



# HOUSE HAPPENINGS

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



Ronald McDonald House's Global Mission is to "provide essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families and promote healing when children need healthcare." That translates to eliminating barriers of such things as payments for lodging and food and bringing our families comfort and as much joy to their lives as possible during their difficult times. We

thank our supporters, staff, volunteers, board and donors who make this possible. We endeavor to let "kids be kids" even while being ill. We're delighted that so many of you have stepped up to make that happen!

Our elves have been busy! A HUGE thanks to Natalie Hodge and her team who decorated our House into a magically decorated Holiday Wonderland. The looks of delight on the children's faces are SO heartwarming and are "making spirits bright!"



Drs. Pat Lanier and Bill Posnick provided a yummy dinner for our special Dia de los Muertos celebration. Paula Friesner, Laurel Sukel, Lidia Polio and others previously had a movie night showing Coco in preparation for those unfamiliar with the significance of the day.



Our guests were gifted a North Pole drop box last week. All of the children love having a direct line to ol' Saint Nick. They are definitely in the SPIRIT. These sweet children are excited to see what Santa brings. What a wonderful time of year. Hopefully they won't be missing home too much. We're going to do the best we can to make sure they have a wonderful holiday season while they are with us



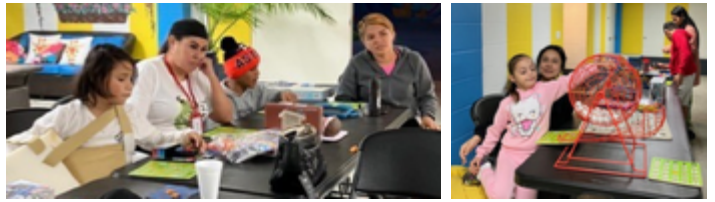
## Happy Birthday

- Glenda Coleman 12/6
- Donald Lewis 12/6
- Nancy Lopez 12/22





We took a trip to the Fire Station. What a wonderful experience. We all learned some valuable safety information and got to take some pictures with the staff. Thank you to the Galveston Fire Department for making the visit such a special experience!



Roger the therapy dog came to visit the families yesterday. The kids loved Roger and Roger loved the kids. Comfort and Joy!



We surprised our moms and daughters with a day of pampering! After meeting in the lobby, we headed to Joy Nails for a mani or pedi spa session. The ladies LOVED this treat, partially sponsored by Joy Nails. THANK YOU, Joy Nails, for this thoughtful gift! Our Moms spend 24/7 with their children who stay at the House during their very stressful time. It was a very special treat day for our families.



Our families were treated to dinner from the McDonald's CoOp team. The families said the food was DELICIOUS! We are so grateful for all McDonald's does for us. Don't forget to "Round Up" your checks when you go to McDonald's. Thank you guys so much for caring for our families as much as we do. Much love to all of you.



We have shopping day on Wednesdays. The families get tickets to use to get things they need or want, supplied by our wonderful donors. What a great time this always is for them. They don't even have to leave the house. Thanks to all who donate to our House!



Our families were provided a delicious Thanksgiving dinner by the Kappa Fraternity. We want to thank this great group of guys for everything. We are so thankful for you!



Bingo! Our families love the bingo sessions hosted by the Board House Operations Team, with prizes from our donors. Special thanks to Sheryl and Michael Bridge for their gifts.





These meals mean so much to our families. Our thanks to our loyal monthly chefs. Other meals were provided in November by the Broadway Church of Christ, the Moore Sisters, Maryellen LeDuc, Drs Pat Lanier and Bill Posnick's special Day of the Dead dinner, Cosmic Cookers, the First Baptist Church, the Bayside Lions Club, the Temple Emmanuel Christian Church, the Galveston Rotary Club, The Galveston Education Foundation, United We Stand, Layers of Love, Moody Mansion, McDonald's McKinney, the First Baptist Church, McDonald's Lucero, Southwest Airlines, Ruth and Marshall Yost, Vera Carmona, Helen and Gayle King and Amanda NCL.

Comfort food! Thank you to Danny Hart and the Galveston Restaurant Group for their deli meat donation. We appreciate you.

### All Aboard!



With the help of the Galveston Railroad Museum and Caitlyn Schanzer, a private UTMB donor, we were able to bring our families and staff to the season opener of The Polar Express. We are so thankful for this very special, joyful experience for our families. Paula Friesner and Laurel Sukel planned a Polar Express Movie night in preparation for our families' trip. Staff and board members did a great job creating the event as if it was really the Polar Express. The Galveston Education Foundation provided a lovely dinner that night. Our families were very impressed with the cozy and tasty chili and Frito Pie—a first for many. 😊 It was a delicious and special treat. Thanks, GEF. And a BIG thanks to the lovely UTMB ASG 3 donors for our Christmas PJs. The trip to the train museum and the Polar Express was magical for all. Thanks to those who made it happen for our families.

Our children were treated to a visit to the Moody Mansion including pizza and a visit by Santa. They were entranced by the loved lavished on them in this beautiful setting.

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We had a HUGE donation from the US Army Corps of Engineers. What a treat this was. Thank you so much for the donation. The kids loved having photos taken with the soldiers in uniform. We appreciate you guys so much!

The ninth annual "Toys for A Claus" Mixed Doubles Tennis Tournament's entry fee was a toy for our House. Thanks to event director-organizer Mitchell Moreno who said 45 toys were raised from the 14 teams entered and from other non-participants who made donations, as well. Such a joyful event for the participants and for our kids. Many thanks!



The Baptist Minister's Association Auxiliary also brought our families goodie bags and talks of hope for our Moms and Dads.

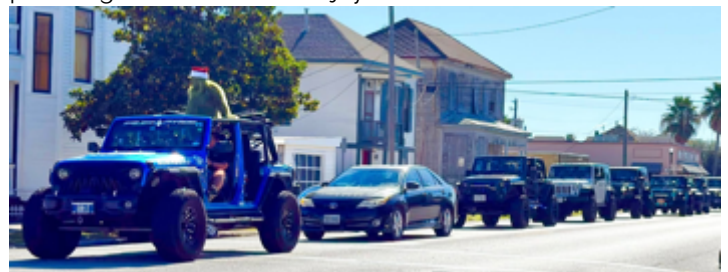
Our wonderful Daisy came every Friday for very fun Arts and Crafts parties. Daisy is a former staff member who left us to return to school to finish her degree. She now is such a wonderful volunteer, donating her time and talents. The kids love her and the joy she brings to The House that Love Built!



### Cerealific and Sudstastic

11,006 servings of cereal! 8,647 loads of laundry! 312 rolls of toilet paper! 85 rolls of paper towels!

And the jeeps came and came and came! A huge parade of jeeps came over the causeway and over Broadway Boulevard to deliver their goods. THANKS to Penny Ohlemacher, Martin-Brower and the South Texas Jeep Association for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Cereal and Suds Run. They brought a tractor trailer load of goodies for our House. Such a beautiful, heartwarming day. THANKS to all who donated and those who came to cheer on the jeepers. A special thanks to Juan Pena and the law enforcement officers who shepherded all those jeeps from Buc-ees (where they initially gathered) to our House and provided traffic control keeping all safe. Our Yudelkis made a beautiful painting to thank Penny. These much-needed supplies help fulfill our mission, providing much comfort and joy!







# Volunteer, Staff and Board News

## Happy Volunteer Anniversary

**32 Years – Tom Lewis.** Our volunteers like Tom bring the Love. Many thanks for your many years of serving our children and families!



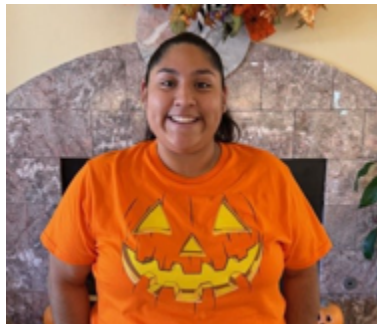
Welcome to our newest volunteers, KC Dogget and Dariela Martinez. Dariela joined us in September. KC who joined us in November stepped right up to assist the House with sorting through our storage closet, shredding documents and cookie prep for the movie night. We're glad to have you both as members of our Ronald McDonald House Galveston family.

The house staff have been busy instituting changes to make the house safer and more welcoming. There have been fire drills, staff attended CPR/AED training, the families enjoyed numerous field trips, family notifications are now in both English and Spanish, mini refrigerators were installed for breast milk, and we've installed a family suggestion box. Thanks to UTMB for the tremendous help with the safety improvements, and to our staff for making all these happen.



Kendall and Monica were treated with surprise gift baskets for Boss's Day.

A big welcome to Linda Starnes, our new Data & Donor Development Manager. Linda joins us with a plethora of nonprofit experience, specifically with children. She will replace Glenda Coleman in her previous position, as Glenda transfers to the role of Executive Administrative Assistant. Please contact Linda for all donor and media needs at linda@rmhg.org.



Welcome, too, to teammate Ximena Villa! Ximena joins us as an Assistant Family Service Coordinator, possessing an extensive history of working in the hospitality industry. She thrives on bringing her welcoming spirit, love of children, and customer service expertise to our House. Ximena will be

covering the Mon-Fri, 5pm-10pm shift.

Our staff also enjoyed a Thanksgiving potluck feast together. Each team member expressed what they are most thankful for, and many were most grateful for the opportunity to work at the Ronald McDonald House Galveston and live out their calling. We're so thankful for them--we love our TEAM who is making a difference in lives, daily! And the comments we get from the guests always say how grateful they are for these devoted staff members.



We've elected new officers for our Board for 2026:

- ♥ President: Paula Freisner
- ♥ Past President: Janice Pearson
- ♥ Secretary: Terry Prescott
- ♥ VP Finance: Mary Orange
- ♥ VP Fundraising: Sarah Martin
- ♥ VP House Operations: Laurel Sukel
- ♥ VP Communications: Mandy Rider



Thanks to all for agreeing to serve!

## 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!

### 2026 Mahjongg Cards

Thanks to the efforts of Sally Galbraith, the Mahjongg cards you have ordered over the years have reaped thousands of dollars for the Ronald McDonald House of Galveston. With each card purchase, the National Mahjongg League donates to our House families, who directly benefit from and are very appreciative of your generosity. Please help keep this beautiful tradition going! Card prices are \$14 for regular size and \$15 for the large size. Please mail or drop your check by January 27th to the following address:


Sally Galbraith  
110 Colony Park Circle  
Galveston, TX 77551.

Make checks payable to Sally Galbraith, or Venmo to @sallyg543. Call Sally at 409/621-6412 with questions.

Please send her the order form below. Our thanks to Sally for all her efforts!







**RMHG**

Check \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_  
 Venmo: @sallyg543 \_\_\_\_\_

**Mah Jongg**

**Card Order Info**

**Deadline January 27, 2026**

Make checks payable & mail to:

Sally Galbraith

10 Colony Park Circle

Galveston, TX 77551-1738

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ amount of Regular Cards for \$14      \_\_\_\_\_ amount of Large Cards for \$15

**Total Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

### 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. Our brick pavers start at just \$100. Order online at: <https://www.bricksrus.com/donorsite/rmhg>, use the attached form or call or email the House for an order form.



We wish you a joyous holiday season and thank you for all the comfort and joy you have brought to our children, families and House. Happy 2026!



