



Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Kansas

Ronald McDonald House Charities lifts children and families to a better tomorrow by providing a home-away-from-home for families of seriously ill children staying at nearby hospitals.

Spring Newsletter 2009

House is Home-Away-From-Home for Families in Need

A typical Saturday night at the Ronald McDonald House for new parents Traci and Thomas Madron: Sitting in the dining room, the distant sound of the TV in the background, Thomas uses his laptop to e-mail new photos of their twin daughters to friends and family, while his wife Traci enjoys a bowl of homemade chicken noodle soup and chats with another house guest.

The house has been a blessing for the young couple from Fort Riley. The Madrons began their stay at the house following the birth of their twin girls in late January 2008 at Stormont-Vail Hospital in Topeka. Weighing in at 1.6 and 1.7 pounds at birth, Lillian and Jewel were born four months premature and needed to stay in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit until they were strong enough to go home.

"The house has been *wonderful*," said Traci. "Spending 10 to 12 hours at the hospital each day, it's nice to come home, eat a home-cooked meal and sit on the couch to relax."

Truly a house that love built, the Ronald McDonald House serves as residency for parents and families of sick children being treated in area hospitals. Over the past 21 years, the house has provided a home-away-from-home for more than 20,000 families.

Thomas, who prefers to be called Tommy, serves in the military and is stationed at Fort Riley. He says that staying at the house has also provided camaraderie and an opportunity to share with the other families.

"We sit and talk, and they help us see that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Now we're the long-timers at the house and give advice from our own experiences," said Tommy.

Supported by community donations and volunteers, the house is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The three-story house has eight bedrooms, each with a full bath; a kitchen; a dining room; a living room; a family room; and a laundry room. Television and internet access are also available to the

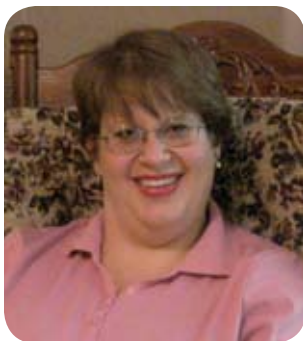


Lillian and Jewel Madron

families, and evening meals are prepared by volunteers from the community.

After a three-month stay at Stormont, the twins were released in late April 2008, and while Traci and Tommy's stay at Ronald McDonald House has made life easier, they were glad to return to Ft. Riley with their girls and take on new experiences and challenges as parents.

Volunteer Spotlight: Goetz's Welcoming Smile



Jennifer Goetz

One of the first things you notice about Jennifer Goetz is her beautiful smile. One of Ronald McDonald House's most dedicated volunteers, Goetz works three hours a day, four days a week, greeting guests and the public, answering phones and performing household chores.

"I try to come in to the House with a good attitude to help make everyone's day a little nicer," said Goetz. "I'm a people person and connect with everyone on some level. I most enjoy interacting with guests. I feel very honored when parents take the time to tell me about their children or show me pictures of their family."

"Jennifer is a wonderful asset to our organization," said Stephanie Salisbury, RMH house manager and volunteer coordinator. "She always gives 110 percent and goes above and beyond her regular duties by doing things like bringing treats in for our guests and staff or taking a few minutes to chat with our families. A ready smile and a quick sense of humor brighten our House every time she comes in the door."

A volunteer for over a year, Goetz quotes Mother Theresa as her drive, "God does not call us to do great things. But he does call us to do small things with great love. This is how I feel about my job," said Goetz. "I know that my effort is appreciated, it is the right fit for me and I enjoy it."

Ronald McDonald House Charities of NE Kansas

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Thoughts from the West Office

In this season of economic turmoil, I am struck by the continued kindness and generosity of our volunteers. Like many non-profits, we rely on the goodness of others to operate our facility at a high level. A quick glance at our 2008 operating statistics reveals that over 400 groups or individuals donated over 1,500 hours of their time to help the Ronald McDonald House.

Our volunteers are comprised of people from Northeast Kansas and beyond. We may have a youth group from Minnesota stop for an afternoon to rake our leaves and our weekly volunteers like Jennifer Goetz, Carol Shannahan and Rita Stanley help with our phones, housework and guest services. Groups like the Hill's Day of Caring Team and Countryside United Methodist Church Moms make all the difference when it comes to painting our facility or having a good, home-cooked meal ready for our families.

As a mission driven organization, much of our energy is derived from the enthusiasm and dedication of our volunteer base. With their tremendous support, we truly can provide our guests with a home-away-from-home.



Martha Hagedorn-Krass
CEO/ Executive Director

RMHC Board Member News

Five RMHC board members completed their terms in 2008. We thank Linda Hauschild, Tony DeJesus, Leta Collie, Jeanne Slusher and Jennifer Buchman for their years of dedicated board service in support of Ronald McDonald House Charities.

We welcome new board members Devon Kariker (VA Hospital) and Scott Fletcher (Cox Communications).

Officers elected at the annual meeting in November 2008 are: Tony Florez, President; Angela Sharp, President-Elect; Karen Telian-Tyler, Past President; Barb Allen, Secretary; and Bryan Phillips, Treasurer.

Check out the RMHC Website

Click on the Newsletter/ Pressroom link to see the 2009 Superbowl Commercial "Penny Loafers." This commercial was aired just before the Superbowl and really promotes the essence of our charity. We hope to see it aired again soon. <http://www.rmhctopeka.org/newsletters.htm>

Staff Transitions

Carylon Pavlacka has joined RMHC as an administrative assistant. She is a former AT & T employee who brings a wealth of experience to the job. Carylon replaces Michelle Beavers, who has joined Maximus Fitness and Wellness.

IRA Rollover Extension

If you are age 70 1/2 or older, you may donate up to \$100,000 from your IRA or Roth IRA to charities like the Ronald McDonald House. This is a tax-free distribution that expires on December 31, 2009. The money must go directly from the IRA account to the charity and not pass through another organization to qualify for the tax-free distribution. Contact Martha Hagedorn-Krass at 785-235-6852 or martha@rmhctopeka.org for more information about this type of charitable contribution.



The Gramkow's stayed at the Topeka RMHC in September and October 2008. Mandy, Ben and baby Ellie stopped by to say hello to the staff when they were in town for a recent check-up.



7th Annual Dinner and Auction

Join us as we celebrate 21 years of helping children and their families! We are hosting our annual fundraiser on August 15, 2009 at the Capitol Plaza in Topeka. This year's theme is Denim to Diamonds. The event includes dinner, dancing and live and silent auctions. Monies raised support our mission of providing a home-away-from-home for families of seriously ill children and young adults receiving medical care in Topeka. We are offering Gold \$2,500, Silver \$1,500 and Bronze \$1,000 Event Sponsorships. For sponsorship and ticket information contact Martha Hagedorn-Krass at 785-235-6852 or martha@rmhctopeka.org. You may also complete and return the form on page 4 of this newsletter.

Thanks for Share-a-Night Support!

Our Share-a-Night program helps families defray the cost of staying at the Ronald McDonald House through grants and charitable donations. Many families have extended stays that exceed one or two months. A big thank you to the following for their generous support of our Share-a-Night program!

**P 1 Group \$500 • BNSF \$1000 • Senator Pat Roberts \$1,000
Bank of America \$1,500 • Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation \$2,500**

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES
Ronald McDonald House Charities provides a home-away-from-home for families of seriously ill children receiving medical care in Topeka.

825 SW Buchanan Street, Topeka, KS
Opened June 15, 1988
8 Guest Rooms

i'm lovin' it

For more information on how you can get involved and support Ronald McDonald House Charities go to www.rmhctopeka.org or call 785-235-6852.

We are proud of the new mural in our area McDonald's stores promoting our charity.



RMHC Seeks Sponsors to make our Event Sparkle!

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Kansas, Inc., is looking for sponsors of our 7th Annual Dinner and Auction: *Denim to Diamonds!* The event will be held August 15, 2009 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka. Please consider sponsoring our event. We have the following sponsorship opportunities available:

Gold \$2,500

- Full-page ad in event program
- Name & logo on auction website
- Name & logo on sponsor board
- Reserved table of 10
- Recognition on podium

Silver \$1,500

- Half-page ad in event program
- Name & logo on auction website
- Name & logo on sponsor board
- Reserved table of 10

Bronze \$1,000

- Quarter-page ad in event program
- Reserved table for 10

Enclosed is my sponsorship check for \$ _____ . Please make a reservation for _____ people.

Contact Name _____ Company _____

Phone and Email _____

City, State, Zip _____

I will not be able to attend, but enclosed is my contribution for \$ _____

I would like to purchase (number) _____ of tickets at \$50 each. Total enclosed: _____

I would like to make an in-kind contribution to the event in the amount of \$ _____

Please return this sponsorship agreement to: Martha Hagedorn-Krass, CEO/Executive Director
Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Kansas, Inc., 825 SW Buchanan Street, Topeka, KS 66606
or fax it to 785-235-3170. Call 785-235-6852 or email martha@rmhctopeka.org for more information.

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Kansas, Inc., is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, Federal ID # 48-1022967

Farm Bureau Food Check-Out Day Helps Restock Pantry



Representatives from Kansas Farm Bureau are pictured from left to right: Jeanie Stous, Jennifer Brunkow, Tatum Brunkow (Jennifer's daughter), Serita Blankenship, and Holly Higgins.

The Kansas Farm Bureau members donated \$500 of food to the Ronald McDonald House in Topeka, recognizing the need everyone has to find solutions to feeding families healthful foods on a tight budget. Starting early on the morning of February 16, the members shopped the sales at the local Hy-Vee before delivering their bounty. The food will be used to help feed families staying at the house.

Now in its 11th year, Food Check-Out Week also highlights America's safe, abundant and affordable food supply, made possible largely by America's productive farmers and ranchers. According to the most recent 2008 information from the USDA's Economic Research Service, American families and individuals spend, on average, less than 10 percent of their disposable personal income for food.

Home Builders Donates to RMH

The Topeka Home Builder Association presented a check for \$1339.75 to the RMH after the annual Topeka Home Builder Association Home Show in February 2009. THBA members raised money for RMH by creating two children's playhouses, one for a boy and one for a girl, that were awarded in a drawing at the event. Thank you THBA! Our staff and families are grateful for your support!



Left to right: RMH CEO/Executive Director Martha Hagedorn-Krass, THBA President and Executive Director Dawn Wright, and RMH Board of Directors President-Elect Angela Sharp.

Mark Your Calendar!

Pop Tab Contest Deadline
April 15, 2009

"Denim to Diamonds" Annual Fundraiser
August 15, 2009
5:30 p.m. to Midnight
Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka

Huff-n-Puff Balloon Rally
September 11, 12, and 13, 2009
Lake Shawnee, Topeka

Lights of Love Fundraiser
November 2009
Location TBA

Cookie Walk
December 4, 2009
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Cookies and candies will be sold for \$5 per pound. Cakes, pies, and breads will be individually priced. All proceeds will benefit the Topeka Ronald McDonald House. Donated baked goods will be accepted the day before the event.

Your Contribution Makes a Difference!

The Ronald McDonald House of NE Kansas exists because of our generous community. Through financial and in-kind donations, we are able to continue serving our mission. Individuals, businesses and community groups may donate in the following ways:

- **Share-A-Night:** Help families in need stay at our house. One night (\$15), one week (\$105), or one month (\$450).
- **Memorial and Tributes:** Make a donation in memory of a loved one or honor a special person in your life.
- **Planned Giving:** Designate the Ronald McDonald House as a beneficiary in your will. Make a gift of stock, annuities, life insurance, real estate, or personal property.
- **In-Kind:** Dry, canned and perishable goods help reduce our operating costs.

I wish to donate \$ _____ Please contact me about Planned Giving at _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone and Email: _____

Credit Card # _____ CVV: _____ Exp Date: _____

Please return this form along with your donation to:

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Kansas, Inc., 825 SW Buchanan Street, Topeka, KS 66606-1427

For more information, contact Martha Hagedorn-Krass, CEO / Executive Director, at 785-235-6852 or martha@rmhctopeka.org.

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Kansas, Inc., is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization (Federal ID 48-1022967). Your financial contributions are tax-deductible and directly support the mission-critical programming of the organization.



**Ronald McDonald House
Charities of Northeast
Kansas, Inc.
825 SW Buchanan St.
Topeka, KS 66606-1427**

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 545
Topeka, KS

Help us keep our mailing information current! Return mailing label to us with your request, or email your change to carylon@rmhctopeka.org.

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Thank you for your help!