

—Almonte/Carleton Place—  
**EMC**

## Remembering the life of Carleton Place teenager Jenna Lang

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EMC News - Family members, friends and acquaintances gathered Sept. 25 outside Carleton Place High School (CPHS) for a celebration of Jenna Lang's life, and to unveil a memorial tree – a lasting tribute to the "courageous" young woman.

On Sept. 16, after a two-year battle with cancer, Jenna, 17, passed away at Rogers House in Ottawa.

"She was very, very brave, and I can't believe how gracefully she dealt with it," said Darlene Fadden, Jenna's mother, who travelled with her husband Shawn Fadden from their home in Rochester, NY to attend last Friday's memorial. "She was a fighter!"

Jenna lived in Carleton Place with her father Bob Lang and stepmother Jennifer (Lang).

The memorial tree, decorated with pink and purple ribbons, sits on the front lawn of CPHS, and is a place for gathering and remembering.

The maple tree was donated by the Wal-Mart in Carleton Place, a cause spearheaded by employee and family friend Donna Hastie.

The night before the unveiling, Hastie made a special garden stone - inscribed with the words "Too well loved to ever be forgotten." Jenna's mother took the stone to place in a garden that she is creating for her daughter.

"Thank you so much to Donna," said Bob. "You have done so much for our family."

"This is what you do in a small town," she responded.

Sean Lawrenson, the best friend of Jenna's brother, performed the song 'Call it Karma' by Silverstein.

"I've known Jenna since she was three," he said. "She was like a little sister."



A special trip to Hawaii with family members this past January.



During her "Celebrating Beautiful You" party Aug. 15, Jenna Lang sits on the deck at her mother and stepfather's home in Rochester, NY.



Tara Gesner, Almonte Carleton Place EMC

Speaking to Jenna's friends in attendance, Bob said, "If you are missing her, please come over and visit, sit in her bedroom." "She's there, you can feel her. Jenna loved all you guys."

Currently, close to 700 people have joined the 'In Memory Of Jenna Lang' Facebook group. The group's description reads, "In memory of an amazing girl, who was taken away from us all way to early."

For those who wish, a donation to Candlelighters or Roger's House would be greatly appreciated by the family.



In Ottawa at Roger's House Sept. 11.  
What a beautiful smile!

#### IN HER FAMILY'S WORDS - JENNA'S STORY...

"Jenna was diagnosed with Metastatic Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma in August 2007. She went through a 54-week study-based treatment protocol. The treatment involved six aggressive chemotherapy drugs, six weeks of radiation treatment and surgery to remove her primary tumor. Her chemotherapy treatment involved three-day and five-day admissions at CHEO's 4 North (4N) Oncology Wing, as well as day treatments and doctor visits in CHEO's Medical Day Unit (MDU).

There were basically no breaks in her schedule and in a less busy week, Jenna would be typically admitted at CHEO's 4N wing due to febrile neutropenia - chemo side effect problems. Many of these admissions lasted weeks while Jenna was given IV-based high dose antibiotics to combat an infection with a suppressed immune system. Besides a suppressed immune system Jenna's blood count always bottomed out from the chemotherapy treatment, requiring countless blood transfusions to boost her blood counts. Jenna received over 120 blood transfusions throughout the course of her treatment.

Chemotherapy side effects, there were many and Jenna dealt with them all, included nausea, mouth sores that went down her gastrointestinal tract, constipation, diarrhea and of course hair loss which was devastating to a teenage girl.

There were many needles between chemotherapy treatments. Jenna received daily shots to help keep her neutrophils high, then many peripheral injections to test her blood counts. But the chemotherapy was too strong and Jenna's blood counts always bottomed out.

Jenna's primary tumor surgery in January 2008 involved an incision almost up the entire left side of her back with an oval incision where the tumor was located. I always compare her incision to a hockey stick. During this invasive surgery Jenna lost sections of three of her ribs where the tumor invaded one of her ribs. The incision took over six months to completely heal due to her suppressed immune system.

Jenna spent almost the entire summer of 2008 in CHEO's 4N wing fighting an infected abscess from a fall and lung fluid problems. These infections caused delays in her treatment, however, it (treatment) was completed in December 2008.

Although her final scans were clear, three months later her first off treatment scans showed that her disease had returned, but with a vengeance. Jenna was immediately started on a less toxic chemotherapy treatment, but towards the end of May 2009, Jenna was admitted at Roger's House for pain control. Scan's showed her lower abdomen tumors had continued to grow during her treatment and caused bladder problems. She stopped this chemotherapy treatment and started on a different type of treatment.

While at Roger's House, Jenna was treated for a bladder infection and urinary tract infection over a two to three week span. Although she recovered, Jenna started on a two to three week span of sleeping all the time. Her doctors thought she was going down hill at this point and her tumors were robbing her of all her energy.

But, Jenna had a goal to work towards - shopping in Toronto with her Aunt Karen. Jenna worked hard at this point and was completely off all IV-based pain and nausea within one week. That following weekend, Jenna went to Toronto and shopped for seven straight hours! Although other events were planned for Jenna she was too tired to do them, but she shopped till she dropped! After the trip, Jenna returned home for a few weeks, and then went to visit her mother in New York. She returned home with lower abdomen pain.

At this point Jenna was re-scanned and her doctors thought additional treatment would not work. Jenna still wanted to take something otherwise she thought she was giving up. She started taking a mild dose of oral chemotherapy treatment but things continued to escalate until she passed away Sept. 16, 2009.



Jenna was so brave and did anything to beat this disease with grace and courage beyond her years. All the while, she was building relationships with some other special CHEO kids. Montana and Jenny in particular. Not only did Jenna build life-long friendships with them but she also had to accept the grief and fear that paralyzed her when they too both died from their cancer disease.

Through all the lonely days, fear and pain, Jenna persevered to get home and live her life as a normal teenager. When at home nothing slowed her down. Jenna loved to be with her friends and family and go to parties or shopping with them. She just wanted to look normal, feel normal and be treated normal - just like every other teenager. Jenna tried her best to keep up with her schoolwork and attend classes at CPHS. She loved associating with her friends at school and was determined to get her credits with the help of Heather Counsel (her teacher at CHEO). Thanks so much to Candlelighters for the laptop computer and cell phone - Jenna's life line to the world when she was in hospital or at home sick.

Daily or weekly visits from her home care nurse, Jenn Irwin were always a welcome breath of fresh air. Jenna enjoyed every minute spent with Jenn. Jenn genuinely loved our daughter and cared for every other child in our family, too. Jenn became a special family member in our home and we thank her from the bottom of our heart. She is indeed, forever, a family friend.

Staff at CHEO 4N wing and MDU is the most caring, compassionate team that we could have asked for to care for our little girl. We became very close with Dr. Ramphal, Dr Moorehead, Marilyn Cassidy (inter-link nurse), Joanne (MDU nurse), Louise (social worker), Heather (case manager) and Brenda (child life worker). Not to mention many other caring nurses and fellow CHEO families that we shared two years of our life with. We all became as close as any family.

Jenna spent several months at Rogers House due to pain control and eventually for palliative care. Rogers House allowed our family to spend the precious final days with Jenna in a comfortable, private, loving atmosphere. The palliative care team of doctors prepared our family in a very compassionate way to help Jenna in her final days of life. We are very grateful that CHEO offers families a place like Rogers House to call home when they are in need. Not to forget the open door policy and hospitality shown to us on numerous occasions by Ronald McDonald house. We could not have endured the last two years without the help of everyone mentioned above.

Finally, as noted before, living in a small town such as Carleton Place is like no other. We have so many people to thank for their support over the last two years.

A benefit dance was held in Jenna's honour in November 2007. Special thanks to Donna Lee Hamilton and Theresa Porteous (DRS), who in turn came to our aid again when they also held and organized Jenna's Celebration of Life at the Army Navy & Airforce Veterans Unit 396, all the performers that donated their time, and the local businesses for donating to the auction. Many special people donated out of their own pockets to support our family - thank you! Too, many thanks for all the cards, flowers, food, phone calls and visits during this difficult time.

There are so many people to thank for their ongoing support and assistance with the benefit dance. They are: Bob's employer (DRS Technologies), Larry Soikie (emcee), the Army Navy & Airforce Veterans Unit 396, the family of Elgin Fraser, and, Scrapease. Others to thank are include the Canadian Cancer Society drivers, POFAP, Candlelighters, the Make a Wish Foundation, Wal-Mart and Donna Hastie (the most caring woman I know), TMAC Glass and Mirror, Debbie Taylor and staff (for their support), the Brown family, John Bowes and Barker Funeral Home (for such empathy), and so many others.

Our families... thanks so much for everything - Moms Gladys Richardson and Dorothy Lang, and Jenna's Auntie Karen and Uncle Eric. Thank you all for always being there for us from midnight drives to CHEO to food and money or just being there to help us cope with this very difficult time in our life. Fortunately, Jenna was well enough to travel to Hawaii with Bob and myself and a friend in January. She had seven sun fun filled days to enjoy life and forget about cancer and needles and chemotherapy. She enjoyed herself to the fullest - shopping, sun bathing, swimming with the dolphins, boy hunting, Sea Doo riding, submarine rides, and an unforgettable New Year's Eve on the beach. Thanks to Emily Angel at Make A Wish Foundation.

As for the family - Bob, Jenn, Chris, Jenna-Marie, Joey (Melissa) in Carleton Place and Darlene and Shawn in New York - they are going to treasure the special moments they had with Jenna, and they will never forget her courage and grace. They will keep her memory alive forever! After a period of grieving, they will work hard to help assist other families that find themselves in their situation."