

## **Cuz Kathleen Cares**

Kathleen Griffith started a tradition when she was a 7th grade student at Garden City Middle School by forming her own charity - Cuz Kathleen Cares. Kathleen wanted to raise autism awareness and charitable funds for the Garden City Community. Kathleen was inspired to help because she has six first cousins affected with this disorder. She decided to plan Garden City's First Annual Autism Ball in 2012. Kathleen and her team of committee members worked tirelessly on soliciting raffles, planning the decorations, entertainment and every last detail for the event and they did an amazing job! In 2013, 198 7th graders attended the Second Annual Autism Ball. The entire Autism Ball was underwritten and forty Chinese Auction prizes were donated by local merchants, parents and friends of the class of 2017. The students enjoyed dancing to a DJ and a Chinese Auction. This was a perfect way to end Autism Awareness month!

Kathleen then passed the torch to her younger brother Liam, class of 2019, who successfully planned the Third Annual Autism Ball last June. He spearheaded the event with the help of his 2019 classmates. Funds from past Autism Balls has enabled the purchase of IPADs, outdoor patio furniture for a group home in addition to a large donation to SEPTA which went towards the newly refurbished Garden City High School Life Skills classroom.

SEPTA would like to thank Kathleen, Liam and the entire Griffith Family for promoting Autism Awareness while creating a tradition in the Garden City Community. All of their hard work has paid off and the Autism Community within Garden City will benefit from this outstanding effort by the Griffith Family.

The torch will be passed once again from Liam to little sister Lizanne, in the Class of 2021 who is already busy planning her event!