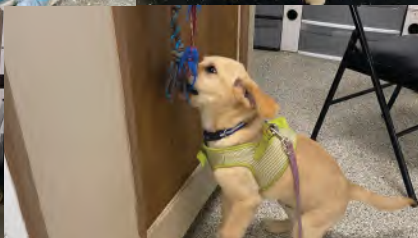





**CircleTail™**  
 Helping Dogs Help People  
**ANNUAL REPORT - 2023**



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Dear Friends of Circle Tail,*

On behalf of our Circle Tail family, I would like to thank you for your support and dedication to our mission in 2023.

It was another busy and productive year and I'm thrilled to share that this year Circle Tail achieved reaccreditation for the third time from Assistance Dogs International (ADI). The reaccreditation process takes many staff and volunteers hours to provide all the documentation required. We also attend meetings to ensure that all ADI standards are being met.

The process ends in a two-day site visit by an assessor who reviews the entire campus and operation. The assessor meets with Service, Hearing, and Facility Dog handlers as well as handlers at the prison, and also staff and volunteers. I am thankful for all the staff and volunteers as well as all our teams and dogs who made this reaccreditation possible.

With staffing during the year being low, we were not able to intake as many dogs as we hoped; however, the staff, volunteers, and prison dog handlers did a wonderful job caring for all the dogs' needs and we were able to finish training and partner 14 amazing Facility Dogs, one successor Service Dog and one successor Hearing Dog, and an even greater number of hosts and handlers!

I appreciate all the ways our community supports Circle Tail throughout the year. All of you help us help dogs who help people, year after year! I hope you have a 2024 filled with health and joy.

Warm Wishes,

*Marlys Staley*

Marlys Staley  
Executive Director, Circle Tail, Inc.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

**Marlys Staley**  
*Executive Director, Circle Tail, Non-Voting*

**Jen Kiblinger, President**  
*Scientific Director, DiaPharma Group, Inc.*

**Gena Stonefield, Vice President**  
*Mortgage Senior Sales, First Financial Bank*

**Jackie Napp, Treasurer**  
*Audit Manager, FORVIS*

**Janelle Tucker, Secretary**  
*Head of Customer Experience, Fifth Third Bank*

**Jeffrey Antonelli**  
*Senior Manager, Deloitte & Touche LLP*

**Matt A. Cook**  
*SVP, Director, Incentive Design, U.S. Bank*

**Chelsea Z. Jones**  
*Independent Consultant*

**V. Ruth Klette**  
*Attorney, Klette Klette Mauntel*

**Patrick Lillie**  
*Relationship Manager, Wells Fargo*

**Jackie Rowlett**  
*Director of Population Health - Ohio, Somatus*

**Barbara Scull**  
*Community Member*

**Caren Welborne**  
*Director, Project Management, Caidya*

**Max Yamson**  
*Executive Director, Camp Livingston*

*Current as of 12/31/2023*

## STAFF

**Marlys Staley**  
*Executive Director*

**Tracy Damewood**  
*Development Associate*

**Tina McKee**  
*Kennel Manager*

**CJ Joslyn**  
*Office Assistant*

**Jess Dunning**  
*Senior Kennel Assistant*

**Robin Fleming**  
*Kennel Assistant*

**Susan Bone**  
*Kennel Assistant*

**Emily Tillack**  
*Kennel Assistant*

**Emma Gundler**  
*Kennel Assistant*

*Current as of 12/31/2023*

The Circle Tail staff work tirelessly to bring the organization's mission to life everyday. Thank you to our Development and Office associates and our Kennel staff, without whom none of our work would be possible.

Throughout the year, the Circle Tail Board of Directors was comprised of between 12 and 13 members. The Board conducted ten board meetings, seven via Zoom and three hybrid, with an average of 83% meeting attendance. The year ended with all 13 board positions filled.

# ABOUT CIRCLE TAIL

Circle Tail is a volunteer based organization, which relies on services, talents and generosity of many caring and giving volunteers to successfully meet the goal of partnering quality service dogs with people in need. Established in 1997, Circle Tail is a multi-faceted non-profit organization located 30 miles northeast of downtown Cincinnati providing:

- **High quality service and hearing dogs to people with disabilities.** These dogs, the recipient training and lifetime follow up are provided at no charge to the individual.
- **Facility dogs to schools** at a minimal charge.
- **In-home service and hearing dogs** to adults with disabilities.
- **Adoption options for career changed service/hearing dogs.**
- Strengthening of the human-canine bond in the community by providing a variety of **dog training classes, Pet First Aid/CPR classes, and educational programs** for the general public.

## Vision

To be a leader in improving quality of life by unlocking human-canine partnership potential.

## Mission

To empower, educate, and inspire individuals and communities through professional training and partnership of highly skilled service-oriented dogs.

## Values

### INTEGRITY

We are knowledgeable, committed to excellence, and act with integrity. We hold ourselves to the highest industry standards and ethics and maintain transparency in our breeding and training. We are patient in our training and placement to ensure success of the process.

### RESPECT

We are caring and compassionate, giving each partner the respect and attention they deserve.

### DEDICATION

We are dedicated to finding the right job for the dog and the right dog for the person, creating a team in which both dog and human excel. We are available and committed to providing lifetime support of the team.

### ACCESS

We seek to deliver freedom and accessibility to all by understanding different individuals and group needs and we believe that everyone should have access to a partnership. We are flexible and adjust our staffing, training, etc. to meet the needs of our dogs and community, without compromising the integrity of the dog-human relationship.

### PARTNERSHIP

We are a strong partner to our teams, staff, volunteers, and our network of agencies, communities, and individuals. We create reciprocal relationships and strive for excellence in our delivery of long-lasting, quality partnerships.



## CIRCLE TAIL CONTINUES TO BE A HIGHLY-ACCREDITED NON-PROFIT.



Circle Tail remains an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International (ADI), the global authority in the assistance dog industry. Circle Tail was first accredited by ADI in February 2008 and was reaccredited in 2013, 2018, and 2023.



Circle Tail continues to receive the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency, which is awarded to organizations that achieve the highest level of transparency within the the GuideStar framework. GuideStar seeks to provide donors with detailed information to aid them in their search for trusted organizations. In order to reach Platinum Level, Circle Tail provides information about its organization and practices regularly, including its strategy, goals, KPIs, financials, board information, and more.



In 2019, Circle Tail became a Better Business Bureau (BBB) Accredited Charity meaning that the organization meets all 20 BBB Standards for Charity Accountability. Additionally, Circle Tail was honored with the BBB Center for Ethics Torch Award, for organizations with outstanding workplace ethics.



Circle Tail's Executive Director and dog trainer, Marlys Staley, is a member of the International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP), and is certified as an AKC Canine Good Citizen® Evaluator and a PetTech® PetSaver™ Instructor, empowering Circle Tail to teach its Pet First Aid and CPR course to help members of the community deepen the human-canine bond.



Circle Tail is also a member of the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP), Little Miami Area Chamber of Commerce, and the United Pet Fund, which provides vital resources to underserved and independent animal care groups and advocates across the Midwest and South.



# ASSISTANCE & FACILITY DOGS

## ASSISTANCE DOGS

Circle Tail trains service dogs for people living with physical disabilities, seizures, or diabetes, and hearing dogs for people with hearing impairments. **These dogs and their training are provided at no cost to the individual.** It costs approximately \$30,000 to fully train and partner a Service or Hearing Dog, which includes follow-ups through the life of the team.

This year, there were one Service Dog and one Hearing Dog partnered, and two partnerships in progress at the end of 2023.

During the year, **seven Assistance Dogs International Public Access Tests were completed** by Circle Tail assistance dog teams.



## FACILITY DOG PROGRAM

Facility Dogs offer cognitive and emotional therapeutic support to staff and children in the school environment. The dogs are highly trained by Circle Tail, and their school handlers and host family receive training and support throughout the life of the partnership.

**In 2023, Circle Tail placed 14 school Facility Dogs,** and Circle Tail has experienced more demand for Facility Dogs following the formalization of the Facility Dog Program. This year, Circle Tail also placed a Facility Dog intern at Sands Montessori, marking the start of an exciting pilot program with Cincinnati Public School District.



**There are currently 50 active Facility Dogs, 44 of which are working in local school districts including:**

- Archbishop Moeller
- Fairfield
- Goshen
- HCESC Pathways to Employment and Norwood Learning Center
- Lakota
- Lockland
- Mason
- Milford
- Northeastern Clermont
- Norwood
- Oak Hills
- Oregon
- Perrysburg
- St. Xavier High School
- Talawanda
- Williamsburg

*\*accurate as of December 31, 2023*

## PLACEMENT OVERVIEW

Dogs Currently Working and Placed since 1997		
	Currently Working	Ever Placed
Public Access Dogs	20	104
<i>Service</i>	16	77
<i>Hearing</i>	4	27
In-Home Service and Hearing Dogs	9	77
Facility Dogs	50	85
Ambassador	7	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>275</b>

Special Placements since Circle Tail's Inception	
	Ever Placed
USDA Detection / Search and Rescue Dog	18
Therapy Registered	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

### CAREER CHANGED DOGS

Circle Tail strives to find every dog a suitable job and all dogs begin at Circle Tail with the intention of training to be a Service or Facility dog. **Circle Tail volunteers and employees work with each dog to ensure its new job is right for them and when a dog isn't suited for a job as a Service or Facility Dog, they are known as Career Changed Dogs**, which Circle Tail places in homes seeking to adopt pet dogs. On occasion, Career Changed Dogs can also go through special adoptions to fulfill other jobs like becoming Detection dogs.

Since 1999, Circle Tail has adopted over 3,800 dogs and puppies into new homes. **In 2023, 19 dogs were career-changed and adopted into new homes.**

**19**  
ADOPTIONS  
in 2023

**3,897**  
TOTAL ADOPTIONS  
since 1999



## CIRCLE TAIL FACILITIES

Circle Tail's campus and facilities saw continued improvement throughout 2023 from ongoing maintenance to the the addition of a new campus building and generous gifts to make campus transportation easier.

This year's campus improvements included:

- replacing a walking bridge
- beginning the construction of a small guest house to be used for out-of-town clients and visitors
- started the remodeling of an on-site building, which will be used as the administrative building
- the continued beautification of the grounds including the removal of dead and dying trees

Circle Tail was also gifted a golf cart and John Deere Gator utility vehicle for use on campus. The golf cart has been very useful to socialize very young pups to riding in a vehicle and to drive puppies and dogs around the trails for a novel experience. It is also used to transport heavy or bulky items between the kennel and the training center. The Gator has been used to assist with the upkeep of the grounds, including watering newer trees and bushes during the dry season.

In addition to the new campus vehicles, Circle Tail was gifted a new van by the Elsa Heisel Sule Foundation and Pat Landen. The new van will be used to transport dogs for outings, for the Prison-Based Training Program, and for dog food and supplies pick ups.





## ON-SITE SURGICAL SUITE

The on-site surgery suite provides a low-stress surgical experience for our dogs. The dogs are walked to the surgery suite and are prepared for surgery by staff and volunteers they know. Following surgery, they recover in a crate in the surgery suite and later in the day when they are awake, they walk back to the kennel for a drink, snack, and bedtime.

## LOCAL VETERINARIANS CONTINUE TO VOLUNTEER THEIR EXPERTISE

Janet Clem, DVM of Cincinnati Animal Medical Center continues to volunteer her time to provide onsite spay/neuter surgeries for dogs in Circle Tail's dedicated surgery suite. In 2023, 20 spays and 22 neuters were performed.

Circle Tail thanks MedVet and Vanessa Kuonen Cavens, DVM, MS, DACVO, who graciously provided 89 eye exams for dogs in training at no cost. All the dogs passed their testing.

## TRAINING

Circle Tail's dogs are trained on Circle Tail's campus, at Ohio Correctional partner facilities, and placed with foster families. We were happy to also be able to conduct American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen® Tests in which 49 people participated, including Service, Hearing, Facility, and pet dog teams.

Educational sessions were held via Zoom with 122 participants and on-site for those working on their training hours before placement with a dog and our facility dog handlers.

### PRISON-BASED TRAINING PROGRAM

Circle Tail has partnered with numerous Ohio Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation facilities over the past 25 years, to **teach incarcerated individuals dog care and handling skills through caring for and training Service, Hearing, and Facility Dogs in training.**

The current program continues to be comprised of two Ohio prisons, including Dayton Correctional Institution (DCI) and the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). Both are women's facilities and house between 10-16 dogs. **This year, the average census was 28 dogs/month being housed, cared for, and trained by the dog handlers at the prisons.**

28

average dogs/  
month in prison  
program

27

average foster  
families in 2023

### FOSTER FAMILY PROGRAM

Foster families—also known as canine educators—provide an invaluable service to the Circle Tail pups who are too young to go into the Prison Program, and pups/dogs on furlough from the prison. **Canine educators are essential to give the dogs off campus excursions, introduction to new environments and reinforce manners and training.**

The joy of fostering a Service, Hearing, or Facility Dog in training comes with much responsibility, especially knowing that the dog's job will be to assist an individual with a disability to live a more independent life or positively impact children at school. Dedication and consistency are necessary to guide a puppy into an upstanding canine citizen and useful companion to people in need.

**In 2023, Circle Tail averaged 27 foster families and 6 weekend fosters with an average of 20 pups/dogs in homes each day.**



## BREEDING PROGRAM

**In 2023 Circle Tail whelped three litters, with a resultant 24 births.** Circle Tail retained 11 pups and the remaining were transferred to other ADI programs or other Service Dog organizations. Two whelps were Circle Tail breeders, and one was hosted for the Assistance Dogs International Breeding Cooperative (ABC).

This Cooperative consists of ADI members who either have large or small breeding programs; those who would like to assist organizations who have breeding programs by whelping litters for them; or those who would just like to receive puppies when available. Circle Tail participates at the Host Level which enables us to assist the cooperative by whelping litters from other organizations.

At the start of 2023, there were 78 dogs in the Circle Tail system. During 2023, 46 dogs were welcomed to Circle Tail, half of which were born on-site; others came from sources including breeders, the ADI Breeder Co-op, or donations. With the 18 dogs that were partnered, and others sent to differing Service Dog organizations, became Career-changed, or otherwise, Circle Tail ended the year with a total of 71 dogs in the system.



### CIRCLE TAIL BREEDING

Circle Tail had two litters from its own breeding program this year.

- CT Starling, a yellow Lab, was bred to CT Redd, a 1/4 Lab / 3/4 Golden Retriever. Starling had ten pups, five of whom were transferred to other service dog schools. This was her second litter and, like the first, she had an easy whelp and was a wonderful mother.
- CT Glory, a black Lab, was bred to Shannon Valley Rudy, a black Lab. Glory had eight pups and Circle Tail transferred four to other Service Dog schools. This was Glory's first litter, and she demonstrated good mothering behaviors.

### ADI BREEDING COOPERATIVE

Circle Tail hosted one whelp for ABC.

- ACAD Twist came to Circle Tail for her whelp and the first four weeks of the pup's care. She had six pups and Circle Tail retained one female and one male pup.

**24**

PUPS BORN AT CIRCLE TAIL IN 2023

## 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

In 2023, Circle Tail helped over

**1,229 people**

to have better relationships with their dogs.

**19**

CAREER-CHANGED DOG  
ADOPTIONS in 2023

**3,897**

TOTAL ADOPTIONS  
since 1999

**18 working partnerships formed in 2023**



**SERVICE & HEARING DOGS**



**FACILITY DOGS**



**DETECTION DOGS**

**12**

grants received

**27**

Foster families  
during the  
2023 year

**71**

dogs in the Circle  
Tail system at the  
end of 2023

**236,000**

service hours, including volunteers  
from the Prison Program

**86**

working placements received ongoing  
training and support from staff

647 people donated a total of

**\$892,759**

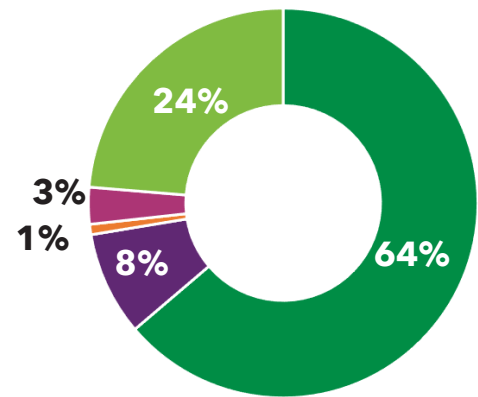
to help continue Circle Tail's mission.



# 2023 FINANCIALS

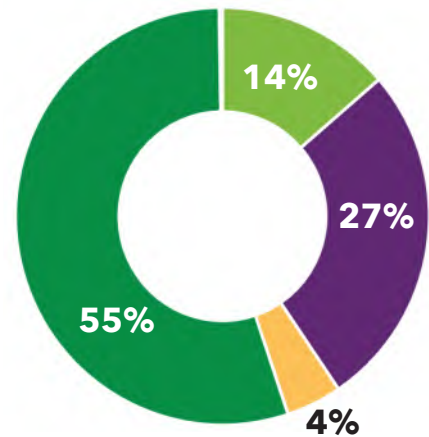
REVENUE	
Operating Revenue Without Donor Restriction	\$665,283
● Contributions & Grants	\$424,282
● Fundraising	\$57,362
● Merchandise Revenue	\$5,706
● Dog Training & First-Aid Classes	\$20,304
● Dog Adoption Fees	\$157,629
Operating Revenue - Investment Income	\$279,844
Donor Restricted Revenue	\$411,115
Restricted Contributions for Capital Projects	\$321,394
Restricted Contributions for Endowment Fund	\$50,152
Restricted Contributions for Facility Dog Fund	\$39,569
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,356,242</b>

OPERATING REVENUE  
without Donor Restriction



EXPENSES	
● Administration	\$98,292
● Facilities	\$193,597
● Fundraising	\$31,324
● Program	\$395,225
Other	\$1,828
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$720,266</b>

EXPENSES





## FUNDRAISING

Building on the successes of 2022, Circle Tail expanded fundraising and awareness events in 2023, including the annual Golf Outing, Let's Paw Tea high tea at the **Loveland Museum Center**, donor appreciation Yappy Hour and a polo match with the **Cincinnati Polo Club**. Some virtual fundraisers were also held including a Giving Tuesday fundraiser, Prison Program toy drive and Giving Tree; the organization also produced and sold a 2023 Circle Tail calendar.

### GOLF CLASSIC

The third annual Golf Classic at **O'Bannon Creek Golf Club** on August 28 had record-breaking attendance; 104 golfers enjoyed lovely weather, a great course, games and prizes, and the event netted over \$39,000.

### LET'S PAW TEA

The **Let's Paw Tea** event introduced Circle Tail to the Loveland area and raised over \$2,000 with a sold-out crowd on Super Bowl Sunday.

### PUPS & PONIES

The **Pups & Ponies** event with **Cincinnati Polo Club** was well-attended on June 17 and raised \$1,659 from gate receipts, raffle sales, and donations.

### In addition to our larger-format fundraising events, Circle Tail also:

- participated in the **Lebanon Performance Ford Car Show** at **Miami Valley Gaming** as the Charity of Choice.
- partnered with **Madeira High School's** Entrepreneur class and came in first place for funds raised.
- partnered with the **Flying Pig Marathon** as an Associate Charity for their 2023 running events.
- was chosen as the **Otterbein SeniorLife** charity for their corporate giving program.
- was selected for an **Eagle Scout** project which resulted in refurbished outdoor equipment and an agility ladder for more advanced service dogs.
- presented to **Magnified Giving** requests from local schools.
- was chosen as the recipient for in-kind donations from the **Indian Hill High School Animal Welfare Club**.
- was privileged to receive 12 grants in 2021; thank you to the team of volunteers who writes the grants and to all the individuals and foundations who supported Circle Tail this year.



**Save the date for Circle Tai's fourth annual Golf Classic at O'Bannon Creek Golf Club on August 26, 2024!**

Please join us for additional events, which will be announced in newsletters and on social media. It's fun to party, especially when it's with the pups!

## COMMUNITY CLASSES

Circle Tail continued to offer basic, intermediate, and advanced dog training classes as well as pet first-aid and nosework classes to the community. **Through virtual and in-person training, Circle Tail assisted over 1,229 people to have a better relationship with their pet dog.**



In 2023, Circle Tail helped over

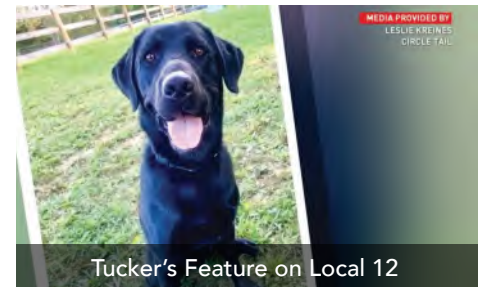
# 1,229 people

to have better relationships with their dogs.

## CIRCLE TAIL IN THE NEWS

Circle Tail was featured for the impact of its service and Facility Dogs on the lives of local students, campers, and police departments. To read the full articles, visit [circletail.org/news-and-events](https://circletail.org/news-and-events).

- Cleveland Jewish News, "Service dogs can play important role at camp"
- FOX 19, "Students raising money for non-profit training service dogs"
- The Journal Times, "Mount Pleasant's finest (and furriest): Village PD acquires electronic sniffing dog"
- Lakota Online, "Woodland Students Impress in NPR Student Podcast Challenge"
- Voyage Ohio, "Conversations with Marlys Staley"
- WCPO, "New CPS facility dog helps students at Sands Montessori"
- WKRC, "Elementary school raises money for school dog, addresses mental health concerns"
- WLWT, "Cincinnati Public School hosts first-ever facility dog at Sands Montessori"



## EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA KEEP SUPPORTERS, VOLUTEERS, AND FOSTER FAMILIES ENGAGED

Circle Tail engages over 8,300 supporters via monthly email newsletters to keep them current on events and happenings at Circle Tail. Circle Tail further reaches its supporters through social media with over 9,900 followers across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The organization also leverages closed Facebook groups to keep fosters families volunteers, and schools with Facility Dogs up to date on Circle Tail events and training tips.



### SUBSCRIBE TO THE MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

To be added to Circle Tail's monthly email newsletter distribution list, visit [circletail.org/sign-up](https://circletail.org/sign-up) or scan the QR code at right.



# THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

In 2023, we saw increased volunteer and event activity as we continued to transition to a post-COVID environment. **We had net positive volunteer retention and saw foster volunteer activity increase on year over year basis.** We were also happy to welcome several group volunteer activities and events on campus.

Volunteers, including foster families, continue to be a critical part of Circle Tail's success, especially in a challenging, inflationary macro-economic environment where both labor and general costs have risen. Support from our volunteers and foster families has allowed us to continue navigating obstacles while ensuring our dogs in training continue to develop and learn in various settings and locations, an important aspect of service dog success.

**Circle Tail sincerely thanks our volunteers and foster families, we are grateful for their wonderful contributions.** Our mission and purpose could not be pursued without the unwavering, consistent support from all our partners, and we thank everyone for the difference each has made in the lives of our dogs and the clients we have the pleasure of serving.

We regularly host sessions for those interested in learning more about volunteering at Circle Tail. **If you are interested in attending a future session or tour, please sign up for our email list at [circletail.org/sign-up](https://circletail.org/sign-up).**



**236,000**  
service hours, including volunteers from the Prison Program

**8**  
large volunteer work groups

**27** Average number of foster families during 2023

**42**  
public relations events and speaking engagements



## REMEMBERING OZONE

We are saddened to share the passing of Ozone who served as a Circle Tail Ambassador from 2018-2023.



# THANK YOU, GENEROUS DONORS

We are so grateful to you and every member of our community for providing the support required to deliver on our mission. It is gifts from donors like you which ensure Circle Tail continues to provide life-changing dogs to individuals and facilities who benefit from their skills and comforting abilities.

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Anne Abraham  
Michele Abraham  
Karen Acuff  
Lynn Adams & Lisa Abel  
Rebecca Aicholtz  
Frank Albi  
Maddie Aliaga  
Chelsea Almer  
Maria Alonso  
Sharon Amato  
Katherine Anderson  
Ramona Anderson  
Terrilyn Anderson  
Vanessa Anderson  
Anonymous  
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Angela Armes  
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Angi Baker  
Jill Baker  
Terri Baker  
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Elaine Black  
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Hannah Burke Garbett  
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Nancy Carr  
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Jonna & David Chadwell  
Donald & Jane Chafin  
Beverly Chain  
Phyllis & Jerry Chaney  
Sarah Chaney  
Shineleigh Channels  
Duane & Lorraine Charbonneau  
Larry Chialastri  
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Arnold Cleary  
Sue & Rob Cohen-Schmuelling  
Laura Combs  
Amy Constable  
Matthew Cook  
Kelly-Jo Cooper  
Kathleen Cosgrove  
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Julee Cousineau  
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Josephine Crowder  
Courtney Curless  
Michael Cussen  
Janice Dage  
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Erin Grinsted  
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Jim Grippa  
Christine Grosnickle  
Tiffany Gross  
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