

GILDA GRAM

A free, non-profit support community for anyone touched by cancer.

“I’m so grateful for Gilda’s Club!”

Theresa is a single mother whose breast cancer is in remission. She and her two children, Noelle (15) and Stanley (8), have participated in various events and activities since joining Gilda’s Club more than three years ago. Theresa says she appreciates Gilda’s Club for its fun and safe environment for her kids.

“It’s wonderful having a place where we can all go where everyone is involved somehow with cancer and understands what we went through,” says Theresa. “It’s a very happy and upbeat place and my kids and I just love it there.”

Stanley is a regular at Noogie Night and Noelle enjoys bringing her friends along for Teen Night. Both have gotten a lot out of their experience with Gilda’s Club. “I have learned a lot about cancer and feel more comfortable talking about it now,” says Stanley. “I’ve made a lot of friends who are also going through cancer, and that helps me a lot.”

Noelle likes that she can just come and relax and have fun without any stress. “You don’t have to talk about cancer if you don’t want to,” she says. “But if you do want to, there’s always somebody there to listen. You’re never alone at Gilda’s Club.”

Stanley’s dad, Stan, who brings his son to Noogie Nights, says he has told many people about Gilda’s Club. “It’s made it easier for me and Stanley to talk about his mom’s cancer,” he says. “And it makes me happy to see how much he enjoys coming here.”

Even though Theresa is now cancer-free, she and her children continue to be active members of Gilda’s Club because, as Theresa says, “Gilda’s Club has done and continues to do so much for all of us. I am so grateful we have Gilda’s Club right here in Buffalo.”

Thank you, Teammates

Earlier this year, Gilda’s Club WNY received its second \$10,000 grant from the Garth Brooks Teammates For Kids Foundation, thanks to the efforts of former Buffalo Bill Ryan Neufeld and his wife, Dawn. The Neufelds have been involved with Teammates for several years and have also supported Gilda’s Club. In July the Foundation invited Gilda’s Club WNY to select a member family to attend an all-expenses-paid two-day Summer Appreciation Party hosted by Garth Brooks in Las Vegas. Stanley, Theresa, Noelle and Stan were chosen to represent Gilda’s Club and had a wonderful time.

“I can’t say enough about Gilda’s Club and the wonderful resources it provides to the people of Western New York,” says Dawn Neufeld. “Noogieland seems like such a fun and safe place for kids to come and escape and let loose! We attended the grand opening several years ago, and I knew it would provide a wonderful refuge for the kids.”

For more information on Noogieland, Noogie Nights, Teen Night or Gilda’s Club membership, contact Kathy Kurtz, 332.5900, ext. 206.



Campers (wearing Camp Sparkle t-shirts they created) and volunteers pose for a group shot during Camp Sparkle at the Gilda’s Clubhouse.

Talk about happy campers!

For four days in July, the clubhouse was alive with the sights and sounds of 12 campers who enjoyed every minute of their Camp Sparkle adventure! They went on a treasure hunt and painted treasure stones as part of Pirate Day. They created Christmas ornaments and decorated cookies as part of Christmas in July. They participated in a sing along and created picture frames as part of The Arts Day. They made smoothies and sand art and enjoyed a picnic/ice cream social as part of the Day at the Beach. And in between they did yoga, learned about Tae Kwon Do, enjoyed creative lunches and snacks and so much more. While the underlying theme was cancer, the overwhelming goal was fun, fun, fun!!

“Many Gilda’s Clubs offer a summer camp program, and we thought it was time to join in the fun,” says Kathy Kurtz, program manager and Noogieland coordinator. “Camp offers kids a chance to be kids, to focus on fun instead of cancer and its impact on their families.”

Our thanks to the families and volunteers who participated in Camp Sparkle. See you next year!



Theresa and Stanley pose with new friends Trisha Yearwood and Garth Brooks in Las Vegas.

“It really makes you feel good to be in this clubhouse!”

Liz Lagowski was a student at the University at Buffalo when she first got involved with Gilda's Club more than six years ago. Her Honor Society held dance-a-thons to raise money for the club and, when the doors opened in 2004, Liz continued her volunteer efforts. Today, she's a frequent Noogieland volunteer.



Liz and Matthew, a Noogieland member, show that being backward isn't always a bad thing, especially on Backward Day in Noogieland!

“Noogieland is wonderful because it gives the kids a safe place to talk about cancer,” says Liz. “They can be around others who are going through what they are going through and that makes the whole thing a lot less scary. Seeing the kids' reactions and being around everyone at Gilda's Club has helped make cancer less scary for me, too. And we have a lot of fun making crafts, baking, watching movies and just letting loose!”

Liz says she's made a lot of friends at Gilda's Club and finds everyone from the staff to the members to other volunteers to be very open, warm and friendly. “It really makes you feel good to be in this clubhouse,” she says. “We need Gilda's Club because so many people have to deal with cancer, and it really helps to talk about it, to be around others who understand. I would definitely recommend anyone with cancer in the family

check out Gilda's Club. They'll be glad they did. I know I am.”

For more information about volunteering at Gilda's Club, contact Susan Lichtblau at 332.5900, ext. 201.

Save The Dates!

Join us once again for our festive gingerbread competition and auction as well as a holiday gift sale by local artists. All events will be held at the Gilda's Clubhouse, with proceeds benefiting Gilda's Club WNY.

Friday, December 5

Cocktail Party and Preview Sale (reservations required)

Saturday, December 6 & Sunday, December 7

Holiday Gift Sale and Gingerbread House Auction (free admission/open to the public)

For more information about the gingerbread competition, sponsorships and volunteers, contact Joanne LaPorte at Gilda's Club, 332.5900, Ext. 203.



Steve Fiorella, WNY artist

Helping kids understand cancer

At Gilda's Club, we offer “cancer support for the whole family, the whole time.” But what does that mean? When we talk about children and teens, it means that a four-year-old who has noticed his dad doesn't have much energy anymore and can't play with him like he used to can learn strange new words like “cancer” and “chemo” and “remission.” It means a seven-year-old whose grandpa is very sick can talk about ways she can make the time they have left together special. It means a 13-year-old has a place to say “Your mom died of cancer? Mine, too.”

Children may not understand words like “donors” and “fundraising” and “non-profit.” But they do understand sharing feelings and experiences. They understand Hello Circle and Small Talk, where they can reveal “My mom wears a wig” and can hear back “Mine, too.” They understand activities like writing a letter to cancer (“Dear Cancer, you make me mad!”) and creating a wish tree (“I wish no one ever gets cancer again!”).

When you send your donations to or volunteer at Gilda's Club, you are helping create a place where children can understand these things, a place where they can understand them together. Because of you - our donors, volunteers, and supporters - children have a place where, as Gilda wished, no one, age 3 or 93, has to face cancer alone.

Kathy Kurtz
Program Manager &
Noogieland Coordinator



Kathy Kurtz

We're counting on you!

You can help support Gilda's Club by participating in our coin box project. Please remember to return your filled coin box to any M&T Bank branch or the Gilda's clubhouse by October 31. Thanks to our sponsors: Buffalo Spree; Business First; Dunbar Armored; M&T Bank; Metro Group, Inc.; Mod-Pac; RealtyUSA; Taco Bell and WGRZ-TV.

Join us for breakfast.

Last year's Beyond the Red Door Fundraising Breakfast, which focused on the Gilda's Club mission and program, was a huge success. Attendees were impressed and heartened to hear from Gilda's Club members, who told how their involvement has helped them with their cancer experience. Please join us on Thursday, October 23 at the Park Country Club in Williamsville where, in just one hour, we will feed your body, fill your heart and touch your soul.

Grazie Sorrento!

For the second consecutive year, Sorrento Lactalis Commercial, Inc. has donated \$50,000 to Gilda's Club WNY as exclusive sponsor of our Beyond The Red Door Fundraising Breakfast. Sorrento has donated \$25,000 for the event and another \$25,000 as a lead gift "to encourage others to support Gilda's Club," and we are very appreciative of their continued support.

Sorrento
CHEESE



For more information about the Beyond the Red Door Fundraising Breakfast, contact Robin Vail at 332.5900, ext. 207.

They came, they sang, we cheered!

In June, we held our first ever Teen Talent Night and boy, did we see some talent! Eight teens participated by doing magic tricks, singing, playing piano and showing off their quilting, cooking and writing talents. First prize went to Erin Herman for her personal essay. Second and third prizes were also awarded and everyone who participated received a certificate. Teen Talent Night was part of our monthly Teen Night activities. For more information, contact Kathy Kurtz at 332.5900, ext. 206.

Coming Soon

More great activities and events for kids and teens!
Watch this newsletter for more information on these upcoming programs and events:

Second Annual Teen Writing Contest

Students in grades 9-12 are eligible to enter a poem or essay that expresses their thoughts and feelings around their personal experiences with cancer. Entries will be judged and cash prizes and certificates awarded at a ceremony at the Gilda's Clubhouse early in 2009. For more information, contact Kathy Kurtz at 332.5900, ext. 206.

Kid Support

This structured 10-week support and education curriculum, which will start in early 2009, uses a variety of art activities, poems, stories, cartoons and games to help children learn how to ask questions, express difficult feelings and share common experiences about cancer. The goal is to reduce stress by providing support and teaching skills and enhancing family communication about cancer. Geared toward 4-7 and 8-12 age groups. For more information, contact Kathy Kurtz at 332-5900, ext. 206.

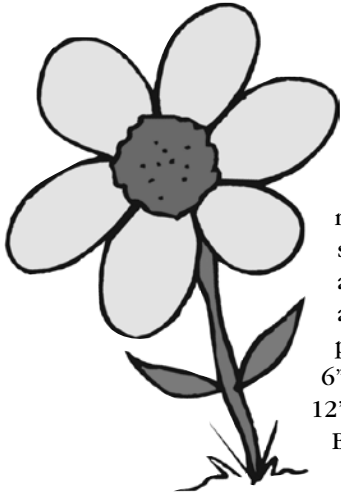
Gilda's on the web

If you haven't seen our website lately, you are in for a pleasant surprise!

Our newly-redesigned site at www.gildasclubwny.org is full of information about club activities and events, news, frequently-asked questions, cancer resource information and more. It's easy to navigate, allows for online donating and features engaging photos of members, friends and volunteers. Check us out online!



A wonderful gift idea!



A brick in the Gilda's Garden is a special way to honor someone you care about, and it makes a great gift for special occasions such as birthdays, Hanukah, Christmas, retirement or an anniversary. Have you, your family or your company placed your order yet? Prices range from \$250 for a 6" x 9" Heritage Brick Blend Paver to \$1,000 for a 12" a 12" Rose Pink Granite Brick to \$2,500 for a Bluestone Stepping Stone. For more information, contact Robin Vail at 332.5900, ext. 207 or visit www.gildasclubwny.org/eventsandfundraisers.



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For more information on Gilda's Club Worldwide, or to locate other Gilda's clubhouses, go to www.gildasclub.org

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