



Tom and his wife, Glee, were there from the beginning, never giving up on the Jill's House dream. They have been faithful prayer warriors and financial supporters ever since. We are so blessed by their kind hearts.

GIVING

Original member of Jill's House's Board of Directors shares how powerful prayer made Jill's House a reality.

Tom McMahon, a member of the McLean Bible Church Board of Elders and former Jill's House Board of Directors member, recently reflected on the early days of Jill's House. He remembers many blessings but also many roadblocks encountered during the early planning and building phase. "Many lives were going to be touched by Jill's House," shared Tom, "and we met spiritual resistance at every turn."

Tom has been a supporter of Jill's House from the very beginning. It started by joining in prayer with the other board members to seek a path for how Jill's House could come into existence. The first hurdle was getting the construction of Jill's House approved by the Virginia State Legislature. Until then, there had been no category for children's respite care. But through great leadership and God's blessings, Jill's House was eventually given the green light.

Tom says the board continued to encounter one disappointment after another, but the real breakthrough came when they realized Jill's House must be open to all children of all faiths and backgrounds. "One Saturday we were praying about it," said Tom. "We said we were doing this in the name of Jesus Christ, and it became so clear to us that Christ cares for everyone, especially these little ones and their parents. We are His hands, His feet and His voice. So we did what He told us to do, and from that moment on, funding and everything else came together."

One of the most tangible examples of answered prayer occurred during the design phase of Jill's House. A major consideration of the design team was whether or not to build a swimming pool. Research among disability experts revealed it would be a huge benefit to the children, but the cost was prohibitive. God heard the call and sent a donor who had seen the construction and paid for the entire construction of the indoor accessible pool. And what a blessing it has been! We survey families after each stay, and the swimming pool continues to be the number one most enjoyable activity for the children, allowing many of the non-ambulatory children the physical sense of freedom for the very first time.

Looking back over the past four years since Jill's House opened its doors, Tom says the greatest surprise to him is the number of families seeking rest and renewal. "We thought we would open one of the three sleeping areas in the first year," said Tom, "and the others would open in subsequent years. That was not the case. We opened our doors in 2010, and families flooded through them, filling the building with their precious children and, for many of them, experiencing relief for the very first time. It is so clear that God's fingerprints are all over Jill's House."



Tom and Glee's beautiful granddaughter, Jennifer, is now 33 and continues to bring joy to her family.



McMahon family members Sandra (left) and Laura visited Jill's House the day after they ran in the Marine Corps Marathon, raising funds for Team Jill's House.

Tom and his wife Glee love the mission of Jill's House, but Tom, who is also a regular donor, shared that it is God who gave Glee and him the ability to be financial supporters all these years. Tom and Glee's generosity has also extended to their family members who live across the United States. In fact, their daughter-in-law Sandra, from Novato, California, and their niece Laura, from Cheyenne, Wyoming, both participated and raised funds as part of Team Jill's House and ran in the Marine Corps Marathon last Sunday!

Tom and Glee are also the grandparents of Jennifer. Jennifer has Down syndrome and Tom says that seeing the challenges his daughter encountered over the years raising Jennifer sensitized him to the need for respite. "It's a lot of work raising a child with special needs, but there are also many joys," said Tom. "For example, people with Down syndrome can spot each other from a mile away. They seem to recognize themselves in each other. You can see the joy in their faces, and their love for everyone. It's a beautiful example of Christ's love for us and how we should share that love with each other, every day."

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