

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The Hennigan Family and RMHC-CP—An Ongoing Story

The Hennigan family has a long history with Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central PA, beginning with their daughter Paige's remarkable entrance into the world in 2007. Since then, the Hennigan's have utilized RMHC-CP's services across a span of 14 years.

Janine Hennigan was only 24 weeks pregnant when she was flown to Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center for an emergency c-section in November 2007. Her husband, Ed Hennigan, was making the two-hour drive from Exeter, PA, when their daughter, Paige, was born weighing one pound, one ounce.



Paige in the NICU

"When I talked to the doctor on the car ride down, he told me there was only a fifty percent chance that Paige would survive because she was so premature," Ed said. "And on top of that, Janine's health was at serious risk because without the emergency c-section, she could've died."

Even after the c-section, Janine was still so ill that she didn't get to see Paige until two days later. "We weren't even able to hold Paige until she was almost a month old because of the intense care she needed," Ed recalled.

To add to the stress the Hennigan family was facing, Paige was born with a grade four intraventricular hemorrhage in her brain. The doctors had to act quickly to get the bleeding under control.

After about a month in the NICU, the doctors discovered Paige had a bacterial infection that was causing hydrocephalus, a build-up of fluid in her brain. To relieve the pressure on Paige's brain, the doctors placed a ventriculoperitoneal (VP) shunt surgically.

During this emotional whirlwind, Ed, and Janine, once she was released, was able to stay minutes away from the hospital at the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey.

"When both Janine and Paige were in the hospital, I had initially stayed at a local hotel for a few days, which became expensive very quickly," Ed said. "When the head nurse at the hospital told me about the Ronald McDonald House, I was so relieved."

Janine and Ed stayed at the RMH from November 2007 to March 2008. They remember celebrating Christmas, New Years, and Easter with their RMHC family.

"It was so important to us to be able to stay close to Paige," Ed said, "The Ronald McDonald House made that possible for us and along with it, saved us money on gas and hotel stays and made us feel comfortable during a hard time."

"Once we were here, we felt like we were close to family," Janine said. "We became close with the staff and volunteers and found support in new friendships we made with other RMHC families that were going through a similar situation."

Unfortunately, their first stay wouldn't be their last. When Paige was two years old, she was diagnosed with epilepsy. From that time on, the Hennigan's needed to travel to Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital 2-3 times a year for her neurologist to monitor her condition with an electroencephalogram (EEG) test, which detects electrical impulses in the brain. Paige's EEG tests can require monitoring for 24, sometimes 48, hours straight to record seizure activity. Being able to stay at the RMH during her monitoring allowed the Hennigan's to focus on Paige's care instead of worrying about traveling back and forth to home.



"We're very thankful to know this place is here when we need it," Janine said. "It always has been."

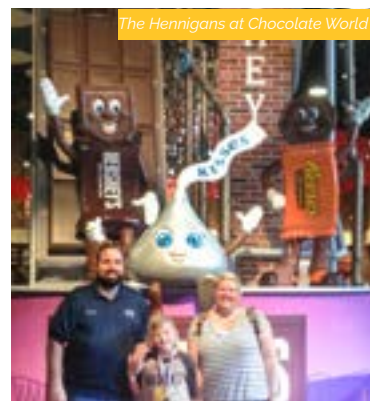
"Waking up at the Ronald McDonald House doesn't feel like being in a hotel," Ed said. "It

feels like we're in our home away from home."

In the last year, Paige had some serious issues with her VP shunt. The shunt placed when she was a newborn had shifted, putting Paige in pain and discomfort. The doctors repositioned her current shunt, but later needed to replace it with a new one. Since her last procedure, she has been doing well. Her family and medical team makes sure to monitor it regularly, as she will have it for the rest of her life.

After more than a dozen stays at the RMH, the Hennigan family has made their own Hershey traditions. They always make sure to go to Hoss's, which is Paige's favorite place to stop for food before going home to Exeter. She even has a "special seat" by the window!

"Every time we come down for one of Paige's appointments, we go to Chocolate World and Paige has to go on the tour ride," Ed said. She loves to travel and go to amusement parks. The Hennigan's have a seasonal campsite they frequently visit, which Paige named "Hershey Kiss."



The Hennigans at Chocolate World

The Hennigan family story is a great example of how RMHC-CP can help families with children who have conditions that require frequent tests, monitoring, and check-ins with a doctor or specialist.

"Whenever we leave the Ronald McDonald House, we find comfort knowing it isn't 'Good-bye' it's 'See you soon!'" Janine said, "It will always have a special place in our hearts as our **home away from home.**"

To help keep families like the Hennigan's together when they need it most, visit [rmhc-centralpa.org/donate!](http://rmhc-centralpa.org/donate/)

A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

Pediatric Illness does not stop for a pandemic and neither do we when it comes to keeping families together and near the care and resources they need. If the last year and a half has taught us anything, it's that we need to continue to think outside the box and plan ahead for anything that might come our way.

Despite ongoing challenges from the pandemic, a lot of good things are happening at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA (RMHC-CP)! I'm excited to share that we recently acquired an adjacent property that will position RMHC-CP for future program growth. In the photo below, you will see we have significantly added to our land parcel. While we have no immediate plans for expansion of services, securing this additional property helps create a strong foundation for the future. We are truly grateful to everyone who has contributed to this opportunity, including our friends at McNeas Wallace & Nurick LLC, The Crest of Hershey, Derry Township, Integrated Development Partners and our Founding Mission Partner – McDonald's.

I'm also excited to share with you a loving "full-circle" story highlighted in this edition of our newsletter that promotes legacy giving to RMHC-CP's Endowment Fund, which supports our families long into the future. The gift from Jenn's House, Inc., in honor of Jennifer Joy and Patricia A. Dillman, will make a significant impact in our work.

While the pandemic continues to impact our programs and fundraising efforts, I am in awe of your dedication and ongoing support which allows us to remain focused on serving families, like the Hennigan family featured on our cover, not just today, but throughout the year and for years to come.

In gratitude,

Karla



Red lines indicate our property prior to the acquisition; Yellow lines show the acquired property. Together, you can see how RMHC-CP's geographical footprint has increased for potential growth in the future!



ADOPT A ROOM

The Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central PA Adopt a Room program allows you, your company, or organization to help defray the cost of operating a guest room in our House for one year.

Your donation helps our organization keep families together and near the care and resources they need as their child receives essential medical care and assures that we can continue to provide our services free of charge.

Benefits of Adopting A Room Include:

- A plaque of recognition to display at your home, office or business
- Recognition in our newsletters, annual report and on our website
- Recognition inside guest room
- Recognition as an Adopt a Room participant in a common area of the RMH



Our "Love Grows Here" donor recognition piece



An Adopt A Room donor recognition plaque

Special Thanks



to those who have already participated:

The Brame Family	The Lynch Family
Dogwood Acres Campground	A Caring Friend
Karns Quality Foods	In Memory of Sophia Marsicano
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen J. Kindler	WoodmenLife Hershey Chapter 364
MI Foundation	Mountain Ridge Metals
Northwest Bank	Pennsylvania Retina Associates
Pennsylvania State Police Academy Civic Association	In Loving Memory of Ashley Glica

Contact Amy at 717-533-4001 ext. 156 or aleonard@rmhc-centralpa.org for more information on Adopt A Room!

LEAVING A LEGACY



Jenn's House, Inc., Emmaus, PA

In 1991, a devastating accident left the Dillman family changed forever. What makes their story one worth telling again and again, is what they chose to do after enduring unimaginable heartbreak.

Jennifer Joy Dillman (Jenn) was 17 years old when she was fatally injured in a bus accident on the way to a baton-twirling competition.

Jenn was captain of the twirling squad at Salisbury High School. She was an honor student involved in many positive activities, including the school's anti-drug and alcohol program, Falcon Key Club, and yearbook staff.

Richard and Patricia Dillman stayed at the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey to be by their daughter's side for nine painful days before she passed away from her injuries.

After losing their only daughter, Richard and Patricia were devastated. In their grief, the Dillman's knew they wanted to honor Jenn's memory – and her giving spirit – by helping others.

After being touched by the kindness they received at the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey, they decided to create their own "home away from home" for families and patients who travel to the Lehigh Valley area for health care.

In 1991, the not-for-profit charitable organization, Jenn's House, was established.

Over the course of almost 30 years, Jenn's House hosted more than 3,500 families, coming from all 50 states and eight different countries. Thousands were touched by the generosity of Jenn's House and the comfort it provided patients and families who needed a place to stay near the hospitals in the Lehigh Valley.

In June 2017, Patricia Dillman, 69, passed away from cancer. For the next four years, Richard did whatever he could to continue the legacy in honor of Jenn and now Patricia, after she dedicated her life to serving others through Jenn's House.

In the years Jenn's House operated, Richard and Patricia put all of the donations they received



JENNIFER JOY DILLMAN

“
After losing their only daughter, the Dillman's knew they wanted to honor Jenn's memory – and her giving spirit – by helping others.
”

back into the organization. They called Jenn's House a "labor of love."

Unfortunately, in early 2021, Richard had to make the difficult decision to close the organization.

But the story doesn't end there.

Continue Reading ...

Continued ...

While the doors of Jenn's House closed, Jenn and her family's legacy will live on. Richard chose to give what was left of the charity to organizations that supported their family and inspired Jenn's House in the first place – including the Ronald McDonald House.

Earlier this year, Richard donated \$58,000 to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Pennsylvania's Endowment Fund, where it will support families with children receiving essential medical care for years to come.

The story of Jenn's House and the Dillman Family comes full circle after 30 years, starting and ending with the servitude of others at its center.

This remarkable endowment gift will support Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA's mission and programs in perpetuity – Ensuring Jenn and her family's legacy lives on forever.



**PATRICIA
DILLMAN**

*Co-founder of Jenn's
House, Mother of
Jennifer Dillman*

KIM HILL LEGACY SOCIETY

CHOOSING AN ENDOWMENT GIFT ...

There are many ways to show your support for the children and families that call Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA their home. Current or planned gifts may be directed to our Endowment Fund to support our families long into the future.

Your endowment gift will be invested and remain intact while the investment earnings support RMHC-CP's mission and programs in perpetuity. Gifts of any size may be restricted into the Endowment Fund and qualify donors for membership into the Kim Hill Legacy Society, which honors faithful and compassionate donors who remember RMHC-CP with a planned gift or other direct giving to the organization.

To learn more, please visit rmhc-centralpa.org/leave-a-legacy-2.

Supporting families...long into the future!

HOUSE HAPPENINGS

UPCOMING EVENTS

LANCASTER EXTRAGIVE

DATE: Friday, Nov. 19, 2021
TIME: 12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual/Online

Support us during Lancaster's EXTRAORDINARY day of giving! Find our profile at extragive.org!

GIVING TUESDAY

DATE: Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021
TIME: 12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual/Online

Don't miss this global day of giving! People all over the world will be donating to their favorite charities - We hope we are yours! Donate through our Facebook Fundraiser on GivingTuesday and Facebook will match up to \$7M in donations for non-profits!

LIGHT A LIGHT

Choose RMHC of Central PA for your annual non-profit giving and give the gift of togetherness this holiday season. Visit rmhc-centralpa.org to make your gift today!

Because pediatric patients and their families staying at the RMH are among the most vulnerable populations for Covid-19, we will be unable to welcome the public into the House for our traditional Light A Light event. We are sad we will miss the opportunity to interact with our friends and supporters in the community, but we hope to celebrate together again in the future.

GUEST CHEFS RETURN



Pictured: Tim Shuey & friends from Pyramid Construction

Help us provide free meals to our families! We are welcoming back Guest Chef groups for dinner - And the next group in the kitchen could be you and 3 friends!

Groups must consist of no more than four people, and each participant must be 18 or older. Masks & proof of vaccination status are required.

Our Baking Program has also returned for groups of two people (18 years or older). Visit our website and click the "Meals & Activities" page for updates!



PET THERAPY IS BACK!

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL!

Share our content with your family, friends & co-workers to help us build greater awareness in the communities we serve and support by keeping families together!



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Round-Up for RMHC



Ronald McDonald
House Charities[®]
of Central Pennsylvania