



Photo by Peton Grattino

“25 LEADING 3,000”

Student Leadership commits to everything they do, especially when it comes to Wish Week, one of the biggest events of the year.

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The fueling force behind almost all of the events at CT, the very heart and soul of school spirit, the selfless entity continuously dedicating their time and energy to the betterment of the school: student leadership. Students and staff see the results of the work of leadership, but do they truly understand all that goes into it?

Although now it is an event that is looked forward to and rejoiced, Wish Week has not always been a tradition at CT. This now essential part of the school year began when the prospect of getting involved with the Make-A-Wish Foundation was brought to former leadership teacher Mr. Aaron Pennington's attention eight years ago by Ms. Kim Rouh.

“[Pennington] was in charge of it for two years and this is my sixth year doing it. It started because Ms. Rouh came from Rock Canyon and it was a big deal at Rock Canyon, they are kind of the all stars of Make-A-Wish. So Ms. Rouh brought the tradition with us and we have just run with it,” leadership teacher Mrs Tamara Johnson said.

There is so much that goes into at-

taining the large check we all see at the Friday Wish Assembly, but there is more that goes into it than meets the eye, especially going into this year's Wish Week.

“We do committees, we have a few different ones. We always have spirit week, we always have a dance or something like that, assembly, publicity, but we also have boys' volleyball and dodgeball committee, and sponsors,” leadership member Morgan Whitaker (11) said.

It is important to consider that there are only 25 students coordinating and planning each of the events, as well as talking with sponsors, which is a considerable portion of wish week.

“I would like to give a shoutout to our sponsor committee, because I think that is the tradition that is probably the root of the success... Our sponsor committee works with the in-house sponsors, the feeder schools, businesses, and every year they have raised the bar with the amount of money that has come in from the community. Monday, everyone else had a day off, six of them came in and worked for four hours rolling shirts

and preparing so they feel ready. They run their own little business,” said Mrs. Johnson.

When it comes to raising the grand total for Make-A-Wish each year, that total isn't entirely from the students, because 3,000 students can only contribute so much out of their own pockets, so leadership reaches out to local businesses and feeder schools as part of building toward their goal of doing better than the year before. After all, the CT community extends beyond the Cherokee Trail building. It is the cumulation and collaboration with every part of the CT community that embodies the purpose of Wish Week: uniting together to make a difference for someone else.

“The goal is always \$10,000, because it costs \$7,500 to grant a wish, but last year we raised \$43,000 and of course we are very competitive, so we always like to do better than what we did the year before,” Mrs. Johnson said.

For CT, raising 30-40,000 dollars is of course a great feat to be celebrated, but what most students may not realize is all that that money can truly do. Though

we always have a singular wish kid that we aspire to raise money for, in reality the money CT raises goes to helping more than just the one wish kid. Last year, CT raised \$43,000, which was enough for Make-A-Wish to grant 6.5 wishes.

Each year, student leadership tries to top what they have done before. According to Mrs. Johnson, last year was the record, and the first year they started doing Wish Week they raised less than \$5,000.

“I try to remind the kids that it is not about the amount of money, it is about the feeling in the building, but secretly we are always trying to outdo ourselves from last year... I never want the kids to feel disappointed if they don't exceed that amount because it is about what we do at school and the impact we make on the community as well as the wishes we grant,” Mrs. Johnson said.

Though the school is usually impressed by what leadership puts together, to them it is just another day's work, however they do allow themselves to celebrate what they have accomplished, after all the time and energy they put into it.

“We always after every big event, homecoming, wish week, prom, we always do a celebration as a class, whether that be going to lunch or going for breakfast one morning just to celebrate the hard work we put into it,” Ritika Chopra (12) said.

Expressing her gratitude and appreciation for Cougar Nation at the Wish Week Assembly, Mrs. Tammy Johnson speaks to the sea of lavender. “We came together and rode the wave to rally for Raegen... We united in our diversity to make a difference for someone else,” Johnson said.
Photo by Peyton Grattino



Overcome by emotion after the grand reveal of how much CT raised for Raegan, Ishika Patel embraces a fellow leadership member in celebration.
Photo by Zoey Lynch

