



# FRIEND TO FRIEND



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#### **OUR MISSION**

Friends of Kids with Cancer is devoted to enriching the daily lives of children undergoing treatment for, and survivors of, cancer and blood-related diseases. Our mission is to be an advocate for these special kids and provide them and their families with the Educational, Emotional and Recreational support needed as a result of the long hours of chemotherapy, illness, and isolation.

#### **OUR PROGRAMS**







#### **CONTACT US**







530 Maryville Centre Drive | Suite LL5 | St. Louis, MO • 63141 | (314) 275-7440 | info@friendsofkids.com



#### A LOVING THANKS TO RETIRING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUDY CIAPCIAK

A longtime friend to the founders of the organization, Judy Ciapciak always had a soft spot for the mission of Friends and spent the majority of her time volunteering every chance she could. As it grew, Friends decided to create a full-time management position. Judy became the Executive Director 17 years ago, and has been living and breathing this organization ever since.

"The best thing that ever happened to FOKWC was when we hired Judy! Her courage and creativity has helped the organization find new and innovative ways to accomplish our mission and blossom into what it is today. Thank you for your immeasurable success and devoted efforts to help these special kids and their families!" (Molly Henry, founding member)

Judy,

As your time as Executive Director has recently come to a close, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your hard work, passion, and enthusiastic commitment in building and growing Friends of Kids with Cancer to the organization it is today.

Over the last seventeen years, your stewardship of Friends has been characterized by innovative ideas, relationship building, and tireless efforts towards increasing the credibility and visibility of Friends in the St. Louis community.

The relationships you have fostered with our families, donors, volunteers, and staff leaves us certain that Friends will prosper continue offer smiles, laughs, support, and endless memories for our kids, their siblings, and their parents!

Your energy and devotion to the role will be difficult to match, but you leave Friends a better organization and on strong footing for those who follow you.

We will miss you and your inspiring leadership!







#### A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUTGOING BOARD MEMBER



A special "thank you" to our departing Board Member, Mary Lynne Wilson.

"She brightens the days of those around her and makes a difference in their lives... simply by smiling!" Mary Lynne exemplifies this statement each and every day!

She joined the "Friends" Board in 2006 and has brought countless

smiles to the Friends organization but most importantly, to our kids and their families.

We are recognizing an amazing woman who has made an immeasurable impact on the Friends of Kids with Cancer Board. She served on the Fashion Show Committee since its inception and Co-Chaired the event in 2002 and in 2006 thru 2008. Mary Lynne has led the Events Committee since 2012. She has Co-Chaired Trivia Night, rarely missed a Golf Tournament and attended as well as volunteered at endless events.

Thank you Mary Lynne, for your kind and giving heart. Thank you for being you! We Love You!



#### "REMEMBERING AN ERA" TRIVIA NIGHT RAISED RECORD \$29,000

On Friday March 2nd, Friends of Kids with Cancer hosted our annual Trivia Night at St. John Vianney High School. Whether it was the Roaring 20's or a 50's Sock Hop, guests picked their favorite era and recreated the look. Sharon Roth, the chair of Trivia Night, along with the Trivia Night committee worked to create a crowd pleasing, sold out event. In total we raised a record breaking \$29,000!

A huge thank you to all of our sponsors especially our Gold Level: BoKal, Quinlan Realty, and Murphy Property Tax Consulting, as well as our in-kind donors Anheuser Busch, Grey Eagle, Urban Chestnut, Schlafly, Major Brands and Glaziers. Special thank you to **Pat Imig** for emceeing the event.

We owe a world of thanks to St. John Vianney High School for donating the space, as well as Tom Mulvihill and his student volunteers for helping with the fastest set up we have ever seen! Over forty wonderful volunteers kept the night moving from the

very beginning with set up until the bitter end when the last item was loaded into the van.

The real stars of the night were our guests! More than five hundred attendees participated in various games throughout the night, including a special "fund-a-need" to underwrite our Magic House family party in April. Because of this generosity, hundreds of Friends patients and their families will get to experience a private party at the Magic House FREE of charge! It was evident that the Friends Community came out in full force to raise money for these special kids. We want to thank all involved for contributing to the night's success.

Congratulations are in order for the night's winners:

- 50/50 Winner: Jan Puscian
- Table Decorating Contest: SpreadArisLight
- Trivia Winners: Family Finance Mortgage

## Teen Girl's Night Out

Throughout Friend's programs one thing is constant, comaraderie is key. We strive to create opportunities for parents, patients and siblings to interact and confide in those on the same difficult journey. Fun experiences can be a wonderful way to create those bonds. Recently, Friends had the honor of treating several of our young ladies to a fun-filled night out together.

"I loved Girls Night Out! It was a great time to see old friends and bond with new ones." (Stephanie, patient)

Their evening began with dinner at Canyon Café, playing ice breaker games and getting to know each other. The real fun began as they walked next door to the **Kendra Scott** store where Friends provided a \$100 surprise for each girl allowing them to shop for, or design, a piece of jewelry. The wonderful staff at Kendra Scott set up a cupcake bar, refreshments, and helped the girls with the color bar and design choices. The room was already sparkling, but the girl's smiles illuminated the store in a way that outshone the jewelry!



#### **FEATURED ARTICLES**

#### FRIENDS WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: TIM MICKELSON

In January, I was honored with the chance to join this amazing organization! And I have witnessed some truly beautiful things...

Tim Mickelson joins the staff of Friends of Kids with Cancer, dedicated to serving children undergoing treatment for, and survivors of, cancer and blood-related diseases.

"Never have I seen more love gathered together to help others than here at Friends of Kids with Cancer. I see it in Judy Ciapciak, who is retiring after 17 years of loving leadership, I hear it on the phone in every employee's voice, I see it in the look on our volunteer's faces, and I feel it in the way each of our board members lead and grow Friends important, and sometimes very difficult journey.

But more importantly, I've seen how much it matters... to an

Oncology she nurse as remembered how her parents explained to the family that there was no money for holiday presents the year she was in treatment - and how Friends arrived a few days later "and gave us back our Christmas!", to a 10-year old as she walked down the runway during our Fashion Show and her eyes locked with her mom's in pure love, and to a father at his son's end-of-treatment celebration as he spoke of his son's battle and thanked those who were there for them."

As Executive Director of Friends, Tim combines his professional skill set with his passion to foster a soaring spirit among children battling cancer - no matter their

prognosis. His responsibilities include overseeing all aspects of program operations, marketing, and fundraising.

Tim brings more than 30 years of experience in non-profit leadership, sales, marketing and program development Friends of Kids with Cancer. Originally from the for-profit performance improvement arena, Tim consciously shifted his career to the non-profit world to focus on helping St. Louis youth achieve a positive future. Recent non-profit experience includes the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and The St. Louis Children's Choirs where he served as director of development.



"I look forward to joining you as we work to bring happiness and hope to these special kids!"

#### **WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

#### **Susanne Rosenberg**

"When I did my senior nursing school clinical in pediatric hematology/oncology, I knew I had discovered not just a field, but also a vocation. For over 20 years I have served in a variety of roles in this specialized field: bedside nurse, outpatient clinic nurse, educator, and manager. Most recently, I was appointed the Clinical Director of Operations for Hematology/ Oncology at St. Louis Children's Hospital. I have been married to my husband Randy for 17 years and have two children, Luke and Anna.

I have witnessed firsthand over the years the impact of Friends of Kids with Cancer on hundreds of patients, families,



and staff. I believe deeply in the healing mission of Friends of Kids with Cancer and am honored to serve in this life-transforming organization."

#### **Mary Greener**

"My career in sports started in 1995 with the Detroit Red Wings. Three years ago, I accepted the position of Director of Corporate Sponsorship with our St. Louis Blues. Little did I know that I would fall in love with an organization that does so much for our community, Friends of Kids with Cancer.

Meeting Judy Ciapciak and Mary Mercurio during the first Ameren Power Play Goals for Kids program was a gift. I knew the minute that I met them they were different in a great way. They were so warm, and what they do is so selfless; everything is for the kids and their families. I immediately wanted to help in any way I could.



Personally meeting the kids and families has affected profoundly and has brought me to the point where I want to do so much more.

I hope to make half the impact that these kids and families have made on me."





Dear Friend,

"Sometimes the simplest things mean the most... Your gifts have been amazing and have brought much joy to our son's face despite the difficulties or pain he may be in. Thank you so much for all you do!" ~ Mason's Mom

Having a child in treatment for cancer is a roller coaster for the entire family. That's why Friends of Kids with Cancer is dedicated to a very simple mission of helping kids with cancer... be kids. We work closely with local St. Louis area treatment centers, bringing a sense of normalcy to families battling childhood cancer through our **Educational**, **Emotional**, and **Recreational** programming.

But we can only do this with your help!

We are excited to announce the Friends Forever Giving Club, and invite you to become an inaugural member. By investing in Friends Forever with your monthly gift, you are helping give a patient back their childhood. Your gift will provide uplifting experiences for our kids, and their families, allowing them to **THINK**, **FEEL** and **SMILE** every day.

As a Friends Forever Giving Club member, you will receive these unique benefits:

- Stories from the Heart Read heartwarming stories about courage, strength, and character.
- **First Look Access** Be the first to hear about everything happening with events, programs, and special Friends apparel.
- Friends Forever Keychain This special keychain will always show your support of Friends.
- **Special Recognition** Your Friends Forever membership will be highlighted in our newsletter, website, events, and annual report.

On behalf of our patients and their families, thank you for considering the Friends Forever Giving Club. Together, we can create smiling faces and instill hope in the hearts of our kids and their families.

With gratitude,

im Midder

Tim Mickelson, Executive Director, Friends of Kids with Cancer





#### Be a Friend Forever Today!

Every child with cancer deserves a life filled with fun, laughter, support, and days that feel just plain normal. By joining the Friends Forever giving club you can make a difference in the life of a child during their fight against cancer. All donations stay in St. Louis providing direct support and services to children battling cancer in local hospitals.



"No chemo, no needles, no pain... just a child playing and being 'a normal kid' for a day. It was such a wonderful blessing for her." (Patient Grandmother)

With nearly 300 new patients diagnosed every year, Friends is there to ease the emotional and financial burdens that arise during the family's fight against cancer. Friends of Kids with Cancer gives back something medicine alone cannot. Educational, Emotional, and Recreational programs build self-esteem and provide moments of joy and laughter to the entire family!

## Helping kids with cancer... be kids!

#### Smile Maker: \$10/month

Provides a years' worth of toys for a newly diagnosed patient.

#### Battle Booster: \$29/month

Provides a special gift for a child beginning treatment.

#### Family Friend: \$60/month

Provides six therapy support sessions for the patient, parents, and siblings.

#### Ambassador of Hope: \$92/month

Brings added hope to a patient that has relapsed through a series of special gifts and memories.

#### Memory Maker: \$140/month

Creates "forever" experiences such as sporting events and concerts.

#### Bell Ringer: \$220/month

Provides end of treatment celebrations for the patient, family, and friends.





#### **Friends Forever Benefits**

When you join the Friends Forever giving club, you become part of a special group of people devoted to helping children and their families as they fight one of the toughest battles of their lives.





Read heartwarming stories about courage, strength, and character.

#### First Look Access

Get a "First Look" at everything happening with our events and programs... plus special access to Friends apparel.

#### Friends Forever Keychain

Receive an authentic Friends Forever Keychain to show your support for the Giving Club.

#### **Special Recognition**

Your name will be published in the FOKWC Newsletter, Annual Report, and other publications.





#### ZION LUTHERAN STUDENTS GIVE BACK

Learning the importance of giving back is essential to making the world a better place. Students at Zion Lutheran School in St. Charles are learning not only about the standard curriculum, but also about the importance of giving to others. Zion Lutheran strives to bring out the creativity within each of their students. Their connection with Friends began in memory of **Drew Albritton** (age 4) and Glenn Markway (age 23).

"Our service learning projects allow our school families to honor the memory of these incredible young men and reach out to those who continue to battle this wicked disease called cancer. It has

been our honor to serve with FOKWC this year!" (Cheryl Haun, Early Childhood Director)



Over the past year and a half, these students have collected over \$11,000 in monetary and in-kind donations! Taking time out of their busy schedules to make

gifts for our families is a big help to our organization. Zion Lutheran hosted a Superhero Toy Drive collecting hundreds of items for our Toy closet along with Christmas gifts for our adopt a family program, gift cards, 65 fleece blankets, puzzles and much, much more! It is wonderful to see these students giving back to the community.

Their donations have had a huge impact on our patients and their families bringing countless smiles, warmth, and laughter. Thank you Zion families for your generosity and donations to Friends of Kids with Cancer!



#### **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**



#### THE SCHWEIZER FAMILY

Laurie Schweizer has been our little ray of sunshine every Tuesday for the last ten years. Her talents for letter composition have been instrumental in developing effective acknowledgment of our honorarium and memorial donors.

"Helping the charity I love has been a wonderful experience that gave me so much more than I gave them." (Laurie)

Her love for Friends has grown and spread throughout her entire family. Laurie's daughter, Abbey

Small, and son, Adam Schweizer, have been very involved over the years. Abbey is well known for her time on the Fashion Show committee, recently chairing our successful 25th anniversary show. Adam coordinated multiple Hats on Days and toy drives within the Rockwood School District.

Thank you Schweizer family for your incredible years of volunteering and friendship but most importantly for helping kids with cancer... be kids!

#### **PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

# "You don't know you need it until after you've joined the group for the first time." (support group parent)

#### PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

No one is ever prepared to hear that their child has a life-threatening illness. The diagnosis of cancer in a child or teenager can be a devastating blow to the patient's loved ones and often times creates an instant crisis within the family unit. Friends of Kids with Cancer has found a tremendous need to provide **Support Groups** for the diagnosed child, their parents, and siblings. Last year, a new Patient-Parent Support Group was

formed to create a safe and supportive environment for the parents and caregivers.

"This group has given me tools to cope and move forward. I would have never gotten this far without them." (patient's father)

The first few weeks after a child's diagnosis, family schedules and routines get turned inside out; life becomes a bit of a blur. There are

no right or wrong feelings; shock, disbelief, fear, guilt, and anxiety are all common reactions. These gatherings address these difficult emotions, provide support, and offer solutions for parents as they process the overwhelming journey of a cancer treatment. Tips to help children cope with physical and emotional changes are provided. Friends' Support Groups are facilitated by Valerie Kennedy Lang (Licensed Clinical Social Worker

with a Certificate in Oncology) and **Glennon Doherty** (Licensed Professional Counselor).

At each session, the children and teens are divided into age-level groups as needed, while the adults meet in their own group.

#### **UPCOMING SUPPORT GROUP DATES**

Participating families have varied from several years' post-treatment to those experiencing a new diagnosis. Friends would like to welcome patient-parents/caregivers, and their families to join this support Group at any point during their journey.

#### PARENT SUPPORT GROUP SESSIONS

SECOND Wednesday of Each Month in 2018 6:30pm - 8:00pm

> May 9 June 13 July 11 August 8

September 12 October 10 November 14 December 12

Friends of Kids with Cancer Office 530 Maryville Centre Drive, Suite LL5, 63141

RSVP by calling our office at 314.275.7440 or email brandy@friendsofkids.com

#### **GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP SESSIONS**

LAST Wednesday of Each Month in 2018 6:30pm - 8:00pm

> May 30 June 27 July 25 August 29

September 26 October TBD November 28 December 26

Friends of Kids with Cancer Office 530 Maryville Centre Drive, Suite LL5, 63141

RSVP by calling our office at 314.275.7440 or email brandy@friendsofkids.com

## Program Highlight

### We love seeing young cancer survivors go on to college!

Our "Young Survivors" Scholarship helps these brave, young men and women live their lives to the fullest! The amount of the individual scholarship awarded ranges from \$2,000 and \$3,700, depending on how many applicants meet the requirements.

Visit our website or call for more information.

Applications will be accepted until June 13, 2018





#### AN AMERICAN GIRL TEA PARTY

Friends of Kids with Cancer joined with #SpreadArisLight to host an American Girl themed Tea Party for young cancer patients and their siblings on Sunday, February 25, 2018

Arianna Dougan lost her battle to neuroblastoma in November of 2017. She loved to give to others and make people happy. In celebration of her birthday, Ari's family wanted to continue her





giving legacy by doing something special for other little girls battling cancer... an American Girl themed Tea Party immediately came to mind.

"We always made a big deal when it came to Arianna's birthday. We wanted to do something elaborate and fun so we contacted our friends at Friends of Kids with Cancer to help us make the party extra-special for the girls

and their siblings." (Lori Zucker, Ari's mother)

Arianna had 12 American Girl dolls that she loved very much. These dolls along with other accessories, horses, beds, clothes



and items from the American Girl Store were a surprise gift for the fourteen young guests at the party. Professional make-up artists and fancy dress-up attire



provided extra glam to the smiles radiating around the room. Decadent desserts and tasty treats created by the Ritz along with lemonade and tea tied in perfectly and made for a truly memorable day!

#### **CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT**

#### **GOOD MEETS WORLD**

For the **Good Meets World** crew it's all about #GivingBack! This is exemplified by their continuous volunteer efforts at events, as well as their desire to help grow the friends mission and business-donor base.

"Partnering with Friends was an absolute thrill for us. Not only do they have an amazing team to work with, they also go above and beyond when it comes to following their mission - and that's what truly matters most to us. The lives that they enhance and the experiences provided to the kids is unlike anything else we have seen." (Zach Tucker, founder)

Good Meets World provides a turnkey giving and branding service that connects businesses to Friends of Kids with Cancer and other local causes. Their service enables businesses to support our organization, while branding and certifying them as a business that gives at the same time.

Be sure to look for new businesses that are supporting Friends through Good Meets World in future newsletters! www.goodmeetsworld.com



GMW Team '17



We are young professionals and with the joys of childhood still fresh in our minds, we support Friends of Kids with Cancer in exciting and unique ways.

Our mission is to provide an enthusiastic and energetic base of young professional supporters and future leaders for Friends of Kids with Cancer.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Gary Haas, President Woody Theis, Vice President Ryan McKillips, Treasurer Kirsten Jones, Secretary Maura Garascia. Emeritus Jamie Schuette, Friends Liaison

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Danny Babitz Shannon Beube Katy Breen Leah Coady Scott Chartrand Andrew Dressel Bekah Franzel Julia Gold Jaclyn Hopp Mary McKee Joe Reinberg Mary Rodgers Phil Sandell **Tracy Sexton** Eileen Sokolowski **Amy Sturdevant** Julie Stutz Chris Timmermann

#### 5TH ANNUAL VOODOO IN THE LOU RAISES OVER \$29,000





On February 17th, the Fabulous Fox Theatre was transformed into a breathtaking backdrop for this event's masquerade theme. Three hundred and fifty guests donned their finest suits and gowns and indulged in Cajun inspired hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Glitz, glam, and theatrical burlesque shows by Van Ella Studios along with live music by The Diamond Empire Band created an exhilarating atmosphere, stimulating the crowd to dance the night away!

In total, everyone in attendance, sponsorships, silent auction, raffles, and various donations raised over \$29,000!

A special "shout out" goes out to our Marquee VIP sponsor, Stifel and all of our partners: Northwestern Mutual, Dominos,

Incentive Concepts, CRB, The Reinberg Family, UMB, Holekamp Foundation, Kathy and Jim Martin, WILsquare Capital, The Staenberg Group, Carrollton Bank, Love Funding, Berkshire Hathaway Estate, Busey Bank, In Memory of John Henry, Wow Factor Home Staging, and Nathan & Jennifer McKean.





Thank you to our event chairs: Katy Breen, Leah Coady, Woody Theis, 11 committee members, the Young Professionals Board, and the seventeen amazing volunteers for dedicating their time and talents towards this record-breaking event!

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2018**





#### **FUN WITH FRIENDS** Saturday, July 14th

City Museum

#### 12 BARS OF CHARITY

Saturday, December 15th 2pm-6pm BallPark Village



### **VOODOO IN THE LOU**

January 25th, 2019 **Fabulous Fox Theatre** 

#### HONORARY & MEMORIAL DONATIONS

#### **HONORARY DONATIONS:** (July - December 2017)

**Jade Abrams** 

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Warner and Helane Isaacs

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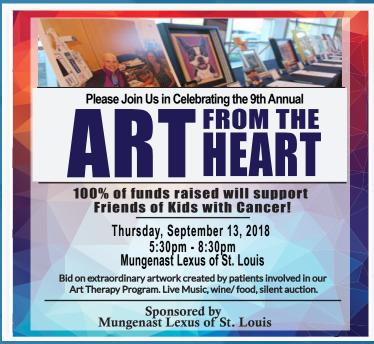
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