

Schultz, Fink truly Paint The Town Gold with their massive fund-raising attempt

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Todd Schultz has one of those rare, infectious types of personalities; when he asks for something, he normally can persuade people to provide what he needs.

Schultz has been treated for cancer through his high school career and a time back he approached his teacher at Lincoln Middle School, Carla Fink, about a fund-raising idea to help children with pediatric cancer.

Fink taught Schultz in seventh and eighth grade and has been his friend since he started his treatment with cancer his freshman year.

Schultz has rallied the entire Edwardsville-Glen Carbon communities around his cause – Painting The Town Gold. He has a lofty goal in mind for the month-long, fund-raising event - \$100,000.

“We are working hard,” Schultz said recently in an interview. “I know this may sound egotistical but I have never been ‘everything is about me.’ I am not a selfish person and want to help others. I just never gave up after I was diagnosed. I have a lot of faith in God and he helps me.”

Fink is one of those people who has helped Schultz since he was diagnosed, spending time with him frequently in the hospital and now being his friend and offered assistance with his massive Painting The Town Gold Project.

Schultz was diagnosed with cancer two years ago on July 13, 2013. He takes chemotherapy each day with both liquid and pills. He said sometimes it makes him nauseous but it is necessary to try to keep the cancer under control.

The Edwardsville High youth wants to assist St. Baldrick’s and St. Jude with the funds raised from Painting The Town Gold. Chicago Cubs pitcher Jason Mott and Schultz have become good friends since the Edwardsville boy reached out to him about his program. Mott is a former St. Louis relief pitcher who has raised money on a national scale to fight cancer.

“I am a big Cubs fan, so that is the main reason we contacted him,” Schultz said. “He is really nice and he actually has enabled me to throw out a first pitch at a Chicago Cubs game on Sept. 20. I am super excited about that. I have gone to opening day at Wrigley every year the past five years.”



Recently, the Edwardsville boy was cleared to rejoin the Edwardsville football team, something he had wanted to do since eighth grade. He was a top player in junior high but unable to be on the team until now because of his medical issues. Head Football Coach Matt Martin was more than accommodating once Schultz was cleared and says he is part of the team and will practice and be with them through the season.

Martin said Schultz is definitely a special young man and he is glad to have him with the rest of the Tigers.

Schultz said Martin has been more than gracious and he is extremely thankful for the coach for letting him get back on the team he loves – the Edwardsville football Tigers.

Fink describes Schultz as “a wonderful kid.”

“When I met him as a seventh grader he was 12 years old,” he said. “Right from the start he got my sense of humor and shared my love of history. He was a sports fanatic

and a really good student. He was diagnosed in July after his eighth grade year going into his freshman year.”



Fink said the idea for the Painting The Town Gold fund-raising attempt started when Todd's friend Phoenix from Cardinal Glennon died after battling cancer. Schultz wanted to do something on a large scale that had a massive impact in regard to cancer research.

Painting The Town Gold will have a Running for the Gold 5K Run and Walk Saturday at Edwardsville Township Park. Registration begins at 7 a.m. with a race start at 9 a.m. The park is located at 6368 Center Grove Road, Edwardsville. Schultz encourages residents to come out and run and participate.

Edwardsville High School, Lincoln and Liberty Middle School, and all District K-2 and 3-5 buildings had a Coin Collection Week for the cause.

Throughout September, some local restaurants and businesses are donating a portion of their sales on certain days to Painting The Town Gold.

The concluding event is a Go Gold Gala set for doors opening at 4:30 p.m. at Wildey Theatre, 252 N. Main St., Edwardsville. Tickets are \$50 and available at the Wildey Ticket Box office or Wildey website. The night will include food, stories and entertainment.

Schultz says tickets for the gala have been a little slow and he hopes people will start purchasing them. He said that event is an important final push for his fund-raising attempt.

Fink said she and Todd have reached out to nearly everyone in the Edwardsville, Glen Carbon communities to rally around Painting The Town Gold.

"Todd and I have spoken to presidents of banks, Rotary Clubs, teachers, teacher's unions and anyone we can think of to generate sponsorship," she said. "We also have tried to raise awareness and never left a presentation where we didn't get a thank you from people for sharing this."