



# HOUSE HAPPENINGS

A Newsletter for the Ronald McDonald House of Galveston Family



Happy May! May has arrived with all its sunshine and fresh energy, bringing blue skies, blooming flowers, and the joyful start of beach season. While we're soaking in the beauty of the season, what fills our hearts most is gratitude—for you. Our

dedicated staff, compassionate volunteers, committed board members, and generous supporters are what make our House so much more than a place to stay. Because of you, it remains a warm, comforting haven for families when they need it most, and that is something truly worth celebrating.

## Happy Birthday

- May 10 - Laurel Sukel
- May 12 - Maryellen LeDuc
- May 19 - Meg Byars
- May 27 - Graciela Estrada



We're so grateful to Raquel, owner of Rigo's in Texas City, for consistently providing delicious cakes and sweet treats that make birthdays for our families and staff at our House extra special!



Easter at the House was pure magic—filled with giggles, bright colors, and the kind of joy only kids can bring! Little ones dashed across the playground in a flurry of excitement during the 400+ egg hunt, baskets swinging and eyes sparkling with every sweet surprise they found. From bunny visits and candy-filled treasures to laughter shared over pizza and games, every moment was bursting with happiness. Our thanks to Mr. Wayne (aka the Easter Bunny) who brought over 50 filled baskets, pizzas and so much fun. We're thankful this Easter Bunny comes every year.



## April Blessings



Add to that a visit from the Warrior Bikers 4 Charity who brought their bikes and lots of Easter goodies. What fun to sit on the magical machines! It was a time where worries took a backseat and childhood wonder took center stage—creating memories our families will hold onto long after the last egg was found.





The Southwest "3rd Friday Crew" once again came in for a smooth landing, bringing their signature in-flight hospitality straight to our House. This time, their cabin service included Easter goodie bag "prep kits," 250 eggs cleared for a full-scale hunt, and a festive drop of cascarnes that really took the celebration to cruising altitude. Always operating at full heart capacity, this flight crew continues to chart new routes for generosity—finding creative ways to make the biggest impact for our families. We're so grateful for this frequent-flyer friendship. Thanks, SWA—until your next joyful touchdown! 🛩️

### Chapters of Kindness



We're grateful to the SMART Family Literacy Program for enriching our House library with Spanish-language titles. When

we identified a need to refresh our shelves and expand access to Spanish literature, Liz Turner and her team quickly collaborated with us to curate a new collection—delivering more than 150 books in just two weeks.

The Brave Like You Foundation donated an inspiring selection of English titles, allowing us to update and diversify our stacks. With our collection refreshed, we're pleased to circulate previously loved books to our McDonald's partners in Beaumont for their library nooks, as well as back to SMART—ensuring these resources continue to be shared and enjoyed.

### Where Happy Meals Meet Helping Hands

We visited Beaumont to thank the Kades Team for their exceptional support of the McDonald's Round-Up program benefiting Ronald McDonald House Galveston. Small change truly adds up, making a meaningful impact for the families we serve, and Ken Kades's team continues to shine across their territory. Paula, Linda, and Kendall met with top-performing locations, including Lumberton—the highest-producing restaurant among our 35 partners—which warmly welcomed us and appreciated the recognition, tokens, and artwork from our talented kiddos. We also learned their 17 stores host Ronald McDonald House shared library boxes, and we're excited to help stock them as we refresh our collection. In total, we visited six Beaumont-area restaurants, each receiving Ronald McDonald House swag, treats, and heartfelt thanks. We're grateful for our partners in Lumberton, Silsbee, and Beaumont, and look forward to visiting more soon. Thanks, too, to the local McDonald's corporation for their donation of household supplies including a mountain of paper goods



out prizes. Our families loved it all (especially the BINGO and candy prize selections ;-)

### Good Eats



Our families love our loyal guest chefs who always bring delicious yumminess and comfort. Thanks to Temple Emmanuel Christian Church for always providing a HUGE helping of kindness and love.

Girl Scout Troop 140152, led by the amazing Mrs. Suzanne Hagir, bridged all the way from Seabrook to deliver a truly sweet surprise—six cases of assorted Girl Scout cookies! Their thoughtful act of sisterhood and service was a badge-worthy gesture that brought plenty of smiles (and treats!) to our families.



The Lyday Family returned for a second month to cook a mouthwatering meal. We're so pleased they have joined our Ronald McDonald House Galveston family. Our families love seeing this group coming! Thank you, Lydays.



The Island Youth Rotary Club of Galveston cooked a wonderful spaghetti dinner and Easter dessert spread. Kids helping kids is the very best kind of kindness. The kids loved having youngsters in the House and can't wait to have them back!



Meals were provided in April by the Lyday family, Cosmic Cookers, the Broadway Church of Christ, the Westward Church of Christ, the Moore Sisters, Dr. Pat and Bill, Maryellen LeDuc, the Galveston Rotary Club, UTMB, the First Baptist Church breakfast, John and Jan Bricks, the Temple Emmanuel Christian church, McDonald's Lucero, Southwest Airlines, Layers of Love, Ruth and Marshall Yost, Vera Carmona, Helen and Gayle King, United We Stand, Maria Tabaracci, Cathy Mclean and Carolyn Nelson Becker, our Super Chef Lonnie, and The Easter Bunny! Every bite came with a side of love—thank you for feeding our families so well. ❤️

The Island Rotary Club prepared and served a delicious etouffee dinner for our families. With full plates and full hearts, they shared a meal, hosted a few lively rounds of bingo, and handed





UTMB's Fire Safety crew paid us a visit and gave us some sound directives. UTMB safety and maintenance teams make sure that our House remains safe and secure. We are indebted for all they do for our House.

where the seawall ends. The evening was filled with laughter, seashell searches, meeting a local raccoon wrangler, and creating unforgettable memories by the shore. Another outing included fishing (and catching!)

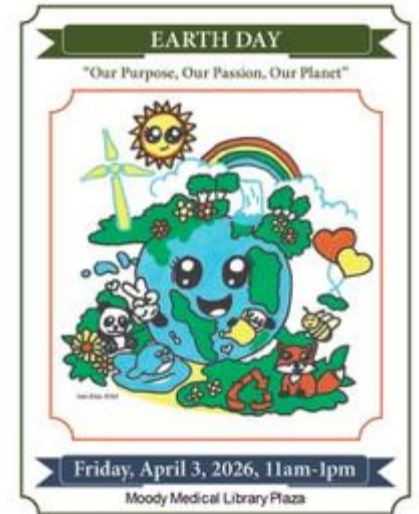


Our hospitality cart created by Christopher Ford is complete! This cart was a House project that everyone had a "hand" in perfecting. Moms, Dads, siblings, and entire families loved being a part of the process. Many thanks to our volunteers who helped bring this masterpiece to life: Dr. Pat, Paula R., Daisy and Lidia. Thank you so much to you all and our families!



With so many artists in the House, it's no wonder that Art Walk is a House favorite! This month the families got to explore the Affaire d'art exhibit, filled with so many beautiful art pieces. The Dixie Messner Gallery welcomed us with great enthusiasm and hospitality as well. Thank you, Kim, for your warm welcome. The art was amazing, the music on the street was great, but the showstopper was

the baby opossum that had been rescued after a tragic accident with its mother. The families learned about its recovery process and got to love on it. We completed the outing with a stroll on the Strand, exploring boutiques and taking the time to snap a few cute photos!



Our families participated in Earth Day at UTMB, where prize-winning artwork from our kids was proudly displayed.

### Our and About in Galveston



Most visitors come Galveston for the beach. We decided it was time for our guests, too, to enjoy the salt air. Our weekly beach field trip is already a major highlight. Each Monday, we bring the families to a different section of the seawall. One week, it was





Because of their exciting entrance into the world of triplets Heaven, Arriana and Josiah, their Mom and Dad recognize their birthday each month! We were happy to facilitate the fun.



Our families were treated at Ben and Jerry's annual Free Ice Cream Day. Everyone agrees that Ben and Jerry's ice cream is pure happiness!

Happy Birthday to Ben!

### Little Fighters, Big Milestones



We saw wonders and whoosits and whatchits galore, with hands-on amazements from ceiling to floor!

With more than 40 fun stops we explored, each one opening up a new door to so much more.

We gathered our kiddos, our families, and friends for a day full of giggles that didn't want to end.

We tinkered and doodled, experimented and played— at a whimsical festival where memories were made!

Thanks to the Grand 1984 for a very Grand, Grand Kids Festival (and the poetry).

17-year-old Daniel was sent home with a new prosthesis to test out. A bilateral amputee at the elbow, Daniel was thrilled to be able to participate in the classroom for the first time. It was a heartwarming experience, to say the least. GO Daniel! Lyzania and her mom were able to go home after two months at the House. This lovely duo brought such light and love to our House and will be sorely missed. We are counting down the months until they return!

### House Celebrations

Parties, events and celebrations are key to making kids feel safe and loved and happy. They help let kids be kids even if they are ill. Birthdays are especially a time to celebrate with the Ronald McDonald House Galveston Family at their Home Away from Home.



It was time for Joan to go back to his home, family and friends. Bittersweet goodbyes are always a mix of happiness and sadness. We will see this sweet guy and his mother again in a few months. We love our little Joan, and he always displays a cute grumpy demeanor, but we know he has affection for us too.

Safe travels to Lyzania, Joan and their families.





# Volunteer and Staff News



We had the pleasure of celebrating our volunteer extraordinaire, Juan's birthday. Juan is a staple in the House, always ready to assist with enthusiasm and an abundance of LOVE. Happy 27th, Juan!



A big thanks to Jodie Trncak, Lynda Van Staden, Laurel Sukel, Dave Lewis, Louise Reid and Lidia Polio who fabricated beautiful gifts for our Lemonade Day donors.



HUGE shout out to those that helped make our 1st Annual Ronald McDonald Galveston Crawfish Bash a success! Katie's Seafood and Art Ramos provided the seafood and hotdogs, our board members Paula Friesner and Laurel Sukel provided the delicious sides, thoughtful details and decor, our House Chef Lonnie Harris served up some deliciousness, and the many other volunteers stepped up to make this an event to remember. Seafood boil, karaoke, dancing, ice cream and loads of fun and laughter are truly the best medicine. ❤️💛❤️

Thanks to Lonnie and Paula for dreaming big and making this happen for our families.



# Happy Volunteer Anniversary

2 years – Kim Helm



## Angela Garcia

A big welcome to our new Executive Administrator, Angie!



Originally from Fort Worth, Texas in a large family including her twin sister, another two sisters and a brother. She graduated from Joshua High School, Everest College and Champion School of Real Estate. She is following in the family tradition as a Mother of four daughters and one son. Somehow, she also finds time for her favorite activities of thrifting, antiquing, gardening, and reading.

She especially loves crime podcasts and historical documentaries, and on top of all that she writes! She's "Always down for a good ghost story." She was drawn into our House by Kendall's outgoing responses regarding the position during the interview process. She hopes to accomplish "simple things, really, to ensure we carry on with the mission and values for the guests." She has hit the ground running (already accomplishing some not so simple things), and we are all delighted with her capabilities and quickness at learning new things. She says, "The house is truly a warm and inviting place; work feels like home." We are indeed blessed to have such a capable new member of the Ronald McDonald House Galveston family!

## Upcoming Events

Remember, everyone is invited, and that means you!

- May 4** – Lemonade Day (rescheduled) from May 1
- May 8-9** – Yaga's Wild Game Cookoff at Moody Gardens
- July 4** – Ronald McDonald House Galveston July 4<sup>th</sup> Bash
- October 25** – Family Fun Event at the Historic Galveston Pleasure Pier



Our sincerest condolences and hugs to the family and friends of Susan Wortham. Susan was one of our guiding lights, and the epitome of a life well-lived. She will live forever in the heart of our House. Our condolences, too, to Joy and the family of Vic Fertitta. We're sad to lose such well-loved people who have contributed so much of their lives to our House and community.

## Wish List

- ♥ Suitcases in good working condition:
- ♥ White art canvas all sizes
- ♥ Hygiene products body soap, shampoo, deodorant
- ♥ Single serve wrapped snacks
- ♥ Cooking oil
- ♥ Raw fresh meat hamburger meat, chicken
- ♥ Sausage, bacon and chorizo
- ♥ Shredded cheese
- ♥ Fresh fruits and vegetable's
- ♥ Sandwich meat and sliced cheese
- ♥ Mayo and ketchup
- ♥ Bottled water
- ♥ Frozen pizzas, chicken nuggets, hot pockets
- ♥ Individually wrapped cheese stick
- ♥ Single serve yogurt
- ♥ Sugar
- ♥ Grape and strawberry jelly
- ♥ \$10 gift cards to Wal-Mart
- ♥ Pine-sol
- ♥ Glass cleaner (aerosol can)
- ♥ Disinfecting wipes
- ♥ Commercial grade black trash bags
- ♥ Fabulosa cleaner
- ♥ Paper towels and sponges

Deliveries can be made to the Ronald McDonald House of Galveston, 301 14th St, Galveston, TX 77550

Call us and let us know when you are coming. (409) 762-8770 You can also order on our Amazon wish list for things to be sent directly to the House.

To all caregivers (and that means you!), happy May!

Thank you for your support of our kids and families.

