



GILDA'S CLUB:

SUPPORT FOR EVERY STEP OF THE CANCER JOURNEY

“There isn’t a day that goes by I don’t think about it. It’s constantly on my mind but I joined Gilda’s Club for that reason. It’s such a wonderful supportive community. I can connect with others who know exactly what I’m going through.”

BY DIANE R. PAYLOR | PHOTOS BY KYLENE WHITE
PROMOTION

Caretaking for others has always been Patricia Malone’s passion. A retired youth detention center social worker for Louisville metro government since 2014, Patricia still spends her days caring for others – primarily the elderly — as a home health aide. However, a diagnosis of chronic lymphocytic leukemia in July 2021 put her in a unique position, she was the person who now needed help. “I was in shock because I had not known anyone in my family who had cancer,” Patricia says.

Despite her doctor reassuring her she would be okay and her type of leukemia was a “wait and see” type of treatment, Patricia recalls trying to process the information and the impact it was going to have on her life going forward.

As the news started to sink in, so too did anxiety. “I had a little knot inside of me. I got in my car, drove home and got on the computer and started Googling leukemia. I wanted to know what it is and how I got it,” says Patricia.

Coming to terms with the life-changing news meant navigating an unconventional path. She told no one — not even those she loves most — like her 18-year-old daughter or her two siblings. “I didn’t want to tell anybody because I didn’t want them feeling sorry for me or being fearful of what would happen to me,” says Patricia.

But she recognized that she wasn’t going to be able to continue on the journey alone. So, Patricia sought out help and joined Gilda’s Club

Kentuckiana, the free cancer support community named after Gilda Radner, the legendary Saturday Night Live comedian who died of ovarian cancer in 1986.

“I needed to connect with people who have had a cancer diagnosis,” she says.

Patricia tries her best to make Gilda Club’s support group meetings for those with active cancer on Tuesdays. Whether she joins in-person or virtually, she says she greatly appreciates the camaraderie the support group provides.

While she is aware her condition may change at any time, Patricia is glad to belong to a community that will offer her support no matter what the future holds for her leukemia.

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Patricia would like others to know about the more than 180 free monthly programs Gilda’s Club offers at their warm, welcoming clubhouses located on Grinstead Drive and West Broadway. Program offerings like cooking classes, yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, art, music, social events, educational workshops and support groups provide the social and emotional support families and individuals living with cancer need. For more information, visit gck.org or call (502) 583-0075.