



# HOUSE HAPPENINGS

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



There is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. It's the golden love provided by you, our Ronald McDonald House Galveston family of donors, volunteers, staff, board members and supporters. As the children and families face difficult times, our House that Love Built provides respite, aiming to relieve the families of worry about lodging and meals and other needs while providing some fun and special, good memories of their time in Galveston. The true gold is when our guests are able to return to their homes, friends and families. We thank you for helping to let kids be kids even though they are ill.

L&D, NICU, social work, and case management — joined us in support of the families we serve. Board members Juan, Kandy, Mandy, Carolyn, and Daisy led House tours, and special thanks to Monica and Linda for creating a beautiful ambiance with their decorating and charcuterie talents.



Hester from Dilliard's has supported our House for many years with an annual donation from Dilliard's Christmas cookbook sales. We loved having Hester join us at the House and are appreciative of Dilliard's constant support!



## Happy Birthday

3/20 Beverly LaRock

3/25 Lidia Polio

## Happenings



The Galveston Noon Optimists came with a donation restocked our pantry. Many thanks, and we look forward to sharing our kitchen with them soon!



Thanks to Sharon Lewis for her thoughtful Valentine's donation full of socks and goodies. The House that Love Built, indeed!



We hosted our annual Hearts of Love Luncheon to celebrate our partnership with UTMB's Women, Infant and Children's (WIC) Department. More than 50 dedicated professionals — including Deb Mordecai, her administrative team, and representatives from



The paver project on our Pathway to Fun to our outdoor playground has been very successful. With construction on our new generator now complete, it's time to refocus our efforts! Board Member Sunday Roberts and her husband Shawn laid the most recent bricks.

Thanks, Roberts Family! And thanks to our supporters who have donated brick pavers. The project was initiated during Covid when the House was closed to visitors, so many of you have not seen your pavers or our new playground. You are now very welcome to visit the House to see your bricks. Just give us a call





to schedule. If you're interested in your own paver, or one for a loved one or your group, an order form is attached to the e-mail.



Our mission is to "provide essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families, and promote healing when children need healthcare." To this end, we have special activities that hopefully ease the lives of our families. Every Wednesday is a "Shopping Wednesday" when we give each guest tickets to select goods that we've gotten from our wonderful donors. These include clothing, supplies, toys and treats. The most popular shopping items remain preemie clothing, receiving blankets, boy's & men's shoes, jackets and toys. Every Thursday we have an outing to Walmart and the Dollar Store so the families can purchase all those little wants and needs, or just wander the aisles as a respite away from the hospitals and the House.

While at our House, we try to broaden our guests' perspectives away from just medical appointments and hospitals and therapies. Galveston has so much to offer them. The Galveston Children's Museum has been wonderful in hosting our kids (and not so young kids) for such fun times. February's Mardi Gras celebrations were special treats. Once we learned that our families hadn't participated in Mardi Gras in the past few years, we made it our mission to get them there! We immediately reached out to Mike Dean, and did he come through for RMHG! He gifted our House with 25 Strand passes on Sunday to enjoy the Fiesta Gras parade, complete with live Tejano music. Ximena and Tammy chaperoned, while Dave shuttled them to the Strand. The families had the best time, and the kids came home swimming in beads! Thanks to everyone for making sure our families are able to enjoy the very best that Galveston has to offer.



Every Friday, our wonderful volunteer and new Advisory Committee member Daisy leads an arts and crafts party. Our families love these! A Valentine's Day arts party was especially fun, as our families made artistic expressions of their love. Our devoted supporters also provide fun experiences. UTMB's Tiny Toes, a student organization fostering interest and knowledge in the neonatal or pediatric fields through volunteer efforts and educational opportunities, came with an arts and crafts event.



The Alpha Delta Pi sorority which has been a huge benefactor to our classroom and art closet, also hosted a party for our families.



Galveston County Sheriff Jimmy Fullen and his sheriffs offered their "Polar Express" trailer as a float for our families in the Shriner's Mardi Gras parade. They came to the House, picked up the families and drove them through the parade. The families threw beads that had been donated to the House. Quotes from the day: "My most favorite day that I've ever had! EVER", "When does the next one start?", "I now see why they say it's better to give than to receive. Throwing beads is SO much better than catching them!" They had so much fun, they requested to do it again. So, they attended the Fat Tuesday parade as well.





Our families love doing arts and crafts, and some of our kids are very talented. They were overjoyed to visit "real" art galleries, talking with the artists and learning more about the craft. We want to thank Rachel Wiley with Rene Wiley Gallery, Robert Peterson with Vacation on Canvas and Anne Lane at From the Heart Gallery on Post Office Street. To say our kids loved this is an understatement. They showed our kids painting techniques and gave tips so they too can apply this to their skills. The kids presented their own artwork as a special thank you gift for the artist's time. ❤️

We ended the month with a visit to the City of Galveston's "Touch a Truck" event. What could be more fun than playing with real city equipment (and even a horse, of course)! We followed up with a yummy visit to Funky Monkey Shaved Ice. We're so grateful for all of you who are giving our families these wonderful experiences.

### Happy Meals

The nutritious and delicious communal meals are special times. Our families are happy to not have to worry about the cooking for all their meals, allowing them to focus on their children's recoveries.



Thanks to the Alba Luz family who came with five trays of delicious goodness!



Thanks to the Rotary Club and our board members who arranged for our families to attend the annual Chili Dinner and tour of the new Ball High School building. They brought back enough chili for the families that couldn't be in attendance. Galveston showed UP, once again, for RMHG and we are appreciative.



Without fail, Southwest Airlines provides dinner for our families on the third Friday of the month. Irma, the team lead, has a brother who drives in from San Antonio for the evening to make balloon animals. Santiago has a heart of gold and enjoys sharing his light and love with the House. We thank SWA for the abundance of goodness that they bring.



Another volunteer all-star team is Layers of Love, who cooks homemade breakfasts on the third Saturday of each month. They





show up with plenty to prepare, and they always bring positivity and treat bags for our kiddos. We thank you for bringing your waffles and healthy helpings of sunshine to our House,

Operations Manager, for more information about our meal program at 409-762-8770.

### A Home Away from Home



We are grateful to Coastal Community Church, another of our meal providers, for the excellent dinner and visit. ❤️

One of the greatest things about our House is the family atmosphere that brings together families going through medical emergencies. They share their stories and concerns and support each other. We're told this is a valuable part of their children's recoveries. Our House artist Ivan lent his talents to the Mom and Dad of a NICU baby boy. Ivan drew a picture for their son to place in his room upon discharge. The parents were so moved at the thoughtful gesture that Dad cried when he received it. Ivan is a true treasure. Thanks, Ivan!



Even though our families are away from their homes during special occasions, we cannot let them not celebrate! The thoughtful children housed with us gifted these sweet parents a Happy Anniversary art piece. We wish them many years of happiness & love ahead. Happy Anniversary!

### Going Home

Temple Emmanuel Christian Church's Community Outreach Ministry (COM) cooked and served our families a super delicious dinner. Ball High Spanish Nacional Honor Sociedad under the direction of Sra./Maestra Purcell was also there and volunteered with so much love and compassion. They are all great students who loved being there and serving; one of the students is a former patient who stayed at our House--he was so happy to be back serving! Thank you, all.

Seeing our guests recover enough to return home is why we do what we do. When Juan arrived in November, he was wheelchair-bound with limited mobility. After new prosthetics, relentless therapy, and incredible determination, he took his first steps in early February — an amazing milestone. Shriners has now cleared him to return to his native Colombia to complete his therapy. We will miss this family dearly, but this is just the beginning. Juan is already moving mountains. GO JUAN! ❤️



Diego, a Shriners patient who has been staying periodically at our House since the age of five, has completed his prosthetic journey and bid farewell to the House for the final time. After 24 stays at our House, Diego and his father have become so much more than guests — they are part of our family. Gentle in spirit and incredibly talented, they both share a deep love of art and remarkable gifts for artwork that have blessed our House over the years. Watching Diego grow,



Other meals were provided in February by our own Chef Lonnie and Tammy, the Moore Sisters, Maryellen LeDuc, Pat Lanier and Bill Posnick, Alta Arita, Cosmic Cookers, Broadway Church of Christ, Westward Church of Christ, First Baptist Church, Jan and John Brick, Vera Carmona, Lucero McDonald's, Helen and Gayle King, the Rotary Club, and Ruth and Marshall Yost. Many thanks for all this loving sustenance. If you or your group would like to donate a meal or cook for us, contact Monica, our House





persevere, and reach this milestone has been an honor. While we will miss seeing his smile in our halls, we are so excited for the bright and beautiful future ahead of him. Our best wishes. ♡

### Board and Volunteer News



Welcome to our new Advisory Committee members Sheryl Bridge, Ashley Byrd, Adrien Caraves, Jennifer Freeman, Debbie James, Stephanie Kindle, Jennie Latham, Reagan Markey, Daisy Martinez, Margaret Norman and Linda VanStaden

### Staff News



Our employees are the best. They have the biggest hearts and give their all for our guests. Happy anniversary to

**18 Years - Frances Estrada**

**5 Years - Dave Lewis**

Thanks for your loving and dedicated service!



**Meg Byars** has been a loyal volunteer and member of the Ronald McDonald House Family since 2013. She is relocating to another state and her love and care and initiative will be greatly missed. Our families gave her their gifts and love and best wishes for the new chapter in her life.

#### Oscar Noriega



The Noriega family has spent many months at our House while Darien was in an experimental program at UTMB for muscular dystrophy. Oscar, Darien's dad, has long been known as the "House Papa," jumping right in to assist when needed. Whether it's helping other families and

RMHG staff when anything arises, hauling, maintenance, the list goes on. He's proven to be such an asset that we offered for him to join our team! Oscar will be functioning as an as-needed weekend assistant. He began training last week and has already proven to be a welcomed addition to the House. Welcome to the team, officially now, Oscar! The family has moved out of the House as Oscar's treatments at UTMB have ended. Oscar is now able to attend a local school—his first time in school.

### Upcoming Events

March 26 – Annual Mah Jongg Fundraiser at the San Luis Hotel


May 2 – Lemonade Day

May 8-9 – Yaga's Wild Game Cookoff at Moody Gardens

October 25 – Family Fun Event at the Historic Galveston Pleasure Pier






**May the Luck of the Irish be with you!**



*It's that time of year again.*  
**The 14th Annual Mah Jongg Luncheon**

**Benefiting Ronald McDonald House Galveston**  
March 26, 2026  
11:00am-4:00pm  
San Luis Hotel Ballroom  
Table Tickets~\$100/person  
VIP Table Tickets~\$150/person  
Selling tables only  
Please RSVP to Kendall @ 409-795-9480  
**Credit card requested to reserve table upon RSVP**  
Get your groups ready, as we expect to sell out quickly!  
Waiting list will be first come, first serve basis

*Buffet Raffle Games  
Let's Mah Jongg!*

