer's wish come true within a few hours, sometimes in a few months, or even years ... depending on what is necessary to fulfill the dream.

Nonetheless, the path of granting a wish belongs to the dreamers themselves. Their ability to dream and enjoy their wish is the aforementioned magic that brings everyone involved together on their journey.

Often, a wish come true opens the door to this world of magic so wide that the dreamer stays in touch with us and becomes part of our team. That was the case with the four members of the first ever Dreamers' Council established in 2023.

Join us to read about the impressions and experiences of people who take part in making wishes come true. Their authentic views provide unique perspectives and captivating insights. They can tell the Golden Fish story like no one else.





Donors

Our group of donors is highly diverse. They include individuals and businesses that mostly hear about us from our employees, associated physicians, or families of children whose wishes have been granted by the Golden Fish. Likewise, some donors have a personal experience from having a wish granted by us to them or their family members in the past. There are also donors who find the Golden Fish on their own, perhaps because they have dreamed a dream about us. Some make a donation to the tune of tens of thousands of crowns without so much as blinking an eye, others donate a few hundred and apologize for not being able to give more. We, however, are grateful for all donations! Thanks to them, we know that there are people for whom our work makes sense, who want to be part of the Golden Fish's mission.

There are many nonprofit organizations that collect funds to finance treatment, hospital equipment, and so on. What the Golden Fish does, however, really got me. I understand that parents of sick children concentrate on treatment, and they might not have the capacity to fulfill their kids' wishes, especially wishes of this nature. Needless to say, I'm deeply moved by the mission undertaken by your organization.

As soon as I get my maternity benefits, I'll chip in.

Donor

My answer to the question how I found out about your foundation is somewhat unusual. One night, as I was drifting into sleep, I dreamed of visiting the doctor with my one-and-a-half-year old daughter who had a cold. In my dream, the doctor said: "Do you know what would help her the most? A golden fish."

When I woke up, I tried to figure out what it could mean. I grabbed my phone to look it up.

The first thing that popped up was a link to your website.

Donor

Several of our donors have organized fundraising events to motivate others to make a donation as well. Examples include birthday fundraisers, funds raised by musicians during their summer tours, corporate fundraisers, and Christmas charity events organized by schools.

We are happy about how the community of our fans and supporters has grown and about the diverse and creative nature of our partnerships!



How Duhovka found out about the Golden Fish

The story of the partnership of the Golden Fish and the Duhovka Elementary School

"As is customary in fairy tales, the Golden Fish has swum to Duhovka entirely by chance.

At our school, the ongoing priority is to educate children in a holistic manner. This concept includes teaching students about philanthropy to help them develop compassion, empathy, kindness, responsibility, critical thinking, financial literacy, and, most importantly, to bring together the school and families into a single community. The joy we can see in the eyes of children when they're helping and seeing the results of their help is priceless and would serve as inspiration for many an adult.

One of the objectives in this academic year was to expose students to difficult topics that are somewhat taboo in our society, such as departure, illness, death, and teach them to work with related issues. To that end, we were looking for a charity organization we could support as part of our annual Winter Concert. While searching for a suitable candidate and contemplating the best way of achieving this goal, the parents of one of our students proposed partnering up with the Golden Fish. From then on, things flowed smoothly.

The Golden Fish was truly golden. Its officials came to the school to discuss the wishes they grant with the teachers, and showed us ways of talking to students about making the wishes of sick children come true. Subsequently, we informed students and their parents of our intent to assist the Golden Fish. Then, we debated, created, baked, and sold all our products during the Winter Concert, thanks to which we were able to donate some 170 thousand crowns to the Golden Fish to enable them to carry out their mission.

For their resolve, hard work, and help, Duhovka's students received a new mascot in the form of a undemanding goldfish as a reward for lending a helping hand to their less fortunate peers. From time to time, we let the goldfish do a tour of the classrooms to remind our kids that helping others and making their wishes come true does not exist in fairy tales only.

Many thanks for giving us this opportunity!"

Michaela Paulová, Deputy Director, Duhovka Elementary School

Acknowledgment

We are grateful for financial support received from the following individuals and organizations in 2023. Thank you!

AZ Cargo s. r. o.

Finvinci Volsor s. r. o.

KytarovkaBrno

Pioneer Beer s. r. o.

Pražská energetika, a. s.

Sigmet spol. s r. o.

T-Mobile Czech Republic, a. s.

VANFORRENT Olomouc s. r. o.

Základní škola Duhovka, s. r. o.

Zebra Technologies CZ, s. r. o.

Eliška Adámková

Soňa Audesová

Mariana Bahnova

Lenka Baránková

Martin Bednář

Lenka Bezděková

Klára Bendová

Simona Blažková

Lukáš Buchar

Martina Coufalová

Petra Divišová

Ludmila Dostálová

Julie Drahorádová

Vlasta a Mirek Dvořákovi

Kateřina Erlebachová

Magdalena Flaksová

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Jiří Folwarczny

Libuše Friedrichová

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Lucie Gintherová

Petr Grossmann

Ondřej Grygar

Tomáš Habarta

Zdeněk Hazlberger

Jolana Hejlová

Martin Holečko

Daniela Holoubková

Ales Holubec

Monika Hrušešová

Šárka Hudcova

Tomáš Hudeček

Barbara Hůlová

Fabien Charbonnier

Vincent Charollais

Martin Chvál

Zdeněk Jahn

Petr Jákl

Robin Zounar

Anna Jašková

Daniel Jiříček

Vladislava Jůzlová

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Radka Kratochvílová

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Lenka Kulhánková

Michaela Kusáková

Radka Lenská

Barbora Löffelmannová

Jan Lukas

Jakub Malý

Roman Marek

Týna a Tom Matějčkoví

Ilona Melicharová

Jan Mezera

Adéla Mikulová

Martin Mojžíš

Magdalena Montanaro

Václav Motlík

Václav Nádvorník

Pavína Netrdová

Eva Nezavdalová

Petra Nováková

Zuzana Ouředníčková

Radek Paulík

Lenka Paulová

Vít Pekárek

Jan Pekárek

Jan Pivoňka

Jana Poldauf

Pavína Poletínová

Marcela Pouchová

David Poupě

Jan Příbek

Kateřina Příbková

Monika Růžičková

Ivana Rysová

Lucie Sedláčková

Kristian Szabo

Jaromír Šeda

Lucie Šídová

Jaroslava Šmídová

Markéta Šobáňová

Pavla Špeldová

Jiří Tyl

Lenka a Jakub Vavruškovi

Matyáš Vích

Michael Vích

Nany Víchová

Jan Vítek

Lukáš Vítek

Ludmila Vítková

Věnceslava Vítková

Lenka Vítková

Jana Vohralíková

Michal Vrablík

Markéta Výrutová

Otto Waldhauser

Eva Wawrik

Michaela Wilson

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CEWE Color, a. s.

GOPAS

Komerční banka, a. s.

Královská čokoláda

Lékárna Slunce

Letiště Praha, a. s.

Magistrát hl. m. Prahy

Michaela Pašková – Miss

Papaver

Jan Pospíšil

Princo

Ruční papírna Velké Losiny

SLANINOVÁ VOKÁL,

advokátní kancelář s.r.o.

Sonnentor, s. r. o.





Communication with the professional community

The Golden Fish maintains partnerships with numerous professionals from the ranks of physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, healthcare institutions, nonprofit organizations, and foundations. Children need support and space to muster up courage to dream their dreams and to contemplate what they'd wish to do and have. For that reason, we need assistance from professionals who are close to child patients, know them, and share everyday situations during their difficult treatment. Their cooperation and involvement is fundamentally important for both the little dreamers and our staff, and each and every one of them deserves a big thanks for their immense support!



We also want to thank our 25 ambassadors who maintain regular contacts with the Golden Fish and helped us make another leap forward in 2023:

Bc. Tereza Broďáková – Centrum provázení, Ostrava University Hospital

Mgr. Simona Dejdarová – Parent project, z. s.

Bc. Martina Dvořáková, MBA – Department of Pediatric Neurology, University Hospital Brno and Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University

Mgr. Alžběta Gajdzica – Department of Children's Oncology, University Hospital Brno

MUDr. Petra Hanáková – Department of Children's Neurology, University Hospital Brno and Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University

Mgr. Marcela Hložánková – Pediatric Support Care Team and Department of Pediatric Neurology, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and Motol University Hospital

Mgr. Petra Janásová – Intervention Team, Motol University Hospital and Department of Pediatric Nephrology, Department of Pediatric Medicine, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and Motol University Hospital

doc. MUDr. Eva Klásková, Ph.D., MHA – Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Department of Pediatric Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Palacky University and Olomouc University Hospital, and Department of Pediatric Medicine, Frýdek-Místek Hospital

MUDr. Zuzana Krška Kušniríková – Department of Pediatric Neurology, Ostrava University Hospital

Bc. Karin Kurtová, DiS. – Department of Pediatric Neurology, Ostrava University Hospital

Mgr. Iva Kuzníková, Ph.D. – Centrum provázení, Ostrava University Hospital

Táňa Matoušková – Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and Motol University Hospital

Mgr. Pavla Medková – Department of Hemato-Oncology, Olomouc University Hospital

Bc. Gabriela Meluzinová, DiS. – Therapy Coordinator and Centrum provázení, Department of Pediatrics and Hereditary Metabolic Disorders, First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and General University Hospital in Prague

Markéta Mičková – Pediatric Support Care Team and Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and Motol University Hospital

MUDr. Marta Neklanová – Pediatric Neurology Outpatient Center, Department of Pediatric Medicine, Olomouc University Hospital

Ing. Eliška Nekolná, DiS. – Pediatric Palliative Care Team at Krajská zdravotní, a. s. and Hospic sv. Štěpána, z. s.

Mgr. Alice Řezníčková – Intervention Team, Motol University Hospital and Pediatric Cardio Center, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and Motol University Hospital

Mgr. Jana Srbová – Department of Hematology and Oncology, Department of Pediatric Medicine, Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Medicine in Pilsen, and Pilsen University Hospital

Mgr. Barbora Šitinová – Klub nemocných cystickou fibrózou, z. s.

MUDr. Katalin Štěrbová – Pediatric Support Care Team and Department of Pediatric Neurology, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and Motol University Hospital

MUDr. Pavel Timr – Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology, České Budějovice Hospital

Mgr. Jana Trtílková – Department of Pediatric Oncology, Brno University Hospital

MUDr. Jana Tučková – Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Department of Pediatric Medicine, Brno University Hospital



I delight in the joy of each and every one of them

Interview with Golden Fish ambassador Eva Klásková

How did you learn about the Golden Fish, and why did you decide to accept the offer to be its ambassador?

I initially found out about Golden Fish from the mom of one of my patients, who asked me to certify a wish made by her son. I hadn't been aware of the foundation, probably because I'm a pediatric cardiologist, and children suffering from a cardiac disorder were only beginning to join the ranks of dreamers at that time. I was very surprised by the offer to become an ambassador, but it gave me the opportunity to acquaint my pediatric cardiology colleagues with the Golden Fish. I'm very happy that children with a serious heart condition have a chance to be dreamers for whom the Golden Fish makes their wishes come true. I delight in the joy of each and every one of them.

In offering the Golden Fish's services, do you sometimes encounter issues that make families reluctant to join its program?

Not really, there are no such obstacles. Families are usually surprised and delighted. As to communicating with family members, I find that it's necessary to discuss what their children can and cannot do from the medical viewpoint. I was surprised to see how often parents unintentionally impose restrictions that are unnecessary; for example, they can't imagine that the family could go on vacation. They are that much more jubilant when they do a trip together, sometimes after as long as 10 years. Parents are often concerned about costs and believe that money should go to children who are needier. In that case, I explain that every child has the right to dream a dream and have his or her wish granted.

As a physician, what do you consider the main benefit children obtain from the process of granting a wish?

I think it's the process of dreaming a dream, looking forward to having it come true, focusing attention in a positive direction. Likewise, it's feeling that they matter to others and that the world is full of kind people.

What would you wish to the Golden Fish in the coming years?

I wish them to retain their desire to help all children without distinction, to be able to find all the dreamers out there who deserve to have their wishes granted, and to be surrounded by friends and supporters who help them on their path.

doc. MUDr. Eva Klásková, Ph.D., MHA
Vice-Dean for Study of General Medicine
(Years 4-6), Faculty of Medicine, Palacky
University
Department of Pediatric Medicine,
Faculty of Medicine, Palacky University and
Olomouc University Hospital



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Centrum provázení

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DEBRA ČR, z. ú.

Dům pro Julii, z. ú.

Energeia, o. p. s.

HAE Junior, z. s.

HAIMA CZ, z. s.

Hamzova odborná léčebna pro děti a dospělé

Hospic Sv. Jiří, o. p. s.

Hospic sv. Štěpána, z. s.

Klub nemocných cystickou fibrózou, z. s.

Kolping Family Smečno

Ledax, o. p. s.

Metoděj, z. s.

Mobile hospice Nejste sami, z. ú.

Mobile hospice Ondrášek, o. p. s.

Masaryk Hospital Mobile Hospice

Dobrý Anděl Foundation

Vlček Family Foundation

Children's Oncology Foundation Krtek

Dům Ronalda McDonalda Foundation

Pink Bubble Foundation

Radost dětem Foundation

Spolu s odvahou Foundation

Šance onkoláčkům Foundation

Úsměv nejen pro Kryštofa Foundation

Parent Project, z. s.

Children's Patron, z. ú.

Produkce BPP s. r. o.

Sanatoria Klimkovice

Sdružení rodičů onkologicky léčených dětí ONKA

SMÁci, z. s.

Společnost pro mukopolysacharidosu, z. s.

Srdcem Robinson, z. ú.

Šafrán dětem, o. p. s.

Šance Olomouc, o. p. s.

Zdravotní klaun, o. p. s.

Motol University Hospital Kindergarten and Elementary

School

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Ahou Public Relations, s. r. o.

AMCA, spol. s r. o.

Centrum paliativní péče, z. ú.

Czech Palliative Medicine Society and Pediatric Palliative
Care Section, Czech Palliative Medicine Society, Czech
Medical Association of J. E. Purkyně

GALÉN-SYMPOSION s. r. o.

Institut Pallium, z. ú.

MH Consulting, s. r. o.

PAHOP, Zdravotní ústav paliativní a hospicové péče, z. ú.

SOLEN s. r. o.

Společnost pro ranou péči, z. s.



I had no idea the Golden Fish existed until Sylvie's illness came our way and resulted in her long hospitalization. It was a blessing in disguise because we met a wonderful nurse there, who told us about the Golden Fish project. The Golden Fish is a great undertaking that very sensitively and with a strong resolve grants the wishes of children who deserve to have their dreams come true for their bravery and fighting spirit. In addition, the Golden Fish has a beneficial effect on their siblings and parents too.

Mom of a Dreamer

Parents

Working together with the family is of key importance for what the Golden Fish aims to do. With that in mind, we want to express gratitude to all parents who put their trust in us in 2023 and allowed the Golden Fish to enter their family life and in many cases their home too. We understand how difficult it can be at times and what sort of questions parents might be asking: What kind of person will the Golden Fish send? Will he or she know how to talk to our son or daughter? Will he or she be able to earn our child's trust? Will he or she not make judgments or unsuitable comments about our kid's wish? Will he or she not promise something impossible to fulfill? We are aware of the delicate and special nature of the setting we enter. We bear that in mind throughout our interaction with families, and we are grateful for open communication and honest feedback from parents.

I was a bit concerned about communication because Mareček is not used to talking to strangers. I was afraid that the fact that he sometimes gets stuck would disqualify him from the project. However, both of the workers we dealt with were wonderful, understanding, and didn't put Mareček under pressure.

They realized that communication is a bit more difficult, but they found a way.

Parent of a Dreamer



Our Golden Fish story – great joy in a difficult time

Dreamer Maty's mom's impressions from her encounter with the Golden Fish

(The dreamer's name and story is published with the family's consent)

Last June, we were informed that our nine-year old son Matěj's condition that appeared as an inflammation following an emergency surgery was in fact an aggressive malignant tumor. Our shock and fear for our beloved child is impossible to describe. I would never have thought that something like that could happen to us, that our son would be a little oncology patient.

Sure, we see that happen to others, we feel for parents of such afflicted children, we donate to various foundations and fundraisers, but we'd never have expected to be in the same situation one day. How can that happen? Well, just like that!

By the end of June, Matěj underwent an additional two surgeries at the Brno Children's Hospital, which consisted of removing the tumor, taking bone marrow and lymph node samples, and inserting a central venous catheter. We hoped to be able to bring Matěj home after these difficult weeks, to give him time to recuperate and gain strength. Because of the nature of his condition, however, the doctors decided to begin chemotherapy immediately, and we had to stay in the hospital.

During that time, I relied on the support of Dr. Trtílková, a psychologist from the Children's Hospital who, among other things, told me about the Golden Fish. It was very nice of her, but our minds were focused on completely different issues at that point.

Also, I think that people do not turn to foundations for help in such situations, unless they face pressing financial problems, which perhaps they should. The psychologist explained

to me that the issue is not whether a family has resources to meet everyday needs. Rather, the objective is to give the child joy using something he or she would not be able to have or experience under normal circumstances. I had to convey that to my husband, who insisted that we weren't so bad off to have to ask for help. That wasn't the point, though.

We made it through a few difficult months, and the situation began to calm down in the second half of September. There were fewer hospitalizations, Maty had more energy, and we all felt better, insofar as one can feel good at all under the circumstances. At the beginning of October, I felt that it was a good time to tell Maty about the Golden Fish, and we filed an application together.

We were contacted by the Golden Fish's wonderful Ms. Zuzana Vaculíková. Maty knew right away what he'd want. Being such a LEGO, sci-fi, and fantasy lover, the choice was clear: Millennium Falcon, 7,541 pieces of joy! I liked that people at the Golden Fish put emphasis on communicating directly with the child and were able to create truly magic moments, such as a letter, a surprise. Matěj will keep his letter from the Golden Fish forever. Anyway, the whole process was very fast, and Maty received his dream Millennium Falcon. What a surprise it was. He believed that his wish would come true, but he'd never have thought that it would happen so quickly!

We thank the Golden Fish with all our heart for the immense joy they brought to Maty! And for our delight from seeing him dance and jump up and down with joy. That's priceless! Likewise, we thank the Golden Fish for thinking about Maty's younger brother Vojtík, who has bravely coped with months of sudden changes and being deprived of mom's and dad's presence.

This experience has brought our family much closer together and taught us a lot about ourselves.



Hana Ševčíková, Mom

What was the effect of children's wishes on dreamers and their families?

Several weeks after a wish is granted, we send a request for feedback to the parents. What do families appreciate the most about what the Golden Fish does? Sensitive communication with their child, respect for their privacy, absence of the requirement to publicize the wish, and the way the preparations, anticipation, joy, and memories are shared. And, most importantly, the smile in the dreamer's face.

(The names of all dreamers have been changed to protect their privacy.)

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I can't find words to describe the most kind-hearted deed one can do for seriously ill children, since it's impossible to restore their health immediately. Making their wish come true is the least that can be done, because the child's mind is full of dreams and wishes. As a parent, I highly value this endeavor! I wish the Golden Fish to never lose the strength to grant children's wishes.

.....

My daughter wished to learn to play the piano. While in the hospital, she was literally consumed by her desire to make music. I signed her up for piano lessons, but it was only thanks to the Golden Fish that her wish could come true. She now plays the piano every single day. Since music has a therapeutic psychosomatic effect, I know that she now has a bit more peace of mind, not to mention enjoyment.

.....

For my daughter, the cat (her granted wish) is the best buddy, an object of love, and I dare say that it's thanks to her four-legged friend that the worst is behind us! It's much more lively at home, we enjoy the moments when we watch the kitty do her antics.

.....

At first, Bětka's wish to travel to New Zealand seemed unreal, we couldn't imagine that such an extravagant wish would be granted. We were wrong. Bětka and Danča have had the best experience



.....

in their lives. The trip was truly unimaginable. It's hard to say to what extent we were affected, but the effect on Bětka and Danča was huge. No one will ever take away from them the moments and adventures they had there. Their sisterly bond has become so much stronger. Ha! They even discovered that they can survive a seemingly endless flight without wanting to 'kill' each other!

.....

For us, the granted wish meant that we could finally be together again, have fun, and enjoy ourselves to the max. It was a wonderful time, a dream come true in many ways. Seeing Kuba happy, healthy, being able to do what he enjoys together with the loved ones ... that's my wish come true.

.....

Your mission to grant children their wishes and motivate them to endure the challenging treatment they receive is highly admirable. What you do rewards their courage and vastly enhances their joy of recovery.

.....

For us, it was a motivation. During the entire second half of the treatment, we eagerly anticipated what Bára would wish when she recovers, and her wish can be granted. The suspense itself was great, and when the time finally came, it was like a cherry on top of the cake. In addition, all of Bára's kindergarten buddies shared the whole process with us.

.....

My son now has more self-confidence. He believes that a person's wishes can come true if they're strong enough. Likewise, he's learned to overcome fear, having flown on a plane, traveled to the pyramids, and stayed in a confined space there. His brother Pavel, who accompanied us and provided translation service, enjoyed the trip as well. For me as a mother, it was important that the boys had fun and bonded.

.....

I would heartily recommend the Golden Fish to all patients suffering from the same illness as I do. It's about losing fear, overcoming the inhibition to ask others for help, trying to enjoy life, or, at a minimum, experiencing something pleasant while sick.

.....

The Golden Fish project is an incredible, fantastic endeavor. I would never have thought that such a big wish would be granted to my daughter. Tears are still welling up in my eyes.

.....

The slogan "Everyone Has a Wish" is great, and it's that much more true in the case of children. The website, the yearbooks, the document about the Golden Fish are all very well designed. They describe the project and showed us what lay ahead of us. Overall, the project is conducive to improving people's trust in and attitude toward foundations and other nonprofit organizations.

.....

I, personally, wouldn't change a thing. Everything was absolutely flawless, above my expectations. The people were very friendly, I got my computer much sooner than I'd expected, and I got a photo frame and a letter from the Golden Fish as a bonus. The atmosphere during the delivery of the granted wish was beyond belief.

.....

For our family, this project is truly top-notch.

.....

Sebík is the one most touched, not because it's a mobile phone and he can surf online, but because he wanted to take part-time jobs to earn money to buy one. Now, he's received something he dreamed about, and it's a great reward for enduring all the pain and the terrible moments he's been through. Only someone who has experienced this will understand.

.....

Since the wish was a puppy, granting it has affected the whole family. In a positive sense, that is. We have a new family member, and our daughter now has a chance to learn to take care of another critter. Her long-standing wish has come true, as her illness was instrumental in the decision to have a dog in the family at all.

.....

We wish that the dreams of other people may come true like ours have.



.....

For me, the encounter with the Golden Fish was a trip to a dreamland. A world where I can make any wish my child has come true with no restriction whatsoever.

.....

Your project is a magnificent undertaking. You are a light during the darkest moments people go through in their lives. Simply heavenly.

.....

For Madlenka, granting her wish had immense importance. All of a sudden, she felt exceptional and experienced great joy and euphoria. The whole family shared her joy of being able to meet with her favorite band.

.....

Granting every wish requires an individual approach. The Golden Fish is 100% successful at this task.

.....

Since our daughter's wish, holidays together, could only be granted after the completion of her treatment, the waiting had a beautiful effect on all of us in that we were so much more looking forward to the time when she recovers and her wish can come true. Our caravan trip was full of wonderful adventures that our daughter and all of us will remember forever.

.....

Change nothing and stay the way you are, please. As long as you can, keep helping, bringing smiles to people's faces, and making come true the dreams of those who need it the most.

.....

The few days we spent together in Paris were magnificent. We thoroughly enjoyed everything, the weather was great, and Simon coped much better than we had expected. He was thrilled. They were some of the best days we've had together as a family.

.....

Their approach was excellent. Everything was explained in detail, and all my questions were answered.

.....

It provided us with a huge amount of motivation that allowed us to endure the treatment in the hospital and probably sped up Amálka's discharge. She bloomed as she looked forward to her wish come true. Because spas no longer worked for her, I hoped that a seaside stay would improve her condition, which it did. Hopefully, it will give her strength for the months to come. Moreover, all of us girls had a chance to be together again and forget everyday worries for a moment. Afterward, getting a photo album filled with memories was so charming and moving.

.....

From where I'm standing, the project is excellent. It provides children with a light at the end of the tunnel during treatment, something they can look forward to.

.....

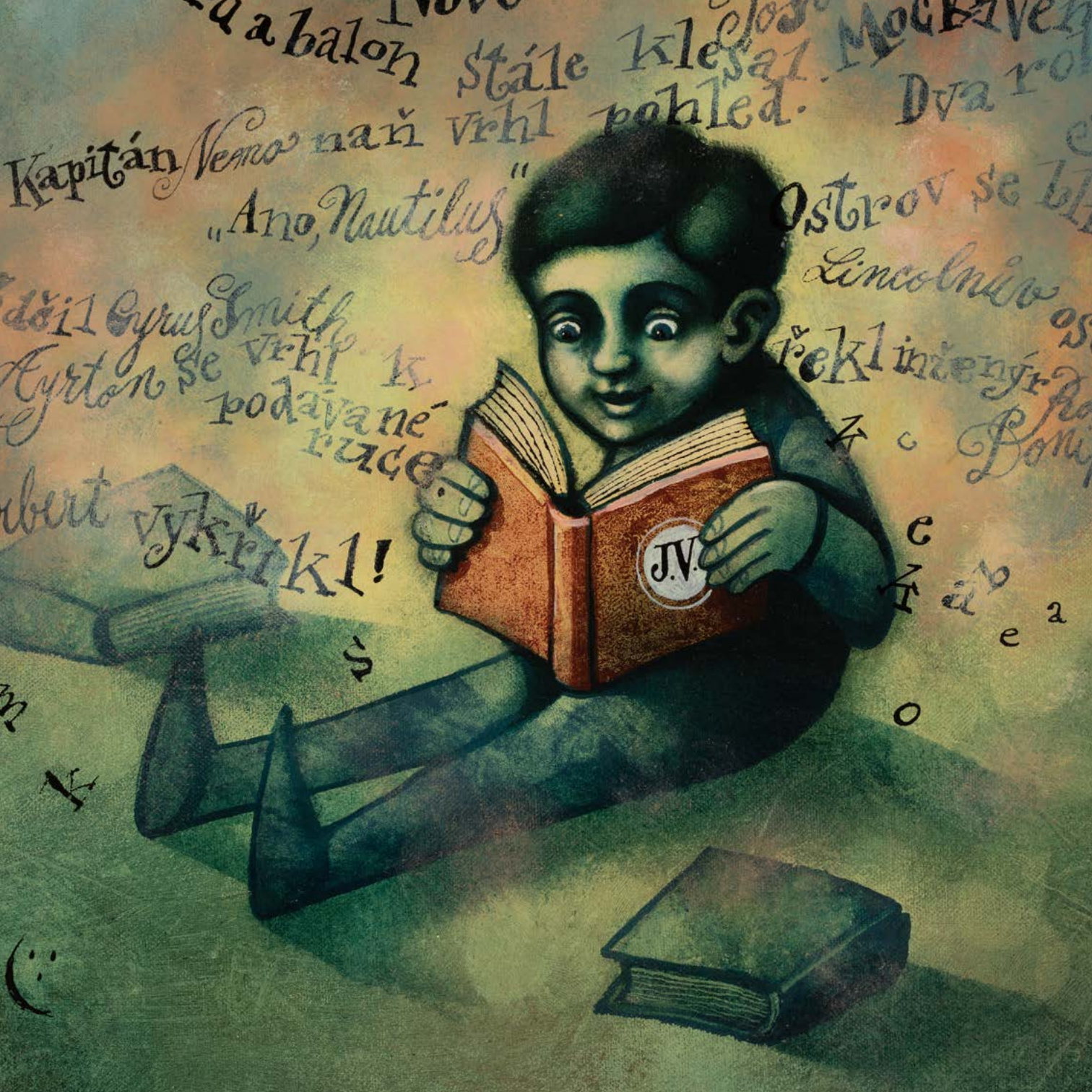
The effect it's had on Pete is such that he now wants to be a pilot :-)) ... For me, his excitement and the joy in his eyes sufficed.

.....

The Golden Fish project has granted a wish my parents would be unable to provide due to financial constraints and a language barrier. Thanks to the Golden Fish, I know that I can fly with a ventilation apparatus without having to worry (that goes especially for mom).

.....

I was able to give a gift to a friend who didn't expect it. He enjoyed it, and that made me happy too.



After the treatment, during which our family was kept apart, it was an unforgettable occasion filled with joy and contentment. All of us thoroughly enjoyed the time together on a luxurious holiday. Until the very last moment, Robík didn't believe that the Golden Fish would grant his wish.

I found out about the Golden Fish project when I was ill. It allowed me to get away from the hard reality and infused me with a great wave of positive energy that made me focus on my dreams instead of thinking dismal thoughts.

We like the fact that the Golden Fish will travel to any place where children feel comfortable to discuss their wishes. Likewise, it's great that they place emphasis on ensuring that the wish is formulated by the child himself or herself.

I recall the terrible days after being given Alešek's diagnosis and all of a sudden being separated from him, as he spent three weeks in an ICU. We found out about the Golden Fish when the treatment was nearly completed, in the waiting room of the oncology department in Brno, where a young woman talked to us and enchanted Alešek so much, that he too wanted to have a wish granted.

I was given enough room to think about everything, and there was no pressure.

A highly professional, human, and personal approach. We liked very much how they presented wishes to children and explained the individual categories from which they can choose. We quickly put things together about a meeting with Porty, and the Golden Fish was able to respond in a fast and flexible manner.

It was a few breathtaking days during which Lucy was able to forget about all the pain she had been through, the uncertainty, and the difficult times still ahead of her. Me too, after months on end,

I stopped worrying, and both of us – I traveled to the seaside with her – soaked up the sun that recharged our batteries and gave us new strength. The whole family has profited, since we had been pretty much on our last legs.

We were very surprised that there is somebody who cares about our affliction and is able to donate so much to allow us to forget about it, if only for a few days. To us, the Golden Fish is an expression of humanness in its purest form.

The project's name perfectly epitomizes its purpose. Until now, we thought that the Golden Fish brings a wish to life only in fairy tales. We never thought that ANY WISH can actually be made, even something us adults would consider over the line. It's because adults tend to consider whether a wish isn't too expensive to fulfill, whether granting it isn't unfair to other kids who are still undergoing treatment and are unable to have their wishes come true. Just for the sake of it, I've asked a few adults what they'd wish were they in the same situation as our son, and few were able to give an answer. In our view, the Golden Fish is the best endeavor we have encountered in our lives. Also, we liked their discreetness. They don't require you to make your story public in exchange for having your wish granted. Simply put, it's a wonderfully pure effort that is hard to describe with words.

The Golden Fish vastly exceeded my expectations. Frankly, I had not expected such a degree of personal involvement and empathy as that expressed by Josef and the whole team. The project was flawlessly planned from A to Z with consideration to my son's age and medical condition.

The time when their wishes are granted is extremely important for children suffering such a difficult fate. The planning and making their wish come true keeps their mind busy, as they look forward to it, and then enjoy a time that helps them forget their hardship.

By granting Tom a wish, we wanted to mark the end of his illness. He's been able to overcome the illness, and it seems that the wish come true really did put an end to this experience. He's now

focused on the present and the future. For us, the parents, it's a bit more complicated. The fears and concerns won't go away that easily.

Our son takes the watch off only when he goes to sleep. He's still learning and discovering new things, mainly with the help of my husband. He likes to send us text messages, which he can dictate, and that's great for us. It works the other way around too, because we can contact him any time, and we know that he'll notice. Apart from that, he's a bit of a hotshot at school, which, I think, has improved his self-confidence because the teacher assistant who works with him said that he fits in much better, gets along with others and makes new friends, which he wasn't quite able to do before.

The wish was granted in a way that hugely exceeded our expectations. I have never come across an organization and people that would be so nice and friendly.

When the Golden Fish visited us to let us know that my son's wish would be granted, there were tears, but for the first time I could see that he was genuinely joyful. He still relishes the granted wish and will continue to for a long time to come.

The Golden Fish project is a unique endeavor. I appreciate that the wishes they grant are what children genuinely want, and that the genuine nature of every wish is carefully examined in a discussion with the child. They put no pressure on either the child or the family to share their story, and granting a wish is not conditional on providing a photograph of the sick kid. This guarantees a certain intimacy and respect, because not everyone wants to share the most difficult time in their life with the rest of the world. Older children are allowed to formulate their wish all on their own and decide the way in which it is granted. All of that sets the Golden Fish apart from other programs that aim to help seriously ill children. For some families, including ours, the Golden Fish is therefore the only possible option.

Not only did we have our 'first times' on our path to a granted wish – the first flight, the first time in a club until late into the night, the first meeting with a singer – but we now also like to recall these

wonderful moments. To this day, we listen to Icy Subzero's songs, and our daughter stays in touch with him and his friends over social media. It's awesome. When Hanča is in a bad mood, she listens to his songs and feels better already.

.....

The project is very beneficial as a part of the therapeutic process. Treatment is more effective if the child is in high spirits and looks forward to something pleasant. All that is reflected in how the immune system responds.

.....

Suddenly, you fall into the ocean's abyss. That's the illness. The first to reach you is a large ship with plenty of help. That's the doctors, hospitals, treatments. Then, not long afterward, you're joined by a big blue dolphin that swims along the ship faithfully to keep you company and give wonderful, fairy-tale-like support. For a child that is on this life-saving but uncomfortable boat, still in danger of falling overboard, it's of paramount importance to see this beautiful sea creature that helps him or her focus on images of the present and the future. The dolphin becomes a friend and subsequently the donor of the child's deepest wish. The dolphin becomes the Golden Fish that frees the little patient before departing into the ocean's depths, leaving behind a sense of great generosity on the one hand, and deep gratitude for providing support along the way on the other.

.....

Every day, Felix realizes at school that the Golden Fish has allowed him to be one of the best. We, the parents, can see how radiant he is and how his self-confidence is growing. He's now at a secondary school, and we can see that he's becoming the boy he was before the illness. He can do some things better than others, and it's thanks to the technology he uses.

.....

The smile brought to our son's face by the Golden Fish is something we hadn't seen in a long time. It helped him mentally, his interest in things around him increased, and he was no longer so depressed.

.....

A full 100%!





Expressing a wish

Many of us might be incapable of expressing what we really wish for, the dream we want to make come true. But how about knowing your biggest wish and then having someone opening up a whole range of other options, which you had never considered? At that moment, you might realize that you'll have to keep looking for your biggest wish for some time still, and that it will be a wonderful but perhaps uneasy task.

Since every dreamer is different, so is every search for a wish. In some cases, the wish is clear from the outset, and the dreamer doesn't want to consider anything else: the choice is obvious. In other cases, more than one meeting may be necessary, everything must be considered, discussed with the parents, and the wish allowed to mature. Whatever the path to a wish, however, every dreamer deserves admiration for undertaking the journey at all. We are grateful to dreamers for reminding us of what it's like to wish for something with the whole heart and for their willingness to share their wishes with us.

We have learned that the key to expressing a person's biggest wish is establishing personal contact and giving children time to think in a comfortable setting. In 2023, we traveled 78,097 km to meet dreamers. On average, each of the Golden Fish's cars traveled 15,619 km. That translates into 372 km per wish, considering the number of wishes we realized last year. Had we traveled the same distance around the equator, we would have circled the Earth 1.94 times.

We want to extend our thanks to Jan Bárta, Tereza Soldánová, Silvie Endlicherová, the illustrators of letters the Golden Fish sends to dreamers to let them know that their wish would be granted. They create customized letters in a helpful, expeditious, and highly sensitive manner for every individual dreamer, based on his or her wish.

A Dreamer's confidence is best gained by showing ignorance

What Jakub, head of The Team of Communication with Children and Families says about how a wish is expressed

I always ask 'why'; I used to when I was studying and I continue to in my professional life. My whys brought the most intriguing answers, while I was undergoing physiotherapy internship, studying psychology and special education, or working in corporate HR.

At the Golden Fish, whys are equally important. The path to expressing the biggest wish runs through these questions: Why is the dreamer wishing that thing in particular? Is it because he or she can't think of anything else? Or is it because he or she is afraid of coming across as greedy, if wishing for something that might appear too expensive or complicated to organize? Or is it because this is what he or she really wants?"

Working in the team responsible for Communication with Children and Families is about asking questions and offering options. Questions are needed to show children the full spectrum of what the Golden Fish can do. Respecting the dreamer's wish is of paramount importance for us. At the same time, however, we want to ensure that dreamers are aware of all the options. Our work would be incomplete if we didn't try to promote imagination and encourage children to look beyond the horizon, when we feel that they can go further in the scope of their dreams. When asking a child about the dream our task is to create a space in which the dreamer is able to express his or her deepest wish. Likewise, we respect it when a dreamer doesn't want to express a wish. In short, dreamers are in full control over their dreams.

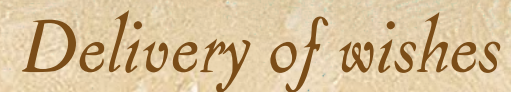
Sometimes, I think that it would be nice to get to a point where I would be able to say: OK, this is it. I now understand my job, I'm an expert, and there's nothing that can surprise me. That will probably never be achieved at the Golden Fish. Every dreamer brings something

new, and you never know what's in store: what the family will be like, the dreamer, what the wish will be ... In short, you must stay open-minded and willing to keep learning.

I like moments when I look like a fool to the child. Such as situations when the dreamer mentions an athlete, YouTuber, or princess I have no idea about, and it's best to admit that I'm completely ignorant about their existence. The dreamer then becomes my guide and depicts his or her fantasies to the smallest of details: what the telephone, the meeting, the princess, the perfect holiday should be like. That's the moment when the child becomes excited and takes the process of making a wish into his or her hands. I'm the empty page for them on which they can write. ... All in all appearing ignorant sometimes pays off.

Jakub Chramosta, Head of the Team of Communication with Children and Families





The year 2023 brought the removal of more COVID restrictions, allowing us to grant all of the long anticipated wishes involving long-distance travel. Several dreamers traveled to such destinations as Japan and New Zealand. In total, 55 travel-related wishes were fulfilled.

It was very difficult to arrange a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, which took place at the Prague Castle at the beginning of June. President Pavel, who was present during the encounter, subsequently commented about the event on his Twitter account as a "meeting of two persons each of whom is a hero for the other". We want to thank Anton, the dreamer who made this wish and showed us that wishes can come true, no matter how impossible to fulfill they might seem at first. Anton was so ecstatic about his wish having come true that he wanted to share the story with others. As a result, his meeting with the Ukrainian president was reported on Czech Television. We thank President Pavel and President Zelenskyy for accepting to grant one boy's wish and going far out of their way to make the encounter possible.

In making a dreamer's wish come true, the Golden Fish's Production Team works together with various other persons. In that regard, our suppliers make a big contribution by providing discounts or donating their products. Their support is very specific, and their initiative often helps us overcome difficulties that granting a wish entails. In many cases, the medical condition of our dreamers necessitates customized products or services. Likewise, some wishes could not be granted without the proactive attitude of our suppliers, even if we had unlimited financial resources.

We thank the SLANINOVÁ VOKÁL, advokátní kancelář s.r.o. for their unwavering support in the form of pro bono legal services provided to the Golden Fish in regard to all aspects of the process of granting wishes, particularly as regards client security, family privacy protection, and non-standard legal situations, such as foster care.

”Our partnership with the Golden Fish has provided us with nine years of joy. The joy of sharing such values as the ability to understand the needs and desires of other people, the willingness to help them achieve their goals, and the enthusiasm with which they undertake good deeds, of which there is never enough. Every time we can make, albeit a small, contribution to granting a dreamer’s wish, we make our own ultimate wish come true to do something that has a purpose. In that, the Golden Fish and their staff are always highly inspiring.”

SLANINOVÁ VOKÁL, advokátní kancelář s.r.o.

We thank Deloitte Audit s.r.o. for their pro bono audit services.

We also extend special thanks to Alza.cz a.s. and the travel agency Fischer, a.s.

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Big thanks go to the following personalities who made children's dreams come true in 2023:

Icy Subzero
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Pokáč (Jak Pokorný)
Porty (Filip Portales)
Tary (Taras Povoroznyk)
Marek Ztracený and his Manager Simona Krajczy
Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic
Volodymyr Oleksandrovych Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine





Volunteers

In handling the wave of travel-related wishes in 2023, we worked together with a number of great people who accompanied dreamers on their travels on a volunteer basis. The role of an accompaniment is exacting and requires a great deal of responsibility, empathy, and dedication. We always try to ensure that dreamers are accompanied by a person who either lives in or is familiar with the destination.

Everyone did their absolute maximum

Impressions of volunteer Jana Pešková from accompanying dreamers in Paris

"I've lived in France for a little over 20 years. I'm located on the west coast, in the beautifully distinctive Bretagne. My collaboration with the Golden Fish was initially arranged through my childhood friend Anička Juráčková. She called me while I was on summer vacation in Czechia, saying that an accompaniment was urgently needed for a girl that wanted to visit Disneyland.

After that, things happened real fast because the girl's condition was worsening, and her wish had to be fulfilled by the end of the summer. About three weeks after my first encounter with the Golden Fish, the dreamer herself with her sister and mom arrived in Paris. It was the first time I accompanied a dreamer from the Golden Fish, and I was only learning about my role in this situation: to put myself on the same wavelength with the child, to sense what she'd like to do, and to offer possible options.

At the same time, I learned how to deal with the unique position of a volunteer accompanying a dreamer while his or her wishes are being fulfilled. For a while, you become part of the family, and it might happen that they open up to you, confide, and take advantage of

the fact that you give them all your attention. It's a sort of journey into their lives for two to three days. It's very intense while it lasts; then you part ways and never meet again. That's the way it goes, but I often remember all of the encounters, all of the people I met.

In 2023, I escorted Zdeněk on his trip to Paris, a boy who can only move in a recumbent position. The experience was unimaginably intense. Within a scope of six hours, many moments happened that might seem minor to us, but were exceptional in the context of Zdeněk's situation. Needless to say, they were exceptional not only for Zdeněk, but for everyone who took part in making his wish come true.

That's one of my strongest impressions about Zdeněk's journey. Everybody there did their absolute maximum: his parents, the airline, Martin, the medical accompaniment, our driver, and so did I. There were others we met along the way – the staff in the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower, and elsewhere. They went very far beyond the scope of their regular duties and did their utmost to assist us. It was a wonderful experience. Simply put, escorting a dreamer gives the journey an extra dimension and intensity. You experience things you never would with anyone else."

Jana Pešková, Volunteer

The answer to challenges needs to be a YES

Impressions of volunteer Jana Koverdynská from accompanying dreamers to Disneyland in France

"I ended up in Paris because of my husband, who was offered an attractive job there. Unsurprisingly, lots of our friends and family members came to visit, taking advantage of our knowledge of the city and, more importantly, having a place to stay. Like that, I became an unofficial tour guide. The good thing was that everybody had a program corresponding to their wishes and interests.

Be that is as it may, I was introduced to the Golden Fish by my former colleague and friend Jakub. I was very pleased that he thought of me in asking if I could help them fulfill a wish made by a beautiful young lady and her mom. The Golden Fish is a team of wonderful people. I applaud them for their ideas and perseverance, and for always doing their job with a smile. I didn't hesitate for a second and accepted the proposition; the older I get, the more I think that one needs to say yes to whatever offers come your way.

It goes without saying that my decision paid off. The few days I spent with the dreamer and her mother in Paris were simply fabulous, including such adventures as a trip to an empty beach on a train overcrowded with holidaymakers. Both of them were seasoned tourists; I like that, when people know what they want and are active. The dreamer knew exactly what landmarks and historical sites she wanted to visit, and her mom was resolved to assist.

I take my hat off to them. In the end, we spent together whole days from dawn to dusk, walking or traveling by bus or train. I recommend to everyone to get to know cities, museums, public transport, airports, and restaurants from the vantage point of a wheelchair-bound person. It's like being in another dimension; you use different entrances, different elevators, you get help from people, you talk to other disabled individuals.

There is a downside too, like finding a barrier-free washroom, which is a superhuman task. Try it sometime. But don't use toilets reserved for the handicapped, even if it's convenient because they're vacant most of the time. Leave them free for use by those who really need them. I must praise the French because while not everything in France always works the way it should, their natural charm and *bonne humeur* worked wonders in resolving all our problems. Trust me, French people really aren't arrogant. The experience was also novel in that I had to handle situations I normally wouldn't. I wanted to keep the girls happy, so I mustered up all the courage I could and things worked out in the end. Were it not for them, I would've given up on quite a few occasions, but the two gave me strength and purpose. All in all, we made do just fine."

Jana Koverdynská, Volunteer

We thank the following volunteers for giving the dreamers their time and much more:

Barincová Zuzana

Bauerová Eliška

Dominik Tomáš

Dymešová Ivana

Gyurkovska Pavla

Harrer Lubomír

Kotková Sabina

Koverdinská Jana

Mužátková Martina

Pešková Jana

Poljaková Andrea

Poljaková Iveta

Pospíšilová Hana

Sasaki Rie

Simandlová Tereza

Turková Adéla

Vodák Jan



Dreamers

When you say Zdeněk, everyone at the Golden Fish knows right away who you're talking about. Zdeněk is a former dreamer suffering from a very serious condition. His parents take care of him with a strong resolve, much love, and endless devotion, trying to fill his life with adventures. Zdeněk gives back by having the desires, problems, and sense of humor of a normal boy, despite all the limitation he faces. What wish did Zdeněk ask the Golden Fish to fulfill? Experiencing a great adventure, that goes without saying!

Trip to Paris

(Published with the dreamer's consent)

Dreamer Zdeněk, 19 years

Wish: "Flying on an airplane. To Paris. I want to see the Eiffel Tower. Or the picture of Mona Lisa. Yes, a trip to Paris it is."

When Zdeněk met with the Golden Fish's staff to discuss the wish he wanted to grant, all of the ideas revolved around his desire to FLY! It came as no surprise then, that Zdeněk eventually decided on an airplane trip to Paris. In light of Zdeněk's medical condition, the trip had to be completed in the presence of both parents and a medical assistant, who would operate medical equipment in the event of complications. In addition, Zdeněk had to be transported in a supine position, together with artificial respiratory support equipment, a suction apparatus, a cough assist machine, and an Ambu bag.

The Aeropartner airline accepted the challenge, and a story that was thrilling until the very last moment commenced. After a month of preparatory work, all was ready, setting the stage for a quick 12-hour trip to Paris at the end of September. The joyful anticipation,

however, was thwarted by technical problems, and the aircraft could not be made ready by the planned departure time. In addition, the fall was coming, and Zdeněk was feeling under the weather. The trip was therefore postponed. The planning resumed in the spring of 2023.

On 2 June 2023, the sun was shining bright, the plane was ready, and medical assistant Jindřich Hornych and the flight crew impatiently awaited the arrival of our dreamer and his mom and dad. When the ambulance came, it was crystal clear that Zdeněk and his parents were a flawlessly functioning unit, and there was no doubt that it would be an awesome trip.

A special vehicle for transport of immobile travelers waited for us in front of the private terminal at Le Bourget in Paris. At noon time, the traffic was insane, and the ride to the Eiffel Tower took over an hour, but nobody minded. The Parisian leg of the trip was managed by the Golden Fish's wonderful volunteer guide Jana Pešková.

Zdeněk and his entourage savored gorgeous views of sun-soaked Paris from the Eiffel Tower's second floor, unaware that they were in for the highest adrenaline only during the subsequent transfer to the Louvre. In the heavy Parisian traffic, the driver had to go over a curb at one point, causing panic inside the vehicle that would never happen with regular passengers. Mom was afraid that Zdeněk might get hurt, dad was trying to unbuckle to put Zdeněk back to the correct position, and Zdeněk himself laughed because that was precisely the kind of adventure he wished to experience.

Wading through the droves of visitors at the Louvre took a quite a while, but in the end, Mona Lisa smiled at Zdeněk from very close. Afterward, Zdeněk bought a few souvenirs for friends, and after 17 demanding hours, he was back in his room in Litvínov.

Everyone who lent a helping hand in making Zdeněk's wish come true agrees: it was one of the most wonderful times in their lives. On his part, Zdeněk is said to remember his trip to Paris as if it happened yesterday. We wish him to always remain a person who tenaciously insists on his dreams coming true.

12 hours of a dream come true

Impressions of dreamer Zdeněk's from his trip to Paris

"There's hardly anyone who wouldn't enjoy traveling and seeing the world's famous landmarks. As far as traveling by air, however, I was mainly inspired by my cousin who used to regularly fly to the U.S. prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, because she worked there. I thought to myself: "Gotta take a trip to the land of the brave one day, too." As time went by, however, things changed, and I realized that traveling to the United States would be too costly. Likewise, I grew in the meantime, and dad had a hard time carrying me to a normal airplane already when I was younger. Not to mention that the voltage in the U.S. is different and my two ventilation devices and the power supply wouldn't stay charged for such a long time.

Be it as it may, I continued thinking about my wish. I decided not to give up on a plane trip. My destination was no longer the U.S., but a country closer, somewhere in Europe. Finally, I settled on Paris. Why Paris of all places? Well, the inspiration to fly to Paris came once again from my family, more specifically my sister and granny who visited the city in the past. They recounted that Paris was beautiful and showed me photographs of the Parisian cityscape. I said to myself: "Well, why not take a trip to Paris as well." And boy, I do not regret that decision!

I looked forward to the trip with much anticipation. Since it would be my very first flight, I had no idea what travel by air entailed. Frankly, I might have been afraid a little bit. As soon as the plane took off, my fear went away. Mom was the one most afraid. My only worry was that the plane would have a defect, which happened before the previous planned departure, but luckily all was fine.

I hoped that there would be some adventure on the way to Paris or in the city. I got what I bargained for, I think, in Paris, in the taxi that was taking us to the Louvre. After the vehicle made an abrupt maneuver, everybody in the cab panicked as my head flew to the side of my wheelchair. I only ended up a bit askew and my hand was outside the wheelchair, but I

was okay otherwise. Everybody was scared, they tried to unbuckle and get to me as quickly as possible. In the end, it was our guide Jana who saved me, and I could only laugh about all the hullabaloo.

Mom and Dad sure played the most important role on our team. I don't think my trip to Paris could have happened without their courage, strength, and cooperation. Another person who was instrumental in making everything happen was our guide Jean (Jana), who acted as an interpreter and helped us arrange a lot of things. Were it not for Jean, tickets to see the Mona Lisa painting up close would probably have been wasted, which would have been a pity. Thanks to her quick intervention, however, we were able to see the picture even after the tickets expired. The medical assistant who accompanied us did a great job too, but luckily I didn't need his help during the trip. So much the better!

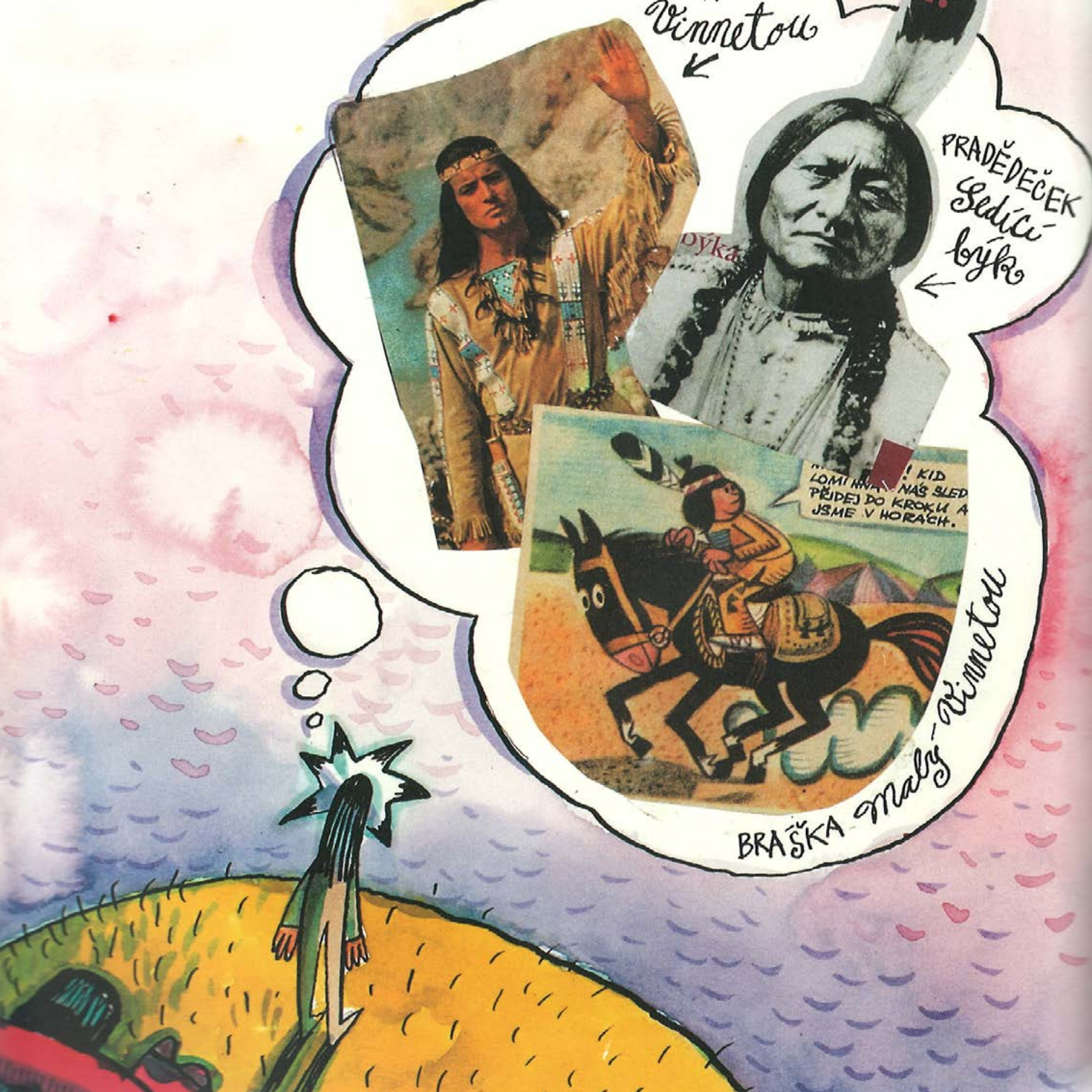
I remember the trip as if it happened yesterday, even the exact number of people I met on the journey... Just kidding, not even Megamind (a character from an American cartoon) would remember that! But I do remember quite a bit. The flight, the visit to the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre Museum, and the taxi ride I already mentioned.

What can I say, I remember the trip with great fondness. When I have visitors who haven't seen our pictures from Paris, I show them the photo album that the Golden Fish had made for me, and I tell everyone how amazing the Golden Fish is!"

Zdeněk Haslberger, Dreamer

"While accompanying Zdeněk, from the first meeting to granting his wish, lots of situations happened, which fall outside the scope of the Golden Fish's 'regular miracles'. There must have been a whole ocean of golden fishies that helped make Zdeněk's wish come true. No wonder. He was such a perseverant dreamer devoted to his dream that it couldn't have been any other way. He never became desperate, he never gave up. How could we?"

Karin, Team of Communication with Children and Families



Dreamers' council

The best stories never end on the last page. They continue their life in the reader's mind, changing him, enriching his soul. The same is true about the stories of dreamers whose wishes the Golden Fish has fulfilled. Everyone who has taken the path of granting a wish remembers the time with fondness and enjoys recounting his or her memories.

We are very pleased to announce that 2023 saw the launch of the Dreamers' Council, which included four former dreamers for whom their partnership with the Golden Fish continued after their wishes were granted.

The main objective of the Dreamers' Council was to collect feedback from former dreamers regarding the entire process and its impact, one year or longer after its completion. At the same time, the Dreamers' Council helped dispel the concerns of future dreamers and their parents by sharing their intimate experience with the process of making a wish. The pilot project was so successful that we decided to continue with newly appointed members.

How my journey with an illness brought me to the Dreamers' Council

The story of former dreamer and Dreamers' Council member Nela Hudecová

"My journey began on 4 December 2019. I remember that day as if it was yesterday. I had a blood sample taken at my pediatrician's office in the morning, and the doctor called mom in the afternoon to come to the hospital right away. The next day, I was given my diagnosis

– chronic myeloid leukemia. It's an illness that usually occurs in older people, it's very rare in children. As the name suggests, the disease is chronic, in my case very difficult to cure. I must touch wood, however, because the latest blood tests show a significant improvement and the first, very minuscule bit of hope that I might be able to stop the treatment. I'm very lucky because the therapy is biological and only consists of taking medication on a daily basis. It's relatively uncomplicated, and it doesn't really restrict my life. Paradoxically, the most difficult period was right after I was released from the hospital and had to spend four months at home. Then came COVID, and the four months became seven. To this day, I struggle to stay home for a week when I have a simple cold.

I now see my illness in a positive light. Luckily, it's given me more than what it's taken away. I feel that during the time I was in the hospital, my family came together and created a strong bond. It brings a smile to my face when I recall how Dad used to bring me and Mom food made by Granny, or how my auntie brought a pot of schnitzels when she came to visit me at the hospital. Thanks to the fact that Mom could stay in the hospital with me, our relationship deepened to a point that we can now confide to each other the most intimate things. The illness has made me realize how grateful I am to have the kind of family I have.

I found out about the Golden Fish about a month after being given my diagnosis. I remember the moment when Anet visited, and I offered her cookies I had baked the day before. Afterward, the Golden Fish granted me my wish, but before that happened, I asked Anet whether there was anything I could do for the Golden Fish in return or whether I could take part in some of their projects. She said that I'd have to wait at least a year after my wish was granted, at which point we'd figure out something. A year later Anet called to let me know that the Golden Fish was setting up a group of former dreamers, and I was happy to become a member of what became the Dreamers' Council. I'm very grateful to the Golden Fish for this opportunity, not only for being part of the organization and seeing its inner workings, but also for meeting lots of amazing people and attending wonderful events in which the Golden Fish participates. I'd like to keep the Golden Fish in my life in the future because it has a special place in my heart, and that's how it's always gonna be!"

Nela Hudecová, member of the Dreamers' Council

Acknowledgment

We thank all members of the Dreamers' Council, its chairwoman in particular, for all of their interesting suggestions, cheerful meetings, and assistance with spreading the word about the Golden Fish's mission among children and their families:


Stela Ambrosová,
Chairwoman

Nela Hudecová

Vojtěch Šedivý

Ondřej Vrba





*272 applications,
57% boys 43% girls
58% oncological patients*

*210 wishes granted;
39% I wish to experience*

Facts and figures

In 2023, we received 272 applications, 57% from boys and 43% from girls. About 13% of the applications did not meet the eligibility criteria, in most cases because of the less severe nature of the applicants' diagnosis.

The structure of diagnoses was similar as in the preceding years. An increase was recorded in the number of applicants suffering from spinal muscular atrophy and dystrophy from 2% to 9%. The increase reflects the expansion of the Golden Fish's ambassador program. Children with an oncological disease continued to be the largest cohort, accounting for 58% of all applicants. One and three percent of applicants were children suffering from cystic fibrosis and an organ failure, respectively. A long-term decline in the number of cystic fibrosis patients is the result of a new causal treatment of this illness, for which we, as well as the families of sick children, are infinitely grateful. There was a decrease from 32% to 29% in the diagnosis category classified as "Other".

The representation of age groups of registered children is even.

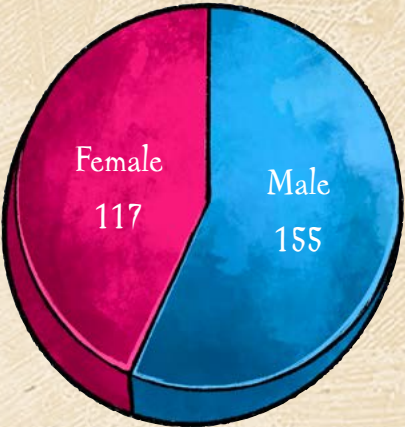
In the reported year, the Golden Fish granted 210 wishes, which translates into more than four wishes per week on average. Regrettably, the wishes of 10 of the applicants could not be granted in time.

There was a significant change in how the expressed wishes were represented in the individual categories. Compared to the preceding year, 'I Wish to Experience' wishes increased from 28% (2022) to 39% (2023), while wishes in the 'I Wish to Have' category decreased from 62% (2022) to 52% (2023).

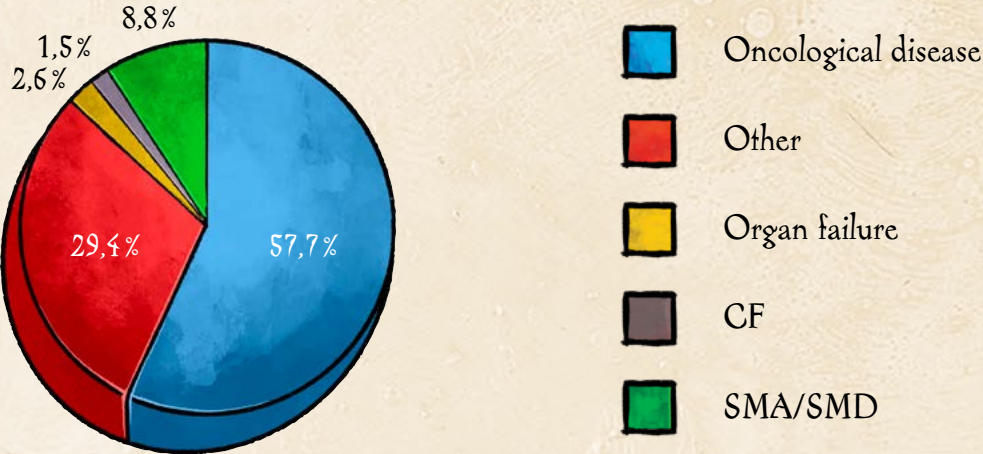
In 2023, we met with dreamers and their families every 14 hours on average. Six percent of the meetings were conducted online, compared to 9% in 2022.

We received an application every 32 hours, and a wish was granted every 42 hours.

Structure of dreamers by sex (applications received in 2023)



Structure of dreamers by diagnosis (application received in 2023))

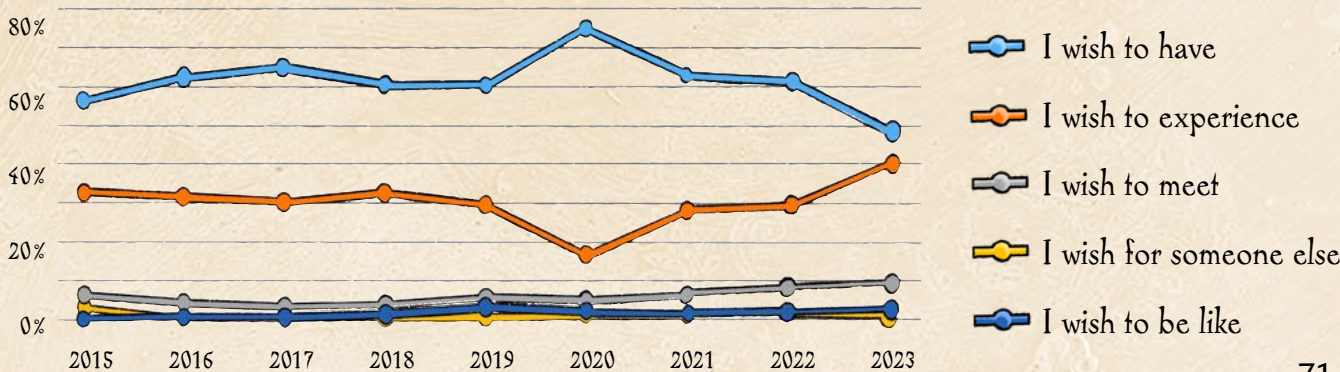


Total number of expressed wishes 231

Percentage of expressed wishes per category (wishes expressed in 2023)



Percentage of wishes per category (wishes expressed in 2023)



Ukrainian dreamers

The Golden Fish has been granting wishes to Ukrainian children since 2022. From the 21 applications received in 2023, 18 were accepted. An oncological disease accounted for the highest number of the diagnoses (15). In 2022, the Golden Fish granted 11 wishes (five girls and six boys), in most cases to children suffering from an oncological disease. In both years, all of the granted wishes were in the 'I Wish to Have' category.

Our thanks for assistance in communication with Ukrainian dreamers and their parents go to:

Ing. Olesia Ferentsovichova

Tetiana Davydluk

Vira Salevieva

International partnerships

In 2022, we established partnerships with organizations that pursue the same mission as the Golden Fish – granting the wishes of sick children. In February 2023, our partners visited the Golden Fish on the occasion celebrating the 1,000th wish made come true. The event was so successful that it has grown into an ongoing collaboration. As sharing experience and know-how proved to be highly useful for all the participants, a grant application was filed with the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research under the Erasmus+ program. The grant was approved for a project titled Wish Alliance, and we will continue meeting on an official basis during the next two years.

Our joint efforts will include exchange internships, specialized self-experience training, a conference for the professional community, a new shared website, and much more.

All these activities notwithstanding, however, our primary objective is to use this project to improve the quality and availability of services provided by organizations dedicated to granting wishes to sick children.

We thank our colleagues from make-a-wish organizations in other countries:

Association Rêves, France

Gonnot Josiane

Association Rêves, France

Moisan Madeline

Csodalámpa, Hungary

Patzauer Éva

Csodalámpa, Hungary

Patzauer Gábor

Fundación Pequeño Deseo, Spain

Pozo Cristina

Fundación Pequeño Deseo, Spain

Cuadrado Cristina

Fundacja Mam Marzenie, Poland

Kwiatkowska Michalina

Fundacja Mam Marzenie, Poland

Ludew Aleksandra

Minu Unistuste Päev, Estonia

Gabor-Mägi Kristiina

Minu Unistuste Päev, Estonia

Ingel Margarita

Minu Unistuste Päev, Estonia

Tatter Evelin

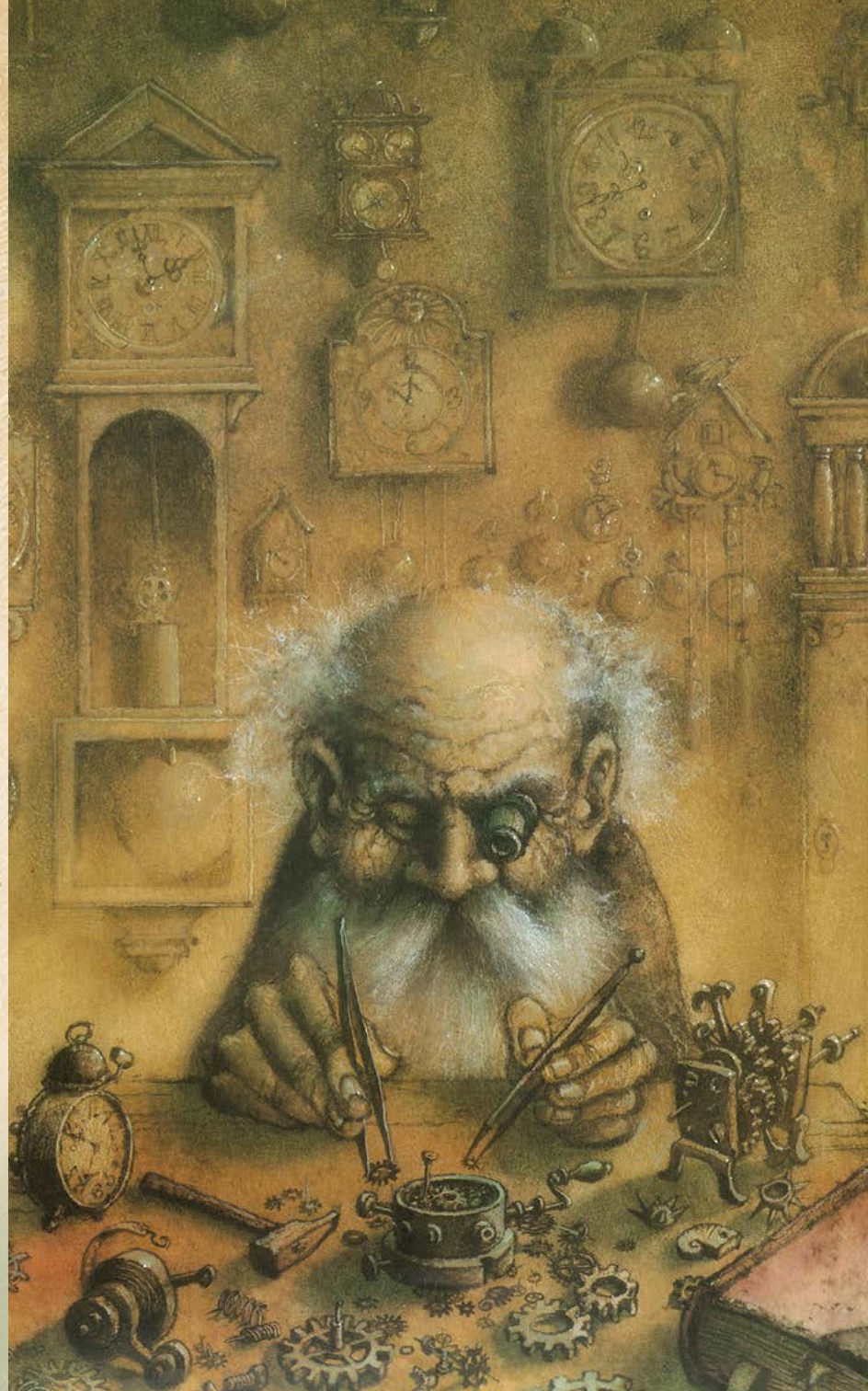
wünschdirwas e.V., Germany

Weag Lida

Audit

The enclosed financial figures are an excerpt from the organization's financial statements. The full version of the financial statements is deposited at the head office and published in the Collection of Documents maintained by the Registry Court. On 28 June 2024, the audit firm Deloitte Audit, s.r.o. issued an auditor's report without reservations.

We thank Deloitte Audit, s.r.o. for performing the audit on a pro bono basis.



Financial report

In 2023, the Golden Fish was able to grant wishes to ill children thanks to financial support provided by individual and corporate donors, contributions from foundations, discounts offered by suppliers, services provided free of charge, and work performed by volunteers.

The organization received CZK 22,600,000 and CZK 8,500,000 in financial donations from Ondřej Vlček and the Vlček Family Foundation, respectively. Corporate donations totaled CZK 198,349, and donations from individual donors amounting to CZK 551,518. A total of CZK 76,778 was collected at a public fundraising event.

In-kind donations were made by Alza.cz, a.s. – CZK 300,338 (electronics) and Prusa Research a.s. – CZK 23,545. Deloitte Audit, s.r.o. provided an in-kind donation valued CZK 48,000.

Further, CZK 1,056,000 in discounts provided by suppliers had a highly favorable effect on financial performance. In addition, various legal, graphic design, translation, and specialized consulting services were provided free of charge.

Volunteers donated 750 hours as part of fulfilling wishes or carrying out the Golden Fish's public awareness activities.

Costs incurred in 2023 totaled CZK 30,034,000, where costs directly related to granting wishes amounted to CZK 22,859,000.

Administrative costs accounted for 24% of total costs in 2023, reflecting the establishment of a new department responsible for donor relations and public relations.

No remuneration was paid to members of the Board of Directors in 2023. Funds in the total amount of CZK 12,979,000 were carried over to the year 2024.

Thank you all

Katarína and Ondřej Vlček are the Golden Fish's heart and soul. They devote as much time as they can, and their contribution goes far beyond serving on the Board of Directors. They are assisted by Irena Zavadová who provides both human perspective and expert oversight. We thank each of them for their lasting cooperation.

On her part, comptroller Martina Břeňová pays close attention not only to figures, but also to the Golden Fish's strategic decisions. We appreciate her work and extend our thanks.

The Golden Fish's mission is to be part of the comprehensive care given to children suffering from a life-threatening illness. This task could not succeed without the support of prominent specialists. We thank MUDr. Lucie Hrdličková, MUDr. Mahulena Exnerová, Chief Physician MUDr. Petra Keslová, and PhDr. Gražina Kokešová Kleinová for consultations, assistance, and support.

No less importantly, I want to thank the wonderful members of the Golden Fish team. They are always ready to do the literally impossible to make the small miracles happen for children. In some situations, coping with the stress while remaining empathic, human, and authentic requires a great deal of courage and an immense amount of energy. I thank the entire team for their work that is indispensable for the organization's functioning. I thank all of you for the work you do and for being who you are!

Karin Pospíšilová





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Klára Besuchet, Tomáš Hornek,
Jitka Chalupníčková, Jakub Chramosta,
Jana Ježková, Zuzana Lebedová, Linda Machalová,
Lucie Pekárková, and Karin Pospíšilová

Edited by: Sarah Brock

Prague, 28 June 2024

Statutory Representative:

Karin Pospíšilová, Director