

*"I have been on the edge, and I know what it is to believe you are going to die. . . . I really hope to grow as a person and give love, which is the best medicine for those who are sick."*

**Margie Luna**



Staff Photo / Mike Fender

**STILL CHEERING:** Cancer has hardly slowed Margie Luna, who chats with best friend Laura Dean after school.

### **Average cost: \$3,700**

The Indiana Children's Wish Fund is the only such organization in Indiana accredited by the Association of Wish Granting Organizations.

The fund has fulfilled nearly 850 wishes to Indiana children with life-threatening illnesses in its 13-year history, said Executive Director Terry Hudson.

Many of the wishes are granted shortly before major treatments, such as bone marrow transplants, she said. The average wish costs about \$3,700 to fulfill.

The fund does not make telephone solicitations and relies on the generosity of individuals and corporations, Hudson said. Most of the wishes actually are fulfilled through in-kind donations of products and services, she added.

Donations may be made to the Indiana Children's Wish Fund, 1810 Broad Ripple Ave., Suite 15, Indianapolis, Ind. 46220.

# A WISH OF COMFORT

■ Even though she suffers from cancer, Margie Luna's desire is to help others.

**By Rebecca Bibbs**  
STAFF WRITER

**W**ESTFIELD, Ind. — Many people would put others' problems on the back burner when faced with a life-threatening illness of their own. Not Margie Luna.

After doctors told the 16-year-old in February that she was in the final stages of inoperable abdominal cancer, the Indiana Children's Wish Fund offered to fulfill a request from her.

Most youngsters ask for a trip to

help Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity.

"I have just about everything I want," Margie said, "and I've done a lot of traveling."

Part of her wish will come true in mid-January when Margie is expected to visit Calcutta, India, where she will help the Missionaries of Charity.

Her two-week trip also will take Margie to Italy, where she is expected to meet Pope John Paul II.

Margie's is a tale of miracles — one after the other.

What began as symptoms of appendicitis ended with a diagnosis of stage-three rhabdomyosarcoma, a soft-tissue cancer found in children. Doctors initially gave Margie a 60 percent chance of survival.

But they learned that the cancer