The Angela Hohl Story

From Loss to Legacy

"You hold your child as close as you can, and push away the unimaginable."

Those words from "It's Quiet Uptown," a song about loss, tragedy, and sadness from the Broadway hit Hamilton, are powerful. But the song goes on to offer a sense that, eventually, there can be a turning point, that from the most unimaginable loss - the death of a child - something good and powerful and beautiful might emerge.

That is what Harvey and Susan Hohl have given to everyone around them. A sense that from the ashes of their daughter Angela's death at age 17, a phoenix has risen in the form of the Angela Hohl Memorial Drive at Daniel Boone High School in Birdsboro. Add to that the other blood drives spearheaded by the Hohls, including one at New Hanover United Methodist Church in Gilbertsville, their church when they lived in the area, and another at Amity Athletic Club Pool in Birdsboro, where Angela lifeguarded for three summers, and it becomes clear that a remarkable legacy has been built in her honor.

Angela's Illness

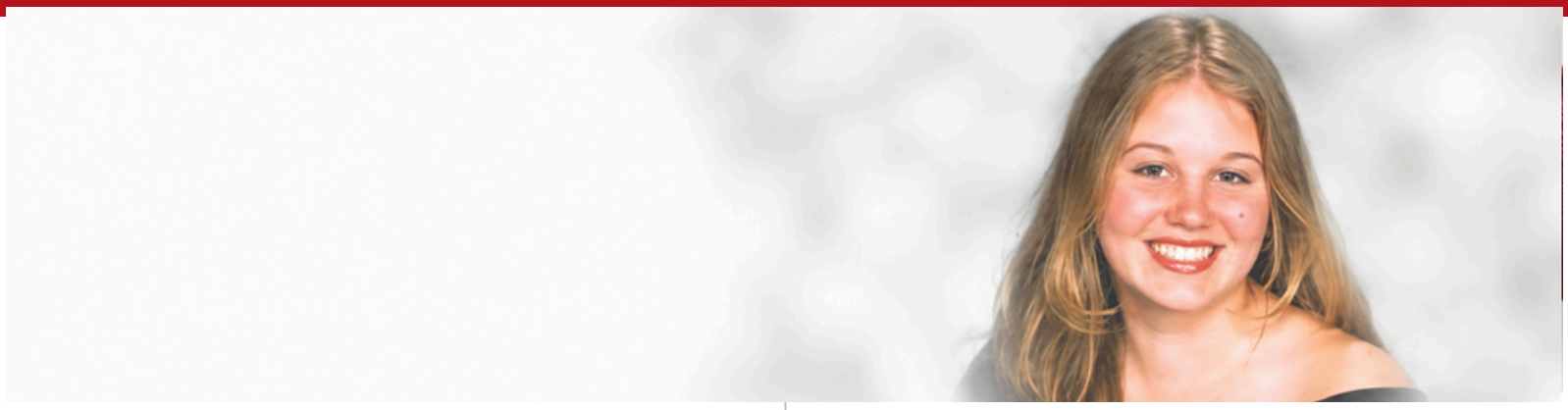
Energetic and beautiful, Angela Hohl woke up one summer morning with swollen glands. Since she was a lifeguard and the family had recently returned from a vacation, they suspected an infection and contacted their family physician. Within days, her condition worsened dramatically. After a trip to the emergency room and additional testing, Angela was transferred to a hospital in Reading, where she soon received her first blood transfusion.

The Hohls learned their daughter had a very rare and fast-moving form of leukemia. Just 26 days after she first became ill, Angela passed away.

During her short illness, Angela received more than 75 units of blood. Because she required a very specific platelet type from carefully matched donors, the Hohls often found themselves waiting anxiously for lifesaving blood products to arrive.

After Angela's death, Harvey and Susan made a decision. They wanted to do everything they could to help ensure that no family would have to wait and wonder whether the blood a loved one needed would be available.

"What Harvey and Susan have built is extraordinary," said Rami Nemeh, President and CEO of Miller-Keystone Blood Center. "They took the most heartbreaking loss a family can experience and created something that continues to save lives year after year. Their commitment reflects the very best of our community and serves as a reminder of why a strong blood supply matters."



Today, the Angela Hohl Memorial Drive remains one of the largest and longest-running blood drives conducted by Miller-Keystone Blood Center anywhere in the region.

Held four times each year, the drive continues to inspire students, faculty, donors, and volunteers alike.

“Angie wanted to be a teacher; to educate, and so we see this blood drive as our way to keep her teaching dream alive. Our hope is that we are educating these students about the importance of blood donation, making them understand, making it a habit,” said Angela’s mother, Susan. “To us, this keeps Angie’s memory alive. And maybe we have fulfilled her dream of educating and making an impact by doing this.”

“We are so proud that these Daniel Boone kids still want to do this. There are so many students who want to help,” she added.

“Frankly, it baffles us, but we are so inspired that students still remember our daughter,” said Harvey. “There have been amazing administrators working on this project and, each time we thought it might come to an end, another group stepped forward to keep it going.”

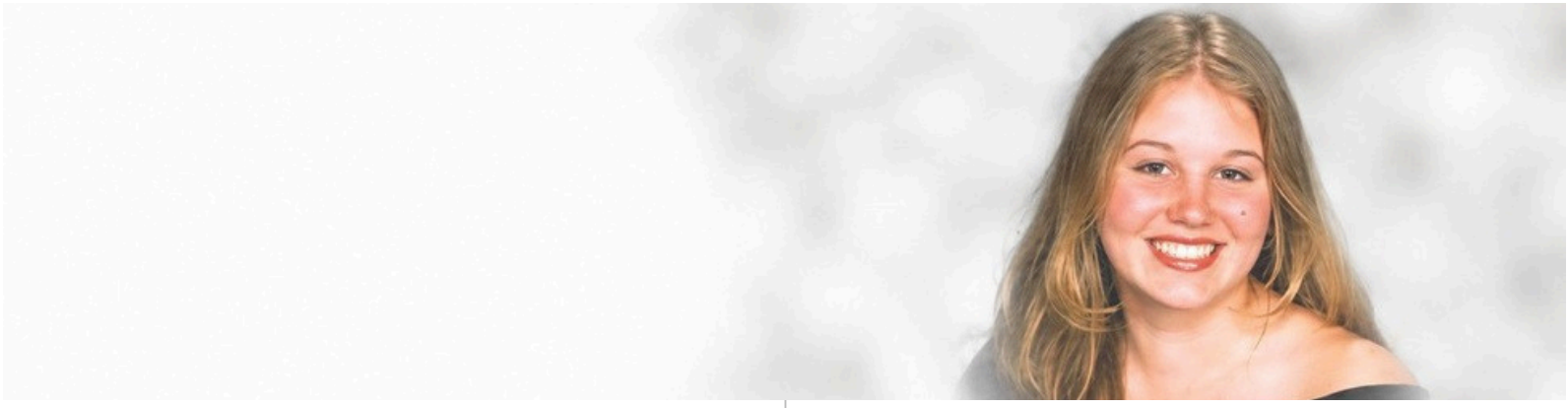
According to the Hohls, it is the students who do the lion’s share of the work. They handle much of the planning and lead the committee.

“There is a long list of Daniel Boone students and graduates who have done this amazing work,” said Susan.

“One of the most remarkable aspects of this story is that new generations of students continue to embrace Angela’s legacy,” added Nemeh. “Many of them were not yet born when Angela was a student at Daniel Boone, yet they understand the importance of what this drive represents. Their willingness to carry her story forward is a powerful testament to the impact one life can have on an entire community.”

The impact over the years has been extraordinary. Donor participation has grown significantly since the drive began, with hundreds of donors rolling up their sleeves at many of the events.

In fact, tens of thousands of blood products have been collected through the drives inspired by Angela’s memory. There is also an MKBC bloodmobile bearing Angela’s photo, a visible reminder of how one life can continue to touch countless others. The impact becomes even more profound when you consider that one blood donation has the potential to help multiple patients.



The Hohls' impact on MKBC extends beyond blood drives. They are also financial supporters of the organization.

"We give because we can, and because we realize how important the financial piece is to the work that Miller does."

Giving has become a family tradition. In place of some holiday gifts, family members make contributions to MKBC. The Hohls also support organizations that were special to Angela, including Harvey Cedars Bible Conference, where a room is named in her honor. Their spirit of generosity extends across generations. Angela's brother, Harvey III, has honored her memory through charitable fundraising and service as well.

It's a Family (and Friend) Affair

"Giving blood is a selfless act, but it doesn't have to be nameless," said Henry "Hank" Limper, a friend and longtime blood donor whose three daughters were heavily involved with the drive. "I give blood to honor the memory and infectious smile of Angela Hohl."
Limper's daughters, Kaleigh, Casey, and Devin, each played a role in the drive during their high school years. What began as a shared commitment ultimately grew into a lasting friendship between the Limper and Hohl families.

Today, the Hohls live in Rhode Island, having retired from careers in the mortgage insurance and title insurance industries. They moved closer to their son and grandchildren, but the connections they built in the Birdsboro area continue to draw them back regularly.

"Our three grandsons talk about Angie all the time. They act like they knew her," shared Susan.

Some of that may stem from the care with which the Hohls keep Angela's memory alive, including a special family project known as the "Quilt of Jeans."

"Angie had a lot of jeans, as most teens do. After she died, I packed them away, hoping one day to make something from them. Later, I took those jeans out and made a quilt for each of the boys," Susan said.

Throughout it all, their faith has been a guiding force.

"Our church helped us so much," the Hohls shared. "We wonder how people without faith handle something like this."

According to her parents, Angela was named after the Rolling Stones song Angie.

Their loss brings to mind some of its lyrics:
Angie, Angie
When will those clouds all disappear?
Angie, Angie
Where will it lead us from here?
The answer is found in the legacy they continue to build: a commitment to ensuring a safe and available blood supply for patients in need and a determination to keep Angela's memory alive through service to others.

All for their Angie.