



HEARTBEATS

Keeping Families Close®

Fall 2022

Keeping families of seriously ill children together.

Dear Friends,

During this season of Thanksgiving, we are grateful to you for taking time to read about the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Amarillo! We have had a very special year here in our new House and we are excited to share some highlights with you in our Fall Newsletter. Our mission of caring for families of early babies and ill or injured children is fulfilled because of you!

As we look forward to our 40th Birthday in 2023, we will be remembering so many milestones reached this year. In April, we celebrated our first full year of caring for families in our new House. Families traveled to Amarillo from rural areas all around the Panhandle because the medical care their child needed was not available in their town. Folks needed a safe place to sleep, eat, bathe, do laundry, but most of all, they needed the care, comfort, and support of our home away from home.

We have a small but mighty staff who genuinely care about the needs of our families. They, in turn, are supported by the incredible volunteers who donate their time to care for others. Our team works around the clock, 365 days per year, to meet the needs of families who are going through the toughest, most unexpected stress that any parent can face.

These amazing volunteers stepped up to man the desk in the Ronald McDonald Family Room at NWTSH, which reopened in June! Our Family Room had been open for 20 years providing continuous service to pediatric families until the Covid-19 pandemic. We are thrilled to have the Family Room open again, Gifts From the Heart delivery reinstated, and Guest C.H.E.F.'s meals in our House kitchen. We are so blessed to have our volunteers back in service in 2022!

We rejoice that you, our friends, have reached out to meet other needs for our families as well! You have invited us to share our families' stories with your Sunday school classes, your civic organizations, your schools and your small groups. You have provided items for our families through our Amazon Wish-List, gift cards for restaurants and grocery stores, and through your faithful monetary donations. Your ambassadorship for our families and for our charity truly embody the caring spirit of our community.

Thank you again for sharing your time, talent, and treasure with our families! We would not be looking forward to our 40th year of service without friends like you. Please share

this newsletter with your family, friends, and colleagues and encourage them to learn more about us at our website, www.rmhc ofamarillo.org where they can sign up to receive our monthly emails. Please consider helping to keep our families close to their child with your tax-deductible end-of-year charitable gift!

Wishing you peace and blessings,

Shelley Cunningham

Shelley Cunningham, Executive Director
shelley@rmhc ofamarillo.org



A Safe Place to Stay

The **Ronald McDonald House** in Amarillo has been keeping families close to their children since 1983. We have already provided over 1,100 nights of care to nearly 150 families in 2022, and the year isn't over yet! What a blessing for these families to experience less stress in their lives knowing they have a safe and comfortable place to stay while their child receives vital medical care.



From the moment we walked in, we were made to feel welcomed. The Ronald McDonald House was a home away from home to us. Everyone was very caring, helpful and thoughtful. We appreciate everyone, staff and volunteers, helping us through this difficult time. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts" – Aguinaga Family



The TOP SEVEN Counties that utilized the Ronald McDonald House over the last 5 years:
Dallam.....Deaf Smith.....Gray.....Hansford.....Hutchinson.....Moore.....Ochiltree

Our volunteers **LOVE** serving families in the **Ronald McDonald Family Room** at the Children's Hospital at NWTSH! The Family Room recently received some upgrades to better serve our guests. Since our reopening in June, our incredible volunteers have welcomed over 1200 visits, providing comfort and support while keeping families close to their child. If you are interested in serving families through this program, we are currently accepting applications!



We don't know what we would have done if the Family Room wasn't here – our little boy needed us close, but we also needed to be able to take care of ourselves to be able to take the best care of him while he was in the hospital. We could go in the Family Room, close our eyes for a bit, grab a snack and go back with a smile." – Rachel



Little things mean a lot for our **Pull Tab Program**.....
Please save your aluminum pull tabs and drop them off at the Ronald McDonald House!



A Gift From The Heart

Our **Gifts from the Heart** program is SO important to the children in our House and the hospital! Gifts are delivered to every hospitalized child at



"You made a very scary hospital stay much more bearable...and brought a smile to Finley's face! Thank you so much!"

BSA and the Children's Hospital at NWTTHS twice weekly. Delivering over 120 gifts each month, the Ronald McDonald House helps brighten the spirits of children when they need it the most.

We are so grateful for the generous donors and volunteers throughout our community who help keep this program alive.



This special program depends on organizations like Ruta 806 and the Amarillo Wranglers, who hosted toy drives for us, and families like the Cantus, who shared their child's birthday gifts. Please consider supporting the **Gifts from the Heart** program when you shop.

Your gifts truly mean the world to kids like Finley!

*"One of the best things about staying at a Ronald McDonald House is that you feel safe. Being in an unfamiliar city and different hospitals is very overwhelming. People are so good – they take care of you and care about you at Ronald McDonald Houses."
– Sarah Goodfellow, Ronald McDonald Family Room Volunteer*



For the past four decades, our volunteers have been an unstoppable force for good! Serving our families is only possible because of volunteer heroes. Please consider the donation of your time to help us welcome and care for families in the **Ronald McDonald Family Room** or at the **Ronald McDonald House**. Volunteers are vital to making our spaces feel like home. These helpers are always pleasantly surprised to discover that they get far more than they expect from the volunteer experience!

RMHCA always has a need for volunteers to help with events, hosting fundraisers, shopping for wish list items, and spearheading toy or supply drives. If you are interested in volunteering or know of someone who might be, please contact Jan and she will find the perfect place to share your talents and love of others.



"Being a friendly face and getting acquainted with the families of pediatric patients has proven to be the most rewarding and enjoyable aspect of volunteering in the Family Room."

– Carol Braudt, Ronald McDonald Family Room Volunteer

Jan Plequette, Program Director
jan@rmhcofamarillo.org

Join Our “Wish List Warriors” Shop For Our Families This Holiday Season!

www.rmhc ofamarillo.org



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House Charities®
of Amarillo

Your Used Vehicle Can Make a Difference



You can easily help Ronald McDonald House of Amarillo create a world where all children have access to medical care by donating your vehicle.

A vehicle donation is another way to support the Ronald McDonald House of Amarillo and a great alternative for you to take care of that unwanted vehicle.

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We accept cars, trucks, RVs, boats and more.
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Christmas is Coming!

Do you need a gift idea for that special someone on your holiday gift list?

Please consider making a gift to the *Ronald McDonald House Charities of Amarillo* in honor or memory of someone special and we will send a Christmas card to your chosen recipients letting them know about your thoughtfulness!

A Home Away From Home

500+ MILES AWAY FROM HOME



Doug, Beth, and Adam

and the adorable Baby Adam as they packed up to make the trek home to Missouri. But it seemed like so much less of the bitter and more of the sweet when they checked in with us, sending this awesome pic of Adam rocking his RMHC tee!

Imagine being on a trip 500+ miles away from home, and then finding yourself in a brand-new hospital giving birth to your first child! That's exactly what happened to Beth and Doug, when they were in Amarillo for a relative's wedding. Before making it to the wedding, Beth started to notice that she was experiencing complications and so the next thing they did was check-into BSA.

"We were here for a wedding but had to have an emergency C-section a day after we got here! Ronald McDonald House most definitely has saved us and helped us when we really needed it! You guys helped us financially and kept us close to our baby! You have also provided us a safe place for us to stay!"

It was bittersweet saying farewell to Beth, Doug,



Baby Adam

OUR PATHS CROSS AGAIN

We always get excited when we get to cross paths with a former family... especially when that involves a surprise visit at our new House! It was such a joy getting to see the Gray Family when they came to spend a night with us before the kiddos had dental surgeries!



Stone and Olivia

"We are from Borger, TX and we share a HUGE heart for the Ronald McDonald House. My first visit was 6 years ago when my daughter, Olivia, was born 2 months early and spent 1 month in the NWHHS NICU. My second visit was 4 years ago when my son, Stone, was born 1 month premature and spent time in the NICU as well.

RMHC has been there for us no matter how big or small the situation may be, and for this, we are beyond thankful!

So thank you, RMHC, from the bottom of our hearts - we love you!" - The Gray Family



The Gray Family

Christmas Cookbook



We are so excited to be partnering with our friends at Dillard's of Amarillo again this year for the Southern Living Christmas Cookbook! For the past two decades, Dillard's has supported local RMHC chapters throughout the nation with this campaign.

Since 1994, Dillard's has raised more than \$15.1M for the RMHC family from the sales of the Southern Living Christmas Cookbook!

This item has proven to make the perfect holiday gift for friends and family, and will be available for purchase at our local Dillard's store for \$14 through December 24th.

Chicago Marathon

The poster for the Chicago Marathon features a large silhouette of a runner in mid-stride, composed of many small, colorful confetti pieces. At the top, the Bank of America logo is next to the text 'Chicago Marathon.' Below that, the date 'Sunday, October 8th, 2023' is written. The main text reads 'Run with Team RMHC and receive:'. Below this is a list of benefits: '- Guaranteed Entry', '- Waived Registration Fee', '- Access to Prizes & Giveaways', '- Free Team Running Shirt', '- VIP Access to Race Day Hospitality', '- Free Admission to Pre-Race Dinner', and '- Access to official runner training program'. At the bottom, it says 'For more information contact Luke at luke@rmhcofamarillo.org or by phone at (806) 358-8177'.

**Run With
Team RMHC**
Sunday
October 8, 2023

Contact luke@rmhcofamarillo.org or by phone: (806) 358-8177