



# The "Low Down"

On Teen Cancer Support

The "Low Down"  
Volume 1, Issue 2  
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All Decked out for Halloween!  
Look Inside for More Pictures of this event!!

### Hot Topics

- Dealing with the loss of hair from a teen's perspective
- Meet the new Teen Counselor
- Find Support and meet other Teens with Cancer

## Meet Rosie...

HER NAME is Rosalena but her family and friends call her Rosie. Born and raised in Mesa, AZ, Rosie, 17, believes that God has a purpose for her life and that people's prayers help her fight her battle against her 2005 brain tumor diagnosis. "I cried when I was first diagnosed," says Rosie. "Of course, I was scared, so I had my pity-party but then I decided to fight. I'm still fighting every day." Jackie, Rosie's mother, is a 7-year breast cancer survivor and is Rosie's rock of Gibraltar. "I watched my mother go through her treatment and surgery. She is strong and determined and knows exactly what I'm going through. We're very, very close."

Rosie lights up when she's asked how she was first introduced to The Wellness Community (TWC.) "I first heard about TWC in August 2006. My Mom and Dad and I were at Phoenix Children's Hospital

waiting for the buses to come back from Camp Rainbow. Christina Lopez and Shannon Schiefer were handing out flyers. At TWC the other kids understand what I'm going



"Live one day at a time and make it like it's your last day on Earth."

through and they don't judge me. That's important to all of us." Rosie, who attended Mesa High and is now home-schooled, enjoys all the different teen activities and is especially fond of Shannon, Teen Coordinator and Counselor. "She listens to all of our prob-

lems. When you miss a meeting, she always calls to see if you're okay. Shannon is our friend."

Rosie's toughest times came when she returned home from the hospital after the partial removal of her brain tumor. "Re-learning how to walk was so hard and because of the surgery my right side is compromised," says Rosie. "I'm not giving up though. Just because you have been told that you have cancer doesn't mean you can't have a normal life. None of us should give up hope that one day there will be a cure for cancer."

Rosie adds, "I was recently told that my MRI looks like the tumor that is left is starting to get smaller! I know that God loves me and with so many people praying for me, I'm bound to get better – one day at a time." *Written by Jenny Fisher, TWC staff*

## In the Know...

### Coming Soon:

A place of your own– The Wellness Community is building a space for the teens and young adults to hang out. *Hunt Construction* and *Gensler Architects* are generously donating this building. This space will include games, music, art and computer stations for the

teens and young adults to use during groups. This building was designed by the input of the Teen Cancer Advisory Committee.

Group Loop is another way for teens to stay connected. Visit [www.grouploop.org](http://www.grouploop.org) to register for online support..



## New Teen Counselor

For those of you who haven't met her yet, Tracy Lentz, MC LPC, joins The Wellness Community (TWC) as the new teen counselor. She hopes to continue building the program as Shannon has done for the last year and a half. Tracy has experience working with children and teens and is excited to share some time with the teens here. Shannon will continue to be a part of the teen program and hopes to join us for most of the teen group programs. You'll be getting all of your emails and phone calls from Tracy, please feel free to contact her for questions or ideas.

The teen program here at TWC is designed specifically for teens and young adults with cancer. This pro-



Tracy and Shannon (L to R)

gram is in response to teens with cancer, expressing the need for a group of their peers which provides support, understanding, encouragement, and hope through a challenging time. The age range for our program is 13-23 and includes teens and young adults during

any stage of their diagnosis.

At TWC teens have a safe, comfortable place to be themselves, hang out and have fun. Teens may have similar changes in friendships, lifestyle, school performance, physical appearance and body image and can relate to and support one another. They also have a place to share struggles and accomplishments in treatment. Some of the words/phrases teens have used to describe what the group has to offer them are "a special bond", "acceptance", "a safe place to talk about what is going on with my treatment", "friendships" and "they understand me".

## Ask a Teen who Knows

**What is it like to lose your hair?**  
Heather B., age 20 shares...

One thing a teen-aged girl doesn't want to hear is that her hair will eventually fall out and she will be bald. I was diagnosed with cancer when I was 14 years old. Of course when I first found out I had cancer my reaction was, "Yeah... okay, fix it." They told me I would lose my hair, and I cried for at least an hour. My mother tried to comfort me, saying that my cancer is treatable. I said, "I understand, but my hair won't come back." She started laughing. "But baby, it will come back!" The nurse said it might even come back a different color, or curls or even with a little wave. After that I was excited to see how it would come back. I was told my chemo would be pretty harsh so I would lose my hair fast. I was sad when my

*"So being a bald teen-aged girl isn't always as bad as you think. Mix it up and have fun..."*

doctor told me that I would lose my hair by my birthday. I didn't want my friends to see me bald. We picked up a couple wigs but I was still "iffy" on if I would even wear them or just wear hats. My hair stayed in for three months before it drove me crazy; it was all over my pillow, my bed, and even in my food.

My next visit in the hospital I asked my favorite nurse to shave my hair. I finally was bald. After that I began wearing my wigs. I started to enjoy wearing them. I wanted to feel normal so badly.

I try hard to make being bald fun. One Christmas, when I was in the hospital, a group was passing out presents to the patients. I put the bows from the presents on my bald head. My nurse started to laugh so hard she had to run and get a camera. Another time,



*Hair does grow back after all!*

my family and I went to Glendale Glitters and a girl complimented me on my gorgeous hair. I said, "Thanks, would you like to try it on?" She started apologizing and I told her not to.

Being bald is hard, but it's easy to have fun too. For my Make-a-Wish, I wanted to go to Disney World. The ride I looked forward to was Pirates of the Caribbean. Since this was my first ride and I was wearing my wig, I turned to the lady behind me and said, "If my hair falls off can you catch it?" The lady gave me a blank stare.

There are always going to be good and bad times after we lose our hair. It really depends on how comfortable we are with it. I had good memories of being bald. It was a lot easier to have fun with it while going through all the chemo and sicknesses. So being a bald teen-aged girl isn't always as bad as you think. Mix it up and have fun because then you'll look back and remember the good memories the most!

**Call 602.712.1006  
for info on TWC's  
Teen Cancer Program**

## Post Party Wrap Up

Check out the pictures from the Teen Lot Party, our project with Beads of Courage completing Mandalas and our Halloween Extravaganza. The Lot Party had games, dancing, art booths, the limbo and lots more! On Halloween, we carved pumpkins, got our faces painted and told SCARY stories!

"I had the best time ever!"  
Teen Participant

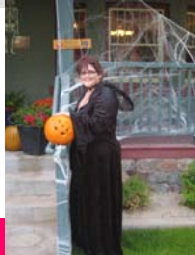


Danny (left) and Karlie (below)

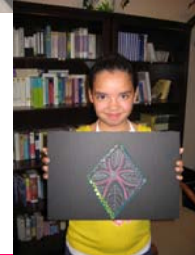
How Low Can you go?



Is that Freddy Krueger?? No, It's Manuel!



Heather (above) and Rosie (left)



## Upcoming Events

### Holiday Brunch

Sunday, December 9  
11 am-1 pm



The Wellness Community and Junior League of Phoenix are hosting a Holiday brunch. There will be stations set up in which you can create gifts for yourself/friends and/or family. Both *Creative Arts and Healing* and *Beads of Courage* will be here. Junior League is going to provide gifts for a "White Elephant Gift Exchange" Breakfast provided. RSVP

### Pamper Yourself Day

Friday, January 4  
1 pm-4pm



Back by Popular Demand! This fun group is a chance to get make-up done, hair, nails, etc. Professional cosmetologists will provide makeovers and tips for application. Lunch provided. RSVP

### Teen Event

Monday, January 21  
3pm-5pm

Activity to be determined by teen input.

### Teen Event

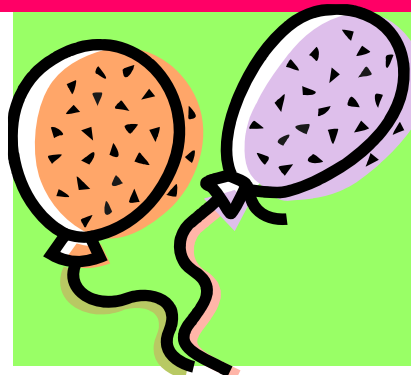
February 2

## Celebrations of Life

Ashley L. celebrates her birthday on January 20

Manuel O. celebrates his 16th birthday on January 28th

On December 13th Kelsey G. will celebrate her 6th anniversary of her last chemo treatment.





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**THE WELLNESS  
COMMUNITY**

YOUR PLACE FOR  
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We're on the Web @  
[www.twccaz.org](http://www.twccaz.org)

**UPCOMING FASHION SHOW TO BENEFIT TWC'S TEEN PROGRAM**

**Look for this great event  
coming in January!!**

Jessica Ornstein was looking to make a difference when she decided to create an event and donate all of the money to TWC's Teen Program. Jessica attends Phoenix Country Day School and has formed a committee that will be putting on a fashion show in January. Jessica and several of her friends have gotten together for the cause. The event will be a **Fashion Show** to take place on **Friday, January 11th from 6-8 pm**. Admission at the door will be \$5 for the general public. Jessica plans to invite all teens from local schools as well as the general public to the event. The event will take place at **The ICEHOUSE** located at 429 W Jackson St in Phoenix. Teen participants from TWC and their families can attend for **FREE!**



They need your help: As an extra, there will be bottles of water

with a personalized label for sale at the event. The committee would like **YOU** to design it. So, get your art tools out and design something for the water bottles—we'll send it over to them and soon it will be on a water bottle. If you'd like to participate, plan or help in any other way feel free to contact Tracy.



This event is a great opportunity to have your ideas get put into reality. The money that is collected at this event will go to items that you would like to see in the new teen center that is being constructed. We need your ideas and suggestions for what you'd like to have in there. So, contact Tracy with ideas for items and groups at **602.712.1006** or [tlentz@twccaz.org](mailto:tlentz@twccaz.org)

