

Around the House

The Magazine for Ronald McDonald House New York. Volume 7, Issue 1



RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE® NEW YORK



The story of 15-year-old Tristin Greer and his family is one of hope, resilience and living life to its fullest.

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On the cover: Teen Jason Greer and his mother, Bronde Greer, from Chattanooga, Tenn., relaxing at the House in early January. Photo by Rob Rosenthal.



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.

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President's Letter



Marian Goldman

Dear Friends,

With this issue of *Around the House*, we welcome you back with gratitude for the wonderful holiday season our children enjoyed through your generosity and kindness. Please come by Ronald McDonald House New York to see some of our recently completed capital projects, including a new heated sidewalk, renovated bathrooms on the first floor, our state-of-the-art conference room, and a playroom that is second to none.

In a sign of Ronald McDonald House's growth and success, our lay leadership is expanding. We are delighted to welcome four new members to our Board of Directors and to inaugurate a new group of young leaders called the Board of Associates. Under the leadership of Jesse Cole, the Board of Associates will be charged with engaging yet another cadre of volunteers to support our activities by creating opportunities for a growing number of interested and altruistic New Yorkers to become involved.

Make sure you read about a hero to our kids, Joseph Paris, whose special donations help our teen population enhance their self-esteem. The wonderful story of the Greer family will simply show you the important work our charity provides for this special family.

Our highlighted programs reflect the diversity of our families, staff and volunteers, and demonstrate the importance of an upbeat environment brimming with wishes of hope for our families in all we do. Please take a look at our wish lists and the myriad of upcoming fundraisers and events that need your support.

It was T.S. Elliot who said, "For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice. And to make an end is to make a beginning." So let us begin this New Year with wishes of hope that 2012 will be a great year for our special kids and families who are battling cancer. And to our volunteers and supporters, may your year be filled with good health and good fortune.

In closing, my continued thanks for your support and friendship. We don't know what we would do without you!

Sincerely,

William T. Sullivan
President and Chief Executive Officer

Ronald McDonald House New York

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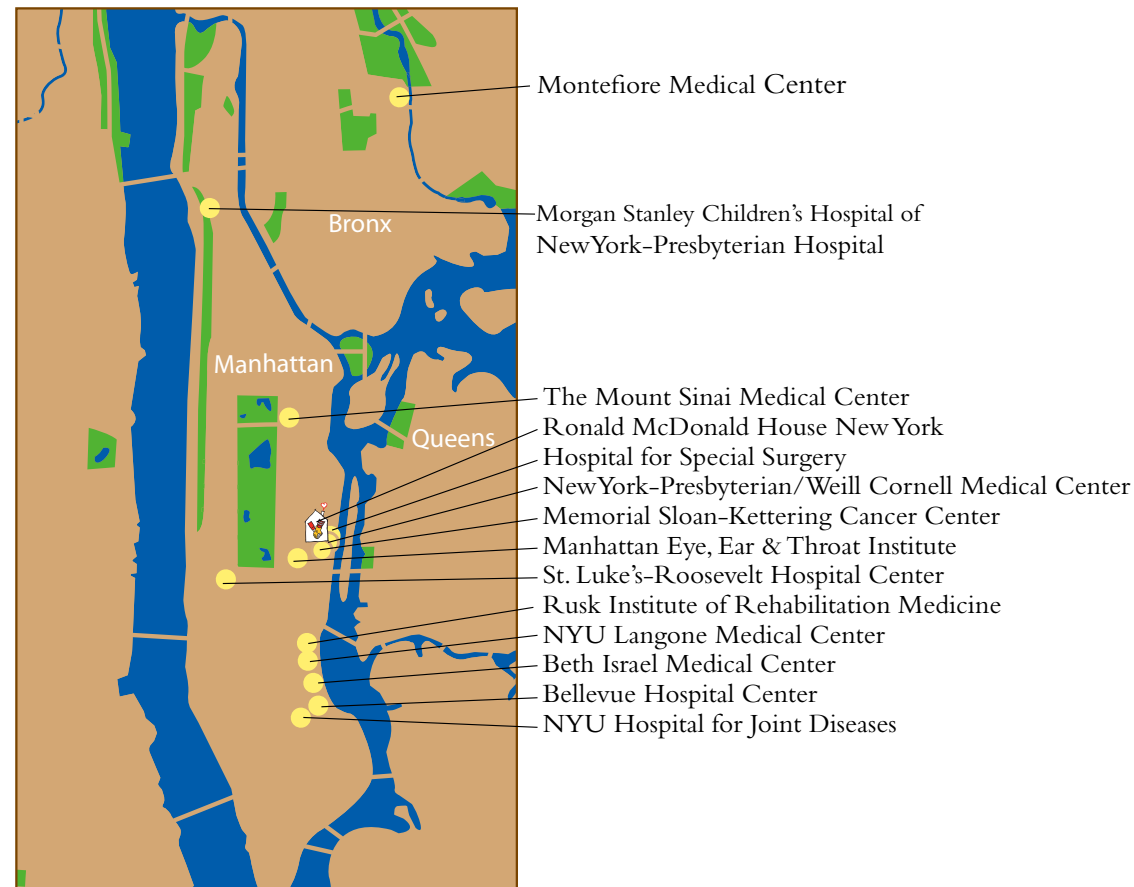
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Thank You

The Company Store

For the fourth holiday season, The Company Store and Company Kids generously donated new sheets, pillow-cases and towels to Ronald McDonald House New York. Their gift of 600 sets of linens, 50 crib sheets, 320 towel sets and 100 blankets, greatly helps us reduce our operating costs and offer the utmost in hospitality to our guest families.

In addition, as a participant in our annual Light a Light, Share a Night holiday event (see p. 16), this purveyor of high quality products for the bed and bath provided all the children with gift bags filled with wonderful items from Company Kids. Our loyal benefactor also encouraged monetary donations from its employees by agreeing to match dollar-for-dollar their contributions in support of families' stays at the House. Thank you once again to all our wonderful friends and supporters at The Company Store and Company Kids!

"Fashion Delivers" Helps With Clothing Needs of Our Families

When families arrive at the House, the last thing on their minds is what they're going to wear. A visit to New York they thought would take a week might end up lasting several months or even longer. Some families from warmer climates arrive here unprepared for colder weather. Most families' resources are concentrated on travel costs, hospital bills and household expenses back home. While clothing often becomes a major need for our guest families, they don't have the time, energy or money to shop.

Enter Peter J. Corritori, an apparel industry executive and a member of the board of governors of the New York Athletic Club, who has greatly helped on this front. Mr. Corritori first turned dreams into reality when he obtained donations of tuxedos for our dads and boys to wear to the annual Spring Social, which takes place at the club. But he was also instrumental in introducing the House to Allan Ellinger, founder and chairman of Fashion Delivers, a charity that solicits donations of new clothing from the apparel industry and distributes it to people and communities in crisis.

Wish List

Thank you for your thoughtful donation of items that help to make the transition a little easier for families staying at Ronald McDonald House New York.

Following is a list of items that are urgently needed.

For the Children

- Diapers
- Baby wipes

For the Moms and Dads

Gift cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Target, Walgreens, Payless Shoes, JC Penney, Starbuck's

For the Families

- Hand sanitizer bottles
- Postage stamps
- Umbrellas
- Rain ponchos
- Rain boots (all sizes)

For the House

- 90 Vacuum cleaners
- 90 DVD players (Blue Ray)
- 30 Irons
- 30 Ironing boards with covers
- 30 Hair dryers
- Paper goods: cups, plates, napkins
- Clear plastic storage containers
- Clorox or Lysol wipes
- Copy paper
- 18/10 Flatware
- Oven mitts
- Batteries (AAA, AA, C, D)

Help a Family Today with a Special Gift!

- Sponsor a room night payment (\$35/night)
- Sponsor a birthday party or special program party

Bulk Donations:

If you, your community group or company would like to share 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@rmh-newyork.org.

For the Playroom

For further information regarding Playroom donations, please contact Nelida Barreto, Director of Programs, at 212.639.0205 or nbarreto@rmh-newyork.org.

For School

- 2" binders – hard and collapsible
- Backpacks (regular and wheeled) small, medium and large
- Colorful folders
- Erasers
- Lined notebooks
- Lined paper (3-hole punched)
- Pencil sharpeners
- Red, blue and black markers
- Small hand sanitizers
- Yellow/pink/blue highlighters

Arts & Crafts

- Scrapbook materials
- Scrapbook add-on decorations
- White gloves
- Acid-free paper
- Archival glue
- Crayola Color Wonder paper and markers
- Drop cloths for tables
- Feathers
- Glitter glue

- Glue guns and glue sticks
- Glue dots
- Googly Eyes
- LEGO blocks, people and BIONICLE sets
- Oil cloth table cloths
- Pipe cleaners-assorted colors
- Play-Doh
- Pom poms
- Scissors (blunt and sharp)
- Small Elmer's Glue
- Washing Paint
- White drawing paper

For the Game Room:

- Foosballs
- Ping-pong balls and paddles
- New Xbox 360 Games
- New Playstation 3 Games
- iTunes Gift Cards (for our new iPad Programs)

For the Tot Section

- Baby dolls
- Baby doll clothing and accessories
- Soft foam building blocks in assorted colors, shapes and sizes
- Stereo

For the Teens

- Blu-Ray DVDs
- MTA Metro Cards (for school transportation)
- Portable Organ
- Sony Snap Lab (UP CR20L)
- Upright Piano

Macy's Gift Registry

The RMH-New York "Wish List" is also available through the Macy's Gift Registry (First Name: ronald Last Name: mcdonald). For more information, visit our "Wish List" page at www.rmh-newyork.org/wishlist.

Mr. Ellinger invited friends and colleagues in the fashion industry to the House to learn about our work and the needs of our families. The group turned around with an immediate delivery of 24 cartons of clothes, shoes, undergarments and coats to help our families face winter in New York. Since then,

boxes of apparel have been streaming into the House to meet the continuous need for clothing of our children, as well as their parents and siblings. We can't thank Fashion Delivers and the donating companies enough for their thoughtful and generous support. ■

What's New at Your House?

Three important and much needed capital projects were completed in late 2011, as part of the ongoing effort to maintain and when possible improve the physical condition and surroundings of Ronald McDonald House New York. All three projects represent major enhancements to the health, safety, comfort and functioning of the House for our families, volunteers and other visitors.

Heated Sidewalk Improves Safety, Reduces Costs

Snow shovels and bags of salt are no longer items on the budget at Ronald McDonald House New York, thanks to the installation of a new sidewalk in front of the building that can melt snow and ice. For safety reasons, the House was planning to remove the 20-year-old cracked sidewalk during the summer months and replace it with a stronger, more attractive pavement.

But as demolition began, Ike Byer, president of Integrated HVAC Systems & Services, in Islip, Long Island, approached the House to suggest adding a heating element to the newly reinforced sidewalk before pouring the concrete. He also offered the services

of his company to install the heating system, which is comprised of special piping that works with weather sensors to circulate heated glycol through the sidewalk when the conditions are cold and wet. Mr. Byer's extraordinary donation of materials and labor is valued at more than \$80,000.

The project surpassed expectations, according to Mel Farrell, building engineer at the House. "Not only have we added a very attractive sidewalk to the House, but we've greatly reduced long-term expenses," he said. "We'll no longer be using salt, which destroys concrete, and we've reduced labor costs because there will be no more shoveling or ice chipping."



Photos by Wini Cudjoe



Conference Room Renovation Maximizes Space, Improves Functionality

Finished just in time for the holiday season, a major renovation of the first-floor conference room brings more space and amenities to this important meeting area for the board of directors, staff and volunteers. The redesign of the space, which involved moving some

walls, has made the room more spacious, expanded its usable area and even made it suitable now for small events.

The freshly appointed room features customized wood cabinets, a kitchen area for serving beverages and light food, recessed lighting, surround sound, wireless service, an A/V system for presentations and new carpeting and furnishings. Stop by sometime and take a peek.



Mel Farrell

First-Floor Restrooms Upgraded With New Look and Feel

Upgrading the public restrooms on the first floor was another priority capital project for 2011. These bathrooms, which are heavily used by staff and volunteers, as well as our guest families, were serviceable, though generic and no longer in keeping with the recently renovated living room and conference room on the first floor.

With the redesign of the restrooms came a decision not to replace the floor tiles. Instead the concrete floors underneath were polished and finished with resin. "This makes the floors very easy to clean," explained Mel Farrell, building engineer. "Without tiles, we don't have to worry about grouting, where mold and bacteria can collect."

New color schemes, furnishings, lighting and plumbing fixtures were carefully chosen to create warmly distinctive ladies' and gentlemen's facilities. "The bathrooms now nicely complement the elegance of our new Macy's Living Room," noted Wini Cudjoe, director of operations.



Marian Goldman Photography

Spotlight on Your Board — New Board Members

Ronald McDonald House New York recently added four new members to its Board of Directors. Each director brings a wealth of knowledge and insight related to their specific field of specialty, as well as a strong passion to the task of furthering our mission. Please join us as we welcome:



Kathryn Beal, M.D.

Assistant Attending Physician, Department of Radiation Oncology, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

Dr. Beal is a radiation oncologist who specializes in treating brain tumors and breast cancer. Her expertise is in stereotactic radiosurgery and in administering image-guided radiation therapy for both metastatic disease and primary brain tumors. With colleagues, she researches different types of MRI sequences for primary brain tumors and the effect they may have on the design and delivery of radiation therapy. She is also an expert in the use of intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) and image guidance for the delivery of radiation for brain tumors (IGRT). In the treatment of breast cancer, she has a particular interest in image guidance for both whole-breast and partial-breast techniques, as well as radiation therapies for breast cancer.



E. Randall Clouser

Head of Distribution and Regional Management, North America Commercial, Zurich

Mr. Clouser has more than 30 years of insurance industry experience. Since 2008, he has served as Northeast regional executive of Zurich, a leading property and casualty insurance provider worldwide. He joined the company in 1996 as CEO of Zurich

Corporate Solutions, then moved to Switzerland where he served for 12 years as the group's chief marketing officer and subsequently COO and head of the growth office.



Alex Dimitrief

Vice President & General Counsel, Litigation and Legal Policy, GE Energy

Recently appointed to his current position, Mr. Dimitrief over-

sees the legal and compliance functions for GE Energy's worldwide portfolio, including power and water, oil and gas, and energy management. He joined GE in 2007 as vice president for litigation and legal policy, responsible for litigation and enforcement proceedings against the company and its business segments in the U.S. and abroad. Previously, he was a trial lawyer in the firm Kirkland & Ellis, serving clients in its Chicago and New York offices since 1986. His practice areas included securities, intellectual property disputes, environmental matters and products liability, and bankruptcy litigation.



Ralph Monte

Principal, IT Advisory, KPMG

Mr. Monte brings more than 25 years of information systems audit and advisory experience, including information security and recovery services. His expertise encompasses the review and evaluation of systems and controls in the pharmaceutical, chemical, healthcare, distribution and manufacturing industries. At KPMG, a global network of firms providing audit, advisory and tax services, he assists clients with project management, awareness and education programs, guidance on documentation of general IT controls, and identification and testing of automated controls in business processes. ■

Recently appointed to his current position, Mr. Dimitrief oversees the legal and compliance functions for GE Energy's worldwide portfolio, including power and water, oil and gas, and energy management. He joined GE in 2007 as vice president for litigation and legal policy, responsible for litigation and enforcement proceedings against the company and its business segments in the U.S. and abroad. Previously, he was a trial lawyer in the firm Kirkland & Ellis, serving clients in its Chicago and New York offices since 1986. His practice areas included securities, intellectual property disputes, environmental matters and products liability, and bankruptcy litigation.



Natalie Greaves

Jesse Cole (center), chairman of the new Board of Associates, with Stanley Shopkorn, chairman of the Board of Directors, and William T. Sullivan, president and CEO.

Board of Associates

The Board of Associates is a non-policy-making volunteer committee made up of prominent New Yorkers who have access to resources that can help further the mission of Ronald McDonald House New York to provide a home-away-from-home for families battling pediatric cancer.

The committee relies on its members' passion and creativity to coordinate projects that assist with fundraising, service to families residing at the House, social activities and mentoring relationships. Members are expected to contribute generously, whether through their contacts or their own resources.

If you're seeking a challenging, highly visible opportunity to help spread awareness about this very important cause, please call Rick Martin at 212-639-0206, or write him at rmartin@rmh-newyork.org and include a resume or CV with your inquiry.

Current Associates

Eric M. Anton • Leslie Barrett
Jesse Cole • Bill Freda
Deborah Freer • Joshua Glazer
Jennifer Hاديaris • Anne Jablonski
Robin Lowe • Michael Keating
Michael V. Marrale • David Matthews
Dan O'Regan • Trish Wescoat Pound
Jennifer Raines • Sacha Ross
Greg Spiegel • Rocco Strazzella
Debra Teramo • Jordan Teramo
Chris Theodoros
Michael Weisburger • Guy Weltsch
Liz Wintrich • Tara Spiegel
Christa Zambardino

Volunteer Spotlight: Joseph Paris Creates Movie Star Magic for Pediatric Cancer Patients

Joseph Paris has a very special talent of making people look good – fabulous, in fact. As the hairstylist to the stars, his gifted hands have given new life to the tresses of well-known faces, from some of today's most popular talk show hosts to Old Blue Eyes himself. But these days, Mr. Paris carries out a very special mission from his midtown salon, Joseph Paris Naturally, taking his patented technique for hair replacement and using it to create custom-made hair pieces for children battling cancer.

Inspired by his own experience with alopecia as a teenager, Mr. Paris has a special place in his heart for children dealing with sudden hair loss. He grew up expecting to go into his father's business as butcher, but the constant frustration of dealing with finding the right hairstyle to compensate for his alopecia led Mr. Paris down a different path.

His mother recognized that her son had a different type of skill with his hands, and she suggested he consider becoming a hair stylist.

"Not wanting to be in the meat business, I said 'If I'm going to be a hair dresser, I'm going to try to be the best I can be,'" Mr. Paris reminisced. "And from there, I went to hair dressing school, and I became the best hair dresser in Brooklyn."

From Brooklyn, he landed on the movie sets of California, and traveled across the world to provide his services to the King of Morocco. Today, he counts among his VIP clients the children of Ronald McDonald House New York, for whom he pours all of his love and dedication into every piece.



Hair replacement expert Joseph Paris in the office of his Manhattan salon, where he devotes time and resources to creating customized hair pieces for children at the House undergoing chemotherapy.

"Doesn't it break your heart to see a kid with cancer? At 74, I've got to give something back," Mr. Paris said as he discussed the heartwarming experience of seeing a child with cancer as they try on a wig for the first time. "I see a smile that would light up the room. I see the parents get so emotional, they start crying because they say, 'That's just the way my daughter looked prior to her losing her hair.'"

The key to Mr. Paris' yourHAIRx hair replacement system is the fact that it includes actual hair harvested from the patient early in the treatment process. He believes it's a critical way to fight depression during the recovery process, for a patient to see their own hair

instead of a synthetic product.

He then explained how the hair replacement system is created for each client: "The moment that the patient gets diagnosed to undergo chemotherapy, while the hair is still intact, the key is to take a photograph from all four sides before the patient takes their first treatment. Then what we do is we harvest some hair. We bleach the knots, and the hairs are put in one single strand at a time. It's like a nylon stocking that fits like a glove — harvesting the hair and putting it in front of the hairline — so that the patient looks like themselves."

The result is a wig that looks incredibly natural, largely because it leaves the patient's hairline intact. The use of "before" photos is an additional tool to ensure that the patient looks exactly as they did from day one.

Mr. Paris' career has brought him a long way from his Bensonhurst beginnings, but it's here in the heart of New York City that his skill and sense of style are working wonders to boost the self image of children with cancer and the family members who care for them.

We are very grateful to Mr. Paris for his contributions to the children of the House, and wish him continued success with the yourHAIRx brand. ■

Mr. Joseph's patented technique involves harvesting some of the children's own hair before treatment begins and blending it, particularly at the hairline, to create a natural look.



For Tristin Greer and His Family, New Antibody Treatment Renews Hope

Tristin Greer, age 15, enjoys the interests and pastimes of many teenage boys: Hanging with friends. Mastering his favorite Play Station 3 games. Staying up-to-the-moment (literally) with friends via text-messaging and FaceBook. Following the highs and lows of his favorite sports teams. Procrastinating big-time with homework.

Yet, Tristin is anything but an average teenager. He has been battling cancer for more than two years. What's more, his life is split between his hometown, Chattanooga, Tenn., where he's a high school sophomore, and New York City, where he spends about half of every month in treatment. Tristin is one of the very first participants in the recently FDA-approved clinical trial of humanized 3F8 antibody (Hu3F8), a hopeful new treatment for his cancer, neuroblastoma, which attacks nerve endings.

When in treatment, Tristin resides at Ronald McDonald House New York, described by his father, Jason Greer, variously as "an amazing setting for kids," "a place of love and caring" and "the best place to be if you have to be away from home." He should know, since the family has stayed at "The Ronald," as he fondly calls it, countless times since Tristin's first treatment visit in summer 2010.

Shuttling back and forth between home and New York is disruptive, to say the least, to Tristin's schooling, social life and family. But when Tristin's at "The Ronald," he's able to do much of what he says he'd be doing at home anyway. You guessed it... He immerses himself in video games, reigns at the ping pong table, keeps in constant communication with friends back home, and just plain "chills" with a tight group of friends, other teens who live at Ronald McDonald House New York.

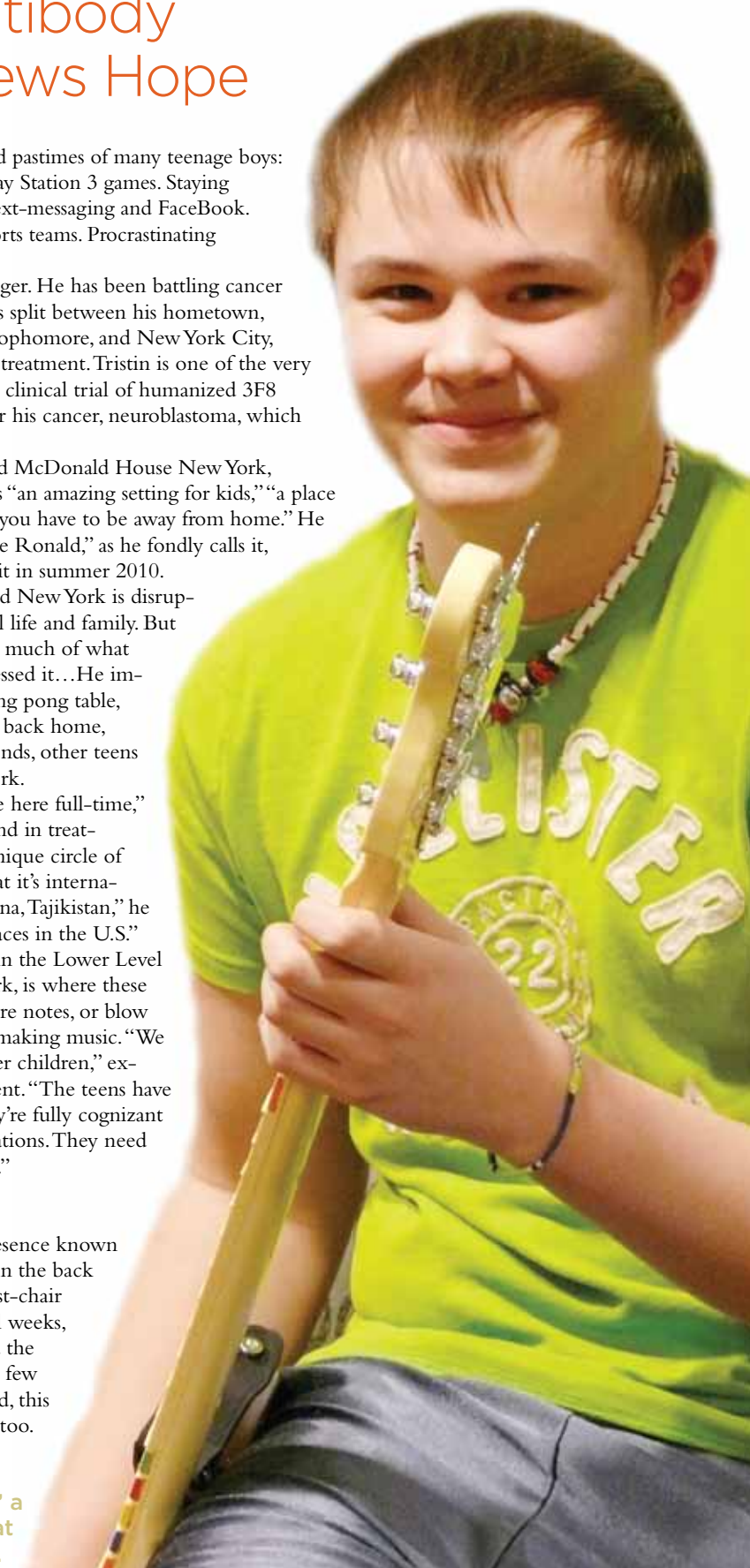
"There are five families with teens that live here full-time," Tristin explained. "We're all around 15 or 16 and in treatment for different cancers." What makes this unique circle of friends even more interesting, said Tristin, is that it's international. "They're from Haiti, Puerto Rico, Guyana, Tajikistan," he counted off, with pride, "and from different places in the U.S."

The Teen Room, located in the Playroom in the Lower Level Lounge of Ronald McDonald House New York, is where these friends congregate. There, they can talk, compare notes, or blow off steam playing games, watching a movie or making music. "We don't have as many teens here as we do younger children," explained Richard Martin, director of development. "The teens have very different needs. Unlike the little ones, they're fully cognizant of what they're going through and the ramifications. They need their own space to talk, hang out and have fun."

The road to New York

For Tristin, neuroblastoma first made its presence known in September 2009 by producing severe pains in the back of the former all-city soccer midfielder and first-chair viola player. After the pains persisted for several weeks, his doctor diagnosed appendicitis and removed the inflamed organ. Tristin was symptom-free for a few months, and then the mysterious pains returned, this time radiating through his sides and abdomen, too.

Tristin Greer playing "Guitar Hero," a favorite pastime in the Teen Room at the House.



Tristin Greer (continued)

In re-examining Tristin, his doctor found a hard spot in his abdomen. An ultrasound revealed a large mass “the size of a water bottle,” recalled Jason Greer, the details of his son’s medical odyssey indelibly pressed into his memory. Blood tests and a biopsy pinpointed neuroblastoma.

Neuroblastoma is one of the most common childhood cancers, with an average of 700 new diagnoses in the U.S. each year. Most often, it’s found in children younger than 2. It strikes the sympathetic nervous system — regulator of our internal organs and flight-or-fight response. The cancer frequently originates in one of the adrenal glands, which sit on top of the kidneys, but can also develop in nerve tissue in the abdomen, chest, neck or pelvis.

Tristin’s doctors in Chattanooga recommended a series of six high-dose cycles of chemotherapy. Sick and weak from the side effects, which included extreme nausea, vomiting, pain and fevers, he withdrew from school and was tutored at home for the rest of the school year. With the tumor still sizeable and wrapped around Tristin’s vena cava,

surgical removal was a high-risk proposition — one his local doctors didn’t feel completely confident about tackling.

Jason, a firefighter for the city of Chattanooga, began researching all he could about surgery for neuroblastoma and read about a pediatric surgeon at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC). He reached out to the doctor about Tristin’s case, and surgery soon was scheduled for August 2010. Social workers at MSKCC arranged for Tristin and his family to stay at nearby Ronald McDonald House New York for three weeks of tests, surgery and recuperation.

“The best place in the world for our son to receive treatment”

Nearly a year from the onset of Tristin’s symptoms and just a day before his 14th birthday, the Greer family arrived in New York not knowing what to expect during their stay. But the first order of business was celebrating Tristin’s birthday, and the staff at Ronald McDonald House New York made sure it was a special day, presenting him with

a cake, gifts and tickets to a Mets game. “Tristin was feeling good then,” Jason recalled of their adventure going to the new Citi Field stadium in Queens.

Tristin’s surgery lasted 12 hours and was successful. In its aftermath, Jason and his wife, Bronde, came to an important realization about Tristin’s ongoing treatment. “We understood this is the best place in the world for our son to receive treatment, and this is where we need to bring him,” said Jason.

Since surgery, Tristin has been involved in three new treatment protocols at MSKCC. He was part of a Phase II trial of bevacizumab (Avastin), with six monthly cycles of this new agent that has shown the ability to shrink tumors by choking off their blood supply. This was followed by a round of natural killer (NK) cell therapy, in which Tristin received a donation from Jason of specialized white blood cells that can recognize and kill abnormal cells in the body.

After those two treatment regimens, Tristin’s scans showed improvement. “He was at a crossroads in terms of treatment



Tristin with his dad, Jason Greer, in one of their first stays at the House.



Tristin and his twin brothers Justin and Austin, now 10, who have accompanied him on two of his many treatment visits to New York.

In the face of wearing travel and treatment schedules, one of Tristin’s exceptional traits is his ability to make time for life.

options,” said Jason. “His doctor knew the humanized antibody would be available soon [for clinical trials] and Tristin was a good candidate. It was a matter of timing, so they put him on two months of ‘maintenance chemo’ to keep him stabilized.” When humanized antibody 3F8 was approved by the FDA last summer for trials in pediatric neuroblastoma patients, Tristin was one of the very first patients to enter the Phase I trial.

How does the new treatment work? “Tristin’s body doesn’t realize the tumors are bad,” Jason explained. “The antibodies attach to the neuroblastoma cells and act as a beacon to tell his immune system to attack the cancer cells.”

Tristin will stay in the study for at least a year, said his parents, and hopefully, it will knock out the remaining cancer cells. “The most amazing thing about this treatment is that it’s non-toxic,” added Jason, remembering Tristin’s earlier rounds of chemo. Initial scans of Tristin, conducted after every two cycles of Hu3F8 treatment, showed tumor reduction and then stabilization. Dosing will increase over time, and scans will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the treatment.

Life lived in two places

In this current phase of treatment, Tristin’s life is divided into 10 to 12 day periods spent alternately at home, not in treatment, and in New York, in treatment.

Tristin appears to handle the disjointed nature of his life with ease and even enjoyment. He’s learned to live life fully wherever he is. At the House, he’s made deep attachments to the other kids and has become a big-brother figure to many of the younger ones. He takes full advantage of the many activities offered. He’s attended numerous professional sporting events in baseball, football, basketball and hockey, and even met big-name players. He’s visited Six Flags and the New York Car Show, ice-skated in Central Park and danced at grand parties like Winter Wonderland at the Burden Mansion.

As Jason reflected on his son’s time away from his 10-year-old twin brothers, friends and school, he said, “Emotionally, it’s very hard with him being away.” The ordeal, understandably, has brought financial strain, too. Without the accommodations and meals provided by Ronald McDonald House New York, the treatment plan at MSKCC would be unthinkable. Still, the Greers are responsible for the many flights between Chattanooga and New York, and Jason and Bronde, who runs a coffee shop the family owns in a local mall, alternate taking time off from work and away from the rest of the family. Sometimes Tristin’s grandmother or aunt accompanies him. “It’s definitely been a family affair,” Jason mused.

“New York is expensive, and it costs so much to be away from home,” Jason

said, noting how much he appreciates the dinners provided most evenings by volunteer groups at Ronald McDonald House New York. Tristin’s mom, Bronde, echoed his concerns: “Every time you walk outside, it seems like you have to spend money.” She takes advantage of guest passes donated by the nearby Equinox Health Club to work out sometimes twice a day. On weekends, the Hong Kong native treats herself to a subway ride downtown to Chinatown, where she likes to stroll and pick up food to bring back uptown.

In a recent visit to New York, Tristin asked his doctors if they could adjust the schedule for his next treatment to allow him a few more days at home. “It’s homecoming, and my girlfriend really wants to go to the dance,” he explained.

Of course, his doctors agreed. In the face of wearing travel and treatment schedules, one of Tristin’s exceptional traits is his ability to make time for life, have fun, discover new people and places, and keep up his interests and friendships. Despite his absences from school, Tristin still plays viola in the orchestra. Soccer is another story. “I can’t run like I used to,” he said, trying to reconcile, it seemed, his life before cancer with the present. “I don’t have the stamina.”

Everyone’s greatest hope for this remarkable teen is that, in time, he will. ■

“The Greers Helped Me to Help So Many Others”

On one of Tristin’s visits to New York last spring, the House provided him and his dad with donated tickets for box seats at a Yankees game located right behind the team’s dugout. Seated behind them was Dr. Thomas Haveron, a chiropractor from New Jersey and long-time season ticket holder, who engaged them in conversation and soon confirmed his hunch that Tristin, who was bald at the time and couldn’t stand for very long, was a cancer patient.

“Doc,” as he’s affectionately known, offered to get Tristin a game ball. Tristin one-upped him, and said, “I’ll get you a signed ball. When you look like me, they give you whatever you want.” Doc was disarmed by his frankness and affect. “He was like a 35 year-old man then, not a kid,” he said. The sports enthusiast invited Tristin and his dad to meet him back at the stadium a week later for a Yankees versus Red Sox game, where he took his guests

onto the field to meet some of the players. “It was great to see Tristin’s eyes light up and for him to look and act like a kid again,” remembered Doc.

So began a friendship not only with the Greers, but also with Ronald McDonald House New York and numerous families from around the country with children battling cancer. Doc had just recently launched a foundation, Medicine via Philanthropy (MVP), whose mission was to provide scholarships for low-income students seeking education in the medical professions. His introduction to families struggling with pediatric cancer inspired him to expand the mission of his foundation to also help children with life-threatening illnesses. Last summer, Doc raised \$100,000 through a charitable event he sponsored at Yankee Stadium. He distributed the funds for scholarships and for pediatric cancer causes, including \$10,000 for



Tristin with Dr. Thomas Haveron at a Yankees game.

Ronald McDonald House New York. He’s planning another fundraising event for 2012.

“Meeting Tristin and his family changed my life,” said Doc, who has lost many family members to cancer, including his mother when he was just 4. “They’ve helped me to help so many others.”

Community Snapshots

At the home-away-from-home for families coming from all over the world in their battle against cancer, our “community” is a broad one. Here are a few highlights of some of the people who have recently touched our hearts at Ronald McDonald House New York.



Music Superstar Taylor Swift Visits the House

Early one evening in the late fall, Taylor Swift slipped into Ronald McDonald House New York for an unpublicized visit with our children and their families. During her intimate, hour-long visit, the country singer-songwriter pulled out her very first guitar and sang four of her songs — of course, the kids knew all the words — sharing stories about each one and telling jokes.

The 22-year-old international music star, already the recipient of seven Grammys and numerous other music awards, gave out signed photos, t-shirts and other gifts, posed for photos with the children and their parents, and made sure everyone got a big hug. We are honored that this young artist, who has demonstrated a deep commitment to important charitable causes, has reached out to touch the families at Ronald McDonald House New York in such a personal way. It was an experience those of us present will cherish always. Thank you, Taylor. We love you!

Holiday Deliveries From Our Firefighter and Police Friends

Our first responders hold a special place in our hearts, and we in theirs. Their frequent visits to the House are always met with excitement by the children and appreciation by their families. During the holiday season, we received visits from our neighborhood FDNY Engine Company 44, who gave gifts to the children; Engine 303, from the Yonkers Fire Department, who also brought presents; and our local NYPD 19th Precinct, who treated everyone to dinner from Tony’s Napoli and gave gifts to the children. Thank you all for your incredible generosity and for always thinking of us at the House.

Thanksgiving Day Parade and Much More

If you find yourself visiting New York at Thanksgiving, it can only lead to thoughts of seeing Macy’s legendary parade in person with its giant balloons of Spider-Man, Snoopy, SpongeBob and other favorite characters, floats carrying oodles of celebrities and all those marching bands. And why wouldn’t our families, too, like to partake in the fun and excitement?

For the third year, New York Athletic Club has made it possible by welcoming our families on Thanksgiving morning with open arms and a delicious breakfast to fortify everyone for hours of viewing delight — right from the club’s windows overlooking the parade route. From the warmth and safety of the club, everyone can participate in the fun. Transportation to the club and back was provided by our friends at the NYPD’s 19th and 20th Precincts, who made their buses available to us.

The magic and bounty of the day continued back at the House when our families sat down together for a mouth-watering Thanksgiving dinner cooked by our friends at Neuman’s Catering, with turkeys provided by Ronald McDonald House Charities and delectable sides and treats from Eli’s. Many thanks to our staff member Greg Denizard and his family for so generously overseeing the set up of Thanksgiving dinner (for the 15th year in a row!) and to the volunteers on board, including those from Guggenheim Partners and the International Securities Exchange.



Parent Pantry

The newly launched Parent Pantry at Ronald McDonald House New York makes non-perishable food and household items available to families who are unable to purchase such goods themselves. This initiative, led by board member Terry Bovin, invites the donations of local school groups who want to help our guest families in a meaningful way.

“When we started contacting schools to participate in the Parent Pantry, we hoped it would generate interest,” said Ms. Bovin. “In a few short months, 20 schools have either run drives or are in the process of doing so.” The first school to step up was Saint Ignatius Loyola, with an extraordinarily generous delivery of towels, toiletries, paper products, diapers and wipes, and light cleaning products.

There have been additional, unexpected benefits for the House from this new program. Students at the schools have become aware of the House and a group of them is now volunteering on Saturdays. Teachers have also joined our efforts by hosting “A Very Merry Un-Birthday” party (as in “Alice in Wonderland”) for all the children and their families on leap day, February 29th.

Some parents from the schools are getting involved, too, in organizing donation drives at their offices. In the spirit of giving, one family from Epiphany School asked the guests invited to their daughter’s birthday party to bring gifts to donate to the children at the House. “We were delighted when they sent two large bags filled with new toys,” said Ms. Bovin.

Schools or community groups wishing to help with the Parent Pantry should contact Wini Cudjoe at wcudjoe@rmh-newyork.org or 212-639-0100.

Family Programs

Broadway Inspirational Voices: Stories in the Key of Life

Some of Broadway's most gifted musical performers and composers are making time to share their extraordinary talents well beyond the Great White Way — including at Ronald McDonald House New York — through Broadway Inspirational Voices. Founded and directed by Michael McElroy, this diverse group of singers and songwriters organizes performances to bring spiritual uplift to people in need.

The House first got to know Broadway Inspirational Voices when the group performed for our families at the re-opening of our kitchens in 2009, after being damaged by fire. The singers immediately riveted everyone's attention away from the dazzling new cabinets, appliances and countertops, leaving not a single dry eye in the room. The performers were equally taken with the experience, and asked to come back to do something collaborative with the families. Their idea: to match up five composers with five children and their families, and then create songs about them. The composers each met several times with their muses — Alex, Antoinette, Brooke, Gage, Khamid — and with their families, to get to know each other, and then went off to write their songs.

In an intimate presentation at the House in November, the composers performed their songs for the first time for the children and their families. Some of the songs were playful and humorous, some were sadly poignant, but all captured an essential facet of the children and their families. Once again, not a dry eye to be found, but hearts were filled to the brim with love, hope and appreciation.

We look forward to more such programs with Broadway Inspirational Voices, and thank them for their incomparable gifts of song.

Michael McElroy, director of Broadway Inspirational Voices and Tony nominated for his role in *Big River*, sings to Antoinette, with composer Isaac Harlan at the piano.



Nina Friedman

Song for Antoinette (first verse)

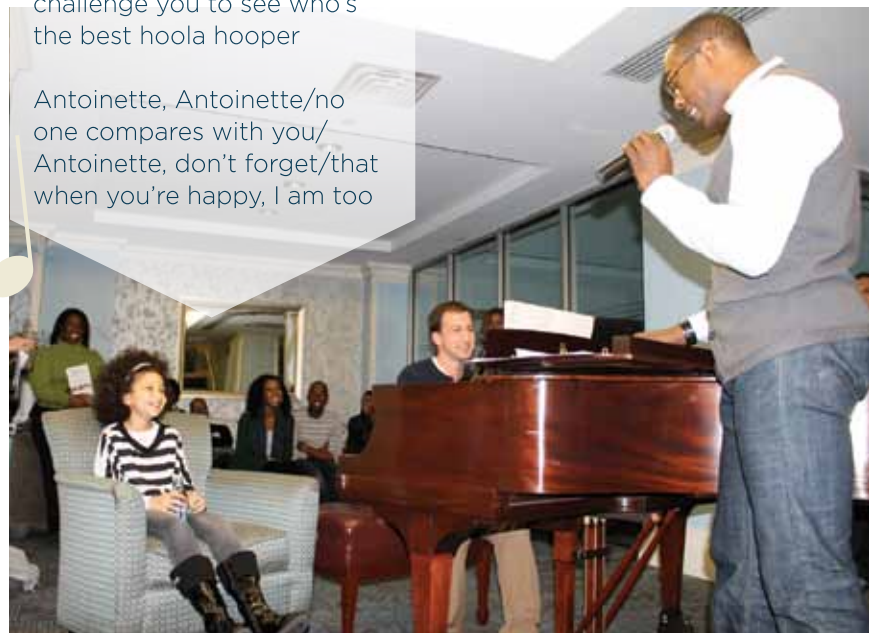
Composed by Isaac Harlan; sung by Michael McElroy

Her name is Antoinette/she's about as cool as a girl could get for her age/she's just eleven years old/but she is wise beyond her years and has a heart of gold

She likes to play with her legos/and you can bet she's havin' a ball/and one time she dressed up like J. Lo/and she's performed at Carnegie Hall

She's got crazy math skills/her ability at long division is really super/and when she's seeking thrills/she will challenge you to see who's the best hoola hooper

Antoinette, Antoinette/no one compares with you/Antoinette, don't forget/that when you're happy, I am too



Nina Friedman

Khalid, his mother and sister (center) inspired *Look Into Their Eyes*, composed and sung by Marcus James (second from left), performer in such Broadway shows as *RENT* and *In the Heights*, with his back-up singers.



Nina Friedman

Brooke joins in a refrain with her composer, Christina Acosta Robinson, who has appeared in numerous musicals and plays.



Nina Friedman

Songwriter Debra Barsha (left), composer of show *Radiant Baby* and musical director of *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*, with her muse, Alex, and her back-up singers.

GAGE

Written by Tony-nominated composer Jeanine Tesori. Sung by Gage's mom, Chelsea.

You sing a G, then an A, then a G, and an E/G-A-G-E, Gage/Our son has a name made of four little notes/Notes you can write on a musical page/Our beautiful angel, Gage/Our beautiful angel named Gage

He thinks I'm funny/He says I'm lovely/I make him think of spaghetti/I give him hugs in the morning, or whenever he's ready

I think he's funny/I think he's sweet/He made the world feel okay/He brought rainbows of color/When all of my life was gray

You sing a G, then an A, then a G, and an E/G-A-G-E, Gage/Our son has a name made of four little notes/Notes you can write on a musical page/Our beautiful angel, Gage/Our beautiful angel named Gage

And the gift goes on, and the gift goes on,/And the gift goes on, and the gift goes on and on. And the gift goes on, and the gift goes on,/And the gift goes on, and the gift goes on.

Winter Wonderland, an Elegant Evening on the Town for Our Families

On a Thursday afternoon in December, Fifth Avenue came to the Lower Level Lounge and Playroom, as hair stylists from Sassoon Salon and make-up artists from Elizabeth Arden's

Red Door Salon arrived to help our children and their family members prepare to look their beautiful best for a big night out. Soon they would be stepping into their new party attire — sumptuous little-girl dresses and sharp little-boy suits, fancy shoes, grown-up dinner jackets and sleek designer ensembles — and swept away to the dreamy Burden Mansion for Ronald McDonald House New York's first annual "Winter Wonderland."

One hundred sixty of our family guests enjoyed an evening of fine food and dancing in the stunning 1905 Beaux-Arts mansion, now home to Convent of the Sacred Heart School, which was warmly adorned with holiday decorations. This semi-formal event joins a series of elegant evenings out that are part of the House's annual schedule of programs for the children and their families.

Many thanks to our volunteers who helped secure donations of new attire, as well as Neuman Catering for their delicious fare, Cloth Connection for crisp party linens, Ariston Flowers for breath-taking arrangements, and D.J. Mario Robles, who kept our feet and spirits flying.



Sara Jaye Weiss





The Vivian Harris Society

Ronald McDonald House New York created its Vivian Harris Society to honor our late President Emeritus Vivian Harris. During her 26-year tenure as founding president of Ronald McDonald House New York, Vivian nurtured our families and inspired staff and volunteers. She was a tireless and gracious leader with innovative vision.

The members of the Vivian Harris Society embody Vivian's triumphant spirit by recognizing the House in their estate plans or retirement plans, and we invite you to join those members by considering us in your future planning. We invite you to join our Vivian Harris Society by making a gift to the House in your Estate or Retirement Plan.

If you are moved by the idea of becoming a member of the Vivian Harris Society, please contact Richard Martin, director of development, at 212-639-0206 or via email at rmartin@rmh-newyork.org. Mr. Martin will discuss how to arrange a gift that best fits the needs of your own beneficiaries, your goals for asset protection, generational wealth transfer, along with tax-saving implications, and a gift to the House. A discussion never places you under obligation. ■



Let Your Electric Bill Help Support the House

With deregulation of the delivery of electricity, you can now choose your electric service from a variety of energy supply companies and gain greater control over your household energy costs. By switching to Starion Energy, you can also help Ronald McDonald House New York every time you pay your monthly electric bill.

Starion's Energy Gift to Charity program offers an opportunity for our friends, volunteers and staff to save on your utility bill by switching the electric supply portion of your bill from the local utility company to Starion Energy. Your monthly bill will continue to be issued by your local utility while you opt to receive the benefit of reduced supply cost from Starion.

When you switch to Starion Energy, the company will donate an initial gift of \$10 per household (\$25 per business) to Ronald McDonald House New York. As long as you remain a Starion customer, the program keeps on giving *month after month and year after year*. With each monthly bill, Starion will contribute \$1 to \$2 to the House.

You can take advantage of this opportunity to reduce your monthly electric bill while helping to sustain the vital work of the House by visiting www.choosestarion.com/rmhnewyork. You can learn more and sign up right there or by calling Starion at 800-600-3040.

Thank you for considering this additional, sustaining way to support the work of Ronald McDonald House New York. ■

Fall Events Raised More Than Half a Million in Funds for the House

"Make a Difference" Honors Calvin Klein CEO and Spotlights American Idol Stars

Pop and Broadway vocalists David Archuleta, David Cook and Constantine Maroulis — all alumni of American Idol — brought their star power to Ronald McDonald House New York on a November evening for the third annual "Make a Difference Evening."

The stars brought smiles and lifted spirits as they performed for our families and for supporters of the House from the apparel and entertainment industries who gathered to honor Tom Murry, president and CEO of Calvin Klein, Inc. Actress Jill Hennessy, star of "Crossing

Jordan" and "Law and Order," served as emcee for this special evening, which raised more than \$325,000 to benefit the House.

Nearly 175 guests filled our new Macy's Living Room to salute Mr. Murry, who serves on the House's board of directors and is a leading supporter. "The meaningful programs and support systems that Ronald McDonald House New York offers are invaluable," he commented. "I am proud to be a part of this organization."

Other notable New Yorkers in attendance at the benefit included Emmanuel Chirico, chairman and CEO of Phillips Van-Heusen Corporation; Allen Sirkin,

president and COO of Phillips-Van Heusen; Macy's Chairman, President and CEO Terry Lundgren and his wife, Tina Lundgren, who is a vice chairman of the House's board of directors; actor and musician Steven "Little Stevie" Van Zandt; Alan Kalter of "The Late Show with David Letterman;" Ronald Wurtzburger, president, and Richard Wurtzburger, vice president, of Peerless Clothing; Joseph Gromek, president and CEO of the Warnaco Group and member of the House's board of directors; and Frank Tworecke, president of Warnaco Sportswear Group.



Terry and Tina Lundgren with the evening's honoree, Tom Murry.



Celebrities David Cook, Jill Hennessy, David Archuleta, Alan Kalter (with wife, Peggy), Steven Van Zandt (with wife, Maureen), and (in front) Constantine Maroulis turned out to honor Mr. Murry and his commitment to Ronald McDonald House New York.



Ronald McDonald House of New York Board Chairman Stanley Shopkorn with Marc Rothstein, of Calvin Klein, Allen Sirkin, and William T. Sullivan, the House's president and CEO.



Warnaco's Frank Tworecke and Joseph Gromek, apparel industry supporters of the House.

Light a Light, Share a Night

Being away from home for the holidays can be difficult for our families, so at Ronald McDonald House New York, we try to go “above and beyond” to make this time of year especially warm and festive. The recent holiday season kicked off with our annual “Light a Light, Share a Night” event in early December. Friends and neighbors were welcomed to the House to join our families, volunteers and staff in celebrating the lighting of our Christmas tree and Hannukah menorah.

Holiday music infused the evening as our children, their families and our invited guests sang holiday favorites led by pianist Dunja Vukosavovic, and members of the NY Pops Orchestra played jazz during the reception in our new Macy’s Living Room. Adding magic and fun to the evening were a visit by Santa Claus, high kicks and dance steps from some of Radio City Music Hall’s Rockettes, and gift bags for the children donated by The Company Store and Company Kids. The Charitable Lead Annuity Trust, under the will of Louis Feil, sponsored the festivities.

More than \$89,000 in contributions were raised from the event to help underwrite the cost of lodging for the families from across the U.S. and around the globe who depend on the House for accommodations when their children need to come to New York for cancer treatment.



Photos by Charles Manley



Karen Kirk

Guest of honor Karl Nelson (center), former Giants lineman, seen here with Sabina Gadecki (right), emcee for the evening, and attorney Kenneth Schulman, a regular volunteer at the House.

Monday Night Football

Ronald McDonald House New York hosted its second annual Monday Night Football Viewing and Poker Night on December 5th. More than 100 supporters tried their luck at this Texas Hold’em style tournament while viewing the San Diego Chargers take on the Jacksonville Jaguars. Silent and live auctions were also part of the evening, which raised \$107,000 for the House.

Guest of honor was Karl Nelson, former NFL offensive lineman for the New York Giants and a cancer survivor. Emcee for the evening was actress and model Sabina Gadecki, former host of the Travel Channel’s World Poker Tour,



who also was a regular volunteer at the House when she previously resided in New York. Other former NFL players on hand to lend their support were Rodney Hampton and O.J. Anderson of the Giants and Bruce Harper of the New York Jets.

Clifford A. Sterling, a board member for the House and managing director of Braver Stern Securities, chaired the event. Sponsors of the event were Braver Stern Securities, Fat Guy Trading, Hilliard Faber & Co., Robert Michiels, Nomura Securities International, Howard Rubin, Carol and Daniel Spina, Clifford Sterling and Weel Trading.

Save the Date

Evening With The NY Pops

Monday, April 30, 2012

7:00 PM

Carnegie Hall

Seventh Avenue and 57th Street

TD Bank Five Boro Bike Tour

Sunday, May 6, 2012

Staggered starting times

Battery Park

Ronald McDonald House New York 20th Annual Gala

Monday May 21, 2012

6:30-9:00 PM

Waldorf-Astoria

Park Avenue and 49th Street

“Open Arms” Team Ronald Volunteer Event

Wednesday, June 13, 2012

6:00-11:00 PM

Gustavino’s

Under the 59th Street Bridge, between First and York

2012 NYC Triathlon

Sunday, July 8, 2012

5:00 AM

Hudson River and 98th Street

An Evening With The New York Pops to Benefit Ronald McDonald House New York

Spend an effervescent evening at Carnegie Hall on Monday, April 30th, for the 29th birthday gala of the beloved New York Pops. This annual fundraiser for Ronald McDonald House New York will feature young musicians from the House as part of the evening’s program of popular American music. Tickets include pre-concert cocktails and hors d’oeuvres, followed by exclusive seating in private second-tier balcony boxes. Bob Gasser, president and CEO of Investment Technology Group, is chair of the event for Ronald McDonald House. For tickets and additional information, contact Tony Cardiello at 212-639-0192 or acardiello@rmh-newyork.org, or visit www.rmh-newyork.org/Fundraising-Events/Evening-With-The-Pops.

Register Now for TD Bank Five Boro Bike Tour

Join thousands of New Yorkers on Sunday, May 6th, as they bike through the city’s five boroughs on car-free streets and highways to support their favorite causes. The TD Bank Five Boro Bike Tour offers a unique opportunity to rule the road and raise funds for Ronald McDonald House New York. Register by April 20th at www.rhm-newyork.org/bike-tour/join. For additional information, contact Sue Houston at (212) 639-0500 or shouston@rmh-newyork.org.

Come Celebrate Our 20th Annual Gala

Our premier fundraising event takes place on Monday, May 21st, at the Waldorf-Astoria, with a goal of raising \$2.5 million in support of the House’s programs and services for families with children battling cancer. Acclaimed TV journalist and talk show host Barbara Walters returns as emcee. Live music will be provided by The NY Pops. Guests will have an opportunity to meet the children of the House through video and live presentations. Honorees are Neil Cole, CEO and president of Iconix Brand Group, Inc., and Gregory J. Fleming, president, Morgan Stanley Wealth Management. To reserve tickets, contact Rick Martin at 212-639-0206 or rmartin@rmh-newyork.org, or visit www.rmh-newyork.org/Fundraising-Events/Annual-Gala.

“Open Arms” Team Ronald Annual Volunteer Event

The love and dedication of our volunteers are vital ingredients in the success of Ronald McDonald House New York. These extraordinary individuals — now 750 of them — gather together one evening each year to celebrate their shared experience and to raise additional funds for activities for the children and families at the House. This year’s gathering is slated for Wednesday, June 13th, at Gustavino’s, and will feature a silent auction, raffle, dancing, open bar and food provided by Tony’s Di Napoli. Bruce Dimpflmaier, general manager of Tony’s, is chair of the event; co-chairs are volunteers Jef Campion and Clemencia Colon-Neyland. For tickets and additional information, contact Terri Eggers at tegggers@rmh-newyork.org or 212-639-0712.

2012 NYC Triathlon: Swimmers Needed

Ronald McDonald House New York makes its first appearance in the annual NYC Triathlon, on Sunday, July 8th. Twelve teams of athletes will represent the House, prepared to swim the Hudson, bike the Westside Highway and run through Central Park. Swimmers are still needed for our teams and will kick off the event at dawn by sliding into the water at 98th Street and coming ashore at the Boat Basin, 79th Street. Register by March 15th with Karen Kirk at kkirk@rmh-newyork.org.



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Jerry Ruotolo

The Tree of Life

As our stories continue to add new detail to the rich history of Ronald McDonald House New York, the Tree of Life wall sculpture continues to flourish with new leaf additions.

The financial support generated for Ronald McDonald House New York from The Tree of Life enables us to offer more than just a place to sleep when families travel to New York City for their child's cancer treatment.

Leaves are engraved with a message and the name of the honored person. Each leaf may be purchased for \$2,500. 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 Richard Martin, Director of Development at 212-639-0206, or rmartin@rmh-newyork.org. ■