

PATRICIA SCHULTZ HENNINGER



Patricia Schultz Henninger, a beacon of generosity and faith whose early struggles in the steel town of Duquesne, Pennsylvania, shaped a lifetime of giving, died on February 20, 2024, at her home in Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania. She was 93.

Born on June 1, 1930, Patricia was the sixth of eight children to a local millworker and a homemaker. Her early life was marked by modesty and determination; she often

recounted stories of walking to school daily in shoes patched with cardboard, embodying the resiliency that would define her later years.

A devout Catholic, Patricia attended church every day with her family during early life, a practice that later influenced her charitable endeavors as an adult. At 14, she began working at Kennywood Amusement Park's concession stand serving popcorn—marking the start of her journey from rags to riches. Patricia was fond of reminding friends that at one time she was the "Popcorn Queen" of Kennywood Park.

After graduating from Duquesne High School, Patricia put herself through business school at Robert Morris University while continuing her work at Kennywood. After graduation, she received a promotion to telephone switchboard operator at the park. In addition to her full-time occupation there, she took on second-jobs for most of her life, which allowed her to put several siblings through college and provide financial support for her mother.

Kennywood Park was not just a career for Patricia, it produced several of her proudest accomplishments. Among these was the refurbishment and painting of the park carousel. She supervised a group of art students from the University of Pittsburgh (she referred to them as "the Critters") to fix, sand, and paint the carousel, restoring the attraction to its former glory. At the conclusion of the summer, the students gifted Patricia a set of glasses with black and red carousel horses. She kept these with her always, and was fond of using them to tell the story of the carousel refurbishment.

Another important event occurring during her time at Kennywood Park, was Patricia's meeting of Carl E. Henninger, C.E.O. of Kennywood and the last living son of its original founder. They married in 1978, embarking on a partnership grounded in shared values of hard work and philanthropy. While their shared lives were based in western Pennsylvania, Carl and Patricia traveled the world—visiting Indonesia, Africa, the pyramids at Giza—following their marriage in New Zealand.

After Carl's death in 1985, Patricia moved herself to the couple's Conneaut Lake cottage full-time, and dedicated herself to charitable work, significantly impacting the local community and beyond. She founded the Carl E. Henninger Foundation, which awards full college scholarships to Catholic youth in Crawford County. Her generosity also extended to many worthy institutions throughout western Pennsylvania, including the Shriners Children's Hospital of Erie, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, Hospice of Crawford County, the Humane Society of Meadville, Animal Friends of Pittsburgh, Big Brothers Foundation of Pittsburgh, Little Sisters of the Poor, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Legacy Scholarship Fund, along with several local churches, including Our Lady Queen of the Americas in Conneaut Lake, St. Phillips' Parish in Linesville, and St. Mary's of Meadville, among many others. At the time of her death, her home in Conneaut Lake was filled with decades of Thank You notes from graduates able to attend colleges and universities throughout the country thanks to her financial assistance.

Her unwavering support of Catholic charities, universities and causes earned her the Cross of Honor from Pope Benedict XVI, which is the highest papal honor that can be awarded to a layperson.

A lifetime dog lover, Patricia doted on the four-legged friends in her life. At the time of her death, she was accompanied always by her beloved dog, Toby.

Patricia leaves behind a legacy of hope and benevolence, remembered by all who knew her as a woman who transformed adversity into opportunity, not just for herself, but for many, many others.

Patricia was laid to rest at St. Joseph Cemetery after a private mass held at Saint Paul Cathedral in Pittsburgh on April 3rd, 2024, with the Very Reverend Kris D. Stubna, S.T. D. presiding. The funeral procession carrying Patricia to the cemetery following her mass made special accommodations to take one last drive past Kennywood Amusement Park, where she had spent so much of her life.

Her charitable legacy supporting causes throughout western Pennsylvania will be continued through the Carl and Patricia Henninger Fund, a component fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation.

Please sign Patricia's online guestbook at www.hatheway-tesesco.com.

Arrangements for Patricia were entrusted to **HATHEWAY-TEDESCO FUNERAL HOME**, 614 Baldwin St., Meadville, PA 16335.

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