

# Randi's Message

Providing Therapeutic Programs to Help  
Children Who Experience Domestic Violence

2019 | EDITION II

[www.randishouseofangels.org](http://www.randishouseofangels.org)



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Fall 2019** Randi's Kidz Club  
at Susquehanna  
Psychological Services,  
Elizabethville, Upper  
Dauphin

**1.11.20** Randi's Kidz Club at  
YWCA of Greater  
Harrisburg

**5.9.20** 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Randi's Race  
for Hope and Courage

## Letter From the Chair

Every school is more than likely to have children affected by domestic violence. Children who experience domestic violence in their homes experience trauma which leads to interruption in learning and can lead to disruptive behavior in school.

It is important to recognize the vital role schools and teachers play in laying the foundation for preserving healthy relationships for our children. School is where teachers often have the closest and longest contact with a child living with domestic violence, and they often work with families to identify resources.

We are proud to announce that Randi's House of Angels has engaged in the first afterschool program in the Carlisle School District.

Many thanks for Chad Acker, SAP Prevention/Intervention Specialist, Cumberland County Commission on Drug and Alcohol to opening up doors to understanding how RHOA can play a vital role in the educational setting. This relationship has blossomed into meeting several social and mental health staff that work with children and families in the schools i.e. Cumberland-Perry Child & Adolescent Service Program (CASSP); and school/social counselors in the Carlisle, York, Cumberland Valley school districts.

It was my hope that providing RHOA programs in the schools will improve the ability to reach more children. Teachers are important and may not be able to stop the violence in homes, but they can make a difference in a child's life by communicating about healthy relationships, bullying, and behavior towards the opposite sex. This is the beginning to how we can reach children on a larger scale and continue to raise awareness of domestic violence.



**MAKE A DONATION AT:** <https://randishouseofangels.org/donate/>



## Celebrating the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Randi's Race

On May 11<sup>th</sup> the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Randi's Race: A 5K Run/Walk for Hope and Courage raised \$50,019 - setting a record for us! We also had more teams participate than ever before - 16 this year - and those teams showed up in huge numbers and raised more than \$8,600! We enjoy welcoming new teams alongside seeing returning faces of those supportive, enthusiastic and committed racers and walkers. We also have a dedicated team of volunteers to ensure our annual race runs smoothly and continues to grow as our community.

New in 2019, Papa John's Pizza offered a fun selfie contest. Participants who posted a photo with #RandisRace2019 and tagged Papa John's entered to win one free pizza each week for the remainder of 2019! Ashley Britcher McMillen of #TeamSue was our winner!

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE HOT DOG SALE

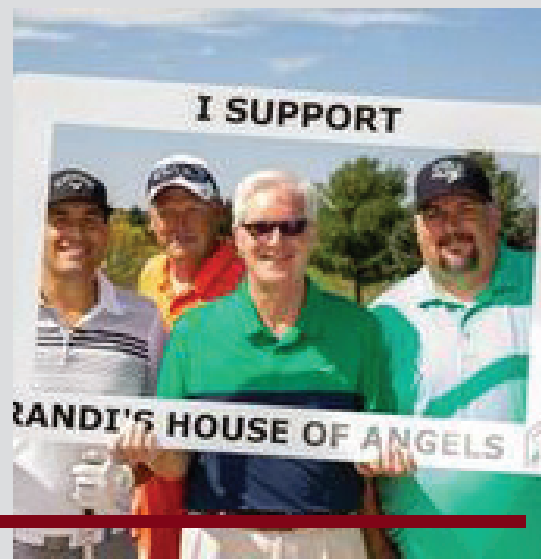
For seven years, Randi's Renegades has been hosting an Annual Hot Dog sale at the Cumberland County Courthouse. With the help of the Cumberland County Sheriff's office as well as the support from fellow county employees, Jennifer Bray coordinates this event each year to raise money to benefit Randi's Race: A 5K Run/Walk for Hope and Courage. Each year the event at the court house has grown and become successful. This year alone they had one of the highest amounts raised. To date the annual Hot Dog Sale has raised a total of \$3,983.00.



Jennifer began Randi's Renegades in 2005, based on her experience as a victim of domestic violence. She gathered her family and friends and formed a team of 45 people, all very passionate about Randi's Race and supporting Randi's House of Angels. Many of the team members support the cause as they have been victims of domestic violence themselves. They want to be the voice of those who are no longer able to speak up and for those who need support when they have nowhere else to turn. Randi's Renegades wants to ensure Randi's legacy lives on forever, and we'll continue to honor her year after year in the fight against Domestic Violence.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual A Round Fore Randi Golf Outing

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual "A Round Fore Randi" Golf Outing teed off on September 6<sup>th</sup> at the Rich Valley Golf course in Mechanicsburg, PA. Year after year, the community support for this event has been outstanding, and this year was no exception. We were both thrilled and honored to have our first Presenting Sponsor - RED Salon. Additional sponsors included Sun Motors, Hilton Harrisburg, PSECU, Landon's Tax & Accounting Service, T. Curtis Handyman, Highmark, Mid Penn Bank, the Green Family and H & N Landscaping. With a record number of sponsors, golfers and donations, A Round Fore Randi raised \$15,300 this year. Proceeds support programs and services offered on behalf of RHOA such as Randi's Kidz Club, a ten-week therapeutic group for children; Randi's Camp, a three-day interactive summer camp; and new this year Randi's Klubhouse, a 4-week interactive therapeutic group for children ages 5-7 years.



## A Family's Love – ROOM FOR ONE MORE

When my husband and I had our biological daughters in 1992 and 1996, we were "done," our family was complete. Fast forward 10 years and we were blessed with a great-niece. Over the next nine years, she would be in and out of our home, sometimes for long periods of time. I am not sure at what point I realized not only was the child being subjected to a home where alcohol and drugs were common but eventually to very abusive relationships her mother would be in. The child was removed from her mother's custody several times and eventually was placed in our custody as a kinship/foster family in 2015. After many court appearances, we realized that her mother was not capable of keeping this sweet little girl safe. We were asked if we would be willing to adopt Renna, hence... room for one more.

While serving as a board member for Domestic Violence Services for Cumberland and Perry Counties, I met Nancy Chavez. At first, we talked a lot about my biological daughters, and then over time, I shared more details about our dear Renna. Nancy suggested that I bring her to Randi's Camp. When I attended the parents meeting about the camp with Renna, I witnessed the depth of Renna's trauma. When one of the camp licensed counselors took her aside to talk to her and try to get to know her, she literally melted down

to the point where they had to come and get me. She was one very frightened little girl and was not ready to share her story but wanted to attend camp.

She loved the camp: Nancy, Greg, all the counselors and helpers made camp a safe place and a lot of fun. "Mr. Greg" showed her that there were other males that she could trust. At camp they taught her that her feelings were ok and she was allowed to have them. I remember after camp, Renna saying to me: "There are kids with a lot worse situations than mine." She met other children she could relate to and realized she was not alone.

Renna also attended Randi's Kidz Club where she learned that she was "allowed" to have the feelings she was having, and felt safe to share them whether they were fear, anger, anxiety or a myriad of other feelings children who have been affected by domestic violence have. One of the things that Renna likes the most about the camp and Kidz Club is: "What is said or shared at camp or Kidz Club, stays there." Renna has also learned through Randi's Camp that she can also be a mentor and protector for some of the younger children. Nancy has done amazing things with Renna, and Renna knows she can always go to Nancy. She has already shared with me that when she is old enough, she wants to help Nancy with camp.



## Are you on our mailing list?

Not sure? Quickly sign up and we'll keep you posted on major announcements and events:

<http://bit.ly/2CV51pj>

## RHOA Honored as 2019 Nonprofit Innovation Awards Finalist

Randi's House of Angels was recognized as a finalist in the Collaboration Category for the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Nonprofit Innovation Awards. Presented by Central Penn Journal, RHOA Founder Nancy Chavez accepted the award at a breakfast ceremony last March.

"It is an honor to be part of such an outstanding community awards recognition program like the Nonprofit Innovation Awards," said Nancy. "So many hard-working organizations show tremendous leadership through creative collaborations, program and process improvement, and much more. I'm very much looking forward to attending this year's awards program alongside our other community friends."

## Special Thanks FOR THE DONATIONS TO RHOA

We would like to express a special thank you to the multiple individuals, colleges, businesses and community organizations that made donations to RHOA over the last few months or since our last newsletter or since March 31, 2019. The donations have supported our programs, and we are very grateful.

- Donna Vandemortal
- JD Investment Management, LLC
- Matt Tunnel
- H2O Studio
- Mindy Akers
- Nancy Itle
- Centre Presbyterian Church
- Soroptimist International of West Shore
- Sheila Kostiuk
- Acri C.F. & Son Inc.





## VENDOR SPOTLIGHT: New York Life

At New York Life we are proud to raise money for Randi's House of Angels because of the incredible work they do with providing education, counseling and empowerment to children who have experienced domestic violence.

Unfortunately, back in 2015 the sister of one of our employees lost her life to domestic violence. In addition to losing her sister, our employee Tammy gained custody of her sister's children. She found Randi's House of Angels online and reached out for help. Nancy Chavez reached back out directly with resources as well as a personal invitation for her new children to attend Randi's Camp once they were old enough.

That same year we supported Tammy when she wanted to raise money by participating in the 5K by encouraging others to donate. Several of us also walked alongside her. The next year we volunteered time by stuffing bags prior to the event, and we were able to give a small grant from New York Life because of the hours that we volunteered. The following year we figured out a way to volunteer even more hours by having a table at the event, participating at the race, helping with set up and tear down of the race and stuffing bags again. This past year we continued with that formula of volunteering to help get the smaller grant, but we were determined to give more.

Each year as a company, New York Life has a month that is dedicated to giving to others. During

this campaign they challenge every employee to give to the cause of their choice. As a bonus, the offices with the highest participation rate win a grant that they can give to the non-profit of their choice. This year we at the Harrisburg New York Life Office were determined to win that grant and give that money to Randi's House of Angels. We created a tracking poster, sent emails and made weekly calls to our agents to remind them to give to their favorite charities, and it worked. We came in 2<sup>nd</sup> place! It is our honor to be a part of this event every year. This organization is very near and dear to New York Life due to how much they have helped one of our own. #KeepGoodGoing



### Board of Directors: Spotlight on

## Edward Katz

**Retired, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Office of Victims Services; Retired, Chief of Police, Penbrook Police Department**

After a 28-year career in law enforcement, including 17 years as Chief of the Penbrook Police Department, I started a new chapter in my life, one that made a profound change in the way that I not only look at myself, but also at others. In 2000, I joined a group of highly motivated, dedicated, and caring victim advocates in the Office of Victims' Services (OVS) at the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). As a law enforcement executive in Pennsylvania, I was familiar with many of the programs and grant opportunities offered by PCCD, but victim services was an entirely new ballgame for me. Fortunately, it didn't take long for me to see that this was my new home and I was going to make a difference.

During my 14-year tenure at the OVS, I had the opportunity to be introduced to Nancy Chavez, who at that time was the Director of Pennsylvania's Weed and Seed Program, which was located in the PCCD building. Nancy and I quickly became friends and collaborated on several successful PCCD projects. It wasn't difficult to tell that Nancy had a fire and drive in her that is seldom seen in others, especially when it comes to Randi's House of Angels, which was frequently a topic of conversation. In 2013, I was surprised and truly honored when I was approached by Nancy and asked to become a member of the Randi's House Board of Directors. Without hesitation I agreed, and I have not regretted my decision for one second. I am proud that I represent an organization dedicated to helping children of domestic violence and their loved ones who are exposed to domestic violence.