



Transforming lives since 1946

Empowering children and adults with disabilities and their families to pursue their own goals and dreams. Serving individuals from Southwestern Indiana, Southern Illinois and Western Kentucky

## YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Spring 2023

### Meet Child Ambassador Waylon Jackson!

Waylon Jackson of Boonville, IN, is only 4 ½ and he has already faced more challenges than most of us do in a lifetime. But thanks to a wide range of Easterseals services, Waylon is achieving milestones that once seemed unreachable!

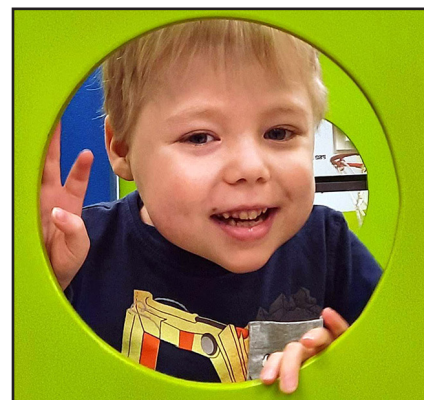
Waylon was born almost 10 weeks early weighing just 3 pounds, 11 ounces. During nine months in the NICU, he overcame a dangerous viral infection, serious breathing and heart problems, and other health emergencies. This determined little boy has come a long way since then!

Now Waylon is focused on catching up developmentally. Easterseals therapies and other services are helping him reach goals to keep up with his friends, thrive at school, and be active in the community. "Waylon is making amazing progress," said his mom, Amanda. "And we love that we are able to meet all his needs in one place – at Easterseals!"

Right now, Waylon is learning to climb stairs in the Easterseals Rehabilitation Center gym. He can ride a tricycle for a short distance using foot straps on the pedals. He's learning to grasp a crayon to draw shapes and print letters. And that's just the beginning!

Some of the most exciting changes for Waylon's family? "He is now starting to eat by mouth! It's something we have been working on since he was one year old!" Amanda said. Waylon uses a communication device to "speak" for him, but he's learning to talk and recently started to use his own voice! "We heard him laugh out loud for the first time around his fourth birthday, and it was the best sound!" Amanda said. "We have now heard him say Daddy, Mommy, sissy, and I love you!"

Waylon still has lots of work ahead of him as he pursues his goals and dreams. With the support of generous friends like YOU, Easterseals will be here for Waylon – and for thousands of other local people who are working toward a bright future! ●



Meet Waylon and other local people who are achieving their dreams. Watch the Easterseals Telethon Friday, April 14, on ABC25! Details on page 6!

**More prizes!**  
**New ticket prices!**

**You could win**  
**\$25,000!**

**2023**  
**EASTERSEALS**  
**ALL CASH**  
**RAFFLE**

2nd: **\$15,000!**  
3rd: **\$5,000!**  
4th & 5th: **\$1,000!**

*More details inside!*

IN Raffle License #002228

**Tickets \$50 each or 3 for \$100**

**Enter by March 10 for your chance**  
**to win 7 extra tickets! Call 812.437.2600**

# Did you know? FAQs about our local Easterseals.

I'm often asked questions about how the Easterseals Rehabilitation Center (ESRC) in Evansville is affiliated with the national Easterseals organization. Here are a few FAQs that you may find interesting.

**Q: Are program and governance decisions made locally?**

**A:** Yes, ESRC is a private, not-for-profit entity, governed by a local, volunteer board of directors. **ALL** decisions about programs and services are **made locally**.

**Q: Does money raised by the Easterseals Rehab Center (ESRC) stay local?**

**A:** **Money raised locally** through our numerous fundraising events and from our many community supporters **stays local** to help underwrite a variety of services for thousands of our friends and neighbors in this region.

**Q: Does the national Easterseals organization solicit funds in this area?**

**A:** Rarely, but on occasion, mailings or emails are received from the national office with requests for donations. Often those solicitations come from a Chicago address but if you have any question about this, please contact someone in the local development office at 812-479-1411.

**Q: Do all Easterseals affiliates provide the same services?**

**A:** No, each affiliate was established by advocates in that community to address whatever gap needs existed. Because the needs varied by community and by state, services varied. Affiliates range in size from very small, single program operations to very large, multi-program services with large geographic areas. ESRC locally is a mid-size, multi-program operation serving people from a relatively small geographic area (30+ counties in Southwestern Indiana, Southern Illinois and Western Kentucky).

**Q: What value-added services does national Easterseals provide?**

**A:** In addition to the use of the Easterseals brand and website coordination, the national office provides 2 primary functions that are very beneficial to ESRC locally. They provide frequent networking opportunities among the 70+ affiliates in various states around the country, including training on best practices and extensive resource sharing. Additionally, the national organization has a strong lobbying and education effort in Washington, DC and advocates for people with disabilities on an ongoing basis. They were a leading advocate for the passing of the ADA in 1990 and continue to advocate directly and to bring affiliates together around issues to have a voice in nearly any legislation related to disability services and supports.

**Q: Has ESRC in Evansville always been an Easterseals affiliate?**

**A:** ESRC has always been affiliated with Easterseals nationally. Easterseals was originally the Society for Crippled Children and our local organization was the Vanderburgh County Society for Crippled Children. This continued until 1967 when the national organization and all affiliates became known as Easter Seals. Locally, when our main facility first opened on Bellemeade Avenue in 1957, it operated under the name The Rehabilitation Center, Inc. but we were always an affiliate. As various rehabilitation centers opened in the tri-state, it was necessary for us to clearly differentiate ourselves and we began co-branding the Easter Seals name with The Rehabilitation Center name in the 1970s. In 2014, we made a complete name change to Easterseals Rehabilitation Center, Inc. as the logo and branding was changing from the Easter Seals Lilly to the current Starburst.

Overall, we are very fortunate to have the autonomy to address the needs in the Tri-State area and to develop strong local partnerships; we are equally fortunate to be part of a strong network with shared vision and mission and to have direct access to leaders and peers in the disability community. It gives us the best of both worlds. If you have any other questions related to this or any other topic, feel free to reach out to me at [kschneider@evansvillerehab.com](mailto:kschneider@evansvillerehab.com).

**Like & follow us on social media!**  
**[www.eastersealsrehabcenter.com](http://www.eastersealsrehabcenter.com)**



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[instagram.com/eastersealsrehabctr](https://instagram.com/eastersealsrehabctr)



[youtube.com/user/EasterSealsSWIN1](https://youtube.com/user/EasterSealsSWIN1)



*Kelly Schneider*

Kelly Schneider, President/CEO

**Many thanks to our volunteer Board of Directors for guiding, governing, and supporting Easterseals.**

#### **2023 Board Chair**

- Bill Norman (Berry Global)

#### **Executive Committee**

- Erica Esche (Community Volunteer)
- Michele Graham (Harding Shymanski & Co.)
- Chad Grunow (Ritz's)
- Brant Kennedy (Harding, Shymanski & Co.)
- Sara Miller (Old National Bank)
- Mary Peach (Easterseals Posey County Representative)
- John Raisor (Fifth Third Bank)
- John Schroeder, Director Emeritus (Wabash/ Crescent Plastics)
- Spencer Tanner (Gutwein Law)

#### **Board Members**

- Anne Thrasher Boyd (Anne Thrasher Boyd State Farm)
- Scott Branam (Deaconess Cross Pointe)
- Julie Burczyk (Tools 4 Teaching)
- Abigail Catania (University of Evansville)
- Shelby Collins (Ascension Medical Group)
- Trent Engbers (University of Southern Indiana)
- Geoff Gentil (Field & Main Bank)
- Katy Gilberg (Community Volunteer)
- Doug Kanet (Cresline Plastics)
- Kyle Markle (Donaldson Capital Management)
- Curt Molander (ABC25/CW7)
- Dana Myers (CenterPoint Energy)
- Michelle Schmitt (Old National Bank)
- Brian Williams (Kahn Dees Donovan & Kahn)

**SAVE THE DATES!**



**THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 11AM-1PM**

Join Abby Wells & family at the Easterseals Rehab Center for goodies like burgers, BBQ, ice cream, a silent auction, and of course - lemonade! All proceeds donated to Easterseals!



**THURSDAY, AUGUST 31  
CAMBRIDGE GOLF COURSE!**

DOUBLE SHOTGUN! 8AM OR 1PM! Reserve NOW! Sponsorships, teams & individual spots aer available. Contact Sara McKeehan, 812-437-2609 or [smckeehan@evansvillerehab.com](mailto:smckeehan@evansvillerehab.com)



**Kids of all abilities at the Easterseals Early Learning Center had fun visiting a make-believe "car wash" in The Crescent Room! The interactive learning activity offered opportunities to develop motor, language, social and problem-solving skills while having a great time. The Early Learning Center is Evansville's only fully inclusive early childhood program. For more information, call 812-474-2244.**



## County Commissioners present \$300,000 in ARPA funds.

Many thanks to Commissioners Cheryl Musgrave and Ben Shoulders for presenting \$300,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding to the Easterseals Rehabilitation Center on Jan. 3, 2023. The Vanderburgh County Commissioners selected Easterseals as one of the local nonprofit recipients of ARPA funds based on decreased revenues, increased costs, and a growing need for services as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic health emergency.

A main focus for this funding will be in the area of mental health, which has been significantly impacted by the pandemic. The ARPA award will help to support Easterseals' expansion of psychology services for our community. Thank you! ●



Left to right, back row: Cheryl Musgrave, Vanderburgh County Commissioner; Dr. Jim Schroeder, V.P. of Psychology Services, Easterseals; Kelly Schneider, President/CEO, Easterseals; Wayne Kinney, Former Easterseals Board Chair; Ben Shoulders, Vanderburgh County Commissioner; Emily Reidford, V.P. of Community Outreach & Education, Easterseals; Chad Grunow, Easterseals Board Member. Front left: Hannah Harrington, age 8, daughter of Janis and Frank Harrington.

**OUR MISSION** is to make profound, positive differences in the lives of local people with disabilities every day, and to change the way our community defines and views disability.

**OUR VISION** is a community in which all individuals and families are accepted, valued and included, and have equal opportunity to achieve their goals, dreams and aspirations.

## Register your child, sponsor a camper, OR volunteer for "iCan Bike!"

Individuals with disabilities, age 8 and up, can learn to ride a regular two-wheeled bicycle at **iCan Bike, Mon.-Fri., June 5-9**.

Each "camper" attends the 5-day "bike camp" for 75 minutes daily. They progress through a series of adapted bikes while receiving individual assistance. Most participants are successfully riding a bicycle with no adaptations by the end of the week! They also receive their own safety helmet and an iCan Bike t-shirt.

iCan Bike is held at Evansville's National Guard Armory. Spots are limited! **PLEASE REGISTER BY MAY 5!** Cost is \$200 per person. Scholarships are available through support from generous donors.

**Volunteers are needed** and must be at least 15, able to walk/run beside an individual on a bike, and available June 5-9, 8am-12:30pm &/or 1-4:30pm.

**To register or volunteer for iCan Bike—or if you're interested in financially sponsoring a participant—**contact Patty Balbach, 812-479-1411, ext. 268, [pbalbach@evansvillerehab.com](mailto:pbalbach@evansvillerehab.com). ●



Happy campers Luke Gilberg and Walker Vaught celebrate their achievements during the 2022 Easterseals "iCan Bike."

## Ritzzy's Fantasy of Lights raises more than \$220,300 for therapy!

In spite of winter weather causing a two-day closure, the 2022 Ritzzy's Fantasy of Lights still raised more than \$220,300 – the third-highest total in the event's history. That number included \$27,000 in extra donations from generous visitors!

**Thank you** Ritzzy's, IBEW Local 16, NECA, Electrical JATC, Teamsters Local 215, IUPAT DC9, IUOE Local 181, Tools 4 Teaching, ABC 25/CW 7, 104.1 WIKY, HOT 96, 93.5 The Lloyd, 107.5 WABX, Evansville Living, Lamar, Kenny Kent Chevrolet, Ragle Inc., display sponsors, volunteers, and everyone who attended and donated! Special thanks to Evansville Department of Parks & Recreation for their continued support.

Since 1994, this event has now raised \$4.3 million to fund essential services for local people with disabilities! **Mark your calendar for the 30th annual Ritzzy's Fantasy of Lights**, which will be open nightly from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. ●

## Easterseals honors Kelly Mitchell of DDRS as Outstanding Advocate.

The Easterseals Rehabilitation Center joined other Indiana Easterseals affiliates in honoring Kelly Mitchell, Director of Indiana's Division of Disability & Rehabilitation Services, at a Legislator Appreciation Lunch on Jan. 10. Mitchell was named Outstanding Advocate for Employment of People with Disabilities for her commitment to person-centered services, employment opportunities, and workplace inclusion. Mitchell was unable to attend, so DDRS Associate Director Cathy Robinson accepted on her behalf.

In addition to honoring Mitchell, the Easterseals leaders and other staff members highlighted employment challenges for people with disabilities and shared stories from individuals succeeding in the workforce.

Also attending the luncheon were Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, State Senators and Representatives, Legislative Aides, and guests from The Arc of Indiana and INARF. ●

*Pictured at the Indiana Statehouse are (l. to r.) Donna Elbrecht, Easterseals Northern Indiana CEO; Cathy Robinson, DDRS Associate Director; Kelly Schneider, Easterseals Rehabilitation Center CEO; and David Dreith, Easterseals Crossroads CEO.*

- Thank you for
- Year-End support!

- We are grateful to all
- who responded to our
- annual appeal at the close
- of 2022. Your gifts exceeded
- \$77,500, helping to assure
- that local kids like Xavier will
- continue to have access to the care they need! ●



# 5 PRIZES! Win \$25,000 • \$15,000 • \$5,000 • \$1,000 • \$1,000

**2023**  
**EASTERSEALS**  
**ALL CASH**  
**RAFFLE**

**KEMPER**  
CPA GROUP LLP  
Certified Public Accountants and Consultants

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**96**

**7WABX 107.5**  
EVANSVILLE'S CLASSIC ROCK

**93.5**  
**THE LLOYD**

**Entry deadline Mar. 15, 2023**

**Drawing Mar. 17, 2023**

For complete rules, visit  
EastersealsRehabCenter.com  
or call 812.437.2600  
Max. 5,000 tickets available.  
IN Raffle License #002228

### 2023 Easterseals All Ca\$h Raffle Order Form

Call 812-437-2600 to purchase by phone or complete this order form and return by mail.

**Must be received by entry deadline - March 15, 2023.**

Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$50 each or 3/\$100 Total Amount Enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check made payable to Easterseals Rehabilitation Center ☐ Money Order

☐ Debit Card (**no credit cards**) Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ NEWS23

Mail to the Easterseals Rehabilitation Center, 3701 Bellemeade Ave., Evansville, IN 47714 | 812.437.2600



Easterseals Rehabilitation Center  
3701 Bellemeade Avenue  
Evansville, Indiana 47714-0136  
P 812.479.1411 • F 812.437.2634  
eastersealsrehabcenter.com

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# easterseals | Telethon Rehabilitation Center Friday! Center April 14, 2023

For the 46th consecutive year, ABC25 will present the local Easterseals Telethon! **THE ALL DAY BROADCAST WILL AIR LIVE ON ABC25 FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 5AM-7PM.** Plan to watch as Eyewitness News anchors host **Easterseals Telethon Friday!**

The show will feature special coverage during newscasts, interviews, appearances by friends of Easterseals, and compelling video stories donated by **ABC25** and **Direction By Newman**.

**Again this year, ABC25 will donate 100% of production and air time!** The station's commitment allows *all* proceeds to fund inclusive early education and essential therapies. These services empower local kids and adults with disabilities to reach their goals and follow their dreams.

**Generous area businesses will match ALL donations made during the show!** Plan to call special numbers on the screen, text TRANSFORM to 243725, or donate at [eastersealsrehabcenter.com](http://eastersealsrehabcenter.com). Follow EastersealsRehabCtr on Facebook for *Telethon Friday* updates! ●



*Meet Easterseals Ambassador Waylon Jackson and other local people who are achieving their goals and dreams.*

**ABC25 donates ALL production and air time! ALL donations stay LOCAL!**

**Special coverage on Eyewitness News throughout the day!**

**Sponsors match ALL pledges made during the show!**