



GILDAGRAM

It's Always Something: Words from the President

In the space of less than one short year, Gilda's Club St. Louis (GCSTL) has grown from an idea tossed around by a few people to a vibrant 501 (c)(3) poised to make a significant contribution to the St. Louis cancer community. All told, the high-profile and talented professionals who have affiliated with the organization number over 100. This includes our Founding Board of Directors, Steering Committee, Medical Resource Council, Young Leadership Council and the remarkable group of ladies who are determined to make The Women's Event a smashing success in November.

At first, it amazed me that this prestigious group would lend their name and support to an organization that was completely new to the region. Although there are 22 operating Gildas Clubhouses across the United States, it was a brand that was being introduced to St. Louis for the first time. But with cancer the leading cause of death in Missouri, it seems that all of their lives had been touched in some fashion by cancer, whether themselves, friends, family, colleagues or neighbors. And the idea of helping to create a warm and welcoming place where ANYBODY touched by cancer in their life could go so they would not have to face the disease alone was an easy sell.

I am personally grateful that each of these individuals has agreed to lend their time and talents to help establish a Gilda's Club in St. Louis, and to make an investment in the quality of life in the region. But in my inaugural Gildagram remarks, I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the members of our Founding Board, who have worked tirelessly over the past year to build the foundation of the organization so that we will be successful in the future. I am truly humbled by their dedication and commitment, and am amazed at what we have been able to accomplish in such a short time.

I've chosen one of Gilda's favorite phrases for the name of this column: "It's always something." In the case of the Founding Board of Gilda's Club St. Louis, it's something very special. And the St. Louis cancer community will benefit significantly from their outstanding efforts to make a difference.

Helping to Open the Red Door

Gilda's Club St. Louis is committed to offering our program free of charge to our members. We depend on the generosity of our friends in the community - individuals, corporations and foundations who support our efforts.

There are many ways to make a contribution to Gilda's Club St. Louis. Financial support, in-kind donations, event sponsorship and volunteers help maintain and grow our programs. Individuals, employee groups and organizations may sponsor special

fundraising events to benefit the Club. If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in producing a special fundraising event such as a golf outing or bowling party, or if you know of a restaurant or store that would be interested in hosting an event and donating a portion of the proceeds to Gilda's Club St. Louis, please contact our Development Director at 314.395.8200.

The employees of Brown Shoe support Gilda's Club St. Louis throughout the year with Jeans Days: employees make a donation to Gilda's Club for the privilege of wearing jeans to work and Balloon Days: one employee sends another a balloon bouquet as a thank you for help, support, etc. Brown Shoe's recent annual dinner event, Evening of Caring, another fundraiser for Gilda's Club, was a huge success. Raffles and a portion Circle of Hope bracelets sales added to the funds they expect to raise this year for GCSTL.

St. Louis Magazine's At Home recently hosted a very tasty evening at Roth Concept Center where everyone was encouraged to walk around the spectacular showroom and view state of the art, luxury kitchen appliances from Sub-Zero, Wolf, Asko and Best. In exchange for their donation to Gilda's Club St. Louis, guests were treated to a cooking demonstration by Chef Todd Weisz (of the soon to open Adler Restaurant) paired with wines supplied and served by The Wine Merchant. What guests anticipated to be a small tasting, turned out to be more of a gourmet meal! Chef Weisz's menu consisted of shrimp ceviche martinis, cashew tempura soft shell crabs, Jamaican rum glazed barbequed salmon and fire-roasted skirt steak. At the end of the evening, Gilda's Club was presented with a check for over \$700!

Volunteer in the Spotlight

Gilda Radner was famous for saying "It's always something," and for that reason, many people just can't find time to volunteer. Marcia Brockman is one of those very special people for whom the old axiom, if you want something done, ask a busy person, must have been created. Wife, mother of four children, operating room nurse, and the most energetic grandmother around, Marcia still finds the time to volunteer her time, talent and energy to a host of worthy organizations.

In addition to her responsibilities as a Gilda's Club St. Louis Board Member, Marcia is also a member of the Women's Event Committee, the primary fundraiser for Gilda's Club, which will be held on November 14th at the Ritz-Carlton. From now until the lights go down and the gala begins, she will be working to make sure that it's not only a sold-out event but that everything looks special and every guest has a memorable evening.

Recognizing that everyone who volunteers for a charitable cause has their choice of many worthwhile organizations, Marcia sums up her desire to support Gilda's Club this way: "As a nurse, I know all too well the devastating impact those three words 'you have cancer' can have on patients and their families. I am fortunate to enjoy good health and as a member of the Board of Gilda's Club, I feel empowered to reach out to the members of our community. My vision is to help in any way I can and to get others to join me in a community effort of support."

Asked why she would recommend that others support Gilda's Club, either through a financial donation or as a volunteer, Marcia said, "There is strength in numbers and every volunteer hour and every dollar will make a difference."

Gilda's Club St. Louis is honored to have this talented and dedicated woman as a founding member of our Board of Directors.