



Newsletter - Fall 2002 Issue #65

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Harvest Moon

Harvest Moon was the theme of this year's Fashion Show. The gala event was held at the Des Moines Golf and Country Club on Saturday evening October 5th. **Sahar's Continental Gallery** again provided us with the latest fall fashions, **Furs by Manolidis** complimented these fashions and children's clothing was provided by **Janelle's**.



This event was more than just a fashion show, during the social hour attendees were able to bid on fabulous items in the silent auction such as; one week stay in condos located in Arizona, Florida and Colorado, beautiful armoire designed by **Sticks**, professional sport packages, theatre tickets and much more. We also enjoyed live music provided by **Tony Valdez** during the social hour and dinner. KCCI's own **Marcus McIntosh** joined us again this year as the emcee and **Curtis Gertz** modeled some of the men's fashions from Sahar's.

We would like to thank **Tom Campbell**, Vice President of Special Events and Fundraising for the Ronald McDonald House, **Jennifer Potratz** and **Tammy Lair**, Co-Chairs of this event and the Fashion Show committee for making this gala event the best yet. Thank you to all the friends of Ronald McDonald House that attended, donated and sponsored this event to help support "**The House That Love Built.**"

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Our Stay At "Ronnie's House"

On December 30, 1998, our daughter, Jenny was diagnosed with brain tumors. She was only two and half years old. Since then, she has had to have several surgeries and three rounds of chemotherapy. During many of her hospital visits, we have called the Ronald McDonald House our temporary home for short stays, generally only a day or two while doing outpatient tests or doctor visits.



On June 10th of this year, Jenny required surgery once again for the tumors. The surgery was complicated by the fact that the tumors are now vascular, meaning they have veins running through them. When the surgeon tried to take a piece of the tumor for the biopsy it started to bleed and we came dangerously close to losing our little girl. A second surgery had to be performed on June 16th to put a shunt in place in order to give the spinal fluid another path to bypass the tumor and allow the pressure inside the ventricle to remain stable.

During the nine days that she was in the hospital, I stayed by her side because in Jenny's words, "My mommy never leaves me". Her dad had to go to work every day which meant he would need some rest away from the hospital. He didn't want to make the 80 mile drive home in case we needed him so he stayed at The Ronald McDonald House. Many times during the nine days our other daughter, Julie, was also able to come and stay so that we could have some family time together. When Jenny was released from the hospital, we were very concerned about taking her all the way home in case complications set in so we all stayed there for two days prior to coming home.

The doctors agreed that our next course of action should be radiation treatments since Jenny had just turned six, the age considered safe to take radiation. The treatments would be administered daily, Monday through Friday, for a total of 28 days. The thought of making daily trip to Des Moines for that length of time did not appeal to me at all. Patti Rawson, the social worker at the hospital, recommended we stay at The Ronald McDonald House.

Jenny had her first treatment on July 1st at which time we moved into Ronnie's House, as we lovingly call it. The staff made us feel at home immediately and before long we were into a routine. I started almost every morning having tea with Brenda and visiting with Ralph and Kathy. At night before turning in, we always enjoyed chatting with Florence. We would use the small wheelchair at the House to take Jenny to her daily treatments. We loaded Jenny's backpack with all the essentials for taking radiation; a compact disc to listen to during treatments, a blanket to cover up with since it's cold in the treatment room and a doll or stuffed animal so Jenny didn't feel so all alone in the room.

During our stay there, we celebrated Julie's 13th birthday. We purchased an ice cream cake, baked cupcakes and posted a sign on the refrigerator inviting other residents to join in the celebration. Not only did the staff attend but many of the residents showed up. This indicates to me how the house is like a home. It meant so much to me that everyone went out of their way to help make Julie's birthday so special for her even though they were also going through hard times.

I tearfully checked out of the house on August 9th after Jenny's final radiation treatment. Everyone kept asking if I was glad to be going home. I had mixed emotions, yes it was nice to be home again but part of me was going to miss the people at Ronnie's House because they had become such a big part of our lives. We have so many wonderful memories of our stay-pizza parties with Brenda, long chats with Kathy, understanding hugs from Florence, Jenny teasing Ralph, Julie playing on the new basketball court, laughing and joking with both staff and the residents, making new friends, working in the quilt room and cooking in the kitchen. Thank you for providing us with a home away from home at a time when we so badly needed it.

The Talley Family

Perpetual Donors

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NESTLE	S&D COFFEE, INC.
WASTE MANAGEMENT OF IA	WELL'S BLUEBUNNY

Governor's Charity Steer Show

The 20th Annual Governor's Charity Steer Show was held August 10th at the Iowa State Fair. The Iowa Cattlemen's Association and the Iowa Beef Industry Council have now raised over one million dollars for the three Iowa Ronald McDonald Houses and for the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation.

The 26 steers that were shown raised over \$66,000 this year. The Des Moines Ronald McDonald House should receive about \$20,000. We thank the Iowa Cattlemen, Governor Vilsack and all of the other sponsors, celebrities and buyers that helped make this 20th show a big success.

Pictured to the right are some of the celebrities that attended this years event: Ronald McDonald, Grimace, Jim Baker, McDonald's owner/operator and Hamburglar.

Pop Tab Journey

An individual pulls a pop tab off of a can of soda and decides to save it and give it to the Ronald McDonald House. It's a small step, but it is the first step and an important step in the pop tab journey. After this person and/or group has saved 100, 1000 or 100,000 pop tabs, they bring them to the Ronald McDonald House packed in plastic bags, coffee cans, milk cartons, boxes and every other conceivable container.

Volunteers or staff put them in large McDonald French fry boxes. After we have 10 or 12 of these large boxes filled, taped and labeled, Brenda Miller takes them to Dick Mathson's Merle Hay & I-80 McDonald Restaurant in Des Moines. A day or two later a McDonald supplier truck takes them to Minneapolis where they are sold for scrap metal.

Each year the Ronald McDonald House Charities receives four to six thousand dollars for the millions of pop tabs that are given to the House.

In addition to the money that the House receives, collecting pop tabs helps in many ways:

Helps the ecology

Teaches kids and adults to be good citizens; donating; helping a charity

Many school groups use pop tab collecting as a teaching aid (ie: counting to a million, etc.)

We owe many thanks to Jim Baker helping us with this operation for many years. In addition to using one of his McDonald restaurants as a pick-up spot, he also helped deliver them from the House to his restaurant. We also thank Dennis Michener for picking up the pop tabs and delivering them to one of Jim's stores the past two years.

One pop tab might seem insignificant, but that first tab leads to a million or more pop tabs for the Des Moines Ronald McDonald House. We would like to thank all the groups and individuals that contribute pop tabs.

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