

Posted on Fri, Aug. 12, 2005

## Yuk it up for a good cause

Laugh for the Cure, a family comedy show, aims to raise money for breast cancer research

OLIVIA FORTSON  
Staff Writer

Everyone loves to laugh. That's one reason why Laugh for the Cure has become such a successful event.

"Every year people come and have a great time and the next year they come back with their friends," says Tammy Greyshock, founder and director of Laugh for the Cure, a fundraiser benefiting the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

This year's event is Thursday at the Comedy Zone. It features silent and live auctions and standup comedy from nationally touring comedians Steve Mingolla and Mickey Dean. Emcee for the evening is "D" Cameron, a Charlotte-Mecklenburg teacher who spends his summers as a working comedian.

"It's a PG show," says Greyshock. "We have a diverse audience. We want the woman who is 45 and has just been diagnosed with breast cancer to bring her 23-year-old daughter and her 70-year-old mother and the whole family can have fun and laugh."

It was Greyshock's own mother, Stephanie Greyshock, who inspired her to come up with a unique fundraiser.

"My mom is a 19-year breast cancer survivor," says Greyshock. "I'd been involved as a volunteer with the Komen Foundation for awhile, but I wanted to do something different to raise awareness about breast cancer issues. In 2002, Michael Hall (the Comedy Zone's sales manager), Brian Heffron (the owner), Jamie Christhilf (a Komen volunteer) and I met to brainstorm about new fundraising alternatives and Laugh for the Cure was born."

The group thought it would be a one-time event, but it was a success and the Komen Foundation approached Greyshock to do it again the following year. Now it has become an annual event.

Greyshock, Hall and Heffron are all still on the committee. In 2003 they were joined by Kristin Candler, whose mother, Bonnie Lundblad, died of cancer in 2001 at 59, and Kim Drum, whose friend, Susan Carpenter, died of cancer in 2001 at 28.

"We all have full-time jobs, so organizing this is a labor of love to celebrate my mom and remember Bonnie and Susan. We believe in it and its ability to raise awareness and help people in our community who are currently being impacted by the disease," Greyshock says. All the money raised is distributed through the Komen Charlotte Affiliate and remains in Charlotte/Mecklenburg and the surrounding counties.

The first event in 2002 raised \$5,000. Last year's event raised \$25,000.

New to this year's fund-raiser is the recognition of a Celebrated Survivor. The first recipient is Allison Stanley who is in her mid-30s and was diagnosed last year with an aggressive form of breast cancer. She had to undergo chemotherapy and have a double mastectomy and a hysterectomy.

"She'll never let you see her down," says Greyshock. "She's always smiling and is a positive role model."

Stanley was featured on the daytime reality series "Starting Over" in January and February. She's currently filming a reunion episode of the show, so she won't be able to attend Thursday's event.

"Even though she can't be there in person, we all thought hands down she should be our Celebrated Survivor."

Greyshock's dream with Laugh for the Cure is to create something that can be replicated in cities across the country. She had the name trademarked and is branding it so that any city that has a Komen affiliate, a comedy club and someone to organize the event can hold it in their own market.

"We organized our first affiliate event in Spokane in 2005 and they're already planning a second event for 2006," she says.

Greyshock would also love to one day take the Charlotte Laugh for the Cure to a larger venue such as Spirit Square and then maybe the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center.

**PREVIEW**

## Laugh for the Cure

Comedy and charity come together for this fundraiser benefiting the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

**WHEN:** 6-9:30 p.m. Thursday.

**WHERE:** Comedy Zone, 516 N. College St.

**TICKETS:** \$25.

**DETAILS:** (704) 348-4242; [www.laughforthecure.com](http://www.laughforthecure.com).