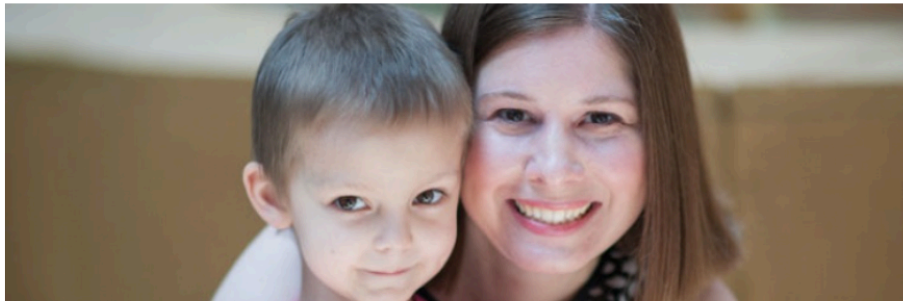


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Get a Makeover, Make a Difference for Those Living with Cancer

By Nicole Plegge | Mon, 07/25/2016 - 12:57pm



Every mom deserves some pampering now and then. A day when you can take off the nail polish that's been chipping away since May, free your hair from a messy bun, and enjoy a massage by hands that aren't sticky from popsicle and pancake syrup.

On August 20, plan an afternoon getaway with your best girlfriends or some bonding time with your daughter at the 4th annual [Beauty Bash](#) at the Saint Louis Galleria. Best of all, your well-deserved me-time is completely guilt-free since proceeds from the spa day benefit [Card Care Connection](#), a nonprofit that delivers motivational cards and care packages to patients with cancer.



Spreading joy through creativity

As a social worker serving patients in the oncology unit, Aleeza Granote soon realized many of her clients were left to fight their disease without the support of family and friends.

"These amazing individuals were facing huge battles day in and day out, without someone there to pick them up and to be there by their bedsides other than nurses and staff. It broke my heart, and I asked myself what I could do to make a difference."

Granote began reaching out to her own friends and family, asking them to create uplifting, homemade cards to let her patients know there was someone thinking about them. With

50 cards in hand, Granote was inspired to launch Card Care Connection here in St. Louis. Just five years later, those 50 cards have turned into 20,000, and a local program now spreads hope to patients across the country.

Through Card Care Connection, schools, churches and other groups follow the organization's guidelines to design handmade, multilayered paper crafting cards. Each card is custom made from the heart and includes a personalized, handwritten message from Card Care Connection volunteers to inspire patients, many of whom are facing the darkest times in their lives. Recipients of the cards are referred to the organization by nurses, social workers and families.

According to Granote, the responses she has received have been overwhelming.

"It may be a small gesture, but patients are truly surprised and touched that someone took time out of their day to do something kind for them," she said. "For instance, I received a note from one mom whose daughter was battling cancer, but never received mail or cards. When her card from us arrived, she was so excited. She put it on the mantle, carried it around, and even brought it to Christmas dinner to show everyone."

"We live in such a digital world that something as simple as a handwritten note can mean everything to someone," Granote added.

Today, Card Care Connection has expanded its card program to include Bundles of Cheer, special care packages that include a variety of items requested by adult and pediatric patients, including pillowcases, nail polish, lotion, beauty products, and toys. But to continue expanding both programs to reach as many patients as possible, support from donors is crucial.

Said Granote, "Most donations go into research and treatment, but not much goes directly to help patients facing a difficult diagnosis. With each card and Bundle of Cheer, we let them know they're not alone."

A spa day that brings change

You can help support Card Care Connection – and enjoy a little much-deserved spoiling – by joining the organization for its [Beauty Bash](#) fundraiser. From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, August 20, the center court of the Galleria turns into a luxurious spa for an afternoon of fun and beauty.

During the event, beauty experts from Regis Salon, A Gathering Place, Grabber School of Hair Design, and others businesses will offer services, including makeovers, manicures, massages, and hair styles for guests of all ages. In addition, a balloon artist, clown and face painting artists will be on site for the little ones as will a photo booth featuring Disney princesses from Enchanted Events.

And because getting pampered works up the appetite, restaurants such as California Pizza Kitchen, P.F. Chang's, Johnny Rockets, and Weber Grill Restaurant, will be on hand serving up samples and snacks all afternoon.

Beauty Bash is open to everyone, and a \$14 donation is suggested. Proceeds will go directly to helping patients in need. For more information on the event or to learn how you can support someone battling cancer, visit Card Care Connection online at [cardcareconnection.com](#).

Photo courtesy of Aleeza Granote

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Metro East mom Nicole Plegge is the lifestyle and pop culture blogger for *STL Parent*. Besides working as a freelance writer & public relations specialist, and raising two daughters and a husband, Nicole's greatest achievements are finding her misplaced car keys each day and managing to leave the house in a stain-free shirt. Her biggest regret is never being accepted to the Eastland School for Girls. Follow Nicole on Twitter [@howmomrolls](#)