



Aloha

# From Our House to Yours

www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org

Newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Hawaii

September 2014

## Riding it out together

Even though Ben Acob had a lot on his mind the day he, his wife Nita, and 17-year-old son Micah were returning home to Maui, he enthusiastically took over the Judd Hillside House's kitchen and began cooking made-to-order omelets for everyone on the RMHC-HI staff. Ben explained that "it was just a small token of appreciation, and we did it with all our hearts."

It actually wasn't the first time Ben showed that he knows his way around a kitchen. During the five months he and his family had stayed at the Ronald

McDonald House, he frequently put together meals that he gladly shared with the other families and the staff.

This wasn't how the Acob family expected to spend five months: away from home, addressing Micah's very difficult health issues. But sometimes the unexpected happens and you must endure.

"When we came over here we had round trip tickets. We expected to return right away, so we were surprised when the doctor said we would have to stay," recalled Ben. "We just looked at each other and said, 'Where are we going to stay?' The doctor said he thought we could stay up at the Ronald McDonald House, and since we arrived here, this House has helped us so much."

Their personal upheaval had begun back in January when Micah began having bouts of high fever. Soon, he also began having pain in his shoulder, back and neck. After several visits to his pediatrician and emergency room, a final x-ray showed a mass in Micah's chest. Ben said that "the next day they gave him a CT Scan and by the afternoon, they called us and said we had to go to Honolulu right away."

Even after arriving at Kapiolani Hospital it took about a week for doctors to determine the exact diagnosis. This was crucial because the course his treatments would take depended on it. It was Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma, and doctors began the first of six rounds of chemotherapy. "They saw it in his liver and different parts of his spine," Ben said.

"They said it was stage four, so his treatments needed to be intense," added Nita.

"Each round lasted five days, and there were different kinds of chemo, Ben explained. "After each round, he has had to recover for a couple of weeks to gain enough strength for the next round. Chemo was difficult for Micah. Sometimes he would do really well and other times it was really hard for him."

Then, after five months of struggling with the devastating side effects of his chemotherapy, Micah was able to go home to Maui — to



Ben, Nita and Micah Acob were excited to be going home to Maui after five months on Oahu.

### Wish List

#### Gift Cards

Restaurants  
Stores/Markets  
Gasoline gift cards  
Prepaid phone cards  
Family activity  
Movie tickets

#### Household Items

Paper towels & napkins  
Microwavable paper plates  
Plastic forks, knives & spoons  
Ziploc bags – quart, gallon  
Garbage bags (yard & kitchen)  
Cutlery set  
Can openers electric/manual

#### Food Items

Cooking oil  
Fresh fruits & vegetables  
Frozen meals (microwave)  
Individually wrapped snacks  
Cup O' Noodles

#### Miscellaneous

Forever postage stamps  
Office supplies  
White photo-copy paper  
(letter & legal size)  
Fitted white sheets – full/twin  
New Pillows

school, and to be with his friends and other family members. Ben might now get to open that small law office he was planning, and Nita will be able to return to her job too.

Nita knows that Micah's doctors will be keeping a close watch on his health. "He's in a clinical study and so he will be monitored for five years," she said. "Monthly, then every quarter, every six months and then yearly after that."

As they headed home, Ben and Nita reflected on their time at the Ronald McDonald House. "As we dealt with our son's condition, we tried to figure out for what purpose or message the disease has for us," Ben shared. "We are convinced that one of them, among others, was to experience the House That Love Built,

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## Message from our President



Terri Chong

Aloha,

At the Ronald McDonald House, we meet and are touched by all types of moms from every corner of our island community. But last month, a different kind of mom paid a visit - Mother Nature knocked on our door, bringing Iselle and Julio, and demanding everyone's attention.

Unfortunately, Iselle unleashed her tantrum on the Big Island of Hawaii, before calming down and shedding just a heavy shower of tears on Oahu. Julio decided to lay low and thankfully, didn't follow Iselle's lead. But it was the largest tropical storm to hit the Big Island in a long time and many people there suffered greatly.

Families who make their home at the Ronald McDonald House while their children are being treated for serious illnesses at Oahu hospitals, come from all the Hawaiian Islands and Pacific Rim area. But 35%-45% of our families come from the Big Island, and anxiety levels for these families were very high. Adding to the worry of caring for a sick child, was great concern for their other children, grandparents, relatives and friends back at home. At times like these, peace of mind is incredibly difficult, if not impossible, when separated from loved ones.

At the Ronald McDonald House, I was so impressed and incredibly proud of our staff, interns and volunteers who set aside their own worries and instead, took care of and attended to the needs of about a dozen families huddled together that weekend at our two Houses in Manoa.

We were ready, and able to reassure everyone that our Emergency Preparedness Plan was in place. There were emergency supplies, meals, transportation and other support services for families with hospitalized children, and 24-hour staff coverage to ensure that everyone at the Ronald McDonald House was safe and comfortable. The atmosphere remained calm, and families felt empowered by the steady stream of information they received from our staff and the media's continuous coverage of the approaching storms.

We were lucky this time. But we are constantly reminded and try to be vigilant about the importance of having a comprehensive emergency plan - and executing it properly - during a natural disaster such as a hurricane, tsunami, or earthquake. It's because so many families depend on us to look out for them while they are here, to protect them from harm, keep them safe, and provide a healing place for their family to be together. They can continue to focus on the reason why they're here - to care for a sick child during their greatest time of need.

### Together continued from page 1

meet all of you, the volunteers, and other residents, who all have made a special impression upon us for the rest of our lives. what we would have done if we didn't have this place. We would have had to stay in a hotel or go home every time, which costs a lot."

Nita appreciated the way sharing the large home with other families provided a strong support system. "You end up sharing what you are going through and learning about what they are going through. It makes you feel like you're not the only one," she said. "You don't feel sorry for yourself when you see so many others going through the same thing. People can't do this by themselves. This House really helps, and we are just very thankful to everyone here."



Before leaving for the airport, Ben, Nita and Micah paused to take a photo with some of the RMHC-HI staff members.

## Milestone for global organization

October 15th marks the 40th anniversary of the very first Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia, Pa. Since that first House opened, Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) has grown to support nearly 9 million families each year.



Believing in the notion that nothing matters more than family, Ronald McDonald Houses are built on the simple idea that nothing else should matter when a family is focused on the health of their child - not where they can afford to stay, where they will get their next meal or where they will lay their head at night to rest. We believe that when a child is hospitalized the love and support of family is as powerful as the strongest medicine prescribed.

Your Hawaii Ronald McDonald House began operating in 1987 and has assisted almost 25,000 people.

# PARADE OF PARTNERS

## Great News!

RMHC-HI is an Aloha United Way community partner agency.



Donors who pledge \$48 or more per year may choose to designate their donation to RMHC-HI in the upcoming campaign.

It's easy...

- (1) See "Optional Donor Choice" on your pledge form
- (2) Go to section E—Agency/Program Support
- (3) Fill in code # 70680

Mahalo for your support!!

## Combined Federal Campaign

This campaign is similar to the AUW campaign but it is a paycheck deduction plan for Federal employees, including the military. Just designate Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii as recipient of your donations.



## Mighty, Happy to Help the Kids

Don't forget! For every Happy Meal and Mighty Kids Meal sold throughout 2014, our friends at McDonald's of Hawaii are donating five cents to RMHC-HI.

Those nickels will really add up and make a big difference to our ability to serve the children and families.

Thank you McDonald's customers for your continual support of our mission through participating in special promotions like this one and by dropping your change into the handy collection boxes near cash registers.



## Our newspaper friends

The following newspapers make a donation to RMHC-HI every time one of their papers is sold at a McDonald's restaurant!



## You shop. Amazon gives!

Do any shopping at Amazon.com?

Please consider doing it on their AmazonSmile.com connection.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic

way for you to support RMHC-HI

every time you shop, at no cost to you.

After designating RMHC-HI as your charity,

Amazon will donate .05% of

all qualifying purchases to us!

Thank you for your support, shoppers!

# The 23rd annual RMHC-HI Golf Classic

Playing in ideal conditions, 192 participants teed off with the 12 noon "shotgun start" at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on July 17, 2014. At the end of the day came the sumptuous banquet, graciously provided by Outback Steakhouse Waipio. There was wonderful fellowship, and all of the awards and prizes were given out. In our Golf Classic, everyone wins something because to the Ronald McDonald House kids and families, the players are heroes!

One golfer, Tyler Tokioka, went home with a \$6,300 Rolex watch, courtesy of Kaimana Kea Rolex Boutique, official Rolex jeweler.



In addition to the golfing, players discovered that each hole also featured games, food and drink.

The event brought in more than \$100,000 to help the families we serve.

Mahalo to everyone who helped make our Golf Classic a success, and a special acknowledgement to our many generous donors and the more than 200 volunteers who helped make the experience a very special one for all the participants.



Our friends from Outback Steakhouse Waipio served up a feast.



Tyler Tokioka was surprised to win the beautiful Rolex watch.

## Platinum Sponsors

Crazy Shirts  
Golden State Foods  
Horizon Lines  
Leu Okuda & Doi  
Lyle Hamasaki Construction, Inc. (2 Teams)  
McDonald's of Hawaii - GAMA Team (2 Teams)  
McDonald's Restaurants of Hawaii (2 Teams)  
Meadow Gold Dairies  
Midas Hawaii  
Outback Steakhouse  
Pookela Paddles  
Waikiki Trader Corp. dba Kaimana Kea  
Rolex Boutique

## Gold Sponsors

Ala Moana Produce  
Arytza Fresh Start Bakery  
BAMA  
Burts Union Service  
C & C Engineering & Construction (2 Teams)  
First Insurance Company of Hawaii  
HMSA  
Kevin and Cathy Wong  
McDonalds Maui  
MidPac Petroleum  
Mitsunaga & Associates, Inc. (2 Teams)  
Newtown Veterinary Clinic, Inc. (2 Teams)  
SERVCO Pacific

Sky River Management  
Stuart Chun - Insurance Brokerage  
Sumida & Associates  
The Coca Cola Company  
Yamashiro Building Supply

## Silver Sponsors

Air Liquide  
American Savings Bank  
Chun Kerr, LLP  
Commercial Sheetmetal Company, Inc.  
Communications Pacific, Inc.  
CSL Construction  
Dennis M.H. Pang Associates  
Ed Sonoda Plumbing, Inc.  
Egami & Ichikawa CPAs, Inc.  
Grace Pacific Corporation  
HawaiiUSA Federal Credit Union  
Honolulu Disposal Service  
Honolulu Star-Advertiser  
HPC Foods  
Island Insurance Company, Ltd.  
J. Kadowaki, Inc.  
Koga Engineering & Construction  
McDonald's of Hilo  
Mutual Underwriters  
Orwak Compaction USA  
Premier Insurance  
Prudential Locations

R.K. Oshiro Door Service, Inc.  
R.M. Towill Corporation  
Royal Hawaiian Movers  
Servco Employee Benefits Consulting  
Sheet Metal Industry Fund

## Prize Donors Over \$500

California Hotel and Casino  
Dr Pepper Snapple Group  
Egami & Ichikawa CPAs, Inc.  
Grand Wailea  
Hawaii Independent Energy  
Hilton Waikiki Beach  
Holua Resort at Mauna Loa Village  
Ka'anapali Beach Hotel  
Kaha Lani Resort  
Kapalua Golf  
Robert and Kathy Leopoldino  
Lloyd Horibe's Hairsapes  
Maui Jim, Inc.  
Mauna Lani Resort Golf Club  
Mid Pacific Country Club  
Rolex Boutique Kaimana Kea  
THE MODERN HONOLULU  
TNP Auto Detailing  
Mr. Troy Wada - INPAC Wealth Solutions  
Waikiki Parc Hotel

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Mahalo!

## Strength in Numbers



The compassionate folks from DATAHOUSE dropped off a contribution of nearly \$1,400 on August 5, raised through a company fundraiser. Left to right, DataHouse interns Thuy Ny Le and Jamielenn Uemura, RMHC-HI Board member Clyde Shiigi of DataHouse, and RMHC-HI President Jerri Chong.

## Matson really cares!

On August 20, Gary Nakamatsu, V.P. at Matson Inc., visited the Judd Hillside House and presented a check to RMHC-HI President Jerri Chong for \$2,500 in support of the Ronald McDonald House Infant Nutrition Program.

Mahalo Matson!

# Matson.



## All in one weekend!

One recent weekend was especially filled with excitement at the Judd Hillside Ronald McDonald House. MILILANI MIDDLE SCHOOL students and teachers visited and sponsored dinner on Saturday August 16. Then, on Sunday August 17, the FILIPINO WOMEN'S LEAGUE sponsored dinner and The HAWAII CENTRAL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION employees sponsored lunch, donated items from the wish list, and were extra hand volunteers. Thank you all for wonderful support!!



The students from Mililani Middle School



The ladies of the Filipino Women's League



The group from the Hawaii Central Federal Credit Union

# Share-A-Night with us at the RMHC-HI Gala

*It's coming up on November 16 at the Sheraton Waikiki Hotel*

We are gearing up for this year's RMHC-HI Gala on Sunday evening, November 16 at the Sheraton Waikiki Hotel! It's a chance for everyone to dress up in their finest and come together to show support for the work Ronald McDonald House does to help seriously ill children and their families. It's an evening of great entertainment, a delicious dinner, and a wonderful feeling of fellowship. Please help us celebrate and share that night with us.



There are bargains to be had at the Gala's Silent auction and Country store.



The outstanding entertainment includes Jordan Segundo!

Visit our website at [www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org](http://www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org) to sponsor a table, purchase tickets, or get more information.

We are also looking for donations of silent auction items. To help out this way, please give us a call at 973-5683 ext. 243. Mahalo!

*Share a Night*   
*Annual Gala*



## GSF really cares about Hawaii's keiki

The supportive people from Golden State Foods (GSF) visited the Judd Hillside Ronald McDonald House on Sunday, September 21, to provide dinner for all of the families. They also presented the charity with a check for \$2,500 to help purchase emergency power generators for both Houses. Gathering around the check were GSF employees, RMHC-HI staff and families currently staying at the House.



## Kamehameha students lend a hand

**KIDS 4 KIDS**, a group of Kamehameha School students, took a break from baking cookies and brownies for the families to pose for a photo on the playground at the Judd Hillside Ronald McDonald House. Their visit on late Friday afternoon September 19 helped get the weekend started with much aloha.

## SSFM's super support!



President Mike Matusmoto and his employees at **SSFM International** selected Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii as the beneficiary of their 55th Anniversary Celebration, held on September 18 at Honolulu Country Club! In addition to the company's \$5,000 contribution, many of those attending the event added their own personal donations, helping the grand total to be \$9,775. Above, Mr. Matsumoto (left) and his management team presented the company's check to RMHC-HI President Jerri Chong (second from left). Next to Jerri (l-r) are Trisha Sugita, Stacey Miyamoto, Eric Matsuda, and Corey Matsuoka.



## Girls start company and help RMHC-HI

Getting a head start on being responsible citizens, ten-year-old Kara Eto, and Baylie Rodrigues, 11, of Mililani decided to do something to help the kids and families staying at the Ronald McDonald House. With the help of Kara's dad Jon, they started their own mailbox painting company known as K&B Painting. Then they painted mailboxes in their neighborhood and passed the money they made over to RMHC-HI. Kara, a singer, has also donated a portion of the cash prize she won from a singing competition.

## We are so grateful!



Our trusty volunteers from **AIR FORCE CGOC** came over on September 23 and cleaned the Judd Hillside House inside and out!

## *Living in Harmony*



Our friends from **HARMONY LODGE** stopped by on September 23 with a \$720 contribution and a delicious spaghetti lunch for everyone. Mahalo!

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



# Caring people needed immediately!

Do you have what it takes to be a Ronald McDonald House Family Room volunteer?

If you:

- (1) Are at least 18 years old.
- (2) Want a volunteer role that really makes a difference.
- (3) Are willing to commit to at least two, four-hour shifts per month
- (4) Truly care about children and families...then...

**YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT FOR THIS IMPORTANT ROLE.**

Please call 973-5683 ext. 225 to get started.



RONALD McDONALD HOUSE  
*Family Room*®

At Kapiolani Medical Center for  
Women & Children