



# HOUSE HAPPENINGS

*A Newsletter for the Ronald McDonald House of Galveston Family*



October was an extremely busy month at our House that Love Built. We are so grateful for the love from everyone who made our Family Fun Event such a great success. We are grateful for our new Executive Director and House Operations Manager, both of whom have hit the ground running with lots of enthusiasm and ideas and solutions and love! We are thankful for those who

volunteer their time and services with meals and fun events for our children and families. And we are thankful for those who supply the funds and wish list items that keep our House going. We are thankful for our Board members who put in hundreds of hours to achieve Chapter status from Ronald McDonald House Global Charities. We are so blessed to live in a community that supports our House and its mission. Thanks to all of you, our Ronald McDonald House Galveston family. ❤️



## Happy Birthday

November 14 – Stacey Weber Rubio

## Around the House in October



Michelle Bryd's bible study class brought dinner to the families one Sunday. A few years ago, Michelle was asked to chair our annual fundraising gala—and she said yes, but only if we could turn it into a family event. That's how Family Day at the Pleasure Pier was born! We recently celebrated our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Family Fun Day at the Pleasure Pier. (See related article.) Thank you, Michelle, for always thinking of our families. We appreciate you so much!



Our Dr. Pat Lanier led an Art Party for our kids and families in preparation of Halloween and the Dia de los Muertos. All our guests so love these art parties! Thanks, Dr. Pat!



Our families had a wonderful time with arts and crafts. They decorated wooden toucans with paper mâché. Thanks to Home Depot. Fun times 😊



Our families had the opportunity to visit the 1894 Grand Opera House in Galveston to see Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana. The show was wonderful and colorful. Thanks to Lori Blackwell and the Opera House. A great time was had by all. Ole!



Every year the Houston Big Game Fishing Club hosts a "Piggy Perch" fishing day for our families with good fishing, good food, good trophies, goodie bags and good fun! What is more fun than catching a fish! It was a beautiful day for a families' outing with the best ever fishing guides. Thank you!





November 2025

Layers of Love dinners are so loved by our families! Thank you to Becky Jobe, Jackie Witucki, Joyce Rodriguez, Sheri Muse, Danny Bielamowicz, Linda Garcia and Chris!



The National Charity League's Space City Chapter spent time at our House, preparing and serving dinner for families staying close to their loved ones receiving care. 💖 How meaningful it is to give back together! Our families SO appreciate it.



Thanks to the Galveston Children's museum for hosting our families. You can see the excitement in their faces and can tell they had a very good time.



Ashley has been staying at our House with her family since June while her brother is undergoing treatment at UTMB. She is a very special little girl who has befriended the other children. Her family has become part of the house, and their love and enthusiasm make everyone smile daily. Celebrating birthdays far from their home in El Paso is not always easy, so we tried to make sure she had a happy 6<sup>th</sup> one at her Home Away from Home.



Temple Emmanuel Church Community Outreach Ministry (COM) cooked and served a delicious dinner to our patients, families and staff. Compassion and love and honor to serve others is what TECC Galveston is all about. We so love your dedication, and our families loved the yummy meal!





Da Krewe du Roux is a HUGE supporter of our House. They recently sponsored a Da Krewe du Roux Too Kids donation drive. Thanks to everyone who contributed, they were so happy to deliver all of the items to our House. What a great way to foster a sense of service and pride in the community with the Kids Krewe, so they grow up appreciating the importance of giving back. ❤️ And we appreciate them!



A BIG shoutout to Southwest Airlines! Southwest Airlines employees have been serving our House with deliciously cooked meals for many years. Love their costumes, and the families loved their food. Such wonderful treats!



Hanging around hospitals is not much fun. So, when our families get a chance to get out, the smiles on their faces show how much it means to them. A HUGE thanks to Moody Gardens for hosting our families for a very fun day at the Rainforest.



McDonald's is the first and forever partner of Ronald McDonald Houses. They support us in many ways. A BIG thank you to this McDonald's Perez group for the pizza, salad and a bunch of fixings. You guys ROCK!! And don't forget to "Round Up" your bill when you eat at McDonald's. Those pennies add up and are a big part of our budget.



We welcomed Kendall and Monica, but we had to say good-bye to our Administrative Executive Lucy Bourgeois. We wish her well in the next chapter of her life.



What better way to take away the cares of physical ailments than to have a party! We had Spirit Week celebrations to help lighten the load. A fun time was had by all.





Latinas for the Arts donated candy and treat bags to the House just in time for Halloween. Thank you, Gloria Brister, for conceiving this thoughtful idea and delivering the treats. Kudos to Donna Perez, Mary Vicknair, and Susie Bickel for preparing the bags of goodies. Thank you to our donors, Monica Garcia, Elizabeth Botello, and Gloria Trevino. You all excel in your commitment. These two ladies in the picture give back every day. How gratifying!!

### Halloween – No Tricks Here, Only Treats

Thanks to Laurel Sukel, Sheryl and Michael Bridges, Sunday and Shawn Roberts, Juan Pena, Lidia Polio, Monica Lima-Torres, Kendall Childs, and all the others who helped our families into their costumes and led them for safe Trick or Treating in the neighborhood surrounding our House. A huge thank you to the numerous neighbors who welcomed our families with wonderful treats. The evening was capped with lots of candy, hot chocolate and fun fellowship at the House.



Our families were also treated to an Arts and Crafts party making Sun Catcher by the Alpha Sorority and weekly arts and crafts parties with Daisy Martinez. Daisy is a former employee, who left our employ to continue her schooling, but has stayed with us as a volunteer, helping to build our House with love! The House

Operations Committee had a movie night, showing Coco in preparation for Dia de los Muertos. Our families are also given the opportunity for a weekly shopping trip to Walmart and Dollar Store, and an in-House "shopping" for items that have been given to us by our wonderful donors.

### Meals our Families Love

Our families tell us the hot meals provided by our supporters are one of the best part of their stays. After a day of treatments at the hospitals, coming to their "Home Away from Home" without worrying about cooking is a treat. These are also times that the families share their experiences together, getting mutual support and making lasting friends. In addition to those profiled above, October meals were provided by the Cosmic Cookers, the Broadway Church of Christ, the Westward Church of Christ, The Moore Sisters, Pat Lanier and Bill Posnick, Maryellen LeDuc, Galveston Rotary Club, Galveston LULAC, The First Baptist Church, Tournament Food, Temple Emmanuel Christian Church, Helen and Gayle King, Lucero McDonald's, Jan and John Brick, Ruth and Marshall Yost, Amanda NCL, and Vera Carmona. We thank you all for warming our hearts and our families' tummies!

Ronald McDonald House Global Charities has provided new guidelines for these meals. They may be cooked in our House or in restaurant, grocery store or other commercial kitchens, but not in individuals' homes. You or your group are welcome to cook in our state-of-the-art kitchen, to bring or send prepared food from commercial kitchens, or send us money and we'll purchase the meal for you. For more information and to schedule your meal contact Monica (409-762-8770 or [monica@rmhg.org](mailto:monica@rmhg.org)).

### State Employee Charitable Campaign of Texas

Every year we receive funds from this campaign. Many UTMB and other state employees elect to donate to our House. These funds are a vital part of our budget, allowing us to provide the housing and services that our families love. Thanks to all of you who have donated, helping the build the "House that Love Built". Our families thank you!

### Happy Volunteer Anniversary

Shirley Jahn – 27 years!!!

Juan Chavarria – 2 years

Maryellen LeDuc, 17 years of monthly dinners



### Best Holiday Present Ever

Stressed out finding the perfect gift for that very special someone? A paver on the pathway to our playground is something that fits all, won't need to be returned and will last and last and last. Order online at:

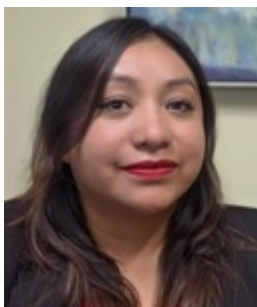
<https://www.brickrus.com/donorsite/rmhg> or call or email the House for an order form.







while their children are in the hospital motivates me to give my best in every decision I make—ensuring that every family staying with us feels safe, supported, and at home.” We have nicknamed her “Magical Monica” for the many improvements she has already made to our House.



### **Monica Lima-Torres, House Operations Manager**

Monica has been proudly serving as the House Operations Manager at the Ronald McDonald House of Galveston since August 2025. She has a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and a Master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Houston–Downtown. She's a licensed Child Care Administrator, certified by the State of Texas. Originally from Mexico City, Mexico, she moved to the United States in 2008 and became a US citizen in 2013. For more than 13 years, she has dedicated her career to the nonprofit sector, supporting children and families with compassion, empathy, and strong leadership.



She began working as a direct care worker at a 32-bed facility for unaccompanied children here in Galveston, and over the past seven years, she served as Assistant Program Director and later Program Director at a 200-bed facility in Houston, working with a federal contractor for the Office of Refugee Resettlement. She says, “Working with organizations devoted to children and families has taught me invaluable lessons about resilience, perspective, and gratitude. It reminds me that while we may get frustrated by small inconveniences—a delayed appointment or a store opening late—these moments are minor compared to the challenges many families face daily.” She says that returning to Galveston has been a wonderful opportunity to continue supporting children and families in her own community. Her husband, Kenny Torres, works as an Assistant Chef at a private club and is also a computer technician. Together, they have two wonderful children, Josue (9) and Enrique (4). The family loves traveling, exploring new foods and cultures, and spending time with their extended family. She considers themselves fortunate to have their parents, grandparents and siblings nearby, allowing them to celebrate holidays and special occasions together.

“Supporting children with medical needs, witnessing their courage, and walking beside families through times of uncertainty continually inspire me. Each positive action, no matter how small, can make a meaningful difference. I am truly honored to be part of the Ronald McDonald House of Galveston and to contribute every day to its mission of providing comfort, care, and hope to families when they need it most. Helping families worry less about where they will sleep, shower, or rest



### **Kendall Childs, Executive Director**

Kendall is a BOI, born and raised in Galveston as the single child of Debbie & Donnie Kelemen who were Luvenberg sweethearts of 50+ years. She attended Galveston Catholic School, Ball High School and Texas State University. She lived in Austin for two years before traveling for work for seven years. She missed her family and returned to Galveston in 2012. She was a respiratory therapist turned director at HCA Clear Lake, where she managed three departments with over 100 employees. “I am a servant leader who lives by the motto ‘I



will never ask anything of my team that I wouldn't also be willing to do myself.”

She has been happily married to Brad Childs, another BOI, for seven years. She is the mom of Harper and Hallie Jo Childs, stepmom to Kayce Childs, and she has 2 precious grandsons-Brackson & Langston. The family has Piper, a 9-year-old rescued Jack Russell mix. She loves to attend all island events with her family, especially the festivals. She says they “don't miss ONE!” She's a member of Galveston Boat Club, Oppe PTO, Tornette Alumni Board, and she's a dance room Mom.

Kendall says, “I have always been drawn to helping others and absolutely LOVE children. Being the only woman in my family that is not a teacher, I chose healthcare and it evolved into a leadership position. I value making a positive impact on the team that I lead and creating additional leaders. My position allowed for the best of both worlds- continuing in leadership while still caring for patients, on a grander scale. Once you enter the House, it's easy to see why the board, volunteers, and staff work tirelessly for these families. There is a sense of fulfillment, positivity and light that is not easily found elsewhere. The hardest

day at the RMHG still surpasses the best day working in another career. The energy is palpable, and I will forever be grateful for this opportunity."

She says she would like to first learn all operations and functionality of the House so she can be well-informed of day-to-day processes. From there, the team will expand and enhance. "Being a BOI, I've found that there are so many generous folks ready to lend a hand, donation, time, energy, you name it! We have a wealth of untapped resources that we can delve into, and I just can't wait to see what we are capable of! The amount of dedication from the House staff, Board and volunteers is unlike anything I've witnessed. They pour their hearts into this cause and practice our mission daily. To see the joy on the patients and their families ignites and sustains the fire to keep pressing along. No is not an option. RMHG will always find a way. It's the House that Love Built, full of magic and a LOT of behind-the-scenes hard work and determination."

Kendall's personal philosophy is "Integrity is what shapes others' perceptions of you. Practice what you preach." She says she "cries at least once a day from the goodness and miracles that I am privileged to witness, a week into this job. I believe that if the cause that you're fighting for no longer moves you, it's time to move on. Luckily, I am just beginning and don't mind the tears!"

## We're a Chapter!!



Our license from Ronald McDonald House Charities was expiring, and we had three choices: become a Chapter, merge with the Houston House or cut our affiliation with Ronald McDonald House Global Charities. To become a chapter, there are many stringent requirements. We had 90 days to meet these, and with a LOT of work from our board members we did. This entailed over fifty new policies and procedures documents to be written by our board members,

approved by our legal advisor (thank you Debbie!) and Board members and then approved by Global Charities. This was made more complicated because we were between Executive Directors. But we did it, with a new contract signed last week followed by a Board celebration. Thanks to our Board members who pitched in hundreds and hundreds of hours and made it happen, so we can continue serving our children and families.

## Upcoming Events

**November 15.** Be sure to join us for a HUGE parade of jeeps, cereal boxes, laundry soap and wish list items. The jeeps gather at Buckee's and parade to our House for a very fun event. Everyone is welcome to come help unload all the goodies. Call the House if you'd like to volunteer.

**January 31st** – Da Krewe du Roux Chicken Run

The most fun free! Mardi Gras event for families and kids of all ages, with proceeds coming to our House and Shriners.



## Wish List

Children's Christmas Pajamas

Butter – Bread

Coffee – Coffee Creamer

Pancake Mix

Fresh Vegetables – Fresh Fruits

Potatoes

Tomatoes

Onions

Garlic

Snacks – Cookies – Rice Krispie Treats

– Hot Pockets

Hot Dogs – Sausages – Chorizo

Cooking Oil

Rice – Bean

Lunch Meats

Eggs

Pasta

Juices

Popcorn

Canned Tuna – Canned Chicken

Chicken – Beef

Nursing Pads – Nursing Bras (S,M,L,XL,XXL)

Feminine Pads

Male and Female Deodorants

Dish Soap

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Call ahead to let us know you're coming at 409-762-8770

Curbside Delivery Hours - 9:00am-6:00pm

For more information contact Monica (409-762-8770 or [monica@rmhg.org](mailto:monica@rmhg.org)).





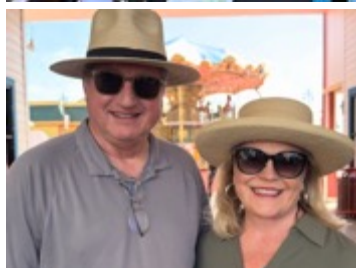
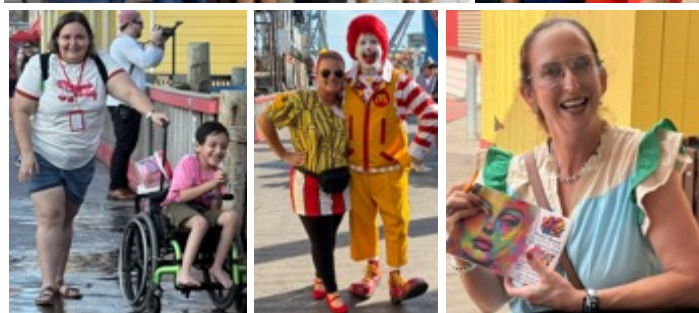
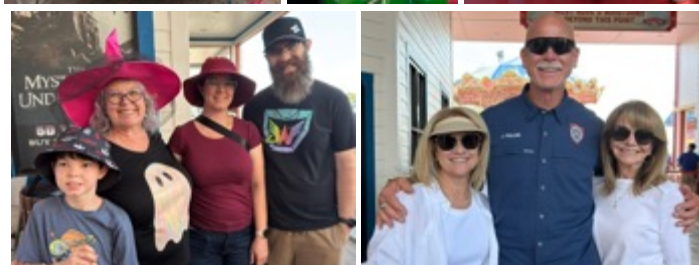
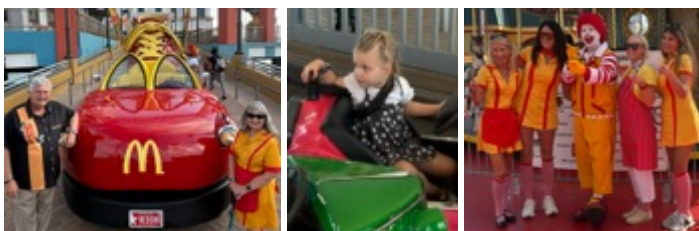
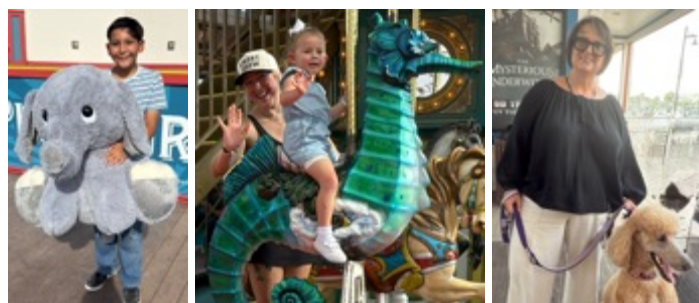


## Fun, Fun, Fun!!!

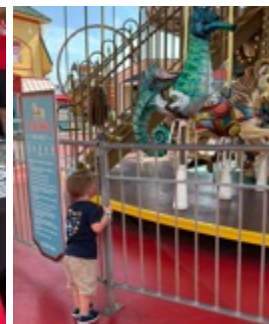
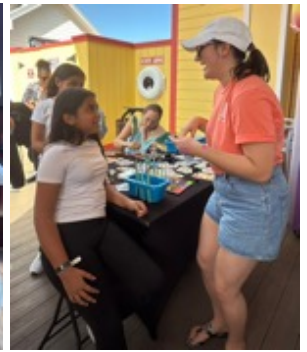
It was an absolutely beautiful day, and our 4th Annual Family Fun Event fundraiser at the Galveston Historic Pleasure Pier was a huge success enjoyed by all. The families attending had so much fun spending meaningful time together. It would not have happened with the help of our wonderful sponsors, the committee and volunteers.



Thank you to everyone who worked so hard. Thanks to Lucy Bourgeois, Glenda Coleman, Kendall Childs, Janice Pierson, Dave Lewis, Michelle Byrd, Sunday Roberts and her crew of greeters, to Sarah Piel and the Junior League of Galveston volunteer face painters, to Susan Falgout and Michelle Beckwith for overseeing the menu, to Mary Orange, Julie Cantini, Kandy Arena, Laurel Sukel and Mandy Rider for registering hundreds of guests in an orderly manner, to Juan Pena and Galveston County Sheriffs who provided security, to Marie Robb for sponsoring the Dipping Dots and Cotton Candy, to Frances Estrada and Lidia Polio for bringing our families, to the Pleasure Pier staff for their help, to Ronald McDonald and the Grimace who brought fun, to Heather Peterek and Lindsay Touchy who worked on publicity, to everyone else who worked on the project, and to each of you who attended the event.







Many of our sponsors donated tickets to our families, to the Big Brothers Big Sisters Gulf Coast, to the Girls and Boys Club, to employees and to families and friends. From Big Brothers Big Sisters: "We are so grateful for the incredible generosity of our friends at Ronald McDonald House of Galveston who provided us tickets for our Bigs and Littles to enjoy a fun-filled day together at Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier! 🎢🎠 From laughter on the rides to smiles that stretched for miles, it was a day full of connection, joy, and the kind of memories that make mentoring so special. ✨ Thank you, Ronald McDonald House of Galveston, for helping our matches create unforgettable moments and for sharing this amazing day with us!"

**A BIG Thanks to our Sponsors!**

During this season, we are so very thankful for the Ronald McDonald House Galveston Family who provides our children and families with the nurturing, care and love so needed in their time of distress. We hope you and your loved ones have a very Happy Thanksgiving, and you share in the blessings and joy you have brought us.

