

# Hope Away from Home

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of the Huron Valley

## RMH of Ann Arbor: 25 Years of Serving Families

### A Celebration of Years Past and an Exciting Look Forward

What were you doing in 1985? Do you remember where you were, what you were wearing or what you were watching on TV? Ronald Reagan was President, the “Cosby Show” was the top TV show and Madonna started her first world tour. Seems like a long time ago, doesn’t it? A lot has transpired in the last 25 years. One of the most important things that happened in 1985 was the opening of the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor to our first families. Now, 25 years later and over 15,000 families served, we have a lot to be proud of.



As we start the next 25 years with the addition of a second House and the ability to serve an additional 2,000+ families each year, how will the 2035 Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor newsletter look back at our world today?



Based on the trend of our occupancy, by the end of 2035 we will have served as many as 80,000

families. This number is startling and really gives you a sense of the impact we will make in the coming years.



What we will continue to focus on is our core mission—the families. That is what our legacy is, and always will be, the important part we play in the healing of patients and their families.



We have decided to combine our desire to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the opening of our new House Within the Hospital. We will honor our “Hope Away from Home” capital campaign donors and past major contributors at a special reception actually in the new C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital in advance of the opening in November. Everyone is invited to purchase tickets in advance and join the celebration.



RONALD MCDONALD  
HOUSE CHARITIES  
OF THE  
HURON VALLEY

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## A Message from Our Board President



Bob Ferguson, Board President  
RMHC of the Huron Valley

Looking out of the window there are signs that spring weather may finally be here! Here's hoping that you're looking forward to milder weather and a long enjoyable summer.

It has been, and will continue to be, a very momentous and exciting year for the Ronald McDonald House. It will be later this year – in November – that we will open our second House! The “House Within the Hospital” at the new C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital. This will indeed be an exciting time and a much needed expansion of our capacity to help even more families at the hospital.

We also started out this year with a new Executive Director. It is my pleasure to welcome Kim Kelly as our Executive Director of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Huron Valley. Many of you already know Kim as she joined the RMHC team in May of 2010 as our Chief Development Officer. She assumed the Executive Director role in January. Please join me in congratulating Kim, and wishing her continued success in her new role in this very eventful year and beyond.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support of the Ronald McDonald House. We would not be able to do all that we do for the families of critically ill children without your help and continued support. Thank you from all of us.

### Board of Directors

- Robert Ferguson  
*President*
- Alan Harris  
*Vice President*
- Ryan Noel  
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- Scott Meier
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- David Perry
- Eric Skye, M.D.
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### Staff

- Kim Kelly  
*Executive Director*
- Shannon Novara  
*Marketing/Communications Manager*
- Marcia Monson  
*Operations Manager*
- Karla Brauer  
*Resident Manager*
- Bonnie Compton  
*Weekend Manager*
- Addie Conard  
*Weekend Manager*
- Michelle Harris  
*Weekend Manager*
- Jennifer Toburen  
*Weekend Manager*
- Ginny Bareham  
*Volunteer Coordinator*

### Mission

The mission of the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor is to provide a “home away from home” for families of children experiencing a serious illness or injury requiring hospitalization or treatment on an outpatient basis.

## 25 Years of Serving Families

*Continued from front*

The combination of these two events will give all attendees the opportunity to see the new House Within the Hospital before it is open for operation.

We will celebrate the past 25 years at the same time we will begin the exciting next chapter of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Huron Valley. We hope you will join us then as we embark on the next 25 years of our journey.

## Save the Date

RMH of Ann Arbor is participating in an exciting event this summer in downtown Ann Arbor and we'd love to have you join us. We will be creating a new facet of “**The Event on Main**” that will be a festive community event for the whole family. Please join us the evening of Thursday, June 23, on Main Street between William and Liberty. Visit our website or Facebook page for more information.

# 5 Ways You Can Help

## Become a Shift Volunteer

We have volunteers who work regular three-hour shifts every other week at our front desk. If this is something you might be interested in, please visit our website.

## Donate Items

Please review our "Wish List" on page 8 for a list of items we need to assist our families. Also, they love to receive care packages of trial-sized toiletries when they check in. We promise it will feel great to know you are helping families with your act of kindness!

## Make a Meal

Families always appreciate a home-cooked meal. Various organizations, businesses and clubs prepare dinner for our families each night. Please contact the House Manager at (734) 994-4442 for available dates and additional guidelines. If making dinner seems too tall a task, families are always very appreciative of home baked cookies, cupcakes, etc. to help themselves to after a long day at the hospital. Muffins, coffee cakes or other breakfast items (such as fresh fruit) that can be grabbed before they head to the hospital in the morning are also appreciated. Baked goods can be dropped off anytime during our office hours 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., 7 days a week.

## Collect Pop Tabs

Save just the tabs from your beverage cans. We bring the aluminum tabs to a metal recycler and the funds help us continue to provide a "home-away-from-home" for families. Reach out to others in your community, your workplace, your schools, and your church to "pull together" for RMH! Visit our website for more details.

## Sponsor or Attend an Event

Check page 5, visit our website or Facebook page for upcoming events benefitting RMH of Ann Arbor. By sponsoring or attending one of these events, you directly support our House.

## House Within the Hospital Update

What started years ago as a conversation between Dave McDowell, our long-time Executive Director, and Pat Warner, Associate Director, UMHS, C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital, will finally become a reality very soon. C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor have always shared the same mission—supporting families of children experiencing a serious illness or injury. This important partnership between our two organizations will become even stronger when the new Ronald McDonald House Within the Hospital opens along with the grand opening of the new C.S. Mott Children's Hospital in November 2011.

room, laundry room and office. For the last few years a large number of people have worked to make this happen: RMH Ann Arbor leadership, C.S. Mott administration, RMHC Global, lawyers, House Managers, project managers, volunteers, social workers, nurses, construction workers, contractors, interior designers, fundraisers, most importantly donors, and many more. This collective effort will help us provide over 2,000 additional families each year with a place to stay right across the hall from their critically ill child. We are working on finalizing operational plans and procedures, preparing to hire and train staff and

volunteers and working with C.S. Mott administration on move-in plans. It is an exciting time.

Our "Hope Away from Home" Capital Campaign has successfully raised over \$708,000 towards our \$1 million goal for construction, furnishings and operation of the House. Our work is not done in this area. Donations are greatly appreciated to help make this idea a reality. Naming Opportunities are still available; please contact Kim Kelly (734) 994-4442 for more information.

*"We view the Ronald McDonald House as an integral part of the continuum of services we provide to families."*

*—Patricia Warner*

*C.S. Mott Children's Hospital*

You may have heard about this new "House", but it seems like it has been a long time coming. This 12-bedroom facility, co-located with the pediatric ICUs on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor, will include 12 guest rooms with private baths, a small kitchen, living



The new C.S. Mott Children's Hospital scheduled to open November 11, 2011.

Photo courtesy of UMHS Marketing

## A Message from Our Executive Director

As I write my first article for this newsletter as the Executive Director of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Huron Valley, I could not be more excited. This is a transformational time for a House that has been providing critical support to families for over 25 years. I am very proud to be a part of the team of Board of Directors, staff and volunteers that are dedicated to supporting families as they go through one of the most difficult times of their lives. The core of our program is focusing on these families and the issues they are experiencing.

As we move forward into the next chapter of the history of the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor we will be challenged to develop and grow our program in new ways. Change can be uncomfortable but at the same time very exciting. The opening of our new House Within the Hospital this fall is an innovative and new opportunity to increase our capacity and give a "home away from home" to an additional 2,000+ families a year. We will expand our staff, our fundraising activities and services in the coming months and years. These changes will increase our ability to do what we have done best for years, support the families that stay with us.

I hope you will all join us during this important time. We need your support now more than ever.



Kim Kelly, Executive Director  
RMHC of the Huron Valley

## A New Heart for Emilio

On October 14, 2010, Ignacio and Yesenia Ruelas welcomed their second child, a baby boy named Emilio, into the world. He was born in Fremont, Michigan, with a full head of hair and big brown eyes.

Soon after his birth, doctors feared something was amiss, and he was quickly transferred to a hospital in Grand Rapids and then to C.S. Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor, where he was diagnosed with hypoplastic left heart syndrome (HLHS), a rare congenital heart defect in which the left side of the heart is severely underdeveloped. Emilio soon underwent the first of what is typically a round of three surgeries to repair his heart. Unfortunately,

after the first surgery, his heart continued to struggle and he was added to the heart transplant list on November 23.

During this ordeal, Ignacio, Yesenia and their two-year old daughter, Elena, have stayed at the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor to be near Emilio as much as possible. Elena enjoys playing in the House's playroom, selecting DVDs to watch and running up and down the halls as an outlet for her toddler energy.

Thankfully, Emilio underwent a life-saving heart transplant on December 20. It has been four months since they first checked into RMH, but the Ruelas family is



Emilio Ruelas shortly after his heart transplant.

optimistic that they'll be able to bring Emilio home soon. He continues to gain strength.

They are grateful that there was a room available at the Ronald McDonald House when they came here. Staying at a hotel for four months would have been too expensive for most people, especially for this young couple. They are thankful for the community groups that provide meals, food and supplies, as well as being able to share their story with other families. Ignacio is somewhat of an ambassador to new families at the House. Yesenia said, "Staying at the Ronald McDonald House is one more thing off your shoulders. You don't need to think about where you're staying, what you're eating. It's all taken care of."



Yesenia and Ignacio Ruelas with their baby, Emilio and their young daughter, Elena.

## Upcoming Events

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Jack of Hearts Bowling Fundraiser Sterling Hts., April 23, 2011

Join us at Sunnybrook Lanes in Sterling Heights from 12:30-3:30 for a fundraiser in honor of 3-year old Jackson Leflar, a veteran of 3 open heart surgeries. Proceeds benefit RMH of Ann Arbor. Visit our website for more information.

### Event on Main Community Event

Main St, Ann Arbor, June 23, 2011

Visit our website for more details on this exciting event in downtown Ann Arbor for the whole family!

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual W4 Country Roof-sit Radiothon September 2011

Once again this year, we'll put W4Country (102.9 FM) radio host, Brian "Bubba" Cowan on a roof and keep him there until he raises lots of money for the Ronald McDonald House. It will be even more fun this year!

### RMH Gala

Joe Louis Arena, October 8, 2011

Stay tuned for details on this wonderful annual event that will be held this year on the ice at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Sponsored by the Southeast Michigan McDonald's Owner/Operators and DTE Energy.

### Let Us Know You Like Us



Are you someone who can't live without frequent updates on **Facebook** or **Twitter**? If you "Like" us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/RMHAnnArbor](http://www.facebook.com/RMHAnnArbor)) or follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/RMHAnnArbor](http://www.twitter.com/RMHAnnArbor)), you'll be updated about our upcoming special events and unique and fun volunteer opportunities.

## Pull Together for RMH with Pop Tabs!

Yes, we collect pop tabs! Many Ronald McDonald Houses across the country collect them and we receive calls almost daily asking if we do. So spread the word, "Yes, we collect pop tabs!"

It's a simple way to support our Ronald McDonald House, and they really add up! Just remove the small tab on your aluminum cans. Save them in a container with a wide opening, such as a plastic jar or coffee can. Tell your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors to save them as well. Saving tabs is a great activity to get children involved and to teach them to protect the environment and help others. Jean Nichols, our "pop tab angel," began saving pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in 1998, shortly after her first granddaughter, Samantha Jean Osborne passed away as an infant. Samantha's

parents stayed at the Ronald McDonald House while Samantha underwent heart surgery at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. Jean saw collecting tabs as a way of giving back to other families in a similar situation. She asked everyone she knew to start saving their tabs.

Over the years, Jean and her "Family and Friends Tab Group for Samantha Jean Osborne" have collected about 3,270 pounds of tabs. Added together with additional donations of scrap metal, she estimates that her group has donated approximately \$7,000 to RMH of Ann Arbor! All of these funds help to keep our House operating for families.

*"Collecting pop tabs is such a small thing to do for such a worthwhile cause, and they really add up!"*

—Jean Nichols

Jean has volunteered to transport all of the tabs we collect at the House to Lorbec Recycling Center in Flint, where her neighbor, Jim Spelman, is the general manager and always gives us the best price.

For more information about collecting pop tabs and where to bring them, please visit our website [www.rmhannarbor.org](http://www.rmhannarbor.org).

## Comedy Night: Valentine's Day Extravaganza

Huge thanks to McDonald's Owner/Operator and RMH Board Member, Jerry Olinik for organizing his 2nd Annual Comedy Night to benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor.

The event was held on February 12 at the American Spirit Centre in Brighton. Attendance was outstanding and guests enjoyed a lovely dinner while being entertained by five comedians. All totaled, the event raised \$16,000 for the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor!



McDonald's Owner/Operator and RMH Board Member Jerry Olinik talks about the importance of giving to the Ronald McDonald House.



## New Faces at RMH of Ann Arbor

If you visit the Ronald McDonald House of Ann Arbor, you may notice some friendly new faces.

**Shannon Novara** has been working at RMH on a contractual basis since March 2010 and has been hired as a part-time Marketing Communications Manager and Development Coordinator. She is responsible for our newsletter, direct mail appeals, website and social media, special events, public relations, and our donor database. Shannon's professional experience includes advertising, marketing and account management.

**Ginny Bareham** has been a volunteer at RMH of Ann Arbor since 1989. She has recently begun working a few hours a week as a Volunteer Coordinator. She'll be working on recruiting, training and screening new volunteers as well as providing ongoing education and support of volunteers and volunteer activities. She has been active not only as a shift volunteer, but also as a member of the House Operations committee and is a former RMH board member. Ginny recently retired as a pediatric nurse practitioner.

## We ♥ Our Volunteers

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we at the Ronald McDonald House realize that we could not exist without the help and service of our many volunteers. To show our appreciation, we are hosting a recognition luncheon for our volunteers on **Monday, April 18** at the **Eagle Crest Marriott in Ypsilanti**.

We will send out more details as the event nears.

*Thank you all for your service!*

## Volunteer Spotlight: Jan Shatusky and Nancy White: Our 25-Year Veteran Volunteers

When the call went out 25 years ago that a Ronald McDonald House was opening in Ann Arbor, near C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, and volunteers were needed to help at the House, two amazing women answered the call, Jan Shatusky and Nancy White.

*"My favorite part of volunteering is seeing families leave with a healthy child."*

*—Nancy White*

When the House first opened, volunteers worked three-hour shifts every week. Now, the shifts are every other week. Nancy says she loves working at the House and nearly always looks forward to her shift.

Jan learned about the House because her daughter was a member of Alpha Delta Pi, and RMHC is their national philanthropy. After retiring from teaching and operating a preschool, Jan was looking for meaningful volunteer work. She loves the feeling that she is doing something useful at RMH.

Jan also noted the deep sense of connec-

tion she feels to the House after being a part of it for 25 years. Besides being a shift volunteer, Jan has also helped out with additional projects like sewing valances for the guest rooms. She is also part of a team of volunteers who have handwritten an estimated 10,000+ thank-you notes to Ronald McDonald House donors.

*"I really enjoy the camaraderie I feel with the other volunteers at the RMH."*

*—Jan Shatusky*

When she is not working her regular volunteer shift at the House, Nancy enjoys playing golf and tennis, reading, biking and volunteering at the UM Hospital gift shop. Jan also enjoys reading and belongs to both a book club and a poetry club. She and her husband of 53 years enjoy Michigan football and visiting their four daughters and six grandchildren.

We are extremely grateful for the combined 50 years of service by these two special women.



Jan Shatusky



Nancy White

# Ongoing Improvements to the House That Love Built

Each year, the Ronald McDonald of Ann Arbor's House Operations Committee brainstorms areas in need of attention throughout the House. These improvements are funded through a special capital budget.

This year's major project will be a renovation of the main office area. This area has been on the list for several years, but it has been bumped until areas which more directly impact the comfort of our families have been addressed. Examples of those projects include bathroom, kitchen and bedroom renovations.

The office area is crying for attention this

year as the vintage 1985 wallpaper begins to fall off the walls! The House Operations Committee will be consulting with interior designers to create a home-office atmosphere.

An additional project scheduled to be undertaken this year includes improving lighting in the sleeping rooms. We will also begin research on renovating the sleep rooms, including removing wallpaper and replacing it with a fresh coat of paint, as well as replacing the original furniture.

In other House-related news, an energy audit was generously donated by UM Hospital Facilities Planning and Development

Department. It was a very helpful tool, and we look forward to implementing their recommendations, such as programmable thermostats in common areas this year.

Many thanks to our dedicated House Operations Committee members: Dave Warren (RMH Board Member and Chair of the Committee), Marcia Monson (House Manager), Karla Brauer (Resident Manager), Dave Perry (RMH Board Member), and RMH Volunteers Ginny Bareham, Sheri Belcher, Michaelene Farrell, Jesse Gutierrez, Mary Kay Pearson, and Mariel Peck.

## A Living Room Makeover Courtesy of La-Z-Boy

Ronald McDonald House Charities has many global sponsors who are incredibly supportive of the Houses. We are lucky enough to have one of the most generous global sponsors right in our area—La-Z-Boy! La-Z-Boy annually donates four pieces of furniture to all Ronald McDonald Houses, including ours. However, La-Z-Boy has gone above and beyond in supporting the Ann Arbor House by preparing dinners for the families, and this year, outdid themselves by adopting our living room for a makeover.

Our living room had not been updated in 25 years, so it was a much-needed makeover! Lea Ann Knapp, a designer with La-Z-Boy, worked with our House Operations



The living room has a more casual, inviting feel. The conversation areas allow many families to share the room.

Committee on a vision to make this space more comfortable and functional.

"We really wanted to create a cozy place where families could relax," said Marcia Monson, House Manager. New paint was donated by another global sponsor, Benjamin Moore, while all furniture, rugs, décor, lamps, window coverings and labor were generously donated by La-Z-Boy.

Our families agreed that the results are beautiful. It's a wonderful gathering place for families to unwind and share as a community with other families.

Many thanks to Greg Pahl, Manager of Retail Marketing Execution, and everyone in the Marketing Department at La-Z-Boy who helped make this room a showpiece of our house.



The new furniture is durable and comfortable and blends beautifully with the existing woodwork.



The La-Z-Boy team poses after painting the entire room.



The new window treatments let in plenty of natural light.



Ronald McDonald House Charities®  
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*We could really use...*



## Wish List

- Canned pasta (SpaghettiOs®, etc.)
- Canned ready-to-eat soups
- Canned tuna
- Cookies & snack foods
- Coffee creamer
- Styrofoam carryout containers
- Dishwasher detergent
- Dishwashing liquid
- Aluminum foil
- Dryer sheets
- Bleach
- Laundry detergent
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Vinyl gloves
- Journals
- Pop-up Post-it notes
- Masking tape
- "Forever" postage stamps
- White 8 ½ x 11 copy paper
- Twin & full size mattress pads
- White pillowcases
- Kleenex
- Liquid hand soap
- Purell hand sanitizer
- Deodorant
- Target gift cards
- Phone cards
- Family-oriented DVDs (no VHS)
- Xbox 360 games (E-rated) and controllers
- Playstation 3 games (E-rated) and controllers

For infection control and the safety of our guest families, we are not able to accept USED or PREVIOUSLY OWNED ITEMS. This includes books, clothing, puzzles, toys, or stuffed animals. This also includes stuffed animals that have not been played with but have been on display or on shelves in a home (example: Beanie Baby collections).