

December 2023



# THE MCS INSIDER

The official newsletter of  
Manatee Children's Services, Inc.



## *Our History and Mission*

**"To advocate for and provide the resources, skills, and shelter to alleviate abuse through prevention and intervention for all children and their families."**

Manatee Children's Services was founded in 1977 by Carol Chamberlain: a librarian, teacher, and social worker with a passion for child advocacy. Through her work in social services, Carol learned that Manatee County had a dire need for shelter to house abused children removed from their homes. She rallied a group of citizens to make the shelter a reality and, to this day, MCS continues to operate as Manatee County's only emergency shelter for child victims of abuse and the county's only Child Advocacy Center.

We provide a full spectrum of programs serving over 12,000 children and families annually. We offer programs in treatment, prevention, intervention, and residential services. Such programs include an emergency shelter, long-term group homes, mental health services, parenting education and training, forensic medical and specialized child victim interview services, support services for relative caregivers, teen pregnancy prevention, and children's personal safety. Visit our [website](#) to learn more.

## In this edition:

- **Holiday Project event**
- **MCS Capital Campaign**
- **GAP Thanksgiving recap**
- **Community News**
- **Community Spotlight**
- **Featured Success Story**



YOU ARE INVITED TO A

# Holiday PARTY

Join us for a fun evening of music, food, 50/50 raffles,  
and networking sponsored by our BNI moving  
company partners to benefit the MCS Holiday Project.

5:00 – 7:00 PM

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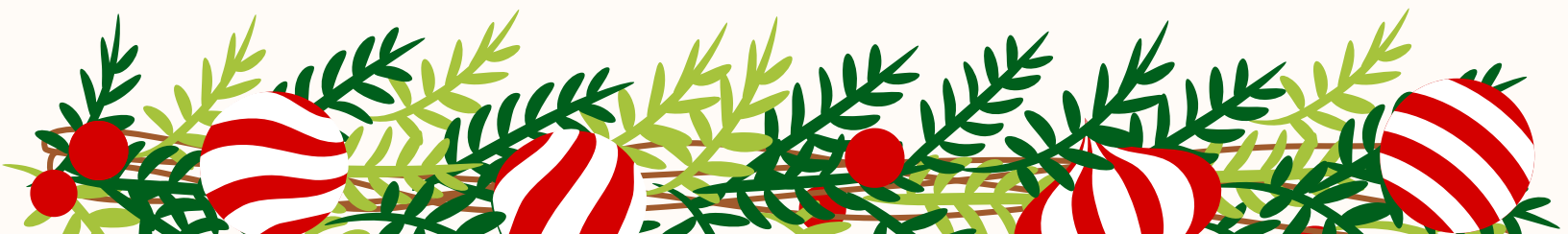
DECEMBER

Gold Coast Eagle  
Distributing

7051 Wireless Ct,  
Sarasota FL 34240

\$20 entry fee with complimentary  
beer and wine

RSVP: Zoe Kasper (Kasperzoe@gmail.com)



# **EXCITING NEWS!!!**

# **WELCOME TO OUR HOUSE**

## **Capital Project**

The giving season is critical for children in Manatee County, and we have some exciting news to share. The William G. and Marie Selby Foundation will award Manatee Children's Services a \$100,000 grant for our "Welcome to Our House" project when we have raised \$50,000. This initiative is pressing. It will transform our agency headquarters to provide even better support for more than 20,000 lives that deserve our compassionate services.

We are asking you to make a leadership gift, as much as you are able to contribute. Your gift is critical to enhance services for child abuse victims and create the best environment for them to receive lifesaving care. This is our last opportunity to ask for help this year, and we are grateful to know how you step up to our needs.

We can accept your gift in any form: a check or cash, a grant from your donor advised fund, or using your credit card online at [www.mcsfl.com/donate](http://www.mcsfl.com/donate). This time of year, many people aged 70 ½ or older also choose to make qualified charitable distributions from their IRAs to organizations like Manatee Children's Services.

We would love to discuss your gift, share some of the many stories we encounter, or provide a tour of our facility. Remember, any gift amount helps children who are counting on us.

Thank you as always for being a part of our family. Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a joyful 2024!

**To schedule a tour, contact:**  
**Krista Post, Development Coordinator**  
**(941) 812-9361 or [kristap@mcsfl.com](mailto:kristap@mcsfl.com)**





# Happy Thanks Giving



We are so grateful to the Hernando DeSoto Historical Society for sponsoring another great year of our annual Grandparents as Parents Thanksgiving celebration! This event is one of our most important gatherings, as it alleviates financial stress for caregivers and brings them together during the holidays.







Thank you to the residents of Sanctuary Cove for organizing a toy drive to benefit children and families in the MCS Holiday Project and those receiving crisis services at our Child Protection Team. They will be so happy to receive these precious items!



# OUR CARING COMMUNITY



We are so excited to share two important grant awards in the month of November!

Thanks to the Manatee Community Foundation, we received \$10,800 for a new security camera system at the MCS Emergency Shelter and long-term group homes, which will allow us to more thoroughly monitor at-risk children for safety hazards.

The Bishop-Parker Foundation awarded MCS with \$27,820 to support our Spanish-Speaking Non-Offending Caregivers (NOC) program, a series of evidence-based group therapy sessions to provide caregivers with the tools to support children in their care after abuse.

Thank you to both foundations for your ongoing support of our services that break the cycle of child abuse.



***We are still in need of Holiday Project funds!***

Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/donate/2705083242980333/>

or [www.mcsfl.com/donate](http://www.mcsfl.com/donate) to make your gift.



COMMERCIAL  
PLASTERING  
U S A , L L C

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



We'd like to recognize a longtime supporter of MCS: the staff of Commercial Plastering USA, LLC. Established in 1976, their specialties are ornamental work, schools, and high-rise buildings. In fact, they are locally famous for their plastering work at the Ringling Museum for the past 40 years.

The organization became part of our giving community 25 years ago by helping raise money to build our residential foster homes. Commercial Plastering President, Billy Rice, has also taken MCS children on field trips and purchased a van for staff to transport them.

"Growing up in the environment that I did, MCS has always been dear to my heart," Billy said. "I know how it feels to be in their shoes.. Unfortunately, they have to depend on help from someone, and MCS provides that help for them."

The staff at Commercial Plastering also make a difference in our community every day through their work with Suncoast Children's Charities, the Safe Children's Coalition Angel Tree program, and Women's Resource Center. In addition, they helped tear down the original school on Anna Maria Island and build the first community center in its place.

"Children are our future and we as a society need to help these kids have a successful future," Billy said. "The saying goes, 'It takes a village to raise children' and this is never truer than with these kids that are at risk and those that have endured abuse and neglect."





# ADOPT-A-MEAL



**Looking for a way to support our families? We need your help to sponsor holiday meal items for our Grandparents as Parents.**

“Sharon” is raising her three grandchildren as a sole caregiver after her husband, who was also an active member of Grandparents as Parents, passed away. The couple adopted the three children prior to his passing.

As you can imagine, the holidays place a significant financial strain on caregivers like Sharon who has found herself unexpectedly parenting a second time around, with deep loss on top of these challenges. You can help by sponsoring holiday meal items. Such items include:

- Family-sized boxes of mashed potatoes
- Double packs of Hawaiian rolls
- Boxes of stuffing
- Large cans of green beans
- Cakes and cookies
- Powdered lemonade, juice boxes, and water
- To-go boxes (for MCS staff to supply food to families during the holidays)

To sponsor holiday meal items, please contact Krista Post at (941) 812-9361 or [kristap@mcsfl.com](mailto:kristap@mcsfl.com). Thank you so much for helping our families!

**Manatee Children's Services, Inc.**  
**A Child Advocacy Center**  
**1227 9th Avenue West**  
**Bradenton, FL 34205**  
**(941) 345-1200**  
**[info@mcsfl.com](mailto:info@mcsfl.com)**

Click on links below to view our website and follow us on social media:

