

GARY, NORTH CAROLINA
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3-9, 2005
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THE CARY NEWS

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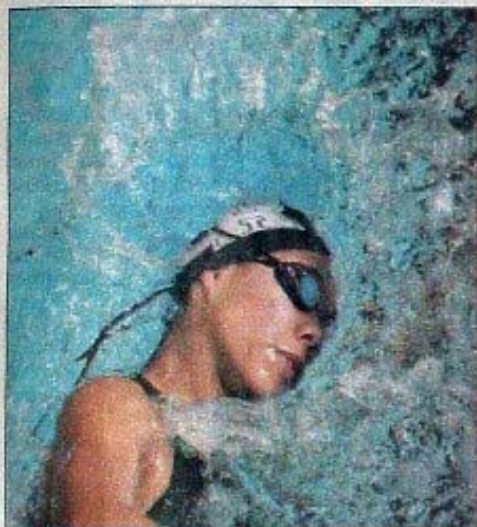
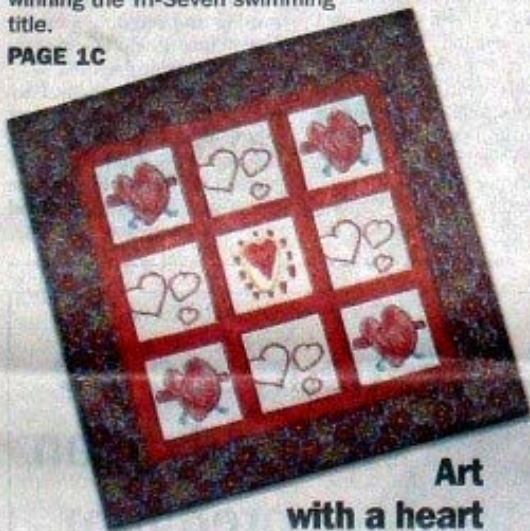


PHOTO BY KEVIN C. COX FOR THE GARY NEWS

Seizing the moment

Green Hope High's girls aimed their season at winning the Tri-Seven swimming title.

PAGE 1C



Art with a heart

Local children are making works of art to benefit cancer patients.

PAGE 1B

Battle of the Books

Brielle

BY KE
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Art is where the heart is

Children make valentines to help cancer patients

BY ANDREA HOWE
STAFF WRITER

Chocolate, roses and jewelry ... the three staples of Valentine's Day.

This year, the Caring Community Foundation is throwing a new gift option — special valentines made by local children that benefit others — into the mix through its “Giving Heart Project.”

The Caring Community Foundation, a nonprofit organization, was developed in 2001 by Eric and Jill Wolford of Cary.

In 1999, Jill, a mother of two, was diagnosed with breast cancer. While battling the disease, she and her husband received support from a number of individuals. That support inspired the couple to “pay it forward” and help others battling cancer.

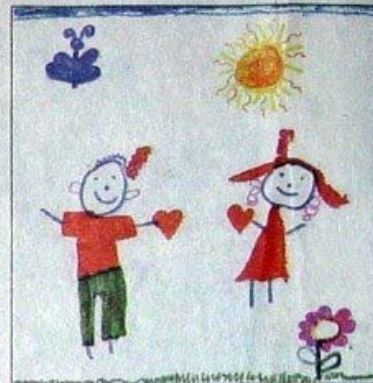
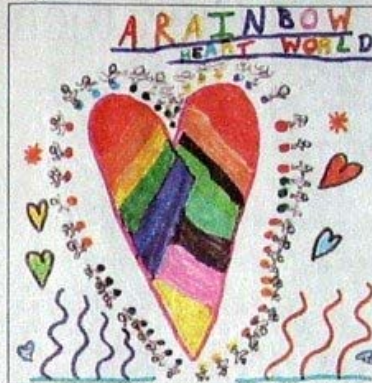
The foundation works with local oncologists and social workers to

SEE **HEART**, 8B



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Caring Community Foundation, which raises money to help patients with cancer, has made three quilts featuring art drawn by local children.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

The Caring Community Foundation is selling valentines featuring drawings by local children. There are 16 designs to choose from, created by children ranging in age from 4 to 15.

HEART

FROM PAGE 1B

provide financial assistance to cancer patients in the Triangle. "It only takes a small group of people to make a difference," Jill Wolford said.

Upon speaking with Wolford about the foundation, Debra Morgan of WRAL television got on board immediately, serving as honorary chairwoman.

"Hearing the stories about how cancer patients have been touched by the kindness of the foundation is heartwarming," Morgan wrote in an e-mail. "So many other charities do a terrific job of raising money for research and support services, but the Caring Community Foundation is different because it gives money directly to the patients. What a great concept!"

To date, the Caring Community Foundation has raised more than \$80,000. In just the past five months, it has aided 30 patients, Wolford said, providing them with the means to buy medical supplies like equipment or prescriptions, or simply to pay their utility bills.

The foundation's main funding sources are events and private donations.

In October, the organization branched out and added a children's arm, Caring Community

TO LEARN MORE

Check the Caring Community Foundation's Web site at www.CaringCommunityFoundation.org.

For specific valentine card selling locations and dates, go to the Web site and click on "kids."

The foundation needs volunteers who can sew and quilt. Interested adults may e-mail Elaine Paul at Elaine@caringcommunityfoundation.org about ways that they and their children can get involved in projects.

For information on hosting or helping with the 2005 Pay It Forward Party, e-mail Jill Wolford at Jill@caringcommunityfoundation.org.

Kids.

According to Elaine Paul, committee chairwoman of this new branch, it was developed in order to show children "the importance of helping others in the community" and to teach them compassion. Paul got involved immediately when Wolford, her friend and co-worker, approached her with the idea.

"We want kids to grow up knowing how to help people," Wolford said.

Foundation members used word of mouth to encourage involvement in the new children's



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Caring Community Foundation used word of mouth to solicit children's drawings. In the first week of sales, the cards raised \$1,100.

activities.

"We talked to our neighbors, friends and colleagues at work, and in turn they talked to theirs," Paul said.

The Caring Community Kids' "Giving Heart Project" is a way

for children to display their art work while helping others.

The artwork can be used in a patchwork quilt or as a greeting card. For the quilts, children receive individual fabric squares for their creations; squares are stitched together to make a quilt measuring 40 by 40 inches.

Three quilts have been completed — the first by a fifth-grade class showing love and support for a classmate diagnosed with cancer — and a fourth is under way.

Valentine cards bearing chil-

dren's artwork, another part of the "Giving Heart Project," put a charitable spin on the upcoming holiday.

Paul gathered a small group of volunteers in her home the weekend of Jan. 8 and by that Monday night they had packaged 8,000 cards.

Small cards are being sold at various area locations in packs of eight with candy attached for \$4, or without candy for \$2.50. Large cards are sold individually for \$3, or in packs of four for \$10. There are 16 designs to choose

from, created by children ranging in age from 4 to 15.

The first week, sales topped out at \$1,100. For sales locations and dates, go to www.CaringCommunityFoundation.org and click on "kids."

"Of course I'm happy about the sales, but what I'm really happy about is seeing the children respond," Paul said. "My daughter wanted to keep doing more after we finished the 8,000."

In addition to small fund-raisers held throughout the year, the Caring Community Foundation holds an annual fund-raiser deemed the Pay It Forward Party. The party began in 2001 and traditionally takes place in the summer; it has steadily grown in size each year.

Last year about 500 people attended and the event raised about \$50,000, with matching gifts from area employers.

"We are looking for a venue to have the next fundraiser in, that's willing to donate to a wonderful cause," Wolford said.

On Jan. 22, the foundation planned to hold its first annual Caring Community Kids Fair, but had to cancel it due to adverse weather. The fair was organized to give children a chance to play games, compose artwork and take part in the "Giving Heart Project."

Many charities spend a percentage of money raised to cover administrative or various other costs. All proceeds of the Caring Community Foundation go to cancer patients, Wolford said.

So on this upcoming holiday traditionally symbolized by the heart, people can give a gift of love to those they care about, while giving the gift of compassion to those who need it most.

