



February 2024

around the HOUSE

3413 10th Street • Lubbock, TX 79415 • 806.744.8877
RMHCsouthwest.com

The Heart of the House



When Bianca was not at the hospital with her newborn daughter, Katalella, she was found in the kitchen at the Ronald McDonald House. Right by Bianca's side was her own mother, Sandra. Bianca found it comforting to spend her downtime cooking. She is a certified chef and has worked in restaurants for a long time. Being able to cook and eat what she liked was a nice change of pace from her pregnancy, which had been difficult and sometimes made it impossible for her to keep down food or water. "There were times when I would

go for days without eating", Bianca said.

Bianca and Jesus, Katalella's father, live close to the Texas-New Mexico border between Seminole and Hobbs. Even though Bianca had a difficult time throughout her pregnancy, she reached a point when she knew she needed to seek medical care. "One day, I just felt something was completely wrong."

Bianca's instincts were right, and she was transferred from Covenant in Hobbs to Lubbock. Bianca was kept in the hospital until Katalella reached 31 weeks. Katalella was born 9 weeks early. Katalella was moved to the NICU and Bianca moved into the Ronald McDonald House. Jesus was able to come and visit but wasn't able to stay full time due to work. During one of his trips, Jesus and Bianca went shopping to stock up on food and snacks for their fellow housemates. They

both knew how important having easy and convenient access to food and meals in the House was to families and wanted to give back.

Bianca's mom, Sandra, came from El Paso to stay with Bianca at the House. Although her daughter was grown, Sandra could not stop herself from wanting to be close to her daughter while she was going through her postpartum recovery. Bianca insisted on cooking for her mom—and anyone who wandered into the kitchen at the right time—but having her mom nearby was able to ease some of Bianca's burdens and worries.

(continued inside)



From the Desk of the President & CEO



The beginning of a new year always makes me feel nostalgic. I cannot help but reflect on the incredible journey we have embarked on together since I joined the staff of RMHC eight years ago. Thanks to your support, I have witnessed how RMHC of the Southwest has made a profound impact on the lives of families. It all began with

The House that Love Built

"The House that Love Built" is not just a slogan; it is a testament to the spirit that defines RMHC of the Southwest. Our House was built on the love our community has for families with ill or injured children. From a single 9 bedroom House to a 17 bedroom House in Lubbock, 4 Ronald McDonald Family Room programs across Lubbock and the Permian Basin, and numerous supporting programs, we have continued to use that love to grow. The House has become a true home away from home. Over the years, I have seen how our programs have provided shelter, comfort, and a sense of belonging to families facing the challenges of pediatric illness and injuries. Our commitment to this mission remains steadfast, and we are more determined than ever to continue this journey of love and healing.

Will you join us on this mission?

There are numerous ways you can continue to support RMHC's mission and put your love into action. You can find more ways to "Share the love" on pages 4 & 5 or visit our website [RMHCSouthwest.com](https://rmhcsouthwest.com).

- 1. Donate:** Your financial contributions, no matter how big or small, make a significant impact on our ability to provide essential services to families in need. The enclosed prepaid enveloped makes giving easy.
- 2. Volunteer:** Consider donating your time and skills to help maintain our home and support our families. Your presence can bring immense comfort to those staying with us.
- 3. Spread the Word:** Share our mission with your friends, family, and colleagues. The more people who know about us, the more families we can help.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to you for your continued support. Your belief in our mission fuels our determination to provide comfort and care to families facing adversity. **It is your kindness and generosity that keeps "The House that Love Built" standing strong.**

As we venture into 2024, let's continue to unite in the name of love, support, and compassion. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who need it most.

With heartfelt thanks and warm wishes for the year ahead,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emmanuel Ramirez".

Emmanuel Ramirez
President & CEO

Board of Directors

Todd Hardin, *Board Chair*
Christi Felton, *Board Secretary*
Paul Dannevik, *Board Treasurer*

Shannon Bates
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Sydney Witte

Katalella's Story Continued

The kitchen is the heart of the Ronald McDonald House. It's where many of our volunteers spend their time cooking and caring for families. It's where many of our families meet each other during meal time. For people like Bianca, the kitchen is also a place for a bit of normalcy in chaotic times.

Bianca and Katalella are both doing well. Katalella was released from the hospital earlier than was originally planned. "She grew and progressed really quick. The hospital staff was really surprised because they thought they were going to have to keep her until she would have been full term." Katalella is in good health and according to Bianca, "She's always hungry".



Thanks to our Director of Operations, and occasional photographer, Lauren Orta, we had a newborn photo shoot in the House. Between cooing over baby Katalella, we asked Bianca what the best part of staying at the Ronald McDonald House was.

"Everything. All of the staff...all of you guys are great, very helpful. It's amazing to be able to be here instead of traveling back and forth from where we live."

Katalella's family was able to head home after 31 nights at the Ronald McDonald House. We are so happy for this family! We imagine that as Katalella grows, she'll spend many hours in the kitchen with her mom and grandma cooking with love.



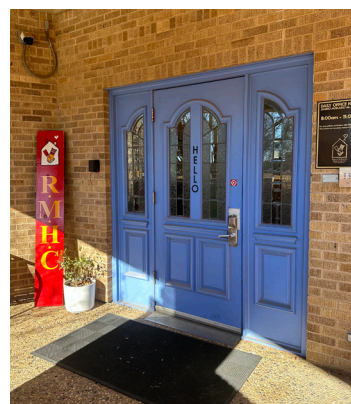
Share the love

Your donation gives families love and comfort when they have a child receiving medical care. Thank you for your support!

Donate today by using the enclosed envelope or visiting RMHCsouthwest.com.

Touring the House

Have you ever wondered what a kitchen looks like that serves 17 families a day? How many closets you need to store RMHC's day-to-day items? What different areas we have for play? We would love to offer you a tour of the Ronald McDonald House! We know how much it means to our donors and volunteers to see where their time and money makes a difference. To schedule a tour, give us a call (806) 744-8877.



The Quickest Way to Someone's Heart...



...is through their stomach.

Our Guest Chefs are the best at filling bellies and warming hearts at RMHC. Guest Chefs are volunteer groups--families, friends, church groups, student groups, coworkers, restaurants, and sometimes individuals--who cook for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House. They mostly cook dinner for the House, though we also have groups that cook breakfast or lunch. Additionally, we have a sub-group of

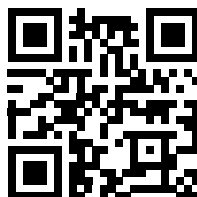
Guest Chefs, called Freezer Friends, who make meals that we can freeze and serve later. On average, our Guest Chefs feed 30 people each night. From spaghetti to tacos to casseroles, Guest Chefs make sure that families have a hot meal waiting for them when they come from the hospital back to the House.

Our Guest Chefs play an integral role in caring for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House. When parents have a child in the hospital, it can be hard for them to make the time to take care of their own needs because of how focused they are on their child's health. Guest Chefs take one of the families' worries off their plate by filling it with delicious food.

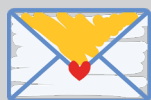
If you are interested in becoming a Guest Chef or have more questions, please reach out to **Erica Cerda**, ecerda@rmhcsouthwest.com or (806) 744-8877.

Making the House a Home

There is a lot involved in making the Ronald McDonald House feel like a home for the hundreds of families we serve each year. From making sure our staff and volunteers are always welcoming to stocking the kitchen with families' favorite snacks, we want to make sure the families staying with us feel the love. Last year, we renovated our kitchen, the heart of the House. This year, we are focusing on updating our guest rooms to make them more comfortable and modern. Painting has already begun. Next up, we will be replacing bedding and headboards. If you would like to help, we have an Amazon Wishlist for our guest room renovations. Scan the QR code to check it out. Your help can make sure our House feels like a home.



Additional Ways to Share the Love



Donate using the
enclosed envelope



Volunteer in our
Family Rooms



Follow us on social
media

A Little Change, a Lot of Love



Visit your local McDonald's, our founding and forever partner, and help make a difference for RHMC of the Southwest. Simply round up your purchase, buy a Happy Meal (RMHC receives a penny for each one sold), or drop your spare change in the donation box. Your small actions can bring comfort and support to families in need.



Our "Season of Giving" Round-Up Challenge winning store, 34th & Quaker-Lubbock

Our area McDonald's are making a commitment to ask their customers "Would you like to Round-Up for RMHC?" Thank you to McDonald's crew members and customers for saying "Yes" to caring for RMHC families.



Ruth Robillard, McDonald's Owner/Operator
Congratulations to Ruth Robillard, who was named one of Lubbock YWCA's "Women of Excellence". Ruth has been a great friend to RMHC for many years. Ruth is currently using her expertise and passion for RMHC by being on our McDonald's Engagement Committee, as well as our Golf and Expansion Committees.

Our Favorite Part: Families Going Home



The De La Torre Family
7 nights



The McMahan Family
10 nights



The Williams Family
6 nights



Take advantage of our
FreeWill partnership



Donate snacks &
bottled water



Learn more on our
website

We Love Our Red Shoes



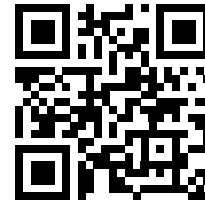
THE Red Shoe GALA

Did you notice the new name?

Our Red Shoe Shindig is now the Red Shoe Gala. It's the same great event benefiting RMHC of the Southwest, just with a little more sparkle. We are encouraging you to pair your favorite red shoes with cocktail attire and join us for a fun night.

At RMHC, we have a bit of an obsession with **red shoes**. Thanks to our namesake, Ronald McDonald, and his own stylish choice of footwear, we like to bring out our (much smaller) red shoes anytime we get together. The shoes represent our unity and commitment to caring for families who have a hospitalized child.

Want to get in on the fun? Join us for the Red Shoe Gala on Friday, March 22nd at the Frazier Alumni Pavilion. The event will include a plated dinner, dessert, cocktails, a silent/live auction, and lots of fun! Tables and tickets can be purchased online via the QR code. You can also use the code to donate if you are unable to attend.



Want to know how else you can get involved?

Contact Carley Patton, cpatton@rmhcsouthwest.com or (806) 744-8877, for sponsorship information, auction item donations, and questions.

Thank you to our
presenting sponsor:



35 Years of the House that Love Built

As we come to the end of our 35th anniversary year on March 10th, it is great time to think about all the good we plan to do in our next 35 years. We are continuing our updates to the House, including a soon to be business center for working parents and siblings in school. We have implemented training for all staff on trauma informed care so that we may better care for our families. We are also getting prepared for a second expansion of the Ronald McDonald House which should be completed in the next 5-10 years. We look forward to the future and are glad to have you along for the journey.



Memorials & Honorariums

October-December 2023

In memory of:

William Boise

Ben and Annelise Chenault

Roy Borden

Michael and Melissa Mapes

Lane Caskey

Joe and Anisse Reynolds

Leonard Conticello

Paula Peters

Garett and Avery Contreras

Ainsley Nelson and West Texas

Endurance Southpaw WTE

Chris Cox

Rusty and Linda Andrews

Tony Duesterhaus

Sharon Duesterhaus

Melvin "Buddy" Gaither

Harry and Pam Zalewski

Mario Guillen

Teresa Sample and BBEARG

Oscar Guillen

Teresa Sample and BBEARG

Tayler Hafen

Aimee Purser

Kelley Hankins

Martin and Sharon Schattel

Barbara Head

Jim and Jean Curtsinger

Brice Hughes

Barry and Retha Pittman

Marie Jackson

Mike and Delanie Adkins

James Kidd

Lea Kidd

Miquela Martinez

Estaban Sena

Bob Moore

Weldon Gray

Brent Neal

Jerry and Darlene Calvert

Joann Neal

Miles Rand

Jessica Gower

Derek Reber

Ms. Jones

Trish Sims

Barry and Diane Altman

Mike Thomas

Martin and Sharon Schattel

Roberta Turner

Scott and Lisa Horne

Jonathan Weldy

Celeste Barretto

Susan Buske

Juhree Castleman and HMS

Nutrition Kitchen & Office Staff

Larry and Vickie Cone

Kristi Goodwin

Anna Kelley and HHS

Counseling Office

Vincent Lee and Master

Plumbers, LLC

Pat and Debbie McKelvey

Pat, Becky and Karli McMurray

Bobby and Judy Pennell

Julia Perry and the

Holdsworth Center

Telesforo and Irene Rendon

Michael and Mary-Denise Sims

Michael Slaugh

Linda Wisdom

Barry and Diane Altman

In honor of:

Bobby Charles Boyton

Howard Penn

Duane Brown

Cindy Preston

JaKobe Benson

Hinika McDaniels

John and Sheila Casey

Ed and Melinda Felton

Casey Clark

Darrell and Pam Andrews

Carl Conova

Doug and Terry Klepper

Samantha Cox

Jane Brown

Elaine Cox

Channing Davidson

Chris Davidson

Chris Felton

Ed and Melinda Felton

Mike and Jayne Field

Randy and Dana Neugebauer

Quinn Gilleland

Bob Gibson

Mickie Hargrove

Mike and Kathy Hargrove

Mr. and Mrs. B.L. Jones

Tom and Lindy Jones

Miles Kuehler

Tom and Kristi McCrummen

Ryan Moore

Dusty and Virginia Moore

Tom and Carolyn Neal

Mike and Jayne Field

Beverly Randoll

Faith Free Lewis

Keri Reynolds

Nadine Reynolds

Elias Portugal Smith

Vanessa Strackbein

Tristin Tarango

Joe and Mary James

Hannah Tipples

Mark and Susan Cox

Renee Wilbanks

Sara Fierro



Family and friends of Nickolas Wood started A Racecar For Your Pocket in his memory. They donated more than 450 toy race cars to RMHC in December. Their goal is to provide kids with a small toy that they can keep nearby for comfort and fun when they are sick and in the hospital.

Our 2023 Impact:



311

families stayed at
the House



1,482

visits to the
Family Rooms



809

volunteers
served RMHC of
the Southwest



158

number of House
to Home bags
provided



250+

items given out
from Cart with a
Heart

Sign up to get our new "Monthly Mini" Newsletter & get all
your RMHC news delivered straight to your email inbox:

