

Community. Connection. Nostalgia.

The Cottagewood Store holds a lasting place in people's hearts. Whether it's your favorite morning coffee stop, childhood memories of penny candy, the spot of your grade school bus stop or the feeling it gives of a bygone era. When you drive down Cottagewood Avenue and see the red store standing proud, you can't help but feel a bit of nostalgia. How did this beautiful building from another era survive all these years? The full story is complex, but the answer is simple.

Passion. Commitment. Time.

In 2022, we served our community as a store, a café, an information center, a boutique, a coffee shop, a lost and found department, a social club, a resting place, a meeting place, an information hub, a trail pit-stop, a babysitting resource, a dog sitting resource, an event space and most simply as a place of community connection. This season brought us numerous ladies happy hours, coffee gatherings on the patio, a thriving food truck Friday lineup, a stellar dog show, a successful 4th of July shindig, new CTWD merchandise, sunflower sales, pumpkin sales, a magical Santa visit and plenty of coffee and treats consumed by ages old and new. It is safe to say many special memories were made!

Here are a handful of the many highlights of 2022:

- We welcomed 15 new CCF members and had 137 families donate towards store operations and community events.
- We had 8 business sponsors whose support provided valuable funding for our season. A huge thank you to our 2022 sponsors, Streeter Custom Builders, Vine Hill Partners, The Sitting Room, Molly Cardinal Engel & Volkers, Tradition Capital Bank, Kristi Weinstock Real Estate, The Dental Specialists and Signature Pools.
- We employed 24 youth in the neighborhood, many with their first jobs, providing excellent training and a safe workspace close to home.
- We sold 1,861 sunrise sammies, 3,360 ice cream cones, 420 kiddy cones, and 485 cookies.
- We gave away 16 pounds of treats to our beloved furry friends! They're some of our most loyal customers ☺
- Neighborhood improvements were made to the Children's Park fountain and the surrounding lawn area. Thank you Steven Streeter for leading this effort!
- The CCF staged 15 successful community events, none of which would have been possible without our many volunteers.
- Over 600 volunteer hours were logged by community members. A big shoutout to Tom Erdman for manning our lawn sales, Sharon Murphy Garber and Anne Deardorff for planning a successful 4th of July event and Joe Haugslund for his efforts to make our holidays magical.
- A new communications database was installed allowing for more streamlined communications on everything from Cottagewood happenings to volunteer opportunities. If you or someone you know would like to receive our electronic communications, please let us know by emailing info@cottagewoodusa.com.

We asked and you responded!

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to our Store Survey. As a community managed non-profit your input is extremely valuable, and we are eager to act on it as we prepare for opening day. What we heard:

- *Food trucks were a good change of pace during pandemic times but people miss the spontaneous neighborhood connection that informal grill nights naturally brought about.*
- *Communication was improved but we can still do better! People relied on social media for many "real time" updates especially regarding last minute schedule changes.*

- *The 4th of July is the most loved Cottagewood Store run event, with the CCF member party a close second. Nostalgia and community connection is most cherished!*

Looking ahead to 2023!

- We have scheduled a wonderful line up of our signature events, mixed in with new ideas to encourage community connection. New this year we will offer Friday Treat Specials and BYOP (Bring Your Own Picnic) in the park evenings, select Fridays throughout the summer.
- Save the dates and view the tentative 2023 calendar ([Click Here To View Calendar](#))

We need your help.

Our neighborhood store has stayed alive for 128 years. **How do we keep it open for another hundred? The answer is YOU. We need your time. We need your energy. We need your talent. And we need your support.** With our events already planned, the store in good physical condition and streamlined communications up and running, the current CCF Board has turned its focus to onboarding new board members in order to reach our full potential as a community hub. ***In order to open the store for the 2023 season, we need to begin transitioning new board members to fill the roles of President, Vice President and Treasurer.*** We will fill these positions no later than May 1st. Over the past 5 years we have seen a decline in volunteerism and therefore have exhausted the talents of our current board members who have dedicated MANY years of their time to keep the store alive and well. It is time for new talent and fresh faces to step into these roles and shape the future. The store is the heart of our community, and its success relies on you, it's member owners. Lending your time and talent makes a monumental impact on the success of our Store. With more new families calling Cottagewood home each year, there is huge potential to evolve to meet the needs of our growing community. Help us open our doors and keep the store alive as a cornerstone of one of the highest areas of property value on Lake Minnetonka. If you are able to join the team please email the CCF board at Ctwdboard@gmail.com.

Please make your annual tax-deductible donation of \$250 - \$2,500 today to sustain Cottagewood Store Operations for our 128th season. As a non-profit, we rely on our member owners to open and operate the store season after season. Your contributions go towards the hiring of employees, purchasing of merchandise, execution of community events and building maintenance of our historic property. Another great way to contribute is through a new gift membership to a child or grandchild which secures their brick in the store's walkway, cementing their stake in the community for years to come. Please click here to to make your donation: [Click Here To Donate](#)

We are looking forward to the future and we hope we can count on your continued generosity and time in support of the Cottagewood Store and the terrific community that we call home.

Sincerely,
CCF Board of Directors