

Around the House

The Magazine for Ronald McDonald House New York. Volume 8, Issue 1



RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE® NEW YORK



Meet Matthew and Dilynn, fearless crusaders in the fight against cancer. These young superheroes are sure to inspire you and steal your heart!



Winter 2013

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Matthew, 5, and little brother Dilynn, 2 1/2, Pedrotty from Albuquerque New Mexico. Photo by Charles Manley



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



Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! Welcome to the year 2013 and this, our 35th anniversary year at Ronald McDonald House® New York! We are very excited about this important milestone, especially as a premier charity in New York City. We plan to celebrate throughout the entire year with each event serving as a reminder of our rich past that builds on a very strong momentum, leading to a new beginning filled with hope and promise for our future.

In this issue, you will meet six new men and women who have joined the ranks of our board of directors to help lead and guide us going forward. You will likewise meet the Pedrotty family from Albuquerque, New Mexico and learn how our Ronald McDonald House has fulfilled an essential need for this family.

Your continued help with our Wish List is very much appreciated. The year-end outpouring of generosity to our special kids and families provided outstanding support at a time when families often feel lonely and desperate. The gifts in-kind and continued financial and emotional help was indeed a blessing to our special guests during the holidays.

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan graced us on Christmas Eve providing Mass and a spiritual uplifting for our families. His thoughtful visit provided a great end to a year that we can indeed be thankful for in so many ways.

It goes without saying that your support helps us to provide a true home-away-from-home to our global family, and we witnessed that in all of its glory over the holiday season.

As we enter this momentous year, I am continually grateful for your support and friendship and value your involvement with our ongoing mission of helping to keep families together.

Sincerely,

William T. Sullivan
President and Chief Executive Officer

Ronald McDonald House New York

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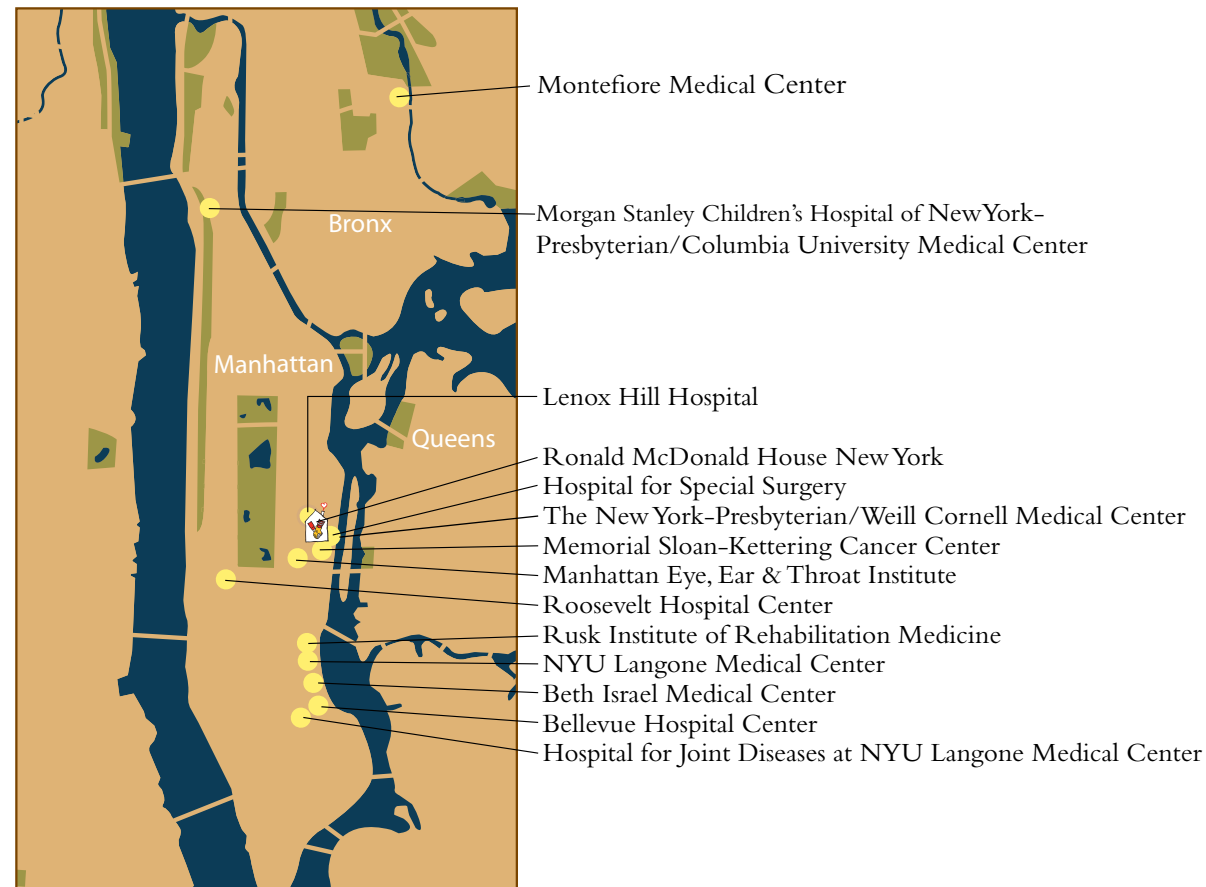
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Wish List

Thank you for your thoughtful donation of items that help 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. We've expanded our list to include special items needed to help support our new hospital expansion program. We are always grateful for your generosity in helping us to better accommodate our families during their stay.

- Tickets for a day of adventure — Big Apple Circus, Bus Tour tickets
- Metrocards
- Crib linen sets — white

For the Breakfast Club

- Coffee
- Coffeemaker
- Hot water maker
- Cup dispenser
- Napkin dispenser
- Juice dispensers
- Cold milk dispensers
- Toasters
- Cereal dispensers
- Cake/pastry display cabinet
- Condiment organizer

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 wucudjoe@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.

Nap Time

- Soft fleece blankets

For School

- 2" binders — hard and collapsible
- Backpacks (regular and wheeled) small, medium and large
- Colorful folders

For further information regarding House donations, please contact Wini Cudjoe, Director of Operations, at 212.639.0700 or wucudjoe@rmh-newyork.org.

For the Teens

- Movie passes
- Clothing
- Clothing accessories gift cards
- iTunes/Game Stop/Best Buy/Modell's — gift cards
- Video Games — PSP/Wii/DS

For the Moms and Dads

- Gift cards: Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Target, Walgreens, Payless, JC Penney, Starbucks
- Clothing (New)
- Slippers
- Make-up kits
- Shaving/Grooming kits

For the Families

- Hand sanitizer
- Umbrellas
- Rain ponchos
- Rain boots (all sizes)
- Coats (winter)

- Lined notebooks
- Lined paper (3-hole punched)
- Pencils and pencil sharpeners
- Small hand sanitizers

For Birthdays

- Lego Sets—age range of young - old (3 years - 17 years) - our children/young adults LOVE LEGOS
- American Girl Dolls
- American Girl Doll accessories
- Wii games
- Xbox 360 games (regular and Kinect games)
- Card games like Monopoly Deal, Skip Bo, Set, Uno, etc...
- Board games: Monopoly, Twister, Sorry, Operation, Battle Ship, Jenga, Scrabble (rotating board)
- Interactive DVD Games: Trivial Pursuit, Family Feud, Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy
- Playstation 2 or 3 Video Games: Spiderman
- Bop It toy
- Michael's Gift Card

Arts & Crafts

- Glow in the dark lanyards
- Glitter glue sticks
- White oak tag
- Color oak tag
- Oil cloth for tables
- 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
- White drawing paper
- 8 1/2 x 11 colored card stock
- Crayola Play-doh

Media Center

- iPads
- New Movies rated PG and PG 13
- Popcorn

Family Support & Wellness

For further information regarding Family Support and Wellness donations, please contact Cherilyn Frei, Director of Family Support, at 212.639.0100 or cfrei@rmh-newyork.org.

Toiletries

- Pocket-sized Kleenex packs
- Pocket-sized hand sanitizers (i.e. Purell)
- Emery boards

Wellness

- Terrycloth or microfiber bathrobes
- Slumber masks and/or eye pillows
- Neck roll travel pillows
- Lavender aromatherapy oils & mists
- Spa socks, (preferably with rubber grips on soles)
- Support stockings & knee-highs
- Slippers or slip-on ballet slippers, with rubber soles
- Sanitary pads
- Heating pads
- Travel-sized fleece blankets
- Relaxation CD's
- Yoga or women's workout DVD's
- Exfoliating shower gloves
- Folding travel mirror

Gift Cards

- iTunes gift cards
- Duane Reade gift cards
- Visa/Mastercard gift cards for hospital food/coffee kiosks

Donate Your Vehicle

Through our partner, Vehicles for Charity, Ronald McDonald House New York is proud to accept most vehicles (including but not limited to cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats and RVs) regardless of whether the vehicle is running or not.

If your vehicle has been damaged as a result of Hurricane Sandy, consider donating it. Your donation is tax-deductible to

the full extent of the law. Ronald McDonald House New York will receive 80 percent of the net proceeds from the sale. We will arrange to pick up or tow your vehicle for free.

To donate your vehicle in support of Ronald McDonald House New York, contact Antonio Neto at (212) 639-0214 or via email at aneto@rmh-newyork.org or visit www.rmh-newyork.org/vehicle.



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE® NEW YORK

For 35 years, Ronald McDonald House New York has provided a home-away-from-home to more than 30,000 families worldwide.

We could not have done it without you!

Please join us in the celebration by sharing your favorite memories (including photos!) with us. Visit us on Facebook or Twitter, or email us at ngreaves@rmh-newyork.org.

[Facebook.com/rmhnewyork](https://www.facebook.com/rmhnewyork) [Twitter.com/rmhnewyork](https://twitter.com/rmhnewyork)

Thank You

When **Rosemarie Ann Siragusa Elementary School's** 6th grade exhibition group hosted its annual Thanksgiving food drive in 2012, the school was able to obtain donations of turkeys from Stew Leonard's. The donated turkeys—including all the trimmings for a full Thanksgiving dinner—were gratefully received by our families, and enjoyed during our annual post-Macy's parade Thanksgiving feast!

As a result of a national partnership between **Ronald McDonald House Charities** and **La-Z-Boy**, our New York facility received \$1,750 following a promotion held in the furniture retailer's local stores. We are always grateful to La-Z-Boy and their continued commitment to helping us provide the utmost comfort to our residents.

While the wintry weather drives our thoughts to warmer climates, we can always be grateful for our volunteers in Florida who send us little rays of sunshine in a thoughtful way. With many of our residents dealing with hair loss following chemotherapy treatments, these volunteers send regular shipments of knitted items to help brave the cold.

Harriet Frankel from Fort Lauderdale has been knitting for more than 70 years, since she was a teenager. Now at 89-years-old, Ms. Frankel is a spirited woman who regularly sends scarves, hats and foot warmers for residents of all ages.

Ruth Schuman is a native New Yorker, originally from Brooklyn, who now calls Boca Raton her home. She regularly sends knitted hats for our residents, who wear them proudly to and from treatment.

The Company Store®, famous for top quality, US-crafted bedding essentials, partnered up with Ronald McDonald House Charities to host National Family Pajama Night on November 17th. During an event where 3,000 pairs of pajamas were distributed to Ronald McDonald House families nationwide, the New York facility also participated where our residents received matching pajama sets for the entire family. As part of the special promotion, The Company Store donated \$1 from the sale of every pair of pajamas sold between October 15, 2012 and December 17, 2012 to Ronald McDonald House Charities. In addition to the monetary donation, 3,000 pairs of pajamas were donated to families staying at Ronald McDonald Houses nationwide. Our families received their donated pajama sets during the November 17th event.

Spotlight on Your Board

Ronald McDonald House New York recently added six 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:

Ellen R. Harris, Vice President, Investments, UBS

Ms. Harris joined Paine Webber as a portfolio manager in its asset management subsidiary and became a financial advisor in 2001 following the acquisition of Paine Webber by UBS. Previously she had been a portfolio manager at American (General) Capital Management and a security analyst at Goldman Sachs and The United States Trust Company of New York. Ms. Harris graduated with a B.A. degree in economics from Wellesley College and an M.B.A. (with distinction) from New York University's Stern School of Business.



Gary LaBarbera, President, Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York

Gary LaBarbera has served since 2009 as president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, an organization consisting of local affiliates of 15 national and international unions representing 100,000 working men and women in New York City. Within weeks of assuming this position, Mr. LaBarbera embarked on ambitious negotiations for project labor agreements. These efforts



culminated in project labor agreements for \$6 billion of public works with the City of New York and the New York City School Construction Authority that are saving taxpayers \$335 million. He holds a degree from the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

Eric W. Mandelblatt, Managing Partner and Chief Investment Officer, Soroban Capital Partners LLC

Eric W. Mandelblatt is the founder, managing partner and chief investment officer of Soroban Capital Partners LLC, a New York based hedge fund. Launched in 2010, Soroban Capital Partners manages over \$3 billion of capital primarily on behalf of institutional investors including leading family offices, endowments, foundations and pension plans.

Prior to founding Soroban, Mr. Mandelblatt was one of the founding partners and portfolio managers of TPG-Axon Capital, a multi-billion dollar global investment firm. He graduated with highest honors from the University of Florida with a BS in Accounting.



Lee Perlman, President, GNYHA Ventures, Inc.

Lee Perlman is president of GNYHA Ventures, Inc., a wholly owned, for-profit subsidiary of the Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA). Over the past 25 years, Mr. Perlman has been responsible for the development of GNYHA Ventures' business entities, which have grown to five companies serving more than 20,000 customers across the United States and nearly \$10 billion in commerce. He is also GNYHA's Executive Vice President of Administration and Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Perlman currently serves as chairman of the Steering Committee of the Healthcare Group Purchasing Industry Initiative



(HGPII) as well as the Public Policy Chair for the Healthcare Supply Chain Association (HSCA).

Mr. Perlman received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Binghamton (N.Y.) University in 1980 and his Master's degree in Business Administration from Cornell University, Sloan Program, Ithaca, NY in 1982.

Kathy Presto, Vice President, Strategic Sourcing for Marketing Solutions, Williams Lea

Ms. Presto is vice president, Strategic Sourcing for Marketing Solutions at Williams Lea. In this role, she is responsible for shaping overall print procurement strategy of all new business opportunities including diligence, discovery, supplier negotiation, management and performance. Ms. Presto is a skilled procurement and supply chain management executive with 25 years' experience in the graphic arts industry.

Her daughter Gillian is also a member of the RMH-NY Youth Committee, and volunteers at the House on a weekly basis. Ms. Presto holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Marymount University.



Joan M. Squires, CEBS, Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Mutual of America

Joan M. Squires is executive vice president and chief information officer for Mutual of America Life Insurance Company. In this role, Joan she is responsible for the technology and computer systems that support the information processing needs and strategic goals of Mutual of America and its subsidiaries.

Ms. Squires is a past recipient of the Ad Laudem Dei Distinguished Alumnae/I Award from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, and the Pregnancy Care Center's Humanitarian Award. ■



Volunteer Spotlight

Youth Committee

In a previous issue of *Around the House*, we introduced two members of our newly formed Youth Advisory Council. These young leaders have been working hard over the last few months to help establish new ways for young people to make a difference in the lives of our families. The 18 students participating in the Youth Advisory Council range in age from 14–18 and their names are:

Adam Alpert
Christiania Cifalino
Allie Diamond
Kylie Freer
Valerie Gard
Michael Griffo
Andie Hearst
Chase Jaeger
Quentin Jaeger
Elizabeth Kulpan
Allison Lieberman
Julie May
Gillian Presto
Alex Riba
Gillian Ryder
Bailey Swiggett
Gabriella Tepper
Marissa Tarrasshuk

To date, two members in the group have started clubs at their schools to raise awareness about our mission. The Youth Advisory Council members are also working on a video that will be used at school fairs to further educate their peers about what life is like for families staying at the House and how people can help.

The students have held fundraisers in their communities that include carnivals, bracelet sales and t-shirt sales. They have also planned and raised money for an outing to Chelsea Piers for the families. The group's members are also actively fundraising to support a luau party in April 2013, where they will provide dinner and entertainment for the families of the House. Their dedication to our mission is a bright beacon of pride in our future. ■

What is the use of living, if it be not to strive for noble causes and to make this muddled world a better place for those who will live in it after we are gone?

– Winston Churchill

New Jersey Family Shows Gratitude By Lending a Talented Hand

New Jersey mom Traci Smith and her husband Mehdi Ziabakhsh thought that they knew a fair amount about Ronald McDonald House and its mission. However, it wasn't until they were brought to the Cincinnati chapter for their youngest son's care that the couple understood just how much the organization's volunteers help to make a difference.

When Darius, now 5, was born with numerous health problems, the family traveled to the Midwest to secure the most effective medical treatment that they could find for him. As a result of the experience, the couple's 10-year-old son CJ became inspired to give back. When CJ asked his mother if it was feasible to fly back to Cincinnati to help other families, they ultimately decided to help families closer to home.

Both Mrs. Smith's husband and father are trained chefs, and she and her husband met while working in the restaurant industry. The decision of how to help our resident families was a no-brainer.

With plans to host a memorable Thanksgiving dinner, the family began fundraising in August of 2012. They reached out to fellow friends, family members and other contacts within the restaurant industry, asking for their support. The holiday dinner menu included baked ziti, mac & cheese, sweet and sour meatballs, savory stuffing, baked sweet potatoes with honey cranberry sauce, home-style German mashed potatoes and of course, the main event — succulent, sliced turkey.

"Both houses have been like a home to us," said Mrs. Smith. "It's our way of trying to say thank you. Ronald McDonald House is such a huge part of our lives now. It's a great cause and now my friends understand it more. They know about it, and everybody hears about it, but they might not know the finer details; for example that people come in and cook."

Dessert included items such as pumpkin pie, coconut cream pie, fruit salad and a heaping portion of gratitude from our families. The contributions from our volunteers hold great significance in the work that we do here at Ronald McDonald House New York. For generous and kind parents like Mrs. Smith and Mr. Ziabakhsh, we are grateful to call them family. ■

The Pedrotty Family — Superhero Siblings and Cancer-Fighting Crusaders

There's something about having the love, support and closeness of a sibling that can make a person feel like they have the ability to conquer anything in this world. Matthew Pedrotty, 5, and his little brother Dilynn, 2½, have discovered quite early that having each other's backs has indeed turned them into real-life superheroes. Unfortunately, neuroblastoma has been the nemesis in this family's war where they're constantly battling to save Matthew's young life.

Originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Kurt Pedrotty, MD, 28, and Elissa Pedrotty, 29, found themselves dealing with the unthinkable the day that their eldest son Matthew was diagnosed with cancer. The family had relocated briefly to Indiana in 2011 for Mr. Pedrotty's radiology internship and were preparing for the Thanksgiving holidays when both boys had developed fevers. While his infant brother Dilynn's fever had improved in two days, Matthew's did not. Matthew then developed a mysterious limp that was so bad; he was barely able to play with the other children at Thanksgiving dinner. Overnight, Matthew was unable to bend down and pick up his toys.

"When we took him to the emergency room, I thought maybe he had an infected joint. Cancer wasn't even on our minds," said Dr. Pedrotty. "He had said that he had a little bit of belly pain. The doctors there in the emergency room were saying 'we know it's a long shot, we're just throwing a blanket out there because we don't really know what's going on. Let's get an ultrasound of the belly.' And I actually remember thinking that it's probably not anything. When I went down with him to get the ultrasound results, they put the ultrasound on and the first thing that I noticed was that his kidney was huge. And then the radiologist came in. Usually when the radiologist comes in, it's not a good sign."

The radiologist informed the family that a mass appeared to be lifting up Matthew's aorta, moving it forward, and all of the structures around it were being displaced. A subsequent CT scan revealed that Matthew had neuroblastoma. A mass had formed in his belly, just off of his right adrenal gland, sitting right above the kidney.



Elissa Pedrotty and Dr. Kurt Pedrotty with son Matthew and Dilynn

Neuroblastoma typically develops in infants and young children. As the disease progresses, a solid mass forms at the patient's nerve endings. Neuroblastoma typically causes symptoms such as fever, bone pain and soreness, bruises, and inability to move a particular body part.

The Hard Battle Ahead

"That week was probably the hardest week of our family's life to-date," Dr. Pedrotty recalled. "I think that blow — from everything that you think about, everything that you envision — it just changes in the drop of a hat. All of the future plans and things that you've made, they all get taken from you."

Matthew's illness continued to get worse to the point where he couldn't roll over in his hospital bed. As standard protocol before beginning chemotherapy, doctors took a hearing test to determine a baseline. The results of this test led to a CT scan which showed that Matthew had also developed numerous tumors throughout his body. The largest, most significant tumor had grown at the base of his skull and diminished his ability to hear.

"All cancer is awful. But one of the things that's really hard about this cancer is you often don't know until it's stage 4. So many of the kids diagnosed are advanced-stage. Where you present with a lot of cancer already progressed and spread throughout the body is not that uncommon for neuroblastoma. I think one of the big goals is how do we fix that," said Dr. Pedrotty.

It Takes a Village To Save a Child

Recognizing the need for support, the family moved back to Albuquerque to be closer to their loved ones. Dr. Pedrotty was able to put his plans for residency on hold while they sorted out what needed to be done for Matthew's care. What happened next was totally unexpected.

"When we did that, it was right before Christmas," said Dr. Pedrotty. "One of the things I've loved to share with people is, if you really want to see how great people can be, how wonderful they can be to other human beings... have your child get cancer because you will see the greatness of human beings."

When the Pedrotties were having difficulty getting out of their Indiana lease early, a friend of the family started

The Pedrotty Family (continued)

a petition to help them. Within two days, the petition received more than 3,000 signatures and Matthew received a surprise visit from several players of the Indianapolis Colts football team. Coordinating the move back home was also a major logistical feat, considering that Matthew was on a tight protocol for chemotherapy. A family friend helped to charter a private jet when Matthew was neutropenic, and the grandparents worked together to move the entire family back to New Mexico almost overnight.

Matthew's treatment in New Mexico began on the COG (Children's Oncology Group) protocol, which involved six rounds of high-dose chemotherapy to start. Despite their best hopes, Matthew's condition failed to improve significantly under the COG protocol.

As they began the treatment, Matthew's parents pursued the idea of identifying a surgeon who could remove the tumor. They identified one affiliated with Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and contacted him shortly after the New Year began in 2012 to determine their options.

"Parents who are trained as healthcare or technical professionals can present a unique set of opportunities for the family, as well as the clinical team. Parents such as Kurt Pedrotty are often better equipped to research their child's disease," said Chaplain Cheryl Frei. "The savvy

parent will often take the lead as their child's primary medical advocate and liaison with the clinical team, asking the tough questions and pushing for more and better treatment options. This can result in earlier diagnosis and cure of rare and aggressive forms of childhood cancers that we typically see here at the Ronald McDonald House New York."

In May 2012, the Pedrotty family made the move to New York City. Their plan was to have surgery done here in New York City, stay a few weeks to recover and then head off to Denver for stem cell transplant surgery.

"We're blessed in where we're at right now in that we have phenomenal minds that are thinking about the care of our son with amazing resources that just aren't available everywhere. The other thing that's a huge blessing is the house that we're staying in because New York City is not cheap," Dr. Pedrotty said.

Matthew's surgery was held in May and he did quite well, leaving the family encouraged. But while the tumor had responded well to the chemotherapy, Matthew's other spreaded disease had not improved. After meeting with the neuroblastoma team, the family decided that a stem cell transplant would not have been the best option. Matthew would still have been left with a large amount of tumor.

The Pedrotty family chose to stay in New York City. While Dr. Pedrotty

worked back home in New Mexico, Mrs. Pedrotty quickly adapted and mastered life in New York City with two young boys.

"My wife...I can't say enough about her. She's been here the entire seven months and she has not left his side," said Dr. Pedrotty. "To see what she's done for our children, it's amazing. Living here in New York with children, it's a challenge. Phones are great and Skype is great, but there's only but so much that you can do from across the country. She really is the rock of our family."

Natural Killer Cells

The family had reached a crossroads where they had to make an important decision: stop where they were and allow Matthew to enjoy the quality of life in his few short years, or to try a new type of treatment that would give them the best chance to fight his cancer. The parents decided that they wanted to fight.

Matthew's currently receiving a new type of treatment called "natural killer cell" therapy. To begin, doctors harvest a sample of infection-fighting T-cells from Mrs. Pedrotty that will then be injected into her son. In order for the treatment to work effectively, Matthew deliberately receives high-dose chemotherapy that will cause him to experience neutropenia. By weakening his immune system to this degree, Mrs. Pedrotty's natural killer cells have the advantage to go to work, fighting against Matthew's cancer cells without risk of being identified as foreign. Otherwise, Matthew's immune system would destroy his mother's T-cells and the cancer would continue to spread.

Matthew is the first person ever to receive the dosage of natural killer cells that he has received, and the 17th person to receive the treatment at Memorial Sloan Kettering. But the treatment doesn't come without challenges; Matthew stayed in the hospital for hospital for 22 days after the first treatment.

"Cancer's in trouble because my wife's really mad at that cancer. It'd better watch out," joked Dr. Pedrotty.

Prior to receiving the treatment, tests showed that Matthew had cancer throughout his entire body: both of arms; both of his legs; throughout his spine; and

his entire pelvis. When doctors reviewed his MIBG scan, a diagnostic that illuminates in areas where tumors are present, the scan glowed throughout Matthew's entire body.

In early December of 2012, a little more than a year since the initial diagnosis of cancer, the family learned that the natural killer cell treatment was working.

"I looked at the scans with him and it was just hard to even believe that it was Matthew's," recalled Dr. Pedrotty. "The disease that had been in both of his thigh bones, both of his shin bones, the disease in his arms, the biceps bone — gone. The cancer in both arms was gone, the pelvis was read as clean, the head was read as decreased, and a questionable spot in the spine. We went from very little change over the past year to a 70 percent reduction in the disease with just one round of treatment. It was awesome!"

The Cancer-Fighting Duo

Throughout his illness, Matthew's parents struggled to find a way to explain the nature of his disease to their young son. The idea came during a very difficult conversation when Matthew couldn't understand why he couldn't go home from the hospital.

"How do you tell a three-year-old that he has cancer? I said, 'Well, you have a C-Man,'" explained Dr. Pedrotty. "Since then, we've had this superhero theme in our family. I didn't realize it would become what it did, but Matthew's become 'Matthew-man' and he fights the C-Man. Dilynn is this ultimate sidekick. The best sidekick you could ever have. He is the blessing to our family because he brings so much life and energy. He's his brother's biggest fan."

"Dilynn wants to have any party of fighting C-Man that he can because he wants to help his brother. And he's two," said Mrs. Pedrotty. "They have a punching bag in the room and they take turns fighting C-Man."

So intense is their bond in the fight against C-Man, when the boys make wishes at a fountain, Dilynn shouts out his wish that his brother's C-Man would go away.

The Pedrotty family believe that after a hard-fought battle for over a year, to



Matthew and Dilynn enjoyed getting close to nature on the Seventh Floor Terrace during our fall butterfly tagging event.



Little superheroes donned their special attire for a Halloween event.

receive such encouraging news was the best holiday present ever — short of hearing that Matthew was cancer-free. As they look forward, they each understand that the road will continue to be difficult until they hear those words. What they also know is that there's solace in knowing that they have a global community of support including their friends at Ronald McDonald House New York.

"You've gotta take a step back and realize that none of this would have been possible for our family if we didn't have a place to stay — if we didn't have a place to be here in New York," said Dr. Pedrotty. "You never think that you'll need it — So many people give so effortlessly and selflessly. And you see that here at the House so beautifully. It's a huge blessing to see." ■



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.

Dear Santa

This year’s Dear Santa project sponsored by Wieden+Kennedy was another huge success! The team fulfilled 127 wish list requests from children staying at the House up to \$75, and gifts were distributed on Christmas evening. In addition, the Wieden+Kennedy team also provided raffle gifts like Kindles, iPods, iPads and gift cards for other family members, ensuring that everyone was accounted for on Santa’s list. Our very own Operations staff member Thomas Sinito pitched in to play Santa, and a many grateful young smiles were found throughout the House!



Photos by Nina Friedman



Photo provided by Bloomberg

Bloomberg Tradebook’s Charity Day

Basketball fans will never forget the day in 1979 when former NJ Nets player Darryl “Chocolate Thunder” Dawkins shattered his first backboard (the feat prompted the NBA to adopt breakaway rims soon after).

This past November, Mr. Dawkins visited the offices of Bloomberg Tradebook, Bloomberg LP’s global agency broker, serving as a celebrity ambassador for Ronald McDonald House New York during their “Trick or Trade Charity Day” event.

Celebrity ambassadors interacted directly with Tradebook clients, and a portion of the day’s commissions were donated to charity. As a result of Daryl Dawkins participation, Ronald McDonald House New York received a generous donation. We could not be more grateful to Bloomberg Tradebook and Mr. Dawkins for their thoughtful generosity towards our mission.

NYSE/EuroNext

On the morning of Friday, November 23, we joined RMHC Board Chairman Linda Dunham as she rang the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange. As part of the exchange’s Kids’ Day Celebration, Ronald McDonald House residents and management from Long Island and Long Beach, NJ were also on-hand for the event.



NYSE EuroNext

Macy’s Christmas Party

Despite the fact that it was a busy time at his workshop, Santa and his helpers took a trip uptown from his workshop at the Macy’s flagship store to visit with families staying at the House. Saint Nick read from his legendary “Twas the Night Before Christmas” before hearing about Christmas wishes from every child staying at the House. It’s always wonderful to entertain VIPs at Ronald McDonald House New York, and this trip is always met with great anticipation throughout the entire house for residents of all ages!



Natalie Greaves

Cardinal Dolan’s Christmas Eve Mass

In 2010, then-Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan visited with the families at Ronald McDonald House New York on a quiet Christmas Eve where he provided many blessings of healing. This past Christmas Eve, he returned — now as a Cardinal — to conduct a Christmas Eve mass.

During the service, Cardinal Dolan mentioned his own personal connection to the House; his niece Shannon had successfully recovered from bone cancer treatment more than 10 years ago. Afterward, he spent a great deal of time greeting each attendee, blessing them with prayers of healing and hope for new miracles.



Photos by Natalie Greaves

Programs

Musical Magic Program

Our years of helping families battling cancer have allowed us to witness first-hand the important role that music plays in the healing process. As part of our hospital outreach initiative, we've taken a new music program into a few of our partner hospitals where young pediatric cancer patients need it most.

Through "Musical Magic," led by Director Dr. Sherrie Maricle, children battling cancer have an opportunity to participate in some form of musical expression as they endure a range of difficult treatments for their illnesses.

The first event took place at NewYork-Presbyterian's Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital on September 13, called "Musical Magic with Bob Dorough and Schoolhouse Rock." Each session includes song lyrics as well as fun puzzles and coloring activities to keep participants engaged.

Additional events were held at Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital featuring "The Attitude of Gratitude Band," and at the Hospital for Special Surgery,

where the Holly Jolly Jingle Jammers facilitated "Sounds of the Season."

We'd like to express our gratitude to the dedicated musicians who have given their time and effort to help introduce this program and make it a success: Dr. Sherrie Maricle; Bob Dorough and Schoolhouse Rock; Val Hawk; Patrick O'Leary; Steve Berger; Noriko Ueda; Art Hirahara; Sue Giles; Lisa Parrott; Sue Giles; Bob Sabin; Matt Davis; Janelle Reichman; And Nadje Noordhuis.

We would also like to acknowledge the leadership at Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital: Kevin Hammeran, senior vice president & chief operating officer; Toni Millar, director, Child Life; Aliza Koenigsberg, administrative director, Children's Service Line; and Ana Funari, special events.

Finally, a major thanks to our friends at the Hospital for Special Surgery: Louis Shapiro, president and CEO; Lorraine Montuori, pediatric case manager and child life coordinator; and Salaena Negrón, child life assistant.



Charles Manley

The Musical Magic program will continue to introduce new, fun events, with events already scheduled on January 23rd, March 20th and May 1st at Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital. ■

Twisted History of the World Film Premiere

In late October, our talented young residents introduced their latest feature film, "Twisted History (of the World)." With a full cast of 50 patients and siblings, the movie was shot over the course of an entire year. Written, produced and directed by volunteer teacher Christine Taylor, the film also featured celebrity appearances by Laura Woyasz and Alex Dunbar. Introduced at the renowned Bohemian National Hall, the film's stars received a standing ovation!

Mrs. Taylor, who also teaches a "Weird Science" class for Playroom visitors twice per week, works to ensure that every project includes an educational component, and this movie was no different. With a script that highlighted notable historical figures such as Cleopatra, Alexander Graham Bell, and Steve Jobs, the actors also learned about each character's world-changing accomplishments and inventions.

With emcee duties handled by WCBS' Wayne Cabot, the actors also received Academy-style awards, in recognition of their unique accomplishment on the big screen.

"Twisted History" was edited by volunteer Michael Mathis, and additional volunteer help came from Theresa Schoenfeld, Sandi Kalish, Kendall Carter, and Jill Dessau, with Bob Ray providing voice-over talent.

It was definitely a night of many stars where we were overjoyed to celebrate the time and talents displayed in this great work produced by our families and volunteers! ■



Bob Ray

Giving News



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. 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 honored person. 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 Nikki Margarites, Director of Major Gifts, at 212.639.0207 or via email at nmargarites@rmhnewyork.org. ■

The Vivian Harris Society

Established in honor of our late Founder and President Emeritus, the Vivian Harris Society allows those concerned about the mission of Ronald McDonald House New York to continue supporting our work as a part of their legacy. During her 26-year tenure, Mrs. Harris nurtured our families and inspired staff and volunteers to do more for families facing their most challenging fight.

"I have been working with the precious and brave kids at the Ronald McDonald House for more than five years now, doing both Weird Science and making movies with them," said Christine Taylor, volunteer educator and

member of the Vivian Harris Society. "The Ronald McDonald House kids are some of the most indomitable, resilient people I have known – wise beyond their years, fun, loving and ever hopeful. Though I myself spend countless hours and energy battling my own terminal cancer, I also realize that I may not win the battle and I want to leave something to help those with cancer coming up behind me. The children of the Ronald McDonald House are in my will and always will be."

By including Ronald McDonald House New York in their estates, donors place a meaningful reminder for their loved ones about supporting a very

special cause that they believe in.

If you are moved by the idea of becoming a member of the Vivian Harris Society, please contact Nikki Margarites, Director of Major Gifts, at 212.639.0207 or via email at nmargarites@rmh-newyork.org. Mrs. Margarites 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.

We invite you to join our Vivian Harris Society by making a gift to the House in your Estate or Retirement Plan. ■

Event Highlights

2012 Kids' Fun Run

This year's Fun Run event was most definitely our most successful ever! We most certainly could not have done it without the support of the tri-state area's youngest philanthropists. This year's event saw more than 1,200 runners from the age groups of four to 17 participate in the 14th Annual Kids' Fun Run, held in Central Park on November 10th, 2012. With over 25 school and community groups participating, the event raised more than \$280,000.

We are very grateful to The Blavatnik Family Foundation for serving as lead sponsor of our Fun Run event. We would like to also acknowledge our major sponsors: the New York Athletic Club; the May and Sam Rudin Foundation; and The Strazella Family. Additional sponsorship was also provided by Central Parking, Coca-Cola, and the New York Parks Department.

Here is the list of our partner schools/groups:

- Anderson
- Birch Wathen Lenox
- British International
- Browning
- Churchill
- Dominican Academy
- Dwight
- Gateway
- Harrison
- Hewitt
- Marymount
- Mount Carmel/Holy Rosary
- New York Athletic Club
- Our Lady of Martyrs
- P.S. 158
- P.S. 183
- P.S. 77 (Lower Lab)
- Sacred Heart
- St. Bernard
- St. David
- St. Ignatius
- St. Stephen
- Town
- Trevor
- Wagner



The Yonkers Fire Department helped our little runners every step of the way.



From start to finish, the athletes showed tremendous spirit that day!



Team Ronald volunteers are always on the scene to lend a helping hand.



Share a Night

We are proud to announce that our annual "Light a Light, Share a Night" event successfully raised more than \$50,000! With the help of sponsorship from "The Company Store," Ronald McDonald House New York joyfully opened its doors to the local community in celebration of the holiday season. It was a night of lights as we lit our Christmas tree, Hanukkah menorah and the Kwanza Kinara.

With our resident kids' chorus on-hand to help greet our guests and usher in the holiday cheer, the event also included a jazz combo provided by the New York Pops Orchestra. We couldn't be more thankful for our community and their love and support.

Clockwise from top left:

Our daytime volunteers didn't miss this year's house lighting ceremony!

The very talented jazz combo sang a number of holiday hits including a rousing rendition of "Feliz Navidad" to get the party started.

Santa and the Rockettes stuck around to grace the dinner hour with some inspired holiday cheer.



Event Highlights (continued)

Make a Difference Evening Raises Over \$600,000

Neither hurricane nor nor'easter could prevent the generous supporters at The Jones Group, Inc., from raising over \$600,000 on behalf of families battling cancer during our annual Make a Difference Evening. Honoring Chairman Sidney Kimmel, the event was chaired by Wesley R. Card, who serves as Chief Executive Officer of The Jones Group Inc.

Actress, musician and entertainer Jill Hennessy handled emcee duties for the evening, while live performances were given by recording artists from the popular FOX television show, "American Idol." Season Eight Winner Kris Allen, Season Nine Lee DeWyze, Jr., and Season Six Finalist Melinda Doolittle each gave rousing, soulful performances that soothed our spirits, and energized us all for the fight against cancer. Celebrity attendees included Little Steven and Maureen Van Zandt, and Alan Kalter of the Late Show with David Letterman and his wife Peggy.

A special award was also given to Ronald McDonald House New York nightly volunteer and The Jones Group Inc.'s Ruth Schlossberg for her service to our families.

Originally scheduled to be held in early November, Make a Difference Evening was slightly postponed due to Hurricane Sandy and other weather-related events. However, the energy was so high in the jam-packed Macy's Living Room; we can certainly attest that good things definitely do come to those who wait. Thank you to everyone who joined us to help make a major difference! ■



William T. Sullivan; Vince Camuto and Board Member Louise Camuto; Caroline and Honoree Sidney Kimmel; Diane and Wesley R. Card; Board Member Tina Lundgren and Board Chairman Stanley Shopkorn



Entertainer Melinda Doolittle getting sassy with a few resident superstars.



The evening's leadership, performers, and our residents were joined by the Van Zandts, the Kalter and Emcee Jill Hennessy.

Photos by David Lang

Calendar of Events

Save the Date

Fino Wall Street Casino Night

Friday, March 1, 2013

6:30PM

1 Wall Street Court, Between Hanover Street & Pearl Street

NYC Half Marathon

Sunday, March 17, 2013

7:30AM

Manhattan

Spring Theatre Benefit: "Matilda"

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

Shubert Theatre

225 West 44th Street

Between Broadway and 8th Avenue

An Evening with the NY Pops Orchestra

Monday, April 29, 2013

5:30PM Cocktails & hors d'oeuvres

7:30PM Concert

Carnegie Hall

Hogs for Hope "Hope to Ride" Motorcycle Run

April 28, 2013

(Rain Date: May 5, 2013)

9:00AM Registration

11:30AM take-off

1:00PM party

Croton Gorge Park Police Escort

Ride to JFK Marina on Hudson

River

TD Bank Five Boro Bike Tour

Sunday, May 5, 2013

6:30AM

Battery Park

Greek Walk-A-Thon

Saturday, May 18, 2013

Ronald McDonald House

21st Annual Gala

Monday, May 20, 2013

6:30PM – 9:30PM

Waldorf=Astoria

ING New York City Half Marathon 2013

Ronald McDonald House® New York is currently recruiting runners for the ING NYC Half 2013 Marathon being held on March 17, 2013. Although general entry is now closed, there are 25 slots available on the Ronald McDonald House New York team for runners ready to tackle the 13.1 trek on behalf of families battling cancer. Runners who sign up with Team Ronald will be required to raise a minimum of \$1,200 (which includes registration fees for the New York Road Runners) in order to participate. For more information or to register, please visit www.rmh-newyork.org/nyc-half-2013/join or contact Michael Ballew at mballew@rmh-newyork.org.

TD Bank Five Boro Bike Tour

As the nation's largest cycling event, the TD Bank Five Boro Bike Tour gives New Yorkers a unique opportunity to rule the road en masse in a tremendous show of pride for the places, people and charitable organizations that are most important to them.

Ronald McDonald House New York's team is actively seeking participants for its team. If you would like to join us as we cycle toward hope for our families, please contact Sue Houston at (212) 639-0500, or shouston@rmh-newyork.org.

21st Annual Gala

It's one of the most important nights of the year for Ronald McDonald House New York, and a very special night for all who attend. Celebrating our two honorees, including Jeff Gennette, chief merchandising officer of Macy's, Inc., it will be a night to remember. Our annual gala event will feature live music provided courtesy of the New York Pops Orchestra and guest appearances by some of the resident families who continue to give us hope in their battle against cancer.

For tickets or more information, contact Richard Martin at (212) 639-0206, or rmartin@rmh-newyork.org.



Barbara Walters will once again serve as our Master of Ceremonies

Charles Manley



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21st Annual Gala



Monday, May 20, 2013

6:30PM – 9:30PM

Waldorf=Astoria

Join us as we honor excellence in
the battle against pediatric cancer.

For more information, visit
www.rmh-newyork.org.