

Make-A-Wish®
Philadelphia & Susquehanna Valley

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Mr. Chuck Harrington
Ancient Order of Hibernians
P.O. Box 1606
Havertown, PA 19083

Dear Mr. Harrington:

Thank you for your generous support. As a way to show you how your gift is helping to change the lives of seriously ill children, I wanted to share with you one of our wish stories. It is about young Hannah. After having chronic symptoms, Hannah's mom took her to the doctors and they scheduled an MRI that revealed a brain tumor. Chemotherapy could shrink the tumor maybe by 10%. Surgery was the only solution but most surgeons wouldn't operate on Hannah. The location of her tumor made surgery too risky. But still, they didn't give up hope. They kept looking for a surgeon that would take the risk with them—that would see the fighter in Hannah and believe, like they did, that she could pull through. A specialist at Johns Hopkins was able to offer them the hope they'd been mustering on their own—he thought he might be able to remove as much as half of Hannah's tumor, but not without danger of making her condition worse.

Gathering as much bravery and strength as she could, Hannah underwent the procedure. When the surgeon came to deliver the results, Lori was overwhelmed—surgery had removed 80% of Hannah's tumor—much more than they had expected. But surgery was just the beginning. Hannah had months of rehab and therapy ahead of her, learning to walk and talk all over again. It was during the healing process that Hannah and her family learned about Make-A-Wish. "I was shocked that people cared that much," Lori said of the volunteers and supporters who made it all possible. "[Make-A-Wish] is all about community." Like many, they were surprised to hear that Hannah was eligible. It's a common misconception that Make-A-Wish only serves children that have a terminal diagnosis.



Serving Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montgomery, Perry and Philadelphia Counties

Having gone through so much, Hannah did her best to think big about what her one true wish might be. After much contemplation, Hannah decided that she would wish to go on an adventure with her mom and dad. Hannah thought of all the things that seemed adventurous to her: snorkeling, zip-lining, riding horses on the beach, hiking through a rainforest. She started to search the internet for these adventures and one place frequently showed up in the search results—Costa Rica!

For some, such a far off land might seem like too much of an adventure for a ten-year-old but Hannah had been through more than her short life deserved. This was the trip of a lifetime and her wish granters made sure it was the adventure she had in mind.

In Hannah's own words "It was amazing! We went zip-lining, walked over the rainforest treetops, rode horses up a mountain-side, and went snorkeling amongst colorful fish. We enjoyed local food... the fruit was so delicious. We saw and did so many things. I even got to practice some of my Spanish while ordering at the restaurant!"

For Lori, watching her daughter laugh again was her own healing process. She told us that the illness and wish experience was something that affected Hannah *and* her family. "What we went through is horrendous." But after being sick, scared and uncertain of the future, Hannah's wish made her feel different in a positive way. It also gave her, in her mother's words "an overwhelming sense of community." Hannah has learned so young what some never do "we need to be there for other people." As a donor, you were there for Hannah and it touched her so deeply that she plans to one day give back to the community that banded together around her to help get her through what could be the most difficult thing she'll ever have to face. Thank you for being a part of Hannah's wish.

With Sincere Gratitude,



Karen Traten
Director of Partnerships & Communications