



Aloha

From Our House to Yours

www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org

Newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Hawaii

Vol. XVI, Issue 1, February 2016

The Feisty One

Each year, Anette and Alec "Al" Feldman of San Diego, California sit down and make a list of the community service they plan on doing. Although they didn't know a lot about their local Ronald McDonald House, it has been on their list most years. They never suspected that one day they would be staying at a Ronald McDonald House themselves - let alone one that was an ocean away from home.

Anette, Al and their five-year-old daughter Mila were just beginning a dream Hawaiian vacation. Their first

evening they spent enjoying a wonderful sunset on the beach. "I remember relaxing on the beach while Al and Mila went for a swim," said Anette. "I sat there thinking this was the best thing ever and that this was exactly where I wanted to be."

The next day, the family went to the zoo but Anette, who was 23 weeks into her pregnancy, began feeling ill. "At first, I thought maybe it was the time difference or gas pains," recalled Anette.

Back at the hotel, Anette napped, hoping that would make her feel better, but by 8pm she was in distress and realized she needed to go to the hospital to find out what was happening.

After a hasty taxi cab ride to Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children, the gravity of the situation soon became clear to Anette. "They were ready for us at the hospital with a wheelchair waiting," she said. "They swept me upstairs, and immediately did an ultrasound."

Soon, Anette got the news that her water broke. "They told me they were going to hook me up to an IV, give me medication, and try to keep the baby in," she recounted. "They said regardless of how long they can delay baby, I would be here until baby comes."

Anette's hope that she could go home and wait in San Diego for the birth was dashed, and it would get even more "twilight zone", as she described it. They knew Anette was only 23 weeks along and had to ask her some difficult but required questions that couldn't wait.

Anette unsuccessfully tried to hold back tears as she talked about what happened next. "The doctors went over worst-case scenarios that involved quality of life and other disturbing possible outcomes," she shared. Anette was incredulous when they asked her what she wanted to do. "I told them, what do you mean - I want you to do everything you can to save my baby!"

Anette kept telling herself "He's going to stay in. He's going to stay in." but around noon the next day with her husband and Mila in the room with her, doctors did an ultrasound. "Then they said, 'O.K. let's get the ball rolling, you're going to have a son.' An alarm went off, doctors, nurses, everybody swarmed in. Suddenly I was being sedated. They were wheeling me and running down the hall into the surgery room with all the bright lights. The last thing I remember is someone in my face saying 'It's ok. It's ok.'"



Mila was so happy to hold her new brother Liam at the hospital.

"Then I woke up in the recovery room and I couldn't believe this had just happened," she said, shaking her head. "It was surreal."

What Anette didn't know yet was that baby Liam had come out relatively healthy and with a strong will to live. Since that first day, he has been progressing remarkably well, earning the nickname "The Feisty One" in the NICU. If all continues to go well he may even be released from the hospital near his original due date of March 9.

"In the hospital, after everything started setting in, we realized we might be here for months," said Anette. "Everything started going through our heads including, where are we going to stay?"

continued on page 2

Wish List

Gift Cards

Restaurants
Stores/Markets
Gasoline gift cards
Family activity
Movie tickets

Household Items

Microwavable paper plates
Garbage bags (yard & kitchen)
Dishwasher-safe plastic cups

Food Items

Fresh fruits & vegetables
Frozen single-serving meals
(microwavable)
Frozen pizza
Individually wrapped snacks
Frozen Hot Pockets

Miscellaneous

Forever postage stamps
Office supplies
Fitted white sheets - full/twin
New pillows
White bath towels
White shower curtain liners
White photo-copy paper
(letter & legal size)

Message from our President



Terri Chong

Aloha,

It's leap year, and for most of us, that means an extra day during February to go about our business, enjoy life, be productive, love and be happy. For families who have a seriously ill child, it can mean an additional day of stress, turmoil, and uncertainty. But here at Ronald

McDonald House, for many, it's an extra day of hope; extra hours filled with love and caring; a bonus of precious time for families to be together.

Not only do we have a 29th of February this year but we are also approaching the 29th anniversary of Hawaii's Ronald McDonald House on March 27. It's clear that the experience we have gained over the years helps us understand the emotional roller coaster that parents go through. The feeling of helplessness, because they have very little control over what is happening to their child; extreme anxiety, because they can't be sure there will be a positive outcome; pressure, because their lives have been turned upside down and finances stretched to the limit.

That's why, at Ronald McDonald House, everything we provide is designed to create as much "normalcy" in a family's life as possible, so the focus can be entirely on their child's recovery.

Some people mistakenly think that the Ronald House is a depressing place because of the gravity of some of the children's conditions. But nothing could be further from the truth. The "House That Love Built" is a place of hope and healing, and we have seen countless success stories along the way.

Families may be experiencing tough times, but what inspires them is that the Ronald McDonald House is filled with optimism, courage and faith.

We are fortunate because we get to see the very best in people; families coming together like never before for the sake of their beloved keiki; staff members going that extra mile just because they care; eager volunteers willing to do anything they can to help; and donors in our community choosing to stand shoulder to shoulder with those in need of support.

In Hawaii, the strong and the healthy make sure the sick and less fortunate are not forgotten. Thank you for being part of the Ronald McDonald House Ohana!

"Aloha From Our House to Yours", the newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii (RMHC-HI), is published three times a year. RMHC-HI, 1970 Judd Hillside Road, Honolulu, HI 96822

continued from page 1

"The hospital social worker told us about Ronald McDonald House and after we talked it over, we said 'o.k., this is what we're going to do.' A room was available and ready for us when we arrived. It just felt comfortable, and everything we needed was set up for us."

Soon, Anette was feeling up to the task. "Being here at the House made me feel like everything was going to be alright," said Anette. "I told myself, I can do it. I can do this!" And she has!

But Anette hasn't done it alone. Her dad Mike joined her here at the House for a couple of months and Al and Mila spend as much time as possible here - thanks to Al's dad Alex who delayed his planned retirement to cover Al's safe and vault business back home. Also lending strong support have

been Al's mom Sofy, Mike's wife Phyllis and Anette's mom Debbie.

"I hate to think what it would have been like for me and my family if I didn't have this," Anette said, gesturing to her surroundings at the Ronald House. "Your volunteers, staff, and organization really are awesome."



Al, Mila and Anette await baby Liam at Hawaii's Ronald McDonald House.

Heroes Of The Heart



Our friends at Midas Hawaii—Bob and Dianne Pereira—are ardent supporters of RMHC-HI. They love giving back to the community they serve by supporting our efforts to help families with seriously ill children.

Bob & Dianne not only participate in our Golf Classic, but they also have set up their own Charity Golf Tournament to benefit RMHC-HI.

They clearly do care about the children, and we proudly count Midas Hawaii among our "Heroes of the Heart"!

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2 — Moms on a Mission presents "A 'Lil Bit Country—A 'Lil Bit Rock 'N Roll", a benefit for RMHC-HI

July 21 — RMHC-HI Golf Classic



Around the House

New washer-dryers for the Judd Hillside House

Thanks to the kind generosity of Golden State Foods Foundation and The Million Dollar Round Table Foundation, desperately needed replacement washer-dryer stacks have been purchased and installed at our Judd Hillside House!



Babies need their milk!

Our Infant Nutrition Program has gotten a big boost with grants from Matson Foundation and Ward Village Foundation.



HOORAY FOR THE PILOT CLUB!



Thank you Pilot Club!

On Saturday January 30, the Pilot Club of Honolulu provided a wonderful casserole "smorgasbord" for the families staying at both Ronald McDonald Houses. On top of that, they presented us with a \$1,000 check!

The club's guiding principles are to "Do More, Care More and Be More" in our communities every day. They are making a real difference.



RMHC-HI's Kanoe Paauhau and Olivia Garner received a warm welcome from the Chinatown Lion's Club when they visited a meeting to share the Ronald McDonald House story on January 28. In the photo are (l-r) Lion's Club members Josie Akana, Roberta Wong Leung and, Angie Ho.

The Chinatown Lion's Club has been supportive of RMHC-HI's mission in many ways, including Super Bowl Sunday when they provided dinner for the families!

2016 RMHC-HI Share-A-Night Gala

November 21, 2015
Sheraton Waikiki Hotel

The 10th annual RMHC-HI Gala was a resounding success! Former board member and longtime supporter Bruce Yanagihara was honored for his countless contributions to the organization. We celebrated Hawaii's great entertainers, and featured a "wine country" theme with wine tastings, a silent auction, and a wine "pull".

Performers included Jordan Segundo and dancers from Pas De Deux Hawaii; Amy Hānaiali'i; Casey Fortuna; Elvis performer Leo Days with his Burn 'n Love Dancers; and Brian Robertshaw. The event brought together several families who have stayed at the Ronald McDonald House, and generated more than \$300,000.



2016 RMHC-HI Gala Honoree
Bruce Yanagihara



Martin and Janet Lau



Wes and Carrie-Jeanne Oda

*Share a Night
Annual Gala*



Dr. Jay Cambra, Veronica Kaneko and Debbie and Patrick Lim



Kitty Lagareta and Richard Edge



(Left to right) Lili'u Ross performed an original song called "Kahuena", which was inspired by her stay at the Ronald McDonald House; Jordan Segundo and Casey Fortuna; and Amy Hānai'ali'i

Mahalo to Our Shining Stars



KOA SPONSORSHIP

McDonald's Restaurants of Hawaii, Inc
Golden Arches Merchant Assoc. of Hawaii

MAILE SPONSORSHIP

Bank of Hawaii
JM Sullivan Family Foundation

ILIMA SPONSORSHIP

Fresh Start Bakery - Aryzta
Ichinose / Ballard Organization
Leu Okuda & Doi, Attorneys at Law
Locations LLC
Meadow Gold Dairies
R. M. Towill Corporation

PIKAKE SPONSORSHIP

Aloha Petroleum, Ltd.
Aloha Shoyu Company Hawaii
Anbe, Aruga & Ishizu, Architects, Inc.
Carole Kai Charities Great Aloha Run
CC Engineering and Construction, Inc.
Central Pacific Bank
Stuart Chun
Communications Pacific
DataHouse
Disposable Products, Inc.
Egami & Ichikawa CPAs, Inc.
First Insurance Company of Hawaii, Ltd.
Foodland Super Market, Limited
Golden State Foods
Hawai'i Gas
Hawaii-Western Management Group, Inc.
HMSA
Hawaii National Bank

H.K. Construction Corp.
Honolulu Star-Advertiser
HPC Foods, Ltd.
Hung Wo and Elizabeth
Lau Ching Foundation
inpac Wealth Solutions & Dean Park LLC
Island Insurance Company, Ltd.
J. Kadowaki, Inc.
Kaiser Permanente
Veronica Kaneko
KBRL Inc. dba McDonald's Waimea/Kona
Kapiolani Medical Center for
Women and Children
Dr. Roberta Ann Wong Leung
Locations Foundation
McDonald's Restaurants of Hawaii, Inc.
McDonald's of Kauai
McDonald's of Maui
MVNP
N&K CPAs, Inc
Dianne & Bob Pereira
Servco Foundation
Sheraton Waikiki Resort
The Shidler Group
Sky River Management, LLC
Sumida & Associates, Inc.
Cynthia Takenaka & Friends
Trinity Investments LLC
Dr. Russell Woo
Bruce Yanagihara

SPECIAL FRIENDS

Alaska Airlines
Alaska Reel Adventures
Joan Bellinger

Big Island Candies
Commercial Sheetmetal Co. Inc.
Fairmont Kea Lani
Four Seasons Resort Oahu at Ko Olina
Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa
Hawaii Independent Energy
Hawaii Opera Theatre
Hawaiian Airlines
Hawaiian Pie Company
Honolulu Star-Advertiser
Tammy Ishibashi
Clayton & Betty Kamida
Yvonne Kuwada
Kanzen Corporation/Blaine Umeda
Duane Kurisu
Lawai Beach Resort
Mauna Lani Bay Hotel and Bungalows
Mitsunaga & Associates, Inc.
Dr. Edison Miyawaki
Moana Surfriider, A Westin Resort & Spa
Moms On a Mission
MW Group, Ltd.
Mike Nino
Palace Hotel, a Luxury Collection Hotel
Pronghorn Resort
Robert Palma Designs
The Queen's Medical Center
RMHC Hawaii's 3 Gents: Lester, Lloyd, Wendall
Sheraton Waikiki Hotel & Resort
SpeediShuttle LLC
Thing 1, 2, 3, 4 & Tobie
Trump International Hotel Waikiki Beach Walk
Charlotte Yamamoto
Chloe and Sherry Bolton Zhao



(Left to right) Elvis performer Leo Days and his dancers; James and Donna Asam with emcee Al Waterson; and volunteers Nobu Os-hiro, Nancy and Richard Akamine, and Sharon Kim

FOREVER OHANA AND FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS...

Dear Ronald McDonald House of Honolulu-

We stayed at your facility as our daughter was in the Neonatal intensive Care Unit at Kapiolani Hospital. We are from Minnesota and were on vacation in Hawaii when our daughter decided to come five weeks early.



We will never forget the compassionate staff and wonderful volunteers at your wonderful house on Oahu Avenue! It was a comfortable home-away-

from-home for us. We made lasting friendships with the other families staying at the House as well.

Both the House and the Family Room at the hospital allowed us a place where we felt both welcomed and comfortable. We can't thank you enough for allowing us to focus on our baby and not worry about food, transportation or shelter.

We had to put our faith in a lot of strangers, and not one single person let us down. Our daughter is now a thriving, happy, healthy one-year-old!

Love- Jill and Greg Backes

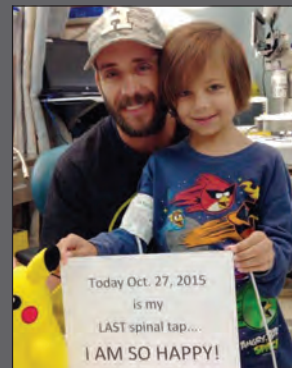
Aloha Ronald McDonald House,

It's frightening when you find out that your baby has a life-threatening illness, especially if you live on a neighbor island like we do. Really sick children must go to Honolulu for treatments. Talk about upheavals—

not only did we need to deal with our child's condition, but we also had to figure out how we could be there, by his side. It all seemed so overwhelming, and it could have been, if it wasn't for the Ronald McDonald House. It allowed us to stay together as a family to support Noah. Another unexpected gift was being enriched by meeting and getting to know other families from all over the islands that were going through similar issues with their kids.

To the volunteers, donors, and everyone else who chips in to make the Ronald McDonald House happen, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

-Zac & Rebecca Hosler



Zac and Noah on the day of Noah's last's spinal tap. Noah continues to do well.

To the Ronald McDonald House family and friends:

Life is God's greatest gift. So special that we must cherish every moment we have with those we truly love, for that moment can be gone. And when that final moment comes, we are left to hold on to the sweet and loving memories—and the bitter lesson of life's fragility and the preciousness of our borrowed time.

But because of Jaimelyn's life and passing, my husband and I can no longer take things in life for granted. We live each day to the fullest. We try to solve most problems before the end of the day and not depend on tomorrow to come, for the next day may be too late. So we fondly kiss and hug our loved ones goodnight, and tell them we love them, for the future is not guaranteed.

These changes in us are because of our little Jaimelyn. We, the family of Jaimelyn Maria Castro Cepeda, would like to extend our sincere appreciation for all of your love, kindnesses and support—but most of all, your prayers in our time of sorrow. Thank you and God bless you all.

-James and Angelyn Cepeda and Family.



Angelyn, Jaimelyn, and James Cepeda

Ways The Community Supports Us Mahalo!

YEE ★ HAW

Moms On a Mission Hawaii Presents
A 'LIL BIT COUNTRY
A 'LIL BIT ROCK 'N ROLL

APRIL

2 at 5:30PM

Pomaika'i Ballroom
at Dole Cannery

BENEFITING

The
Ronald McDonald
House
Families



Kick Up Your Heels With



Lina Girl &
Dita Holifield



& Dita Holifield's HillBilly House

\$85

Dinner ★ Dancing ★ Sweets

Pull on your Boots, Jeans & 'Lil Bit of Bling!

For tickets, contact Roxane Kimura at 256-8788

Mighty, Happy to help the kids

Don't forget! For every Happy Meal and Mighty Kids Meal sold throughout 2016, our friends at McDonald's 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!



McFun-raiser Coupon Books

Every day, more and more schools, teams and clubs are discovering the fundraising power of the RMHC-HI McFun-raiser Coupon Book Program.

It's really simple and it really works! McDonald

Restaurants of Hawaii donates menu items, which is really the key to this program. RMHC-HI packages these menu items in a handy coupon book, which it sells to organizations like those described above for \$3 each. The group then sells them for \$5, making a \$2 profit on each coupon book sold. Since the coupons in the book are valued at approximately \$18, everybody is a winner!

Check out more information about McFun-raiser on the RMHC-HI website at www.ronaldhousehawaii.org, or call RMHC-HI at 973-5683 ext. 244.



Pro Bowl supports RMHC-HI with \$3,000 grant



RMHC-HI's Kanoë Paauhau (left) and Candace Asam-Lopez got a chance to meet Tennessee Titan's quarterback Marcus Mariota while attending the Pro Bowl Beach Day event as VIP guests!

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Hawaii
1970 Judd Hillside Road
P.O. Box 61777
Honolulu, Hawaii 96839-1777
Phone: (808) 973-5683
info@rmhchawaii.org
www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Honolulu HI
Permit No. 635

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Volunteer Spotlight

By Olivia Garner
RMHC - HI Volunteer Services Manager



The Ronald McDonald House is often described as "The House That Love Built." When thinking about that love my mind goes straight to our volunteers. Needless to say, the wonderful individuals who choose to dedicate their time are the heart and soul of RMHC-HI.

Over the years volunteers have come and gone. However, they always seem to leave a special mark on the House and everyone in it. This spring we are saying goodbye to the lovely Lisa Selman as she moves away to the neighbor island of Maui.

Lisa began regularly volunteering at RMHC-HI nearly two years ago. She is the kind of person who helps out whenever and wherever she is needed. In many ways she has become a "Jack of All Trades" when it comes to her volunteer work. Whether it is helping in the office, preparing for a special event, or covering a shift at the Family Room, Lisa always seems to step in and do it without any hesitation!

When reflecting on her time as a volunteer for RMHC-HI Lisa expressed how much she enjoyed being at the Judd Hillside House and the Family Room. She talked about how

the "House is such a cheerful, hopeful, and a beautiful place to be," and how the Family Room is "a quiet and special place in the Kapiolani Hospital".

Lisa says she especially looks forward to her regular shifts at the Family Room because she is inspired by the families she meets while volunteering there. "It is amazing to see the strength that these families have while facing such hardship," she explained.



Lisa Selman

Lisa hopes to continue volunteering in hospitals and schools on Maui. We wish her the all best in her future adventures.

Lisa, you will be greatly missed by staff, volunteers, and the families! Thank you for everything!

To volunteer, call Olivia at 973-5683 ext. 241.