

Hello Members of the Cottagewood Community Foundation:

These are truly unprecedented times. As each of us works to stay safe, remain healthy and handle our new at-home circumstances and routines, I am reminded of the strength of our wonderful Cottagewood community.

It is times like these that communities across the globe come together to take care of one another. In this time of uncertainty, we are all seeking optimism and joy and signs that normalcy will once again resume.

Opening Day for the Store is planned for Saturday, May 2, and I can assure you that Laurie and the Board have been hard at work planning for a fantastic 125th season. As with all things right now, we acknowledge schedules may need to be fluid and will be in touch if for any reason our plans need to change.

Our Mission at the Cottagewood Store is to bring people together as a Community to celebrate one another, provide a place of gathering, and make long lasting memories. That is what we intend to do this 125th season.

Like so many small businesses, we rely on the support of our community to stay afloat and in the case of our seasonal business, to open our doors each season. While it's incredibly hard to ask for support under these circumstances, the Store simply cannot open without your help. The Store -the heart of our community- depends on the financial support from each one of you to be open and run successfully season after season. We are a non-profit, so every contribution counts, and every expense is watched.

Last year, your donations, volunteering and support produced some pretty outstanding results:

- 121 gracious people contributed to the Cottagewood Community Foundation Fund in 2019 including 14 new families who joined as members
- Through your generosity we raised \$47,650 which allowed the store to be stocked (with annual iconic Cottagewood merchandise and more) and kept the annual operations of the Store running
- We provided a great working environment to approximately 20 kids who interacted with each of you while learning valuable on the job experience
- Steven Streeter, Tom Nicol and other generous community members donated extra time and elbow grease to lead a capital campaign that allowed us to revamp the front of the store, making the porch safer and helping create additional seating areas perfect for the afternoon ice cream stop. We are grateful to each of them!
- We raised over \$2,000 from your donations to the Spring and Fall Cottagewood Yard Sales, some of our biggest efforts to date. Thank you Tom Erdmann for continuing to lead this bi-annual event
- We added additional corporate sponsorships from Tradition Capital Bank, Northwestern Mutual, This Delightful Life, and continued appreciation from Streeter & Associates, Grieger Group and Vine Hill Partners
- We hosted 12 community events, including the season-opening Member Party, Grill Nights, Fourth of July and our Back to School Pancake Breakfast
- We hosted our first-ever National Night Out Grill Night with big success and look to make it even bigger in the 2020 season!
- The Cottagewood Store partnered with Minnetonka High School's VANTAGE Program and assisted in working on a real business environment project that gave the students insight to our operation, and in turn they provided us new fundraising ideas!

All because of you and your generosity.

We are back again this year with the same direct ask for your support and contributions. What you each give to the Cottagewood Community Fund, you get back as a community in the value the store brings to our neighborhood. Now more than ever, the need to unite our community feels invaluable.

This year, we've already got some great improvements and events planned. Expect to see:

- Grill nights featuring pony rides, dog show and the ever-popular Cottagestock
- Updated, custom Cottagewood merchandise
- Bingo Nights
- Stay tuned for our new *"frequent buyer coffee program"*

If you're in a position to support the small businesses you frequent, know and love, we would be grateful now more than ever for your generosity. Your tax-deductible donations help us get off to a strong start by ensuring the Store opens on time, with wonderful events, with great merchandise and treats within a short walk. [Please donate today.](#)

Curious what else you can do to help us prepare for the season? Plan ahead for how you can contribute your time volunteering to help make our events outstanding. Relying on those who have already volunteered their time over the past many years can be burdensome. We need many hands to help plan, host and support the events you love. The more individuals and families we can engage in planning, the more we can ensure we're meeting the needs and desires of our community!

There are a lot of unknowns right now as we all face new realities. What we do know is we are a tight community that helps life each other up in times of need. There is no better way to help us all get through these coming weeks than provide support for the terrific community we all call HOME. We are excited for what's ahead and hope to see many of your smiling faces when we open our doors for SEASON 125.

Thanks for all you do!

Rob Burke & the Cottagewood Community Foundation Board of Directors