



Celebrating 35 years of...
Keeping Families Close®

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Knoxville

1705 West Clinch Avenue Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

knoxrmhc.org

Spring 2020

BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

Trying to outwit Mother Nature is always a gamble... to snow or not to snow, that is the question! Thankfully for our House and the 300-plus guests that attended our magical event on February 7th, the snow held off and Stanley's Greenhouse was filled to capacity with friends eager for some gourmet goodies and a sneak peek at Spring.

The \$24,000 raised was due not only to our attendees, but to our talented volunteers and generous sponsors such as: Akima, Bob & Laura Barnes, Beverage Control, John & Kathy Buckingham, Clayton Homes, Conry, Taylor & Morrow, CPA's, Allison Dulaney, MD, Fast Signs of Knoxville, Libby Fisher Signature Real Estate, Franklin Equipment, Barna & Mary Ann Gibson, Tom & Terri Hale, Harman Ice,

Malinda Harris, MD, Julie Howard & Ted Flickinger, Kirk & Joanne Huddleston, Anne Jackson- harpist extraordinaire, Joe and Pat Johnson, Robert Kelso, DDS, King Cleaners, Knoxville Beverage, MRB Broadcasting, Massey Electric, David Matthews Salon, Bennett & Meg Millikan, The Pour Guys, Provision Physical Therapy,

LLC, Retirement Planning Services, LLC, Salon Visage, John & Carol Sheridan, Southern Rebar & Supplies, Matthew & Stephanie Strutner, Taylor & Huie Fine Interiors, Bill & Jo Terry, UT Culinary Program, West Chevrolet, Wild Birds Unlimited, and as our media sponsor: B-97.5 Radio



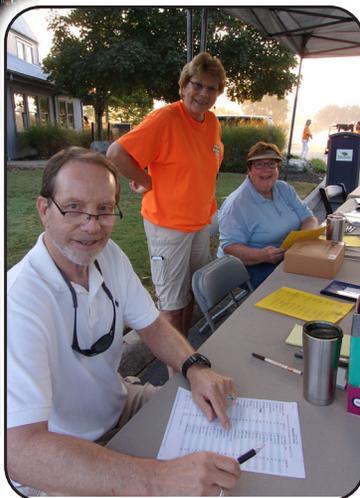
GOLF TOURNAMENT

We've set our golf tournament this year for September 10th at Egwani Farms. To hopefully entice you to be part of the fun, here's a re-cap of our 2019 event.

One hundred thirty golfers joined us in early October for what we hoped would be a "cooler" event than our previous year's June outing. Ever unpredictable, our East TN weather just wasn't quite ready to let go of summer



temps and the 90-degree day surprised us all! But with the beautiful course, the \$100 gift certificate "goody bag" and a bountiful meal graciously donated by Texas Roadhouse, the heat was soon forgotten. But what was remembered was the \$73,631 that was raised for our wonderful House!



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
of Knoxville

DILLARD'S

It's often been said that old friends are the best friends... And Dillard's has demonstrated that for a quarter century now with their annual in-store holiday fundraiser to benefit Ronald McDonald Houses across the country.



Geoff Johnson, general manager of the West Town Mall store, paid a visit to us on February 25th to personally deliver a \$3,004 check that represented proceeds from their "Southern Living" cookbook sales. It's hard to fathom just how many lives have been touched by their generosity over the years!!

CHOCOLATEFEST

Chocolate... it's hard to say that magic word without smiling, isn't it??? And it's even harder to resist when you're offered a taste. Just imagine a place where over 3,000 aficionados gathered to enjoy a



auction were all part of the fun-filled event. And the "sweetest" thing of all was the \$12,482 that was raised for the House, thanks to the Herculean efforts & vision of the organizer, Jennifer Johnsey and her crew of dedicated supporters.

sweet "fix" and you've just described Chocolate Fest 2020 that was held on Saturday, January 25th. Contests galore, a VIP tasting area, shopping, entertainment, and an



KFI

Over the years, we've all noticed that some friendships "ebb & flow" but then there are those special and extraordinary friends that stand the test of time. And that's the case with the Keys Fillauer Board of Directors that befriended us 35 years ago and their ties to our House are as strong as ever, if not stronger!

Their first visit to our House in 1985 to deliver a donation was the genesis of their love affair with the work we do. These incredible individuals have worked tirelessly over the ensuing decades to raise funds for us, starting

with years of hosting golf tournaments that have recently morphed into a series of concerts. And thankfully \$850,730 later, their passion for our mission has never wavered and we couldn't be more humbled & grateful. We'd love to see you at this year's stellar event!!



Admit One

The KFI will present....
Tony Award winner...
Levi Kreis on July 25th
at the Doubletree Hilton in Oak Ridge.
kfigolf@comcast.net for more info

Admit One

Farm Bureau

When you hear the name, "Farm Bureau", one naturally tends to think of insurance and their heart-warming TV commercials featuring Charlie! But we at the RMH know firsthand that the caring people who make up the organization do more than sell policies... they give hope! Year-round, members of Farm Bureau in Knox and surrounding counties spend untold hours raising money and awareness for our House. Even though the Covid-19 virus negated our annual reception for them, their efforts still culminated with several truck loads of



food being donated on March 23 along with cash and gift cards that will be used year-round to purchase needed food items. These dear folks are the answer to the enduring question "What are friends for?"



BOARD UPDATE

With our incredible new and returning Board members, we know we'll have a banner year in 2020! Our House is only as wonderful as those who love it. And with that in mind, we'd love to welcome new members: Keri Lattimore, MD who is part of UT Medical Center's neonatal team; Philip Kuss, a sales rep with Enterprise Print Group and a long time supporter; Linda McBrearty who has had a 35-year career in government communication & public affairs; & Stacey Bristow who is a community volunteer extraordinaire. And we couldn't be more pleased that Cindy Mayfield, Julie Howard, & Bill Coley agreed to re-enter the fold once again to share their time & energies with us.

Focus on a Family...The Mynatts

For the residents of Putnam County, Tennessee, March 3rd was a "day that will live in infamy" as tornadoes tore through the region leaving a trail of utter destruction in their wake. One neighborhood was especially hard hit with the end result being homes that were completely destroyed and the heartbreaking news of several fatalities.

With little to no warning of the impending storm, Chad & Jill Mynatt hurriedly hunkered down with their two small children to ride out the storm as best they could. In the aftermath, two things were perfectly clear... their home was simply gone and their two-year-old daughter Harper, had been seriously injured. Due to the overwhelming medical needs of so many in the area,



Harper was brought to Knoxville for treatment. Once hospitalized, she underwent surgery to repair a skull fracture that had caused a traumatic brain injury. PICU staff at Children's Hospital told the family that they might consider staying at our Ronald McDonald House as her recovery would take time, several weeks at least, so the arrangements were made.

Dazed and battered from their ordeal, the couple gratefully accepted grandparents John & Lisa Rhodes' offer of assistance, encouragement, and time to watch their baby, five-

month-old Major, who blessedly suffered only minor scratches, giving them the chance to devote all their energies to being at their daughter's bedside.



As if these dear people weren't dealing with enough, not long after their arrival in Knoxville, the Covid-19 virus began to escalate. Friends and other family that had been dropping by to offer their never-ending support had to begin to do so via phone, text and email. It's been quite obvious just how beloved this family is as evidenced by the volume of mail and packages that they seem to receive daily.

And all that love, support and those prayers have paid off in a big way as Harper has continued to delight and amaze everyone with her recovery as she was released from the hospital, with a parade of cheering staff bidding her farewell, several days prior to Easter.

The original plans to transfer her to a therapy center in Atlanta were nixed due to the virus risk, so Children's made arrangements for several weeks of intensive outpatient therapy for her here in town.

What an absolute joy it was to see the family reunited under our roof! Mom, Jill, summed up their experience here by saying, "There truly are not adequate words to express our love for RMH. We obviously did not want to weather this storm, but it was a blessing to do it at Ronald McDonald House."



KIND FOLKS.... CARING HEARTS

♥♥ When a freak hailstorm damaged the roofs of the three buildings on our property, we were beyond grateful to the Roofing Industry Alliance of Progress which included Rackley Roofing Company and GAF who combined forces to take on the Herculean task of replacing them. All the costs that were above and beyond what the insurance would cover were graciously donated by this trio of caring companies.

♥♥ How blessed we were to receive a call once again from Kevin Faddis, president of the Knoxville Firefighters Association inviting RMH Director, Sue Beverly, to attend their benefit concert on December 7th where she was presented with an incredible gift... a check for \$10,000!!

♥♥ when twelve year-old Alejandra Mazariegos agreed to be the artist for our 2019 holiday card. She & her Mom stayed with us for six weeks while she was undergoing treatments at a nearby healthcare facility. In between medical procedures, she drew on her varied artistic talents to create a fabulous card for us to sell with the result of her creativity being an astounding \$73,861 raised!! Helping us with this incredible endeavor was WS Packaging Group, Inc that so generously donated all the production costs associated with this project once again saving our House thousands of dollars... What phenomenal supporters of the work we do!!

♥♥ For years now, Maury Middle School students from the FCA have made a pilgrimage from Dandridge to Knoxville to bring household items and gift cards to us. They outdid themselves during their last visit when they brought us over \$1,300 in donations. What an incredible testament to the kindness of these amazing young people!

♥♥ BMC or Business Machines Company, for as long as we can remember, has graciously donated not only all of our copier supplies and repairs, but president Don Ball has made certain that when our old machines are close to "expiring" we have the latest models at a greatly reduced rate... like zero!! His generosity has sustained our office for over three decades now and we couldn't appreciate him more.



♥♥ We were delighted to learn that the Downtown REO Group wished to adopt us as one of their philanthropies. We were even more delighted when they came one night to prepare dinner for our families, and in addition to a bountiful meal, we also received over \$500 in various gift cards to address the unique needs we have.



We are so grateful once

♥♥ again to the Town of Farragut for making us their partner in "fright" for their annual family-friendly event, Freaky Friday, held annually on the Friday prior to Halloween. Even a light drizzle couldn't dampen the spirits of all the costumed kids that loved collecting the bounty of sweets being distributed. And our House also loved collecting all the donations so kindly given by those in attendance. Who says zombies don't have a heart??

♥♥ Hats off once again to those incredible members of the Bearden High School Key Club that raised an astonishing \$15,561 from their UT parking initiative. It's such a huge commitment they've made for nearly two decades now, coming to our RMH five hours prior to every home football game to begin selling spaces!! But what a phenomenal impact they have made to our budget, year in and year out!!!

The East Tennessee Parrothead Club



supported us to the tune of \$1,330 this year. Fans of Mr. Buffet get together periodically for fellowship, fun and philanthropy and we're the fortunate recipient!!

AVANTech, Inc, a national company that has a location in Knoxville, has become one of our newest supporters. They offer industrial water treatment solutions and more recently, have offered us some funding in the form of their employee's payroll deduction plan. For 2019-2020, their caring workers have pledged \$4,400 to us!



We're delighted with our partnership with Kendra Scott, a company best known for their incredibly gorgeous jewelry. They have not only donated gifts for our mothers in residence here, but recently held a special sales event, "GiveBack", in conjunction with ADPI alums to raise funds for us. And we also have an offer from the staff at their Bearden

location to "call on them" should we have a need arise.... How special is that?!



It's hard to imagine any gift we could give our families that would be more appreciated than a good night's rest! Try as they may, it's next to impossible to sleep well at the hospitals. Thanks to a wonderful donation from Tempur-Pedic in March, we now have a half-dozen luxuriously comfortable new mattress sets and frames guaranteed to help parents get the rest they need & deserve.

Twenty years is a long time for any kitchen to be in service, especially with the use one receives here in our House. Thankfully, our multi-talented house committee members decided this was the year to renovate the annex kitchen. Due to the generosity of donors such as Standard Kitchen and Smoky Mtn Tops, who gave us incredible discounts on materials and artist Lynn Arnwine, whose donated art now graces the space, our kitchen is the envy of all

who see it! Its beauty now beckons all of our volunteer chefs to create some sumptuous meals for our families to enjoy!



Enterprise Holdings Foundation once again gave us a "huge" reason to smile as they sent us a phenomenal check for \$6,000. Their support over the years has been so deeply appreciated as has their enduring friendship!!

We were thrilled to once again be "adopted" by our dear friends who are part of the Smoky Mtn Classic Chevy Club the third week-end in May for their car show extravaganza held in Sevier Co. We were equally thrilled to receive the \$3,500 that was the result of their year-long planning efforts and hard work!!

And a new car show was devised by the wonderful folks at Northwind Solutions whose first time efforts in co-ordinating such an event late last Spring netted \$2,500 for us. (Their loving concern for the work we do was

to continue this Spring, but their efforts in executing their second show were thwarted by the Covid-19 virus)

Concord Christian School second graders once again worked their hearts out making crafts for sale to benefit our House. All their talents resulted in a car full of household items we needed plus an ever-generous check for \$2,581. That goes to prove that you're never too young to make a difference in someone's life.

And speaking of our young supporters, children attending Child Creations Day Care in Powell came up with a fun way to help us and get their exercise all at the same time! Last summer, owner Debbie Snyder and those in her charge, hosted their first annual "Trike-a-thon" for our benefit, where kids of all ages worked hard making lap after lap on anything with wheels, raising an impressive \$5,170 for us!! Fingers crossed that the event can happen again within the next month!!

2019 At a Glance

- ◆ We served families from eight different medical facilities
- ◆ We assisted 1,151 people
- ◆ The top five reasons for a referral were: prematurity, behavioral/emotional issues, respiratory problems, cancer, and brain surgeries
- ◆ Our families came from 37 counties within Tennessee and from 16 other states
- ◆ 64% of families we served had children from newborn to 3 years of age
- ◆ An incredible 6,825 volunteer hours were donated by equally incredible people! Many thanks to all of them for giving so generously of their time & talents
- ◆ The top five Tennessee counties we served were: Sullivan, Cumberland, Washington, Cocke, and Hamblen
- ◆ We were blessed to receive \$65,426 of "in-kind" gifts that include meals, household items, and donated services
- ◆ Sixty-six families used our House for "day use", usually needing assistance with food & access to our laundry
- ◆ While our average stay was seven nights, families in need of our services for multiple months at a time are quite common

CHANGE DOES MATTER



One question that is often posed to us is whether or not the money in the canisters at McDonald's actually does come to us. And we can honestly answer with a resounding... YES... that it indeed does come our way on a monthly basis. A newer initiative that McDonald's has executed for our benefit is their Round-Up program. Due to the rise in electronic payments, customers have the opportunity to "round-up" their purchase total to the nearest whole dollar, regardless of their payment method. So those utilizing the self-order kiosks can still make a cashless donation to us! Revenue from both of these options continues to be a huge benefit to our annual budget.

