



RONALD MCDONALD
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Knoxville | 2023

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Focus on a Family: Nolan's Story



Nolan Farmer's infectious smile is what immediately draws people to him, and his whimsical sense of humor keeps them coming back.

We were first introduced to this 11 year-old dynamo in August, 2022 when he traveled from his home in Pound, VA, three hours away, to our Children's Hospital for treatment to combat B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Soon after his diagnosis, his family, including Dad, Charles, was referred to our House that has now been their home for the last nine months and counting.

His mother, Ramona, knew that a coworker of hers had utilized a Ronald McDonald House when her child was also being treated for cancer, so she had a basic understanding of our mission. But upon entering our House for the first time, she was taken aback that it was more of a true "home" than the hotel she was expecting.

One perk of being in the home-like environment is that it allows her to make Nolan's favorite food...

Mom's lasagna... that he covers liberally with "shakey cheese." Shakey cheese, you ask? Yes, that's what Nolan calls the parmesan cheese in the green, cylindrical container that you must "shake" out.

In between treatments, Nolan can sometimes head home to Virginia for a respite from treatment and some down time to build his beloved Lego creations that he proudly displays for all to see. But then, all too soon, he's back in Knoxville to continue his hospital visits, along with his faithful companion, a cat named Loaf, which is a stuffed animal, so named for resembling a loaf of bread.

In summing up the Farmer's family experience staying at our House Ramona said, "Without the RMH, the expense of food and shelter would have caused a hardship for us and could have hindered our ability to be with Nolan during his treatments, which would have been devastating. It is the greatest blessing imaginable during a time when our lives have been turned upside down. We've been told he'll need two more years of chemotherapy, so there will be many more visits here in our future... But coming "home" to our second family makes all the difference during such a stressful time in our lives."

"The RMH offered us food, shelter, moral and emotional support, and at this point, I couldn't say which one of those was more important. I only know that it has been much needed and greatly appreciated." Ramona

RMH Golf Tournament

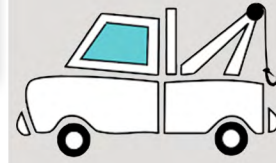


In addition to enjoying a glorious day on the links, golfers who came to Egwani Farms last September to support our House were treated to an unexpected bonus, the Blue Angels flying overhead as they were in town for an air show the following day at the airport nearby.

Being well-fed certainly helped everyone's score as Burger Family McDonald's, Brown Bag, and Texas Roadhouse provided ample feasts throughout the day. Professional Events set up a mobile pro-shop and in between shots, golfers had the chance to spend their \$100 goody bag token.

Without our caring sponsors, our largest annual fundraiser could not happen... so hats off to:

The Cochran Family McDonald's, Tom Cochran, Eric and Emily Cochran, Scooter Foods, East Tennessee Children's Hospital, UT Medical Center, Pilot Flying J, Martin Brower, Broadway Carpets & Flooring, Brown Bag, First Horizon, Hailey Management, Kirk and Joanne Huddleston, Knoxville Pediatrics, Associates, PC, Pinnacle Financial Partners, Texas Roadhouse, The Hudson Company, Blaine Construction, Burger Family McDonald's, Citizen's National Bank, Coulter & Justus, Harrison Bend Properties, Hodges, Doughty & Carson, PLLC, Keurig/Dr. Pepper, Mayfield and Sons, PYA, Regions Bank, Rice Buick GMC, Taylor Farms, Wyatt Insurance, Kenneth and Dana O'Kelley, Will and Carolyn Gibson, Martin and Company, Ted Flickinger, Cherokee Distributing, Enterprise Print Group, Old Smoky Moonshine, Shoffner Kalthoff MES, Inc, Superior Steel, T&T Signs, Topgolf, 3 Rivers Radio Group



**Car
Donation
Program**

Did you know that donating your car, motorcycle, RV, or trailer can help support our families? Last year we were able to raise \$1,238 with this program and we would like to see 2023 do even better!

All you need to do is call 855-CarsHelp(227-7435), and they will pick up your vehicle anywhere in the United States for free.

If you're looking for an easy and impactful way to make a difference, consider donating your vehicle to our House today!



**Give a
Little Love**



McDonald's has once again shown their continued support to us through their annual Heart Promo. This allows customers to buy hearts to be displayed around local McDonald's, with the proceeds going directly to supporting our mission of providing a home away from home for the families who stay with us.

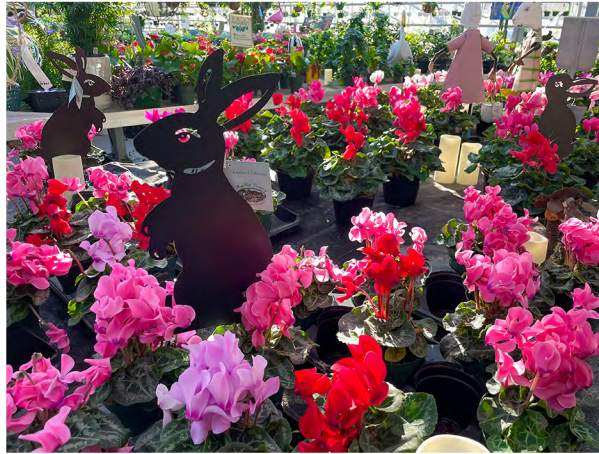
Thanks to the generosity of McDonald's and their customers, this year's Heart Promo raised \$33,956 for our organization.

BEAT THE WINTER BLUES RETURNS

After a two-year hiatus, thanks to Covid, the capacity crowd at Stanley's Greenhouse in early February was anything but "blue" as guests sipped and nibbled the bounty of goodies on hand while taking in the beauty of hundreds of glorious blooms and artful decorations created especially for the event. That touch of spring was the perfect antidote to those cold and dreary winter days that East TN had been experiencing.

Our hearts were also warmed by the overwhelming generosity of our sponsors that made the magical evening a reality!

Thank you to:
Akima, Jenny Austin, John Bello, MD, John & Kathy Buckingham, Clayton Homes, Jed & Marsha Dance, Will & Becca Edwards, Enterprise Print Group, Ted Flickinger & Julie Howard, Barna & Mary Ann Gibson, Harman Ice, Del & Malinda Harris, Paige Huggler, Anne Jackson-harpist extraordinaire, Andy & Jennie Johnson, David & Jeanne Clair Jones, Robert Kelso, DDS, Betsy Thomas & Larry Kirchner, Knoxville Beverage, Knoxville Neonatal Associates, Kerri Lattimore, MD & Harry King, Joseph & Linda McBrearty, Bennett & Meg Millikan, Tripp Nelson, MD, Southern Rebar & Supplies, Stanley's Greenhouse, Stephanie Strutner w/ Catalyst Evaluation Group, Bill Terry, MD & Jo Terry, United Rentals, UT Medical Center, UT Regional Perinatal Center, West Chevrolet, & 3 Rivers Radio.



AKIMA

Over 70 years ago, a small group of civic-minded women came together in the spirit of friendship and a sense of community. Throughout the decades Akima made and continues to make a tremendous positive impact throughout Knoxville, assisting a host of organizations, with our Ronald McDonald House being a fortunate beneficiary. Their members have served on our Board, given the House monetary gifts for room renovations, they so beautifully "deck our halls" at Christmas, and provide bountiful feasts for holidays, such as Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving, even Mother's and Father's Day. We've often wondered if being a top-notch chef was a requirement for membership as the ladies have been instrumental in the success of our Beat the Winter Blues fundraiser by supplying volunteers to help manage the event and preparing world-class cuisine for our guest's enjoyment.



Knox County Farm Bureau

Members of Knox County Farm Bureau delighted us once again by making their annual trek to our House to deliver a bounty of food. On March 20th, three trucks, overflowing with every grocery item imaginable, rolled into our parking lot... And even after their 2-hour grocery shopping blitz, our kind-hearted supporters stayed to help unload and store things away. All in all, over \$4,000 in foodstuffs and gift cards were graciously donated as evidenced by their 6-foot long register tape! As a token of our gratitude, once the last fridge had been filled, we hosted a reception for our remarkable friends and presented Pam Stoutt, Chair of the Knox County Farm Bureau Women's Group, with a plaque expressing our heartfelt appreciation for their years of caring service to us.

ChocolateFest

January 28th was "the" day that chocoholics had eagerly been anticipating as ChocolateFest made its triumphant return after a pandemic-induced absence of 2 years. Anyone and everyone with a sweet tooth lined up at the Jacobs Building to satisfy their craving for all things chocolate, to enjoy some entertainment, and browse among the many participating vendors. Organizer Jennifer Johnsey donated 20% of general admission tickets to our House, resulting in a nearly \$3,000 windfall.



Wonderful
Volunteers!



New Board Members

At our first Board meeting of this year, we welcomed back veteran member, **Stephanie Strutner**, into the fold, and also initiated three new faces into the family: **Jo Ann Goodrich, Jake Faris, and Rebecca Pierce.**

Jo Ann grew up in Rogersville, TN and came to Knoxville to attend UT and decided to stay, thankfully. She is Mom to Amy and Ryne, currently self-employed, and spends leisure time playing tennis, gardening, spending time with family, and giving back to the community by volunteering at Children's Hospital, Central Baptist Church and now our House.

Jake was born & raised in Knoxville and also attended UT, majoring in finance, and upon graduation, began working in the family business, McDonald's. In 2019, he became an owner/operator and owns 25 of the restaurants across 3 states.

Rebecca is a Kingston native who recently returned to East TN to practice medicine at Knoxville Pediatric Associates. She's married to Dr. Joe Pierce, Associate Dean of Students at UT, has 3 boys and they all enjoy hiking, soccer, and lake time.

A New Face

We'd like to introduce our new Marketing & Social Media Manager, Ben Cooper, who began his career with us in mid-July. Originally from Decatur, Alabama, he now lives in Knoxville where he spends his free time playing music and teaching private lessons.

Prior to coming to work at RMHC he was a graduate student at the University of Tennessee Knoxville. When asked how he felt about his new position, he replied, "I am so lucky to be given this opportunity to share all the wonderful things happening with this organization. Every day here is different, and I have met so many wonderful people since I started. There is nothing better than knowing you are making a difference."



McDonald's

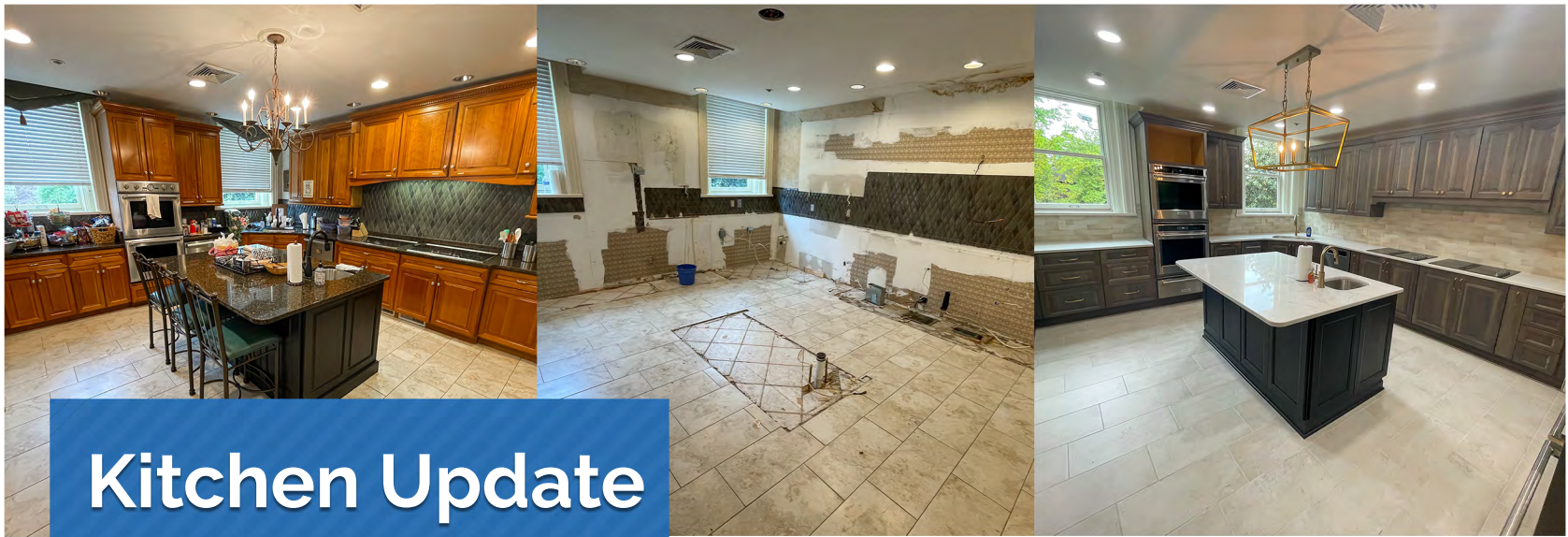


With McDonald's Round up program, you can round up any purchase to the nearest dollar and that spare change goes directly to our House. In addition, many McDonald's locations have canisters inside each restaurant and outside their drive-thru windows, making it simple to donate your loose change. Last year McDonald's was able to donate \$60,694 because of these programs!



Also, for every Happy Meal sold, one cent is donated to KnoxRMHC. This led to a \$40,648 donation last year! That's not all - a penny from every pound of potatoes used is also donated to our House resulting in additional thousands of dollars towards supporting our mission! Thanks McDonald's and thank YOU for helping us provide a home away from home for families with seriously ill children.





Kitchen Update

Anyone who has ever attempted a remodeling project at their home can relate to the mess, stress, and interruption to daily life that it causes. So, you can imagine what chaos a total overhaul of the kitchen, stripped down to bare walls, at our main House could do for the forty guests who reside there. While a make-shift “kitchen” was set up in the dining room, complete with a microwave, mini fridge, coffee maker, and snacks, work began on March 13th with the appliances being installed & operational by April 19th. That timeline of efficiency was almost unheard of... but the various suppliers and companies we were fortunate to work with knew of our mission and the population we serve and basically moved “heaven & earth” to expedite the work with the end result being a spectacular new space. For years to come, our families and volunteer chefs will enjoy creating meals to nourish the soul in a kitchen that is certain to be the envy of all who use it.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to: Our House committee members, Wes Tankersley, Geoff Overmyer with Proffitt & Sons, Lance Williams & crew with Massey Electric, Ruben & Lucas Adorati, Standard Kitchen, Designer- Liza DeWald, Todd Scott, Jeff Marlar, and Jason Debord with Smokey Mtn Tops, Mark Patterson with Pattersons Appliances, Dale Clifton Plumbing, Kalthoff Shoffner, Josh Andrews with Finish Point, Broadway Carpets, Cindy Lewis with Stokes Electric, Richard Knight, and Danny Scates, Roger Sykes, and Kenny Walker with Glen Oak Missionary Baptist Church.



ADPi's Ongoing Support

The lovely ladies of Alpha Delta Pi, both the alums and collegiates, have been involved with the Ronald McDonald House movement long before our home opened in 1985 as the first Ronald McDonald House opened in 1974. Their ongoing support in a host of ways has been invaluable over the ensuing years as they've held annual fundraisers for us, volunteered their time on a weekly basis to help keep the House clean & organized, they've provided meals, and even collected needed items from our wish list. Come to think of it, there is nothing they haven't done to keep us up and running! The chapter from TN Tech has also added their support, with the long drive from Cookeville being part of their gift. Last year the combined efforts of both chapters resulted in a \$30,386 donation. Incredible!!



KFI Event

July 30th saw our coffers grow by \$37,000, thanks to the loving support and dedication of the KFI Board that hosted yet another incredible evening for us. Several hundred guests gathered at the Double Tree Hotel in Oak Ridge for food, fellowship, a live auction, and dancing the night away to the music of Boys Night Out. From their \$400 gift to us in 1985, the passion this group has for our mission kept growing, inspiring more and more people to get involved, so much so, that their tireless efforts have raised \$929,345 in the 38 years since that first donation. How could we ever thank all involved for nearly four decades of their love & compassion? We're not sure it can be done.



ALTAR'D STATE

From February to May 8th, 10% of everything purchased on Mondays at Altar'd State West Town Mall went directly to our House, helping us to provide comfort and support to families with seriously ill children. We are incredibly grateful to them for their their commitment to giving back to their community. Thank you, Altar'd State, for making a difference in the lives of our families!

Luau in the Smokies

The East TN Chapter of the Parrothead Club held a luau last July to benefit our wonderful House. Their mission is to have fun while assisting area charities, as they have their "party with a purpose" objective. A portion of Townsend, TN was transformed into a tropical escape featuring great food, music, a silent auction, and more, with \$1,600 being raised by the day's end. What more can we say than "thanks" and "party on!!"



Firefighters Continue Their Giving

When one thinks of firefighters, they can automatically envision them battling flames and saving lives. Well, our Ronald McDonald House sees that, plus a completely different view, one of their touching lives. The Knoxville Fire Fighter's Association Local 65 also raises funds for educational and safety programs in addition to supporting numerous charities. A beautiful example of that would be the \$15,000 check that president, Larry McAfee, presented to our House in early January, the result of concerts that the group works so hard to organize.

Freaky Friday



Halloween in the town of Farragut means more than carving pumpkins and collecting candy as town officials found a way to help our House as well. Local businesses and organizations set up treat stations along the lake trail at Mayor Bob Leonard Park and children 12 and younger could partake in the fun. It's always a free event, but participants are asked to bring a wish list item or monetary donation to us if possible. We are beyond delighted to find that at the event's conclusion, we had collected over \$1,300 and had a van overflowing with needed items. No tricks, only treats for our wonderful House thanks to the generosity of everyone in attendance.



Trikeathon



Debbie Snyder's love of children was the genesis of her purchasing a day care center that focused on educational preparation combined with her passion for teaching pre-schoolers about Jesus. She also wanted to teach children about reaching out to help those in need, which she did with her "Trike-A-Thon" initiative that began several years ago. Her students secured pledges for each lap they made around the center's track, and also received some additional gifts from caring parents. Their 2022 efforts resulted in a phenomenal donation of \$7,135 which goes to show that one is never too young to lend a helping hand... or should we say, "lend a helping pedal!"

A Fond Farewell

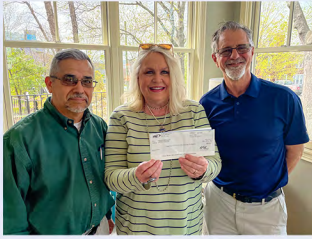
After three decades of family-friendly fun, organizers of the Smoky Mtn Classic Chevy Club decided it was time to retire this beloved event. Held the third weekend in May, enthusiasts of cool cars gathered in Sevier County to admire the craftsmanship of a bygone era, and in doing so, raising funds for a variety of local charities that included our House. While we will miss the many friends we made there over the years, the thousands of dollars they donated to us, including their final \$3,500 gift in 2022, will be a testament to the member's kindness, compassion, and belief in the work we do.



The Continuing Support of Key Clubs

Earlier this spring, the Kentucky-Tennessee Key Club District meeting was held in Sevier County, attended by hundreds of philanthropic young members, with one outcome of the gathering being that our House received 1,000 gift bags, filled with a variety of treats, to be distributed over the coming months to our guests. That is one of many examples as to how area Key Clubs support our House. Some of the clubs recycle aluminum to raise funds for us, some clubs have come here to demonstrate their culinary skills in preparing meals for our families, hosting a UT football parking initiative, and even volunteering during the summer months to clean and do yardwork, which is also greatly appreciated. It's heartening to see a host of young people working so hard to support their communities and how thankful we are to be the object of their tireless efforts.





Martin Brower

We are always so thankful for Martin Brower and all they do for us. Their employee donation program gives a payroll deduction

option that provides money which is split between the four Ronald McDonald Houses they support in their distribution area. In their most recent visit to the house, employees Jorge Reyna & Walt Dupre presented us with a \$4,751 gift. They've also been a major sponsor of our golf tournament for decades and we are incredibly appreciative of all they do for us!



Several employees at ADA Station Communications in Crossville have used Ronald McDonald Houses throughout the country, including ours, so they were aware firsthand of the work we do and wanted to contribute to our House. Therefore, they made an outstanding \$50,000 gift to us! We cannot thank them enough for their incredible generosity and we are truly humbled by the magnitude of their donation!



We are thankful for Dollywood's ongoing support for our mission to give families a place to stay during a challenging time in their lives. In December they donated an incredible \$7,500! We are so grateful to be on their list of charities they support after all these years. What an impact they make on so many!

Dillard's



We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Dillard's for their continued support of our House through their Southern Living Cookbook fundraiser. For many years, this annual fundraiser has been an incredible source of support for our House, and we are incredibly grateful for Dillard's ongoing partnership. Store manager Shawn Ulrich was on hand to present the House with their \$4,313 check.



Concord Christian School

Concord Christian School did a wonderful Christmas fundraiser for us in December! Their 2nd grade classes created items to show off and sell in their Christmas shop! Portions of the proceeds went directly to our House! With this they were able to give a donation of \$3,265! Thank you to their amazing school administration and their kids who helped make it possible!