

# AWESOME AWGO TIPS



Association of Wish Granting Organizations (AWGO)  
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Board Member of A Child's Wish of Greater New Orleans

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## 2009 AWGO CONFERENCE

I hope this newsletter finds everyone well! The Board has been working diligently preparing for our 2009 conference which will be held in Nashville, Tennessee on Thursday and Friday, June 18-19. On page 4 of this newsletter, please note the conference details and reservation form so you can plan early to attend this fun-filled, exciting conference. (Who knows, there may even be an Elvis sighting while we're there!) Please mail your completed form with your check to Rosemary Bowers at A Wish Come True and contact the hotel directly to reserve your room. We should all be able to get a good rate on airline tickets if we book early.

## NEWSLETTER

Since our lives are so busy and hectic these days, I realize there is not enough time to investigate all the different topics pertaining to our wish granting organizations. Consequently, I thought it might be helpful if we could focus in the newsletters on a different topic each time to better inform our members of useful resources and options in the community. I have noticed over the years that whenever I meet with my wish families, I inevitably find there are numerous unmet needs the family is too overwhelmed and exhausted to pursue on their own. My intention is to research different areas of interest and include that information in our newsletters. Since there are so many topics that need to be researched, I would like to invite all of you to share information you may already have, as well as those topics you may be willing to research and share with our membership. Eventually, we may decide to compile all of these

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resources into booklet form that can be given to our wish families. Please email me any items of interest, including articles and websites, that you would like to see in our newsletter. My email address is: [kathleen.breaux@yahoo.com](mailto:kathleen.breaux@yahoo.com). Together we can make this newsletter a great success! This newsletter's topic is wigs and hats for chemo patients. This is a very sensitive topic for children with cancer and hopefully this information will provide comfort and peace to the children who have lost their hair and are feeling embarrassed and ashamed due to their hair loss.

## WIGS FOR CANCER PATIENTS

**Before you buy...Ask Your Doctor** - Not all treatments cause hair loss, so discuss the possibility with your doctor. If there is a high probability your child will lose some of their hair, get a prescription for a "hair prosthesis" for your insurance company since most cover wigs needed for medical purposes. Also, ask about steps your child can take to help retain their hair. (continued on page 2)

s **When we learn to follow our hearts, we discover an amazing thing: The elusive path to happiness is not only brightly lit, it is calling us.**

**Call Your Hairstylist** – A hairdresser can be a great resource. Once you've bought the wig, your stylist can trim and style it for your child's face.

**Take a Short Cut** – Even if your child has always worn their hair long, getting a short haircut is one of the biggest breaks you can give your child during treatment. Long hair, pulled down by gravity, is more likely to fall out sooner. Short hair masks initial hair loss better and makes less of a mess when it does fall out. Just remember to keep a good-sized lock of hair to use as a guide for wig shopping.

**Give Your Child Options** – Since wigs can be uncomfortable and troublesome, your child may not want to wear one everyday, all day. A hairpiece peaking out from under a hat or scarf can give the illusion of hair without the annoyance and bulk of a wig. Most wig stores and cancer specialty shops stock a wide variety of bangs, side pieces, ponytails, curls and falls. Many of these are designed to be velcroed into a hat.

**Choosing A Wig** – A wide range of factors will influence your choice of wigs: human hair or synthetic; short or long; custom or machine-made; and price (which can range from \$40 to over \$5,000).

**Synthetic vs. Human Hair** – Most people prefer synthetic hair since it's easier to maintain and less expensive. Most synthetic wigs have their style molded into them, but some can be reset. The advantage to stylable wigs is that you can change their look, just as with real hair. The disadvantage is that they have to be reset every time they're washed. Synthetic hair also dries faster than real hair. No curling irons or blow dryers can be used and hot rollers can only be used on low settings.

Human hair wigs will obviously look and feel more like your hair, but are expensive and far more time consuming. You can use heated appliances on them for touch-ups though. There are three types of

real hair used in wigs: Asian, Indonesian and European. The most readily available and least expensive is Asian. It is also the heaviest and least like the hair found on Western European children. Indonesian is slightly finer and considered a mid-grade hair. European is the finest and most rare, and is priced accordingly. Since all these wigs are cleaned, stripped, dyed and possibly permed, it is often difficult to tell what type of hair a wig is made from by the color or the curl alone.

**Wig Construction** – The way a wig is made affects how it looks just as much as, if not more than, the type of hair used. A quality synthetic wig is preferable to a poorly-made human one. There are three different types of wig constructions: custom, hand-made and machine-made.

**Machine-made wigs** are the least expensive and most widely available. Wefts of hair are sewn together in a straight line, cut and assembled into a wig. (When you look inside a machine-made wig, you can see the lines.) Many look extremely realistic as long as they are not parted, pulled back or otherwise altered. Some children find these wigs more comfortable because the construction creates vents that allow air to circulate to the scalp.

**Hand-made wigs** look the most natural of the prefabricated choices because individual strands are knotted on to a skullcap rather than wefts of hair being sewn together. These wigs can be parted and styled with accessories because there is no chance the vents will be exposed.

**Custom-made wigs** are almost indistinguishable from natural hair. They are usually not a viable option for cancer patients, as they are extremely expensive and generally take more than two months to complete. Make sure that you have final approval on the choice of hair and style, and unless you have prior knowledge of the shop, call your local chapter of the American Cancer Society to double-check that you are working with a reputable establishment.

Below are two organizations where you can donate hair for cancer patients or get wigs for children with cancer free of charge or on a sliding scale basis.

**Wigs for Kids** – I spoke with Tammy and this organization sounds wonderful! The wigs they provide are absolutely free, but they do ask that if your insurance company covers the cost of the wig that you ask the company to do so. They also accept hair donations, so if your organization wishes to have a hair drive, this would be a great place to send your donations. Their address is: 21330 Center Ridge Road, Rocky River, Ohio 44116 and their telephone number is 440-333-4433. For additional information, please visit their website at [www.wigsforkids.org](http://www.wigsforkids.org).

**Locks of Love** – is a not-for-profit foundation that provides hair prosthetics for children afflicted with medical hair loss. The organization provides custom-fitted hair wigs for long-term medical hair loss free of charge or on a sliding scale basis to financially disadvantaged children. This organization also accepts hair donations. Their address is: 234 Southern Blvd., West Palm Beach, FL 33405 and their telephone number is 561-833-7332 and their toll-free number is 888-896-1588. Their website is: [www.locksoflove.org](http://www.locksoflove.org).

**Caps For Kids** – This is an international non-profit organization with programs in more than 90 hospitals scattered throughout the United States including 4 in Canada. They are dedicated to giving caps and scarves signed by athletes, entertainers and other notable celebrities to children who are pediatric cancer patients. Check out their website for locations near you. [www.capsforkids.com](http://www.capsforkids.com). (If you are so inclined, you may want to provide decorated caps yourselves to an area hospital.

I worked with Loyola Law students who decorated caps during their lunch hour and then I brought them over to our local Children's Hospital. A Child's Wish of Greater New Orleans paid for the supplies and the students provided the labor. It was a wonderful experience for everyone involved and a great way to promote our organization.)

**The Heather Spoll No Hair Day Hat Program** – encourages everyone to knit one or two chemocaps and donate them to a cancer treatment center in the area where you live. You can print their patterns and share them with others. [www.chemocaps.com](http://www.chemocaps.com).

Life breaks us all, but afterwards, many of us are strongest at the broken places.  
Ernest Hemingway

Live all of life as a new experience and you will be free. Free from worry. Free from expectation. Free from previously gained understandings. Free from earlier experiences that hold you bound to the positive or negative aspects of other people or external events. Let everything in life be new.  
Scott Shaw

It is not how much we have or do in life that counts, but how much love we have or do it with.  
Mother Teresa



***The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of  
The Association of Wish Granting Organizations,  
Inc.***

**June 18<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Nashville, TN**

**Hotel Accommodations**

at the

**GuestHouse International Inn & Suites  
2420 Music Valley Drive, Nashville, TN  
Call (615) 885-4030 for reservations**

- Located just minutes from Downtown – be sure to see the sights, get that country feeling! Plenty to do for everyone.
- Special rates for **Standard Rooms \$104.25 including tax > 2** queen beds or 1 king bed (1-4 guests) **or King Suite \$151.17 including tax > 2** separate rooms – 1 room king bed with TV plus sitting room with sleeper couch, refrigerator and microwave.
- Other special complimentary included amenities offered from the hotel:  
Airport Shuttle; Gaylord Opryland Hotel Shuttle; Parking;  
Expanded Continental Breakfast served daily; high speed internet access; All guestrooms include: coffeemaker, hairdryer, iron & ironing board; Several great restaurants within walking distance; Indoor Pool with outside Jacuzzi; Fitness Center
- 25 Standard Rooms and a limited number of King Suites reserved at this  
special rate - Call and reserve your rooms today!

**JOIN US** either Thursday or Friday (to be determined) night as we get together, go out to dinner and do some excellent networking!  
*More info to follow!*

**DON'T MISS OUT!!** Complete the enclosed conference registration form and mail with your check today!



Providing the Highest of Standards in Wish Granting Throughout the World

The Association of Wish Granting Organizations, Inc.

18<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference – June 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – Nashville, TN

### **Registration Form**

The 2009 AWGO Conference will be held at the beautiful **GuestHouse International Inn & Suites, Nashville, TN**. To make your reservation call: **1-615-885-4030**. Be sure to mention that you are registering for the **“AWGO – The Association of Wish Granting Organizations Conference”**.

Our **special room rates** are **Standard Room \$104.25 (tax included)** or **King Suite \$151.17 (tax included)** **don't forget breakfast is included**. There are only 25 Standard Rooms and only a few King Suites are held at the **“AWGO”** conference special rate so book early! This special rate is only available until **May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009**. **We look forward to seeing you! The hotel is extending the AWGO rate 3 days before the conference and 3 days after so bring your family and enjoy Nashville.**

Please return this form to Rosemary Bowers at **A Wish Come True, Inc.** along with your check made out to AWGO. For more information you may email: [Rosemary@awishcometrue.org](mailto:Rosemary@awishcometrue.org). We need to get a general consensus of attendees to insure adequate meeting space.

**Registration fee for AWGO members is \$125.00 for first person with a fee of \$49 per additional attendees and non-members \$150.00 for first person with a fee of \$49.00 per additional attendees.** This price includes lunch Thursday and Friday.

**Checks made payable to “AWGO” and mail with this form by May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to:**  
**Rosemary Bowers, A Wish Come True, Inc., 161 Furey Ave., Tiverton, RI 02878**  
(A portion of the registration fee may be used to support the operational costs of AWGO)

NAME:

ORGANIZATION:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE, ZIP:

TELEPHONE:

FAX:

EMAIL:

Names and Titles of Attendees:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title:  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title:  
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\* \*There is a special **“Scholarship Fund”** set up for organizations wishing to attend the conference that need some financial assistance. For information contact: [Susan Ponton, Special Wishes, Inc.](#), P.O. Box 391, Oakville, CT 06779 (phone: 866-999-5224 or email: [s.ponton@snet.net](mailto:s.ponton@snet.net).)