

# Gildagram



For Friends of Gilda's Club Chicago • Fall 2002

Living with cancer?  
Come as you are.™

## A Message From The President—

Gilda's Club Chicago will celebrate its fifth anniversary in February of 2003. We are now well into our program of providing social and emotional support to people living with cancer, and their families and friends. This is a huge achievement and we are proud that our organization is becoming part of the fabric of Chicago.

As you know, we offer our program free of charge and do not solicit our members for support. Therefore, we must rely on our donors to provide the funding needed to continue our growth. This issue of the Gildagram highlights various fund raising events that have been held and that we are planning to support the Club and the program activities that they help fund. We are especially excited to announce our Lion King benefit next May.

We look at a number of indicators to measure the success of our efforts. One indicator is the number of new members we attract on an annual basis. Our membership numbers – along with member satisfaction which is always high – demonstrate our relevance to the community. The service we provide to Chicago is extremely important and the more people we provide it to, the better we fulfill our mission. Consider this statistic – seven out of ten families are affected by cancer. The need is very real for Gilda's Club Chicago. The referral data indicates that health care providers and family and friends are far and away the most significant source of new members, with community organizations, the media, and members and volunteers also generating referrals. Which brings us to a very important question ... who have you told about Gilda's Club Chicago lately?

Thank you for your support, and for helping us make the lives of people facing some of the greatest of life's challenges a little easier.

Steven F. Molo

## Gilda's Club Chicago to Benefit from Special Performance of Disney's *THE LION KING* by Diane Muller

"Hakuna Matata." Any one who has seen – or knows kids who have seen – *Disney's The Lion King* knows that this two-word phrase means "no worries." The Gilda's Club Chicago community will share this "problem-free philosophy" at a benefit to be held in conjunction with a special performance of *Disney's The Lion King – The Broadway Musical* next spring.

Gilda's Club Chicago supporters and patrons will sing along with Simba and the gang as the popular show begins its new national tour in the Windy City. The benefit, to be held on May 2, 2003, will also serve as the official celebration of the Club's fifth anniversary and it is going to be an exciting evening, as the final preview performance prior to Chicago's opening night.

The much-acclaimed Broadway musical currently is playing to sold-out audiences in New York, London, Toronto, and Los Angeles, and producers expect the Chicago limited engagement to be an equally tremendous success. The musical will run at the Cadillac Palace Theatre, the same locale that hosted Gilda's Club Chicago's successful 2001 benefit performance of the smash hit *The Producers* during its world premiere engagement.

*The Lion King* musical has received tremendous praise for its originality and beauty, winning six Tony® Awards including Best Musical. The musical contains the award-winning Elton John/Tim Rice lyrics from the original movie score, as well as additional songs written for the Broadway production. Gilda's Club Chicago will be the exclusive beneficiary of the May 2, 2003 show and the Club expects to fill the house.

"We have a tradition of creating exciting theatrical benefits for our supporters and we are looking forward to a wonderful evening next May," said the Club's executive director LauraJane Hyde. "We are grateful for this exciting opportunity to raise funds to help broaden our program for people living with cancer."

TICKETS FOR THE PERFORMANCE ARE ON SALE NOW. CALL GILDA'S CLUB CHICAGO AT 312-464-9900 FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO RESERVE YOUR TICKETS TO THIS SPECTACULAR EVENT.

Steve Molo with Chicago White Sox wives and fiancées at the August 19th pre-game check presentation representing proceeds from Sox Appetit.



## FEATURED VOLUNTEER: Sister Elaine Lederer

by Kate Hutchinson

Thanks to volunteer Sister Elaine Lederer, Gilda's Club's "bulk mail angels" have grown. The group started with her and two others when the Club opened and has now grown to a contingent of more than 12, mostly from her parish and neighborhood. Together they mail calendars and other material to more than 2,000 recipients each month. "When we finish, we all go home tired," laughed Sr. Elaine, a Dominican nun who lives on Chicago's northwest side.



A retired Chicago public school teacher, Sr. Elaine, 79, has a schedule that would exhaust people half her age. She also volunteers with the CAPS program, where she appears in court on behalf of crime victims, and tutors two boys from China. An ovarian cancer survivor, she is involved with the National Ovarian Cancer Alliance. In fact, Sr. Elaine has survived three separate bouts with cancer. "Only the good die young," she joked.

As a survivor, she has attended wellness groups at Gilda's Club Chicago. "Women today are so knowledgeable about cancer. There is so much hope for people with cancer these days," she said. "I love this place, it's so inviting and uplifting. When I pass it while I'm riding the El, I want to get off and stop by. I feel like I own it."

A convert to Catholicism from Judaism, Sr. Elaine is celebrating her 60<sup>th</sup> year as a Dominican sister. She has master's degrees in pastoral ministry and English as a Second Language and a doctorate in Spanish. She has taught ESL classes and has translated church bulletins for the diocese of Chicago. She has also been a teaching fellow at the University of Michigan. "I don't know if I'm the best volunteer," she said humbly. "I would like to do more. I'm just one of many."

### **Giving to Gilda's:** It is easy to support Gilda's Club Chicago

through workplace giving campaigns at companies throughout the Chicagoland area. There are various ways you can help:

- *Some companies already include Gilda's Club Chicago on payroll giving forms.*
- *Gilda's Club Chicago is a member of the Illinois Women's Funding Federation (IWFF). Look over your payroll giving form to find Gilda's Club Chicago and IWFF.*
- *If your company allows "open choice" giving, employees can designate specific charities as the recipient of deductions. If you have questions, consult your company's campaign coordinator.*
- *When contributing to your local Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), please note that we are listed as Gilda's Club Chicago. Our agency number is 5652 for all CFC campaigns.*
- *Some companies will match an employee's donation so it is a good idea to check whether your employer has a Matching Gifts Program. Many companies will match your contribution dollar for dollar and some will match at a higher rate. Request a matching gift form and send it with your contribution.*

If you would like further information on how to include Gilda's Club Chicago in your workplace giving campaign, please call the Club at 312-464-9900. Thank you for your contribution. You are making a difference in the lives of those living with cancer.

## \*\*\*GILDA'S GOINGS ON\*\*\*

Upcoming event - Tour de Chicago! The Lance Armstrong Foundation and Gilda's Club Worldwide are co-sponsoring a forum that will take place on Monday, November 11 at 7 p.m. in McGaw Hall at the Evanston Campus of Northwestern University. Gilda's Club Chicago is proud to be the local "arm" for GCWW in this effort. For more information, contact the Club.

Upcoming event - Please join EILEEN FISHER for special days of shopping to commemorate national breast cancer awareness month. On Thursday, Oct. 3 from 5-9 p.m. at Water Tower Place and Saturday, Oct. 5 from 1-4 p.m. at Oakbrook Center, ten percent of the day's proceeds will support Gilda's Club Chicago.

We are pleased to announce that Gus Rodriguez, M.D. has joined our Medical Resource Board. Dr. Rodriguez is Director of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare and we are privileged to have his support.

Welcome to Gilda's Club Chicago's new Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Henderson who started her new role in May. Sarah has been working in a volunteer capacity as our PR coordinator since September 2001 and we are delighted to welcome her to the staff in her new combined role as Volunteer and PR coordinator. Sarah came over from London, England 18 months ago and her British accent makes her easily recognizable in the Club!

Thank you to WTMX Radio (The Mix) who issued their second annual CD "Mixclusives Volume 2" to benefit Gilda's Club Chicago in March with tracks from some of the country's best known acts including David Gray, Jewel and Lifehouse. The CD raised \$30,000 for the Club.

Volunteers and members play a significant role in raising awareness about the Club and have staffed information booths at health fairs, cancer survivor day events, and workplace wellness fairs. This summer, our volunteers even brought a taste of Noogieland to the Y-Me race. We encourage members to serve as liaisons with hospitals and clinics. If you are interested in serving as an outreach volunteer, please contact Kathleen Hanks.

We launched our new website in May. Many thanks to Brainforest who designed our eye-catching new layout, Norvax for both the programming and hosting, and the many staff and volunteers without whom this effort would not have been possible. Be sure to visit [www.gildasclubchicago.org](http://www.gildasclubchicago.org). Thank you to the dedicated team of volunteers led by Pat Morrison who designed and managed the original website which served us so well.

Andrea Karoff, Program Coordinator, presented an overview of Gilda's Club Chicago's mission and programs at the Illinois Foundation for Quality Health Care's 2002 Mammography Conference in May.

The Club hosted its third annual Cancer and the Workplace seminar, for HR and EAP professionals. Fifty workplace professionals attended the June seminar. The event was organized by a committee of professionals who gave of their time and expertise to plan what was noted by one attendee as, "an excellent program!" Attorney Julie Badel discussed Leave Laws and Policy, while Bonnie Taylor, PhD, discussed the side effects of living with cancer. Erica Pope, Club member, talked about her involvement with the club as well as her workplace experience.

We were pleased to welcome the National Black Leadership Initiative On Cancer (NBLIC) in June for their bi-annual awards program. Over 100 guests were present for music, comedy and awards. The theme was based on the successful cookbook, "Down Home Healthy Cooking," which teaches people about cancer preventive cooking. Fumi Apantaku Onayemi, Regional Director for NBLIC, was the host and organizer of the program.

It's been camp time at Gilda's this summer. We hosted "Camp One Step At a Time" in June. Twenty-five campers came to Gilda's Club and received makeovers, manicures, took part in a Second City improv workshop, and made their own lunch in a healthy eating workshop. In August, we held a camp day for our kid members and had over 25 kids enjoy a visit from our canine friends at the Anti-Cruelty Society, arts and crafts and a story-telling session.

Welcome to C'est Le Vie, a new networking group of women from the Evanston area. Darlene Eady-Moore, a very active member of Gilda's Club who is seeking to raise awareness of breast cancer in the Evanston community, brought this group to the Club.

Thank you to the White Sox Wives who in August presented a check for \$10,000 representing sales of *Sox Appetit*, their cookbook benefitting the Club. The cookbook, which is still available by calling (312) 674-1000, is packed full of recipes from lead-off appetizers to grand slam desserts provided by players, wives, coaches and Gilda's Club members and volunteers. It makes a great gift for foodies and supports Gilda's Club at the same time!

## FEATURED MEMBERS: The Colmenero and Eastaneda families by Kate Hutchinson

The Colmenero and Eastaneda families are part of Gilda's Club Chicago's first family group for Spanish-speaking members, begun one year ago and led by Graciela Killner. Eloy Colmenero, who works for the Glenview Park District, and his wife Adrena found the Club in the phone book after their six-year-old son Sadrac became sick. Sadrac receives medical treatment at Children's Memorial Hospital, but the couple said Gilda's Club provides much-needed emotional support.

Sadrac and his nine-year-old brother Eloy enjoy the activities in Noogieland, and after some initial reluctance, now look forward to Saturdays at the Club so much they jump out of bed at 6 a.m. and start bugging their parents.

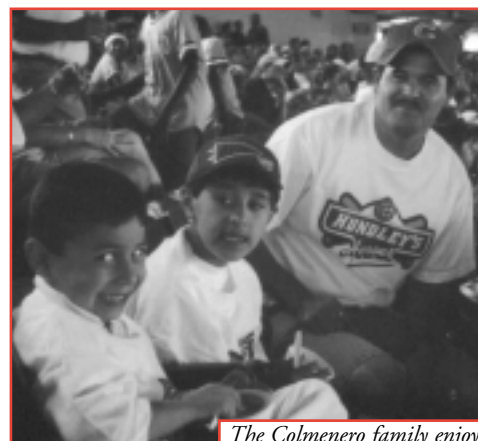
Leonides Eastaneda discovered Gilda's Club Chicago through a brochure at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital, where her five-year-old daughter Evelyn was being treated for cancer. Evelyn and her six-year-old sister Itsel also enjoy playing in Noogieland. Leonides and the Colmeneros, who are all from Mexico, have struck up a friendship outside the Club and car pool to meetings together.

Adrena said her experience with the Club has been extremely positive. "We have been received with warmth and understanding, and we can meet other people dealing with cancer."

"The most important thing is we can talk freely and have a good time too. All our needs are taken care of," Leonides said.

Gilda's Club Chicago hopes to offer additional services for Spanish-speaking members, such as bilingual volunteers, counselors and special programs in Spanish, said Killner, Gilda's Club Chicago's bilingual staff member.

Unlike their parents, the Colmenero and Eastaneda children are bilingual, so they can participate in a number of activities. The Colmenero brothers count freeze tag, the sandbox and clay classes among their favorite activities, and enjoyed the club's recent outing to the Chicago Cubs game.



*The Colmenero family enjoys a recent Chicago Cubs victory.*

## Brady's Gilda-like Gifts Make for Great Benefit

by Will Cooper

Multi-talented improv artist and TV star Wayne Brady headlined a night of hilarity at Gilda's Club Chicago's fundraiser last May 16 at the Chicago Theatre. The evening raised more than \$50,000 for Club programming and operations.

Introduced by WGN Radio personality Steve Cochran, Brady sang, danced and impersonated everyone from Louis Armstrong to Michael Jackson, keeping the 2,000-strong audience rolling in the aisles.

"Wayne Brady honored the memory of Gilda Radner by sharing with us his wonderful comedy, and he has helped draw attention to her legacy that is Gilda's Club—a strong and viable support community for individuals and families touched by cancer," said Gilda's Club Chicago Executive Director LauraJane Hyde.

Credit for the evening's success goes to the hard-working Board of Directors of Gilda's Club Chicago, and to the generosity of corporate and media sponsors American Airlines, the Chicago Sun-Times, Van Kampen Investments and WGN Radio.

When Brady finished his performance, a group of kids from Noogieland joined him on stage to deliver colorfully-illustrated "Thank You" cards they had made by hand. Surprised and visibly moved, Brady went down among the audience to show off the children's heartfelt handiwork.

Rain clouds on the evening of the event failed to dampen attendance, and the entertainment's bright aura shone steadily in the days afterward, as numerous calls expressing interest in Gilda's Club lit up the phones.

"We are grateful that the Gilda's Club family has enjoyed another successful annual fundraiser," Hyde said. "We've been blessed with the generosity of many wonderful and talented individuals over the years, and Wayne Brady has kept that tradition alive."



*Wayne Brady with event sponsor Van Kampen representatives Larry Althoff and Jerry Hubbard at the May 16th benefit.*

## *THANK YOU Gilda's Club Chicago*

"I keep thinking about what my sister's legacy is and how to honor it. And, every time I think about it and describe it, it is Gilda's Club Chicago. A place to go where you can speak honestly; express yourself; feel love and support; and feel beautiful! Thank you!" E.F.

"You've been so wonderful, thoughtful, supportive, and helpful. Things have been difficult for us lately, so we especially appreciate all the support we have gotten from Gilda's Club." E.S.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you for the huge amount of support you have given me. Thanks to each of you for the cards and good wishes. I hope to see you soon. I miss you!" T.N.

"Great job! Thank you for the opportunity to share and support Gilda's Club Chicago." B.G.

"This letter isn't directed to one specific person; rather it applies to everything and everyone that make up this wonderful place. You have given my family and me the greatest gift imaginable. You taught us to understand and respect death, value life, love and friendships and to not feel alone." H.M. and Family

"I want to thank you for all of the support that Gilda's Club Chicago has given me. It has given me strength and understanding of what I went through with cancer and the understanding to be who I am today. Thank you again." J.M.

"I think often of our 'Art Class' and the healing it brought to me. Happily, I am now three years in remission." M.M.

-Compiled by Diane Kulik

The mission of Gilda's Club Chicago is to provide a meeting place where people with cancer and their families and friends can join with others to build social and emotional support as a supplement to medical care. Free of charge, Gilda's Club Chicago offers support and networking groups, lectures, workshops, and social events in a conveniently located, homelike setting.

## Mission Statement



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