



It is with great pleasure that I introduce everyone to Mr. Greg Essig. In addition to running his own successful business Western Lakes Golf Club at an exemplary level, Greg continues to demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to Variety – the Children’s Charity of Wisconsin for over twenty years. Variety’s mission is to enrich the lives of children with physical or developmental special needs and their families. This year Variety is celebrating 85 years of this mission and Greg Essig will once again be leading the way by holding the Western Lakes Golf Outing and Dinner which benefits Variety.

Greg takes it upon himself to provide exceptional support and service to Variety children and families. Twenty plus years ago Greg saw the need and importance to hold an event and to continue to include “the working guy” so everyone is given the opportunity to give back and support a good cause. Each year Western Lakes coordinates on average 80 events and 50 of those events are with non-profits. Steve Sazama highlighted the immense meaning of Greg’s involvement for the past twenty years; “Greg was given the opportunity to choose many other charities to raise money for, but he fell in love with the mission and has put Variety first. Greg would be the first one there to sell a Variety gold heart, to spend time with families, raise money for the cause, he is always there, there is never a no and he will do whatever it takes. No matter what you can count on his support.”



Growing up Greg had very strong parents who instilled work, family and life ethics into him and his brother. On his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday his father picked him up and took him to the lot where there was a car for sale with a \$150 price tag. His father told him that the was his car and then pointed across the street and showed him where he was going to start working to earn money for the car. To this day Greg is always working or volunteering his time and is extremely thankful for the lessons his parents set by example. Greg grew up with his brother who is hearing impaired, however he never thought of his brother as handicap nor did his brother. He looked up to his brother as his “protector” who was always there for him no matter what. Greg learned by example early on not only by his parents but also his brother. There was no stopping his brother, he never looked back and continued to move forward not allowing his disability to get in the way of his life, goals, and work ethic. I asked Greg if he is tired, and what is giving him that extra push to hold yet another event for Variety after 20 years and with the humblest answer he explained to me that “It’s not just about raising money, the knowing that you are helping children and their families you just want to keep going. We are lucky, we can go to the gym if we want these kids can’t, so it is important to give back monetarily or volunteering. You do what your strength is and go from there. Be grateful, appreciative and recognize people aren’t as fortunate. If you are having a bad day it probably is not a bad day if you reflect.”

For the past twenty years Greg has epitomizes leadership and has inspired countless people to give back. Western Lakes golf event has been so successful for Variety solely due to Greg’s plan that is put into place and his commitment to the cause along with the extensive hours he puts into maintaining relationships year round and spreading Variety’s message to gain the attention of newly inspired golfers or sponsors who want to give back and pay it forward. The effort behind the scenes and level of expertise that Greg provides has been a proven success year after year with the tremendous amount of

funds raised for Variety. Dave Hallenbach of Grand Geneva stated “When Greg finally retires there will be a big void in the area of fundraising. He is a very good person; a lot of people have ulterior motives, but Greg has a big heart and has a big concern of helping others. He has been blessed in his world and its truly giving back in whatever way he can. Greg has been known to donate items to eagerly buy them back just to give back and to help. There are a lot of good people out there, but you really don’t know who they are, they just do what they do because it work’s and he has been blessed to be able to do that.”

Throughout the past twenty years at Variety some staff has changed, new board members commit as others step down but there has been one constant and that person is Greg Essig. Variety is so grateful for the commitment and immense funds that this humble man has provided. Due to individuals like Greg Variety is now celebrating its 85<sup>th</sup> year with honor and excitement as we continue to enrich the lives of children with physical or developmental special needs and their families. It is because of human beings like Greg that non-profits like Variety can continue to make a difference in this world. Tom Pipines, former sports anchor for FOX 6 reinforced the feelings and sentiment that Variety has for Greg Essig. When Tom heard Variety was highlighting Greg he too said “Greg is most deserving of any and all recognition. Greg has a sensitive heart and a special heart for children and by extension their parents who are facing challenges whether it be sickness, mental or physical you will see tears well up within his eyes and he will do whatever he can by going the extra mile to help.”

Greg has made a difference and a huge impact at Variety, by not only carrying out our mission on a day to day basis but he has positively impacted our organization. His skills, knowledge, passion, and willingness to help others and dedication to Variety and our community is the reason why we are so proud and honored to have Greg spearhead the Western Lakes Golf Outing.

Due to our nation’s health emergency Variety and Western Lakes have postponed the annual Western Lakes Golf Outing to Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We look forward to reuniting with all our families, friends and long-time supporters of Variety. We are in this together-stay safe.