



RONALD McDONALD  
HOUSE NEW YORK



# AROUND THE HOUSE

THE MAGAZINE FOR RONALD McDONALD HOUSE NEW YORK, VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3



# CONTENTS

- 1 PRESIDENT'S LETTER
- 2 WHAT'S NEW AT YOUR HOUSE?  
Our Website Gets a Facelift
- 3 SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR BOARD  
Bruce Colley
- 5 SPOTLIGHT  
Chaplaincy
- 6 SPOTLIGHT  
Barbara Lowenstein: 15 Years of Fun in the Sun
- 8 FEATURE STORY  
Sandra Liu Finds Her Calling
- 12 FEATURE STORY  
Supersized Hearts: How McDonald's Owner/Operators  
(and Millions of French Fries) Helped Thousands  
of Pediatric Cancer Patients Find a  
Home-Away-From-Home in New York City
- 15 FUNDRAISING  
The Tree of Life  
Buy a Set of RMDH NY Mascot Dolls
- 16 CALENDAR  
RMDH NY's Second Annual Community Block Party  
ING New York City Marathon: Team Ronald McDonald  
Kids' Charity Fun Run

## FRONT COVER

Sandra Liu, 16, at The Art Center in New York City  
Photograph by Mark Rosenthal

## BACK COVER

Mattie Powell, 4  
Photograph by Bob Ray

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Much has been said, lately, about Abraham Lincoln and his leadership style in a time that mirrors issues we face as a nation today. Recently, I read Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address and the words "Fondly do we hope...fervently do we pray," spoke to me with great meaning especially in working here at Ronald McDonald House New York.

Our courageous children and families, who, each day, face great challenges and major difficulties, continually inspire us. Their peace of mind is the motivation behind how our volunteers and staff continue to work 365 days a year.



In this issue, we spotlight Board Member Bruce Colley, a McDonald's Owner/ Operator whose family has been supporting the House for over 30 years. In addition, you will learn the long history of financial support that McDonald's Owner/Operators have given our charity since the beginning.

Our New York City House is ablaze with activity and going on in each precious corner of the House. Summer Camp is bursting

with great activities and programs both in and outside the House. Our Second Floor Dining Room and Family Kitchens are undergoing a complete modernization, as are our elevators, HVAC systems and fire command station. Safety is always foremost on our minds.

You'll meet Barbara Lowenstein who has been opening the doors of her heart as well as the doors of her beautiful Fire Island beach house to our children and families for the last 15 years. We have a special update on our Chaplaincy Program and how it has grown and diversified over time to accommodate family needs. Don't miss the wonderful story of House Guest Sandra Liu, a talented artist who parlayed a diagnosis of cancer into a promising future as an architect.

Our website has just undergone a facelift. Go to [www.rmdh.org](http://www.rmdh.org) to page through the latest features.

As summer winds down, you'll still find plenty of information on upcoming Fall fundraisers in our Calendar such as our Second Annual Community Block Party, the progress of our ING New York City Marathon Team, our Kids' Charity Fun Run and so much more!

We continue to be grateful for our supporters who have kept their commitments to our children and mission under the direst economic conditions. And so, in Honest Abe's words, "Fondly do we hope...fervently do we pray" for all of you for a happy, healthy and safe summer!

Gratefully,

William T. Sullivan  
President & Chief Executive Officer



WHAT'S NEW AT YOUR HOUSE?  
OUR WEBSITE GETS A FACELIFT



Ronald McDonald House New York has given its website a facelift. With new graphics and features, families, donors, volunteers and staff will have the opportunity to experience a more interactive and efficient site with targeted content for each user.

You'll be able to meet some of the children we serve on a daily basis or read one of our publications including our Annual Report, our Team Ronald McDonald Newsletter or our quarterly magazine *Around the House*. You can learn about our history, programs, Partner Hospitals, in-House departments, news, milestones and media. You'll be able to view upcoming events and fundraisers with the ability to register and pay online, securely. If you'd like to volunteer, give cash contributions or donate goods or ser-

VICES, you can find the information you'll need here. Your donations will automatically be downloaded to our donor database where we'll now acknowledge your generous gifts via an automated email. For special and team fundraising events such as our Team Ronald McDonald ING New York City Marathon participants, users now have the ability to create personalized web pages from which they can solicit family, friends and co-workers to donate on their behalf for the House.

Please visit [www.rmdh.org](http://www.rmdh.org) today to page through our news, features, inspiring stories of Hope and to learn about what we do and the many ways you can become involved and help us continue our mission in New York City.

ADDENDUM TO OUR 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

The \$30,000 donor category was omitted from our 2008 Annual Report. Ronald McDonald House New York would like to thank Per Annum, Inc. for their generous donation of \$30,000.

SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR BOARD  
BRUCE COLLEY



Board Member Bruce Colley has been a part of the McDonald's business world since 1965, when, at the age of 12, his father recruited him as a potato peeler and floor mopper at the family's first McDonald's restaurant in Mamaroneck, NY. But in 1975, when he graduated from Cornell University, he went to work for Morgan Guaranty Bank in Buenos Aires, Argentina and not the family business. After a revolution in Argentina, Bruce opted to return to the U.S. to work for a private investment bank in Winston-Salem, NC. It wasn't until 1980 that Bruce's father made him an offer he couldn't refuse: to join him in the restaurant business – the McDonald's Restaurant business, specifically. "At the time, we owned over 100 McDonald's throughout the New England area," says Bruce. "It was sometime within a year of joining the business that I visited Ronald McDonald House on East 86th Street when it was still a small townhouse with about 24 rooms. Vivian Harris, the President at the time, gave me a tour and introduced me to a few of the kids staying there. I began volunteering and, needless to say, it changed my life. I realized what it meant to have good health. These children from all around the world were far away from their homes, schools, friends, making the best of it, smiling and trying to lead normal lives despite their trials."

Eventually, Bruce shifted his focus from volunteering to fundraising after the passing of a child whose family he had become particularly close with. "The loss was devas-

tating," he says. "I began to dedicate my efforts to raising money for a bigger and more functional home for these children and their families. I just couldn't bring myself to feel that loss again."

Having attended numerous New York City charity functions over the years, Bruce thought about how these types of events could help the House by creating awareness and raising money. He gathered a few of his friends to work on it and they called themselves The Board of Associates. From 1982 to 2000, Bruce and Associates organized about 22 major fundraising events that raised over \$500,000. The Board of Associates sponsored movie premieres, parties, Broadway show events, concerts, Skate with the Greats and anything else they could think of. Bruce was also a member of the McDonald's Metro Owner/Operators who raised millions more through the "French Fry Tax" and donation containers on the counters of their McDonald's restaurants.

In 1990, Bruce joined the RMDH NY Board of Directors and hasn't looked back once. "I've always been proud of the House and all it's achieved over the years. But, it never could have happened to this extent if not for the shared commitment, caring and enthusiasm of so many. I'm thankful for the honor of being part of something so special."

RMDH NY thanks Bruce Colley for his many years of service as well as his continued dedication to the cause of pediatric cancer and the important mission of our House.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TEAM RONALD MCDONALD!

Congratulations to Team Ronald McDonald for another phenomenal fundraiser. The Imagine Event (Jef Campion, Chairperson, Ruth Schlossberg, Co-Chairperson) on June 16th surpassed all expectations by raising more than \$215,000. "It was the best event ever and legendary," says Ralph Vogel, Director of Human Resources, Volunteers & Programs. "In this terrible economy, the volunteers searched under every rock and came up with a theme that captured attention and raised more money than any other year." The event, held at the Union Square Ballroom, featured a beautiful hand-painted mosaic with tiles created



Photo: Neville Bean

by RMDH NY kids and others.

"The Imagine Event was born from a group of highly creative, motivated and passionate individuals who combined their ideas to create an event beyond expectations," says Jef Campion. "Our vision was clear from the initial planning stages through the execution of the party. It was a real team effort for all of the staff, volunteers and friends of Ronald McDonald House New York who gave their blood, sweat and tears for this beautiful evening. I'm humbled by the dedication and compassion people have shown for our most worthy charity."



## WISH LIST

For further information regarding this Wish List, or to make a donation (NEW items only), please contact Lucrecia Ortiz at 212.639.0200 or [lucy@rmdh.org](mailto:lucy@rmdh.org)

If you, your community group or company would like to share bulk donations of new goods, seasonal surplus merchandise or other large-scale contributions, please contact Wini Cudjoe, Director of House Operations, at 212.639.0400 or [wini@rmdh.org](mailto:wini@rmdh.org)

### FOR THE CHILDREN

- DVDs (movies)
- New clothing (seasonal, all sizes)
- Diapers (the bio "green" type)
- Baby wipes

### FOR THE MOMS AND DADS

- Gift cards: Visa, Master Card, American Express, Target

### FOR THE FAMILIES

- Toiletries (soap, toothpaste, hand and body lotion)
- Hand sanitizer bottles
- Postage stamps

### FOR THE HOUSE

- Paper goods: cups, plates, napkins
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Clear shower curtain liners
- Wash cloths in white
- Pillows
- Plastic storage containers: large, medium and small
- Dishware: Corelle in plain white, plates, soup bowls, coffee mugs (no teacups or saucers)
- Toasters
- Blenders
- Coffee makers
- Cutlery
- Healthy snack items
- Cereal (individually sized)
- Assorted tea bags
- "Green" laundry detergent
- Clorox or Lysol wipes
- Copy paper
- Photo paper

### FOR THE PLAYROOM

For further information regarding Playroom donations, please contact Nelida Barreto, Director of Programs, at 212.639.0205 or [nbarreto@rmdh.org](mailto:nbarreto@rmdh.org)

### FOR ARTS & CRAFTS

- Feathers
- Pipe cleaners
- Washable Crayola markers
- Washable Crayola crayons

- Crayola fabric markers

- Color-Me Tara cloth banner

- Color-Me flag

- Tissue paper

- Drop cloths for tables

- Oil cloth table cloths

- Crayola Model Magic

- Crayola Dough

- Crayola modeling clay

- Sculptey

- Play-Doh

- Balloons for summer camp and parties

- Glue guns and glue sticks

- Felt material (assorted colors 12- and 36-inch squares)

- Craft sticks

- Legos

- Craft foam sheets

- Plastic lacing for lanyards

- Pom poms

- Wiggly eyes

- Corobuff Sheets

- Glue dots

- Glitter glue

### FOR THE SPORTS SECTION

- Foosballs

- Ping-pong balls and paddles

- Wall-mounted Basketball with cabinet (from Hammacher Schlemmer or S&S Recreation)

- Fold-A-Hoop

### FOR THE BABIES SECTION

- Soft foam building blocks in assorted colors, shapes and sizes

- Baby dolls

- Baby doll clothing and accessories

### TECHNOLOGY

- Camcorder

- Photo paper (4 x 6 and 5 x 7)

- Stereo/CD player

- Sony Snap Lab (UP CR20L)

### FOR THE TEEN ROOM

- New sofa and chair

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## SPOTLIGHT ON CHAPLAINCY

What is currently known as The Department of Family Support at Ronald McDonald House New York was once called Chaplaincy with a long history that began, quite unofficially, when the first House on East 86th Street opened in two five-story walk-ups that had, until 1978, been utilized as a convent.

When the House first opened, there was no immediate thought of starting a Chaplaincy program, according to Monsignor Harry Byrne, a former RMDH NY Board Member who had assisted in the acquisition of the convent. There was a church – St. Joseph's of Yorkville – on 87th Street just east of First Avenue and the priests from that church took the time to support the House, informally, with whatever was needed from cooking meals to providing pastoral care to the families. In the meantime, Monsignor Byrne was involved with an interfaith Chaplaincy program that placed Chaplains with the New York hospitals and knew that they were interested in providing a Chaplain to RMDH NY. "In the whole field of caring, there had suddenly been an increase in the need for pastoral care based upon patient requests," says Monsignor Byrne. "Chaplains in the program provided support for Catholics as well as the Protestant and Jewish faiths.

In those early days, Chaplaincy took on the traditional role of spiritual care assisting with the psychological stress parents of very ill children suffer as well as for parents who have lost a child. "These situations are very stressful and detrimental for marriages and for siblings of children with cancer," says Monsignor Byrne. "We tried to assist families with grieving to help strengthen them psychologically. We're trained and available to support people of many different faiths."

Over the 30 years that the House has been in existence, Chaplaincy has developed to include a broader scope of support services. Cherilyn Frei, the current Director of Family Support, has expanded the program to include a team of volunteers comprised of three clinical chaplains, two social workers, a women's fitness trainer and a life coach.

Programs now include a weekly caregiver's support group, new guest orientation, women's wellness, interfaith prayer services, a hope and healing mass with the Sacrament of the Sick, a Latina spirituality and support group as well as the coordination of food donations and special programs throughout the year.

"Cherilyn has really moved the program along," says Monsignor Byrne. "She's been excellent in creating what the program has now become."

In 2008, the Department of Family Support provided psychological, social and spiritual care for a total of 8,528 people. The Department also includes 13 certified volunteer therapy dog teams and partnerships with hospitals and other social service providers such as the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of New York, Angel Flights North East and local medical and dental providers. These services are in addition to providing traditional pastoral and bereavement care, staff and volunteer support, crisis intervention and transitional services for families moving back home.

For more information on the services provided by RMDH NY's Department of Family Support, please contact Cherilyn Frei, Director of Family Support, at 212.639.0195 or [cfrei@rmdh.org](mailto:cfrei@rmdh.org)

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE NEW YORK provides a temporary "home-away-from-home" for pediatric cancer patients and their families. The House is a supportive and caring environment which encourages and nurtures the development of child-to-child and parent-to-parent support systems. Ronald McDonald House New York is the largest facility of its type in the world.





Photo: Melissa Hartung

## SPOTLIGHT ON BARBARA LOWENSTEIN 15 YEARS OF FUN IN THE SUN

One could call Barbara Lowenstein a pioneer. Or perhaps a master of turning ideas into action – ideas that, to some, might seem colossal and impossible. And yet, Barbara makes it all seem effortless.

Barbara Lowenstein began her career as an editor for a small paperback publishing house. Because she enjoyed working with writers so much, she got the idea to combine her well-honed editing skills with her natural sales ability to open her own literary agency. With about 20 writers on board, Barbara took the leap and created Lowenstein Associates in 1976. Over 30 years later, Lowenstein Associates represents more than 100 writers and is still a growing business.

In the early 1990s, Barbara purchased a summer house on Long Island's famous South Shore beach community Fire Island. At the same time, Barbara had a friend who volunteered at Ronald McDonald House New York and had the opportunity to hear stories about the children

and families in residence. She was so touched by how much it meant to her friend, she suggested having a little barbecue for the children. It was 1994 when she first opened the doors to her beach house for that little barbecue and has kept them open to our families ever since. "It's changed my life," Barbara says. "I recall one of the mothers grabbing my hand on the way out one year thanking me for making her feel normal for the first time since her child was diagnosed with cancer. It's made me aware of how important health is. I admire these parents so much."

That one mother's sentiment has been the reality for the hundreds of other families Barbara has hosted from all over the world. "It's a great learning experience for me," she says. "I met a wonderful woman from New Guinea. Since I'd been to New Guinea, it was interesting to learn about how she'd come to New York. Meeting the families each year is the most meaningful part of it for me. You learn so much. You learn about the health programs



of other countries and generally, get a whole new sense of the world we live in."

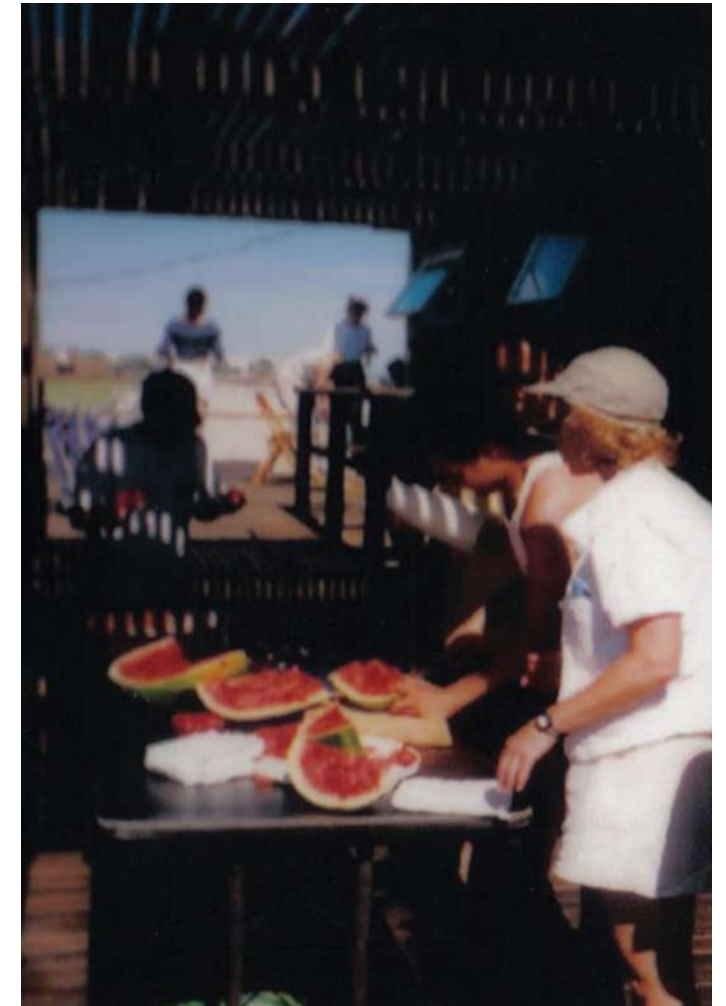
Over the years, the event has grown to the point of earning the reputation as the highlight of the House's summer festivities. "The first year we went, we rented two vans and drove out with about 25 people," says Wini Cudjoe, Director of House Operations. "Now it's so big, we have to rent a big bus. Barbara has the local firemen and policemen waiting to pick us up from the ferry and take us to her house. And she's even gotten the ferry company to donate the ferry tickets. She has the entire community involved."

According to Barbara, the kids arrive at about 10:00 AM and by the time the firemen and policemen drive them to the house, they're hungry and cooking begins immediately. "We spend a lot of time cooking and the kids spend a lot of time eating," she laughs. "We have a huge table on the deck covered with food and watermelons. My neighbor, Steve Rosenthal, does charcoal portraits of the kids. He sets up the minute they get there and stays until they leave. The kids play on the beach and the time just flies."

Melissa Hartung has attended with her family the last few years. "We love going," she says. She's so friendly and makes you feel so welcome, like you can relax. It's fantastic to open your whole house to all of these families."

"She has so many of her friends involved," Tim Hartung says. "And there's football, volleyball, boat rides, a portrait artist, we build sand castles – whatever you can think of, she's already thought of it. She's busy cooking and doling out ice cream all day but she takes the time to talk to the kids. She thinks about the families and the House throughout the year."

"When it's time to leave, I hand out pops and wave goodbye," Barbara says. "I want people to know that I love doing this and I could keep doing it forever. It gives me a great feeling and I'm thrilled that it's lasted so long."







## SANDRA LIU

*Finds Her Calling*

Even before 17-year old Sandra Liu was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma in 2007, she'd already lived in America, Taiwan, South Africa and Canada and had life experiences beyond her years.

Sandra was born in Oregon in 1991 while her mother Fanny, an Actuary, and her father Pao-pao, a Mechanical Engineer, studied for advanced degrees. When she was still very young, Sandra, her parents and older brother Edward returned to Taiwan where she attended school until the Seventh Grade. Because school in Taiwan is heavy in academics at the expense of the arts and sports, Sandra longed for more. Her parents agreed to send her to South Africa to live with her grandmother and to attend High School. Although Sandra spent the next few years in the top five percent of her class excelling in physics, chemistry and mathematics,

she now had the opportunity to take classes in fine art, music and technical drawing, finding that she enjoyed these subjects tremendously. Sandra also felt an immense sense of freedom in sports, participating competitively in tennis, soccer, swimming, ice-skating and long-distance running. "I thrilled at the feeling of freedom when ice-skating, the team spirit we developed in competitive soccer and tennis matches and the increase in my endurance gained from swimming and long-distance running," Sandra wrote in an autobiographical essay. And, the team spirit she'd gained through playing sports extended into other areas of her life. On weekends and holidays, Sandra and a group of friends spent time with the disabled sponsoring food drives and fundraisers for orphanages through the local Rotary Club. But, when her mother began a sabbatical year in Vancou-

ver, British Columbia, Sandra decided to spend the Eleventh Grade with her mother and younger brother Zachary in Canada.

It was around this time Sandra began to experience pain in her right knee, assuming it was nothing more than a tennis injury. Over the Christmas 2007 holidays in Taiwan, Sandra was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma, a bone cancer, affecting her right femur and muscle. Immediately, Sandra underwent three months of chemotherapy to shrink the tumor before receiving a total right-knee replacement in Taiwan. Unfortunately, by June 2008, the cancer had metastasized to her lung. She had a successful surgery on her right lung but shortly thereafter, her doctors found something on her left lung and decided that a consultation in New York at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center was her best op-

tion. In August, Sandra came to New York with Fanny for her consultation and began chemotherapy in conjunction with an immunotherapy treatment called MTP only available in the United States.

When Sandra and Fanny checked into Ronald McDonald House New York in August 2008, they were surprised by what they found. "We were shocked by the House and all they did for the kids," says Fanny. "When we went home after those first five days, we took the activities calendar with us to show everyone back home how amazing it was. On only her second day at the House, Sandra was able to go to the beach and play mini-golf. Normally, she would just go to the hospital and then go home. This House supports the children so well."

"We thought it would be like a hotel," Sandra says.





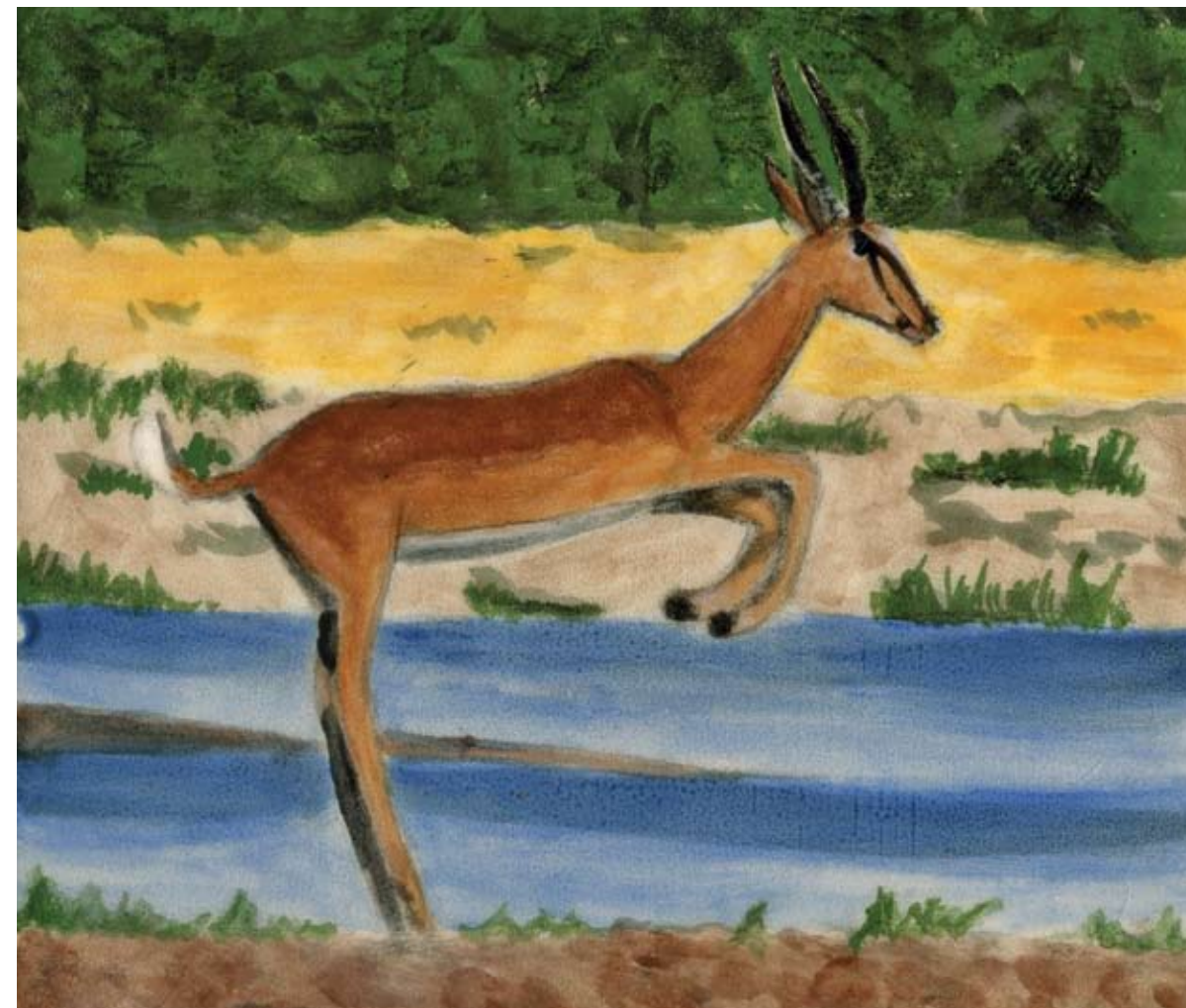
Sandra with mom Fanny, dad Pao-pao and brother Edward, Taiwan 2008



Sandra with brothers Zachary (left) and Edward (center), Taiwan, 2007



Sandra paints tiles for the 2009 IMAGINE Fundraiser (above); "Gazelle" (right)



"Sometimes I feel like I'm on holiday even though I'm in cancer treatment. And, it's great to be here with the other families from all over the world. We have a particularly close bond because of the common experience we share."

When Sandra and Fanny returned to Taiwan, Fanny was determined to ensure that Sandra could continue her treatments. With a great deal of drive and persistence, she contacted the pharmaceutical company in California and finally got them to agree to export the drug to Taiwan on Sandra's behalf under what is referred to as "Compassionate Use." "It's very difficult to do," Fanny says. "There has to be agreements between the hospitals and the countries to do this. These things usually take a long time, but in our case, it took only two weeks. This was very special."

By the winter of 2009, Sandra's doctors in Taiwan thought her best treatment options were in New York at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center because of a new antibody treatment.

Getting back to New York wasn't as easy as it sounded, though. Because U.S. hospitals require a deposit from non-U.S. citizens – in Sandra's case \$350,000 – the Lius had very little time to raise the full amount and came up short by about \$200,000. "I prayed and prayed," Fanny says. "I prayed for a sign of what to do, of whether it would be better to stay in Taiwan to try treatment using Chinese medi-

cine or for a way to get back to New York." When Fanny received a call from a friend in California for Chinese New Year, she explained the situation. Within a day, the friend called back with good news that another friend was willing to put up the additional \$200,000. "It was a miracle," Fanny says. "When you pray for something, it's not about begging. It's more about asking for something and believing in what you're asking for. You have to be able to receive, too."

Sandra and Fanny packed up and moved back to New York and into Ronald McDonald House New York to begin advanced treatment in February 2009.

In the first days of moving back, Sandra met volunteer Mark Rosenthal, the Director of The Art Center on East 75th Street, and began attending his workshop. "I was thrilled to have this opportunity," Sandra explains. "Whenever I'm working on my artwork, I get so absorbed, I don't worry about anything else." After her third lung operation, Sandra found that drawing helped her refocus her mind away from her cancer treatments and pain.

"It's part of a bigger learning experience," says Mark Rosenthal. "For every child, the experience is different but Sandra's choices of what she creates tend to be very beautiful and harmonious. She came to The Art Center with a high level of skill from the very beginning."

Sandra wrote the following in her essay: "It was

a great honor when Wini Cudjoe, the Director of House Operations, asked me to design three ties to be presented to the Honorees and Chairman of Ronald McDonald House New York at an event at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops Orchestra last April." It was at that same event Sandra had another opportunity – to sing in the House's band, Bad Habit, with *Schoolhouse Rock* legend Bob Dorough under the Direction of Sherrie Maricle and other members of the New York Pops on the great stage at Carnegie Hall.

Through Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center's education program for children in cancer treatment, Sandra completed High School and graduated on June 25th. Based upon her academic record, Sandra was selected Valedictorian for her class and was thrilled to have her father in New York to attend. "Considering what we've all gone through, graduation means a lot to us and our families," Sandra insists.

Earlier in the year, Sandra was nominated by a teacher for a citywide High School competition sponsored by The School Art League. "When I was recovering from a recent surgery, I received the good news that I would be awarded two medals at a ceremony at The Metropolitan Museum of Art," Sandra says. "I received the Alexander Medal for completing an art program with distinction and the St. Gaudens Medal for completing an art program with excellence in drawing."

Over the last several months, art has become so im-

portant to Sandra, she has decided to pursue a career in architecture to combine her strengths in math and academics with her natural gifts as an artist.

"I think of my life here as a good opportunity. When some of the other kids feel bad about missing things from home, I tell them to think about all of the opportunities their friends at home don't have. We have the chance to do things that our classmates and friends will never have." For Sandra, cancer has changed the trajectory of her life in many ways. But in the best way, it's helped her to find her calling as an artist.

According to Fanny, Ronald McDonald House is the best place for parents to stay with their children under the circumstances. "It's wise," she explains. "The families are well supported by the House, not just family-to-family but through such warmth from the staff and spiritual support too. Everyone is always smiling. They make you feel comfortable."

"I'm very thankful to the doctors and the nurses at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and to all the staff and volunteers at Ronald McDonald House for what they've done for me," Sandra says. "My experiences have taught me to enjoy what I have and to live my life to the fullest each day with a joyful heart. I'm so grateful."





Image courtesy of McDonald's Corporation

The first McDonald's franchise in Des Plaines, IL, opened by Ray Kroc in 1955

## SUPERSIZED HEARTS

HOW MCDONALD'S OWNER/OPERATORS  
(AND MILLIONS OF FRENCH FRIES) HELPED THOUSANDS OF PEDIATRIC  
CANCER PATIENTS FIND A HOME-AWAY-FROM-HOME IN NEW YORK CITY

When Ray Kroc opened the first McDonald's franchise in Des Plaines, IL in 1955, one of the basic tenets of his business philosophy was to give back to the community he served. And, even though the price of a burger and fries was a mere 25 cents back then, Ray Kroc managed to support a number of charitable organizations including many focused on children's causes.

According to Linda Dunham, a New York Metro Owner/Operator and Chairman of the Global Ronald McDonald House Charities, Ray Kroc insisted Owner/Operators give back and encouraged his franchisees to join charitable organizations and invest a portion of sales back into their respective communities instilling an atmosphere of responsibility as well as opportunity.

Linda joined the McDonald's team after a successful career in banking. "I really found my place in this business," she says. "It's given so much meaning to my work life and has allowed me to really feel that I'm doing something." When she started working with her husband, an Owner/Operator

in New York, Linda had the chance to visit the New York Ronald McDonald House, then located on East 86th Street, on what was called "Cleanup Day." Linda remembers getting stuck in the elevator with a little girl from Russia who was accompanied by her grandfather. They had been staying at the House after the Chernobyl accident while the little girl received cancer treatment in New York City. Linda immediately realized that some maintenance and a few other things were desperately needed. The event left her in tears. "I was so moved by that experience," she says. "It was crystal clear to me at that moment that I had to do something to try to help. I don't think there's anything you can compare with having a sick child." Not long after, Linda joined the House's Board of Directors with a new understanding of the extraordinary circumstances these families were trying to live under. "We provide a valuable service by helping them to have as normal a life as possible while they're with us," she says. What was clear to everyone involved with that first 24-room House on East 86th

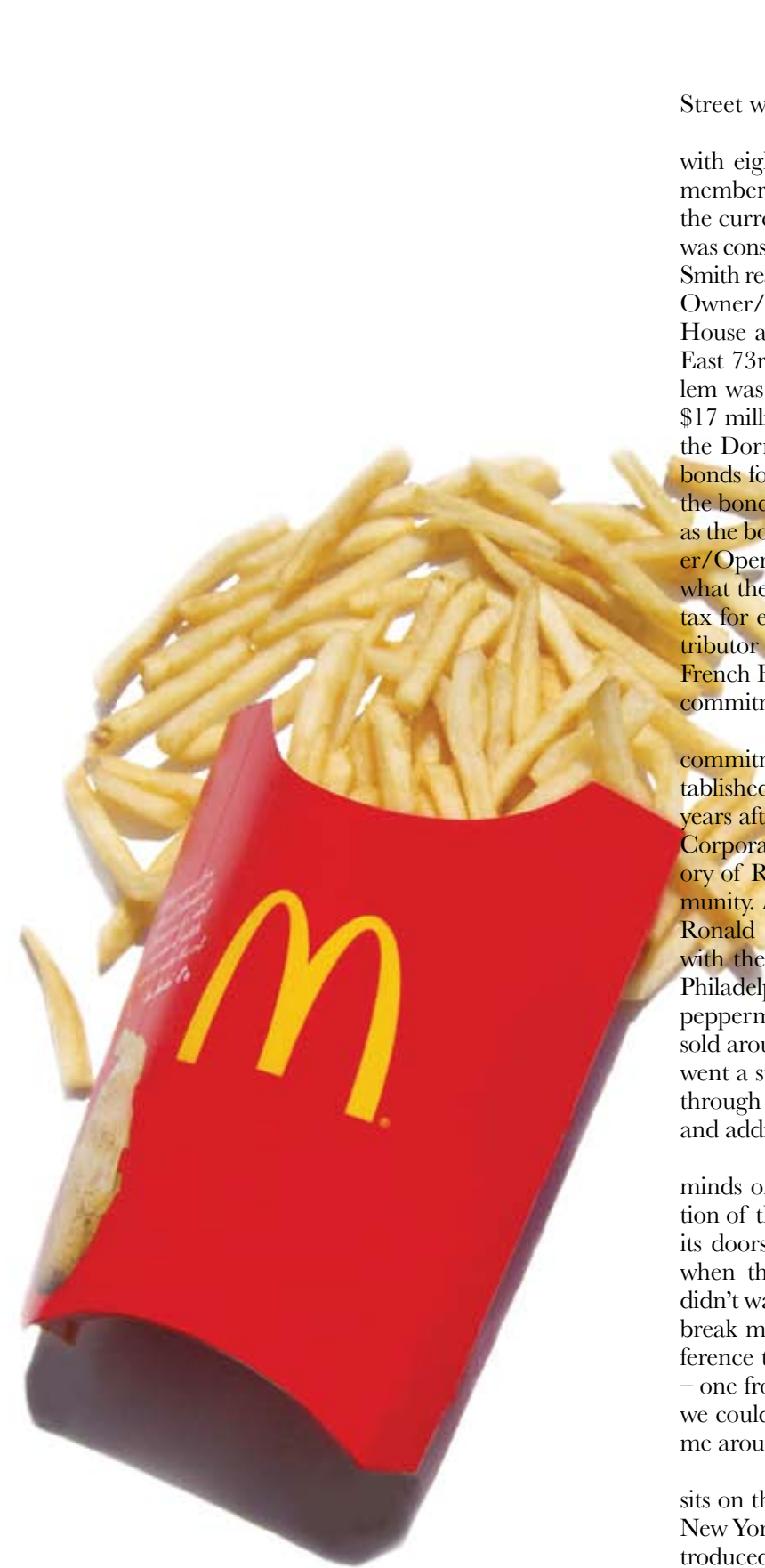


Photo Carol Tusciano

Street was that a bigger House was absolutely necessary.

Ed Flynn, another New York Metro Owner/Operator with eight local restaurants is a former Board Member who remembers that time as historically important in the evolution of the current 84-room facility on East 73rd Street. "The old House was constantly filled to capacity," he says. "Vivian Harris and Forrest Smith really wanted a bigger building." Forrest Smith, a McDonald's Owner/Operator and Chairman of the Board of the New York House at the time, was instrumental in locating the property on East 73rd Street originally owned by Con Edison. The big problem was figuring out a way to finance the property and raise the \$17 million needed to build the House. With a bit of negotiation, the Dormitory Authority of New York agreed to underwrite the bonds for the property and the Bank of New York agreed to rate the bonds so they could be sold to pay for the construction as long as the bonds had a guarantor. In 1988, the New York Metro Owner/Operators took on the liability of guaranteeing the bonds with what they called "The French Fry Tax," a two-cent, self-imposed tax for each pound of French Fries purchased through their distributor with about 620 restaurants participating at the time. The French Fry Tax raised millions of dollars and eventually the bond commitment was settled.

The French Fry Tax was a perfect example of Ray Kroc's commitment to Social Responsibility manifesting long after he established the first McDonald's franchise in 1955 and only a few years after his death in 1984. 1984 was also the year McDonald's Corporation created Ronald McDonald House Charities in memory of Ray Kroc and his commitment to giving back to the community. And, the charity was set up exactly 10 years after the first Ronald McDonald House opened in 1974 in Philadelphia. As with the New York Metro Owner/Operators, the first House in Philadelphia was supported by the local restaurants selling a green, peppermint shake called a Shamrock Shake, which was originally sold around St. Patrick's Day. Ronald McDonald House Charities went a step further and expanded their reach to support children through health and education initiatives and well as disaster relief and additional efforts not just locally but globally.

With that spirit of Social Responsibility foremost in the minds of the New York Metro Owner/Operators, the construction of the House on East 73rd Street was completed and opened its doors in 1993. Ed Flynn worked closely with Vivian Harris when the new building was under construction. "Originally, I didn't want to go near the House because I thought the kids would break my heart," he recalls. "But when I went to the press conference to announce the new facility, two fathers approached me — one from Ohio and one from Indiana — and said 'Without you, we couldn't be here. Thank you very much.' After that, it turned me around. I joined the Board and became the Treasurer."

Pete Samaha, an Owner/Operator with 13 restaurants sits on the Board of Directors of both Ronald McDonald House New York and Ronald McDonald House Charities. He was first introduced to the House when it was still located on East 86th Street. "I walked in to see the House on what I thought was a bad day for me. I was confronted by these families who were unbelievably positive and living through tough circumstances. It hit me hard. I left that day knowing I would never have a bad day again. And basically, I just dedicated myself to the House. I started by raising money with a golf tournament and eventually became a Board Member. There's nothing worse in life than losing a child."

Jerry McCoy, an Owner/Operator with a restaurant in





Image courtesy of Pete Samaha

New York Metro Owner/Operator and Board Member Peter Samaha (center) with Associates, presents a check to RMDH NY, 1988

Monroe, New York, has been a supporter of the House for over 20 years. “The mission is important,” he says. “Relieving these families of the pressures and concerns of having to find accommodations, and in some cases, food, under such stressful circumstances is tremendous. They can focus on the illness and not the other things that go along with it.”

Over the years, in speaking with families who have stayed at the House, Jerry has heard similar sentiments voiced over and over again – that families find great strength in an environment with others sharing the same experience. “For these families, being able to interact and talk with each other is a big part of it,” he says. “I have a strong affection for Ronald McDonald House and the great things they do for the kids and families. The Owner/Operators have a unique partnership with the House, one that goes beyond anything financial or legal. The reasons for what we do and why we do it haven’t changed since the beginning. I’ve always felt and continue to feel that the Owner/Operators would like to support the House for as long as it exists.”

Even though the bond commitment has been settled, the New York Metro Owner/Operators have continued their support of the New York House and three other locations

(Westchester, New Jersey and Long Island). They raise money through initiatives that range in scope from donation canisters on the counters of the restaurants to golf tournaments, black-tie events, sporting events, movie premieres, celebrity outreach and anything else they can come up with, literally raising millions of dollars over the years. As is the case with so many of the New York Metro Owner/Operators, Pete Samaha encouraged his children to get involved. “My oldest son began fundraising when he was still in High School. I like to take the kids to the House whenever they start to complain about life,” he laughs, but adds, “The New York House is one of the most successful Houses with respect to the numbers of children that are helped. It’s been a huge success and we’d like to help even more kids. We don’t ever want to be in a position where we can’t help these children. But every organization has the same problem now because there’s just not as much money out there for charity.”

“We take great pride in what we accomplish in our communities and through Ronald McDonald House Charities,” says Pete Samaha. “The company McDonald’s and the franchisees have given back with a huge proven record over the past 50 years. We’d like to do even more.”



## FUNDRAISING THE TREE OF LIFE

Visitors to Ronald McDonald House New York have noticed *The Tree of Life* wall sculpture has had a number of new leaf additions over the last few months. Several families have honored their Loved Ones with the installation of leaves and have gathered with friends and family to install each leaf on *The Tree of Life* with a special ceremony. This vibrant symbol of life and strength provides each family with an extraordinary way to memorialize and celebrate the life of someone special. As time goes by and more and more leaves are added, *The Tree of Life* will continue to refresh and support the House.

The financial support generated for Ronald McDonald House New York from *The Tree of Life* enables the House to offer more than just a place to sleep when families travel to New York City for their child’s cancer treatment. Like a tree, the House provides shelter, has many

branches of support and gives us strength in times of turmoil. The House is a home-away-from-home, a place with an extended family and life-long friendships with those who are there when you need them.

Leaves are engraved with a message and the name of the person being honored. Each leaf may be purchased for \$2,500. Your leaf will be placed on *The Tree of Life* and you will receive a beautiful glass tile to acknowledge the installation of the leaf in your Loved One’s name. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and will help us continue to offer services to families arriving today, tomorrow and in the years ahead.

For more information or to purchase a leaf, please contact Patrick Lenz, Director of Major Gifts, at 212.639.0600 or [plenz@rmdh.org](mailto:plenz@rmdh.org).

## BUY A SET OF RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE NEW YORK PLUSH DOLLS



Take a piece of Ronald McDonald House New York home with you by ordering a set of our Mascot Dolls – a simple yet fun way to put a smile on the face of someone you love! When you purchase a set of our colorful Mascot Dolls, your money goes directly to programming for our children and families.

For just \$20 (plus shipping and handling), you can purchase a set of our two Mascot Dolls (one girl and one boy, each approximately 7.5 inches tall), specially designed for RMDH NY, with over 75% of the proceeds directly benefiting our families. These collectible dolls are a must-have for that special someone in your life.

To order, please contact Lucrecia Ortiz at 212.639.0200 or [lucy@rmdh.org](mailto:lucy@rmdh.org).

Photos: Jerry Rautala





Photo: NYPD

**RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE NEW YORK'S  
SECOND ANNUAL COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY**

Date: Saturday, October 3, 2009 (rain date: Sunday, October 4, 2009)  
Time: 10:00 AM through afternoon  
Location: East 73rd Street between First and York Avenues

Due to its great success the first time around, Ronald McDonald House New York is pleased to announce its Second Annual Community Block Party in celebration of the House and its neighboring communities. We plan to feature live music throughout the day as well as great food, rides, games, arts & crafts, entertainment and Ronald McDonald himself! We also offer an educational line-up with representatives from New York Presbyterian Hospital Paramedics, New York's Finest and its Bomb Squad, Emergency Services Unit, Mounted Unit, Highway Motorcycle Unit and an appearance from McGruff the Crime Dog. New York's Bravest will give children the opportunity to experience an antique fire truck while learning about fire safety and prevention. Bring your pets for the "Blessing of the Animals"

and to meet RMDH NY's own Therapy Dogs through the Westminster Kennel Club's Angel on a Leash program. And, if you don't have a pet, you can adopt one through the ASPCA Adoption Mobile which will be on hand with some irresistible animals looking for a good home. Think of this as our way of saying thanks for all that our communities do for us throughout the year!

We are currently seeking sponsorship for this event. If you, your community group or company would like to support, underwrite or contribute to this event, or for more information on how you can help, please contact Daniel Badillo, Evening Manager, at 212.639.0182 or [dbadillo@rmdh.org](mailto:dbadillo@rmdh.org).



**ING NEW YORK CITY MARATHON**

Date: Sunday, November 1, 2009  
Time: 6:00 AM through afternoon  
Location: Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island and RMDH NY

Team Ronald McDonald is off and running in preparation for the ING New York City Marathon on November 1, 2009. Our 25 runners have signed on and have begun serious training to complete the 26.2-mile course while raising money and awareness in support of Ronald McDonald House New York. Please visit [www.rmdh.org](http://www.rmdh.org) to view our runners and offer your support.

If you are already registered to run in the ING New York City Marathon and would like to run in support of the House, please contact Michael Ballew to join the team and to learn how to create your own personal fundraising page. From your personal page, you will be able to invite your friends and family to support you and one of the most important charities in New York City. You will also be invited to a pasta dinner the evening before the event to meet the families you are running for. Plus, your friends and family will have the opportunity to staff the RMDH NY water stop at 73rd Street and First Avenue. On race day, you will be given access to our restrooms and refreshments on our Third Floor Terrace. Our top fundraisers will also be invited to a bagel breakfast and will receive transportation to the starting point on the morning of the race.

For more information on this event, please contact Michael Ballew, Development Officer, at 212.639.0209 or [mballew@rmdh.org](mailto:mballew@rmdh.org).



Photo: Clifton Buzar

**11TH ANNUAL KIDS' CHARITY FUN RUN**

Date: Saturday, November 7, 2009  
Time: 10:00 AM Ceremonies begin  
Location: Central Park, 7th Avenue at 59th Street

Kids from the ages of 4-17 are invited to participate in our 11th Annual Kids' Charity Fun Run in New York's Central Park to benefit Ronald McDonald House New York. This is a great opportunity for children to have fun and raise money to help pediatric cancer patients living at RMDH NY. Our Opening Ceremony includes a warm-up with Ronald McDonald and Grete Waitz, a nine-time winner of the ING New York City Marathon. All participants will receive a T-shirt and numbered bib when they arrive as well as ribbons and snacks at the finish line. There is a \$30 individual registration fee. Just follow the instructions at [www.rmdh.org](http://www.rmdh.org) to register beginning at 12:00 Noon on September 1, 2009. Event day registration is \$40. If your school is participating as a group, or you are part of a private group, please register at your school or with your group's leader.

For more information on this event, please contact Anthony Cardiello at 212.639.0192 or [acardiello@rmdh.org](mailto:acardiello@rmdh.org).

**CALENDAR**

**RMDH NY's  
Community Block Party**

**Date:** October 3, 2009  
Rain date: October 4, 2009  
**Time:** 11:00 AM  
**Location:** 73rd Street between York and First Avenues

**Children's Happy Faces  
Foundation Golf Outing**

**Date:** October 6, 2009  
**Time:** 9:00 AM Registration  
**Location:** Sleepy Hollow Country Club, Sleepy Hollow, NY

**Monday Night Football  
with the New York Giants**

**Date:** Autumn 2009  
**Time:** 6:30 PM  
**Location:** Giant's Stadium (Tentative)

**30th Anniversary  
Celebration of Niki Sideris**

**Date:** October 7, 2009  
**Time:** 6:30 PM  
**Location:** Jumeirah Essex House, Grand Salon Ballroom

**ING NYC Marathon  
Team Ronald McDonald**

**Date:** November 1, 2009  
**Time:** 6:00 AM  
**Location:** Meet at RMDH NY

**11th Annual Kids'  
Charity Fun Run**

**Date:** November 7, 2009  
**Time:** 10:00 AM  
**Location:** Central Park 7th Avenue at 59th Street

**Light a Light!  
Share a Night!**

**Date:** December 3, 2009  
**Time:** 5:30 PM  
**Location:** Lobby and Living Room of RMDH NY





## RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE NEW YORK

This is four-year old Mattie. Mattie and her parents lived at Ronald McDonald House New York while Mattie received treatment for Meduloblastoma, a very challenging brain cancer. By the age of three, Mattie had already experienced brain surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. Today, Mattie is considered cancer-free thanks to an advanced antibody treatment only available in New York City.

“When you’re in this type of situation, it means a lot not to have to worry about things like having a warm meal,” says Mattie’s dad, Duane. “The volunteers were awesome. The warmth of the staff was wonderful. And most of all, we felt safe.”

Today, Mattie is tap dancing and getting ready to start school.

Thanks to Ronald McDonald House New York, families just like Mattie’s can live in a safe, clean and supportive environment in close proximity to our 14 Partner Hospitals for a nominal fee of \$35 per night, far less than the \$270 it costs to house each family, each night. We provide family rooms, kitchens, a library, computer rooms, a play-room, tutoring, professionally supervised activities and transportation services. More importantly, we provide a loving and compassionate environment where children are children first and foremost.

Ronald McDonald House New York is independently owned and operated. Through generous donations from individuals like you, we can continue to cover the majority of costs for these families so they can concentrate on what’s really important – their child’s recovery.

Make a donation today.

Ronald McDonald House is a 501 ( c ) 3 charity accredited by the Better Business Bureau.



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE NEW YORK  
405 East 73rd Street, New York, NY 10021  
212.639.0100  
[www.rmdh.org](http://www.rmdh.org)