



John Bestmann Memorial Scholarship

John Bestmann was one of WACO's founding fathers. Back in 1979, John and a few friends became aware of the growing number of underprivileged children in the northwest suburbs. Realizing these children were missing out on several opportunities common to most suburban children, such as the joy of opening presents on Christmas morning, John and his friends dug into their own pockets to help out. Soon John was organizing fundraisers and was instrumental in helping WACO incorporate in 1993. He passed away in 1996, but his spirit lives on.

Michael O'Malley Memorial Scholarship

During his eleven years as Hoffman Estates Village President, Michael O'Malley worked tirelessly to help disadvantaged children in the northwest suburbs. WACO partnered with Mike in the 1990's and he was instrumental in getting other suburban leaders on board. Mike was also very involved in establishing the Children's Advocacy Center. The CAC helps child abuse victims and is one of the agencies WACO supports. Mike led by example and always found the time to help children in need.

Bill Kelly Memorial Scholarship

Bill Kelly's passion for helping underprivileged children was unmatched. Other than his own beloved family, and perhaps Notre Dame football, there was no topic Bill liked discussing more than WACO. To list the things Bill Kelly did for our charity organization would take all night. He spent multiple hours convincing a reluctant, and computer illiterate WACO board into building a website. Whenever anyone claimed they were too busy, too tired or too broke to help out – Bill was there to remind them "it's for the kids". For years our Elk Grove Village shopping tour ran seamlessly, thanks to Bill's stewardship. He brought the FootballMania fundraiser to the board's attention and turned it into one of our most successful fundraisers. From his hospital bed last fall, Bill continued to make calls to make sure the shopping tour and FootballMania projects were flowing smoothly. Bill's passing has left a huge void. WACO honors him with this scholarship in his name.