

CARE TAKERS

FAMILIES RELY ON THE CARE WE PROVIDE



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Alberta

"FAMILIES RELY ON THE CARE WE PROVIDE"



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VOLUME 5/ 2022

Our volunteers bring the holiday cheer to RMHC Alberta



Happy fall! As we transition into the holiday season, we want to take a moment to thank you, our generous volunteers, for all the time, energy, and care you have given to families with sick children staying at RMHC® Alberta in 2022.

Our volunteers are a cornerstone of Ronald McDonald House Charities® Alberta. From check-in to check-out and every moment in-between, our volunteers' warmth and peace make each House a home away from home. Representing the compassion, dedication, and people-centred values of RMHC Alberta, our volunteers go above and beyond every day to support families across Alberta travelling for a child's medical treatment.

In this edition of CareTakers, we highlight the one-year anniversary of our Comfort Cart program and share some photos from recent volunteer initiatives at RMHC Alberta. We also spotlight an urgent need for several in-House and Signature Events volunteer opportunities, especially as we head into the holiday season and the new year. Finally, we are excited to introduce you to RMHC Alberta's new Provincial Volunteer Managers, Ashley and Elyse, who you can learn more about in the following pages!

Thank you to every volunteer who has prepared a meal, driven a shuttle, checked a family in, or dedicated time and care to doing countless other tasks in support of families staying at RMHC Alberta. Our wonderful volunteers bring all the cheer to our Houses during the holiday season and beyond.



"We arrived at the Red Deer House directly from Paris for the early birth of our daughter. We felt kindness and happiness from everyone. We loved meeting volunteers and being able to share our story and hear their advice. Being close to the hospital and our daughter allowed us to spend more time with her and it changed everything for our family. The generosity, comfort, and attention for the three of us was very moving." - Anonymous

Celebrating One Year of RMHC Alberta's Comfort Cart Program



One-year Comfort Cart numbers:

Days of operation: **88**

Individuals served: **601**

Volunteer hours: **400**

Top 5 items given:

- Snacks: **870**

- Water: **297**

- Coffee & tea: **206**

- Hygiene: **162**

- Activity: **83**

September 2022 marks one year of RMHC® Alberta's volunteer-led Comfort Cart program. Offering complimentary snacks, drinks, toys, hygiene items, and more, the Comfort Cart brings the comforts of the Ronald McDonald House to families spending long days at the NICU. That way, caregivers don't have to worry about leaving their sick infant's bedside when they have a need.

RMHC Alberta volunteers currently operate the Comfort Cart four times a week outside the Foothills Medical Centre's NICU. We are planning on extending the Comfort Cart program to more hospitals across Alberta.

RMHC Alberta needs your support! If you would like to volunteer for the Comfort Cart program, visit our website at rmhcalberta.org/volunteer.

"So many items to choose from. We wish the Cart was there every day." - NICU family

"The Comfort Cart program has a profound impact. Extending some of our services through the Comfort Cart right to the NICU allows families to be steps away from their baby. Families can take solace in a conversation with a volunteer, a cup of coffee, or a nutritious snack." - Lori Rechlo, RMHC Alberta General Manager

"We are forever grateful for your love, support, and prayers. It helped us get through the tough months in the NICU and bring home our little man."

- The Vossebelt Family



Do you want to make a difference in the lives of families travelling for their sick or injured child's medical treatment this holiday season? We would love to hear from you! To learn more about specific volunteer opportunities at RMHC Alberta, please visit our website or reach out to the House of your choice.

Join RMHC Alberta as an individual in-House volunteer. Our Houses currently have an urgent need for the following positions this holiday season:

Edmonton

- Shuttle Drivers
- Front Hosts
- House Refreshers
- Home for Dinner Host
- Maintenance Support

Phone: 780-439-5437

Website: <https://rmhcalberta.org/volunteer/edmonton-volunteers/>

Red Deer

- Front Hosts

Phone: 403-340-2007

Website: <https://rmhcalberta.org/volunteer/red-deer-volunteers/>

Calgary

- Front Hosts
 - House Refreshers
 - Shuttle Drivers
- (morning and weekend shifts)

Phone: 403-240-3000

Website: <https://rmhcalberta.org/volunteer/calgary-volunteers/>

Medicine Hat

- House Refreshers

Phone: 403-487-6166

Website: <https://rmhcalberta.org/volunteer/medicine-hat-volunteers/>



Front Host: Provide support with reception duties including answering the phone, greeting guests (including families, donors, volunteers, and visitors to the House), taking donations/payments, and checking families in and out of the House. May also include helping around the House with dishes, laundry, activities, etc. Minimum commitment: 1 shift per week for six months. Current shifts available: Monday to Sunday: 9am-1pm, 1pm-5pm, 5pm-9pm

House Refresher: Provide support to family services and housekeeping staff with maintaining the cleanliness and tidiness of our House and family suites. Tasks include linen changing and laundry, dusting, sweeping, sanitizing, and window cleaning. Minimum commitment: 2 shifts per month for 6 months. Current shifts available: Flexible to accommodate volunteer schedule.

Shuttle Drivers: Ensure families have safe, convenient access to the hospital. Need to be 25+, clean driver's abstract, and at-fault accident-free for at least 6 years. Minimum commitment: 1 shift per month for six months.

Maintenance Support: Provide support to our facilities department. Activities may include daily and weekly duties like minor painting, greasing doors, tidying storage spaces, tightening door handles, lawn care, watering flowers and trees, and picking up garbage. Short-term projects could include planting gardens, trimming trees, painting iron railings, and power-washing benches and playgrounds. Minimum commitment: 2 shifts per month for six months. Current shifts available: Various.

Home for Dinner Host: Facilitate group participation in the Home for Dinner program by orienting the group to the kitchen, assisting with their questions and needs, and ensuring processes and protocols are followed. Minimum commitment: 2 shifts per month for 6 months.



In July, RMHC Alberta's own Denise Kinghorn and her family generously donated their time to cook a meal for the families at the Calgary House. We are inspired seeing our staff work so hard and finding time to give back to the community. It was wonderful to see Denise and her family cook a delicious meal in the kitchen!

Soft Christmas Cookies



Ingredients

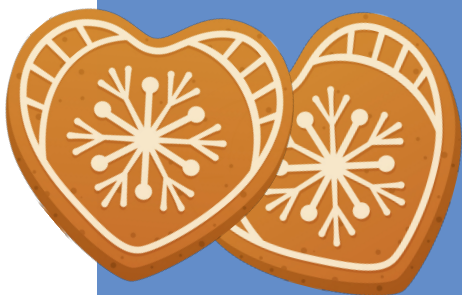
- 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar
- 1 cup margarine, softened
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Directions

1. Sift together flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl. Set aside.
2. Beat sugar and margarine until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, then stir in vanilla. Blend in dry ingredients until incorporated. Wrap dough. Chill in fridge for 2 hours.
3. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Grease two cookie sheets.
4. Roll out dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Cut out shapes using cookie cutters; arrange them on the prepared cookie sheets. Gather scraps and repeat this step.
5. Bake until edges are barely brown, 6 to 8 minutes.

Source:

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/10110/soft-christmas-cookies/>



Volunteer to spread some cheer this holiday season



The holidays are a busy time of year and that is no different at the Houses. Volunteer help is urgently needed at all four RMHC Alberta Houses. Our holiday volunteers lend an extra hand around the holidays to bring seasonal cheer to our families. Volunteers with exceptional attention to detail start decorating the last week of November, and we need extra volunteer help throughout December as Houses accept and wrap donated items. We also call on volunteers to set up the "North Pole" at each House, which has all the gifts Santa and his team of elves have worked hard on all year for the families. Our December in-House volunteers make the holiday season extra magical for our families.



All RMHC Alberta Houses need decorators, wrappers, bakers, and Home for Dinner volunteers for the upcoming holiday season. Does your family or work group want to make a meal for one of our families?
Visit our website to volunteer today!



Light the House

On December 1, it's tradition at our Houses to turn on Christmas lights and invite special guests over to ring in the holidays. Sometimes Santa even makes an appearance! This is a great way to celebrate the winter season and brighten up the neighbourhood.

Did you know?

In addition to our in-House volunteer opportunities, RMHC Alberta also hosts many fundraising and third-party events outside of the House! We're always looking for volunteers to support these events.

Charity Golf Classic

Join us in June 2023 for six unique Charity Golf Classic tournaments across the province in support of RMHC Alberta. Golfers can expect 18 holes of golf, carts, activities, food, and an auction. The tournaments will be a Texas Scramble with a shotgun start. A program will follow the golf round.

Grande Prairie: June 5, The Dunes Golf & Winter Club

Red Deer: June 8, Alberta Springs Golf Resort

Cold Lake: June 17, Cold Lake Golf & Winter Club

Canmore: June 19, Silvertip Resort

Edmonton: June 28, The Quarry

Medicine Hat: TBD



Winterland Invitational

The Winterland Invitational is a U9, U11, and U13 hockey tournament hosted in the Lakeland Region (Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Elk Point, and Glendon) in support of RMHC Alberta. We are happy to be hosting this event in person again during the February 2023 long weekend.



Shoot for the House

Join us for our 11th annual Shoot for the House clay shooting event at the Wapiti Shooters Club on September 9, 2023. Sponsor this event or register your team in support of families with sick or injured children. The event includes breakfast, 96 targets, ammunition, on-course lunch, happy hour, dinner, prizes, silent and live auctions, raffles, games, and more.



Hustle for the House

Hustle for the House encourages families to get active in support of RMHC Alberta. Walk, run or roll any distance virtually during the week of July 24–30, 2023 or participate in one of our physical races. Participating in Hustle for the House as a corporate team is a great way to build morale, encourage healthy habits, and enjoy some friendly competition.

Virtual (on your own): Week of July 24–30
Cold Lake, Edmonton, Calgary: TBD



Taste of Home

The Taste of Home gala offers a night of connection over delicious food and local entertainment. Dress up with friends and family in November 2022 to get an intimate glimpse into our mission. This year's gala is an in-person event in Calgary and Edmonton. Go to our website to buy tickets: <https://rmhcalberta.org/event/2022/11/3/taste-of-home-2022/>



New Employee Highlight

Ashley and Elyse, Provincial Volunteer Managers

On October 17, Ashley Walsh and Elyse Bondar started their new roles as RMHC Alberta's Provincial Volunteer Managers. These new positions have been created to put more resources toward enhancing our volunteer experience and to provide extra support for staff teams. We are thrilled Ashley and Elyse have taken on these roles to help manage administration for RMHC Alberta volunteers and to develop a uniform provincial volunteer approach.

Ashley Walsh started with RMHC Alberta over five years ago. Her background was previously in sales, so she was excited to transition to the non-profit sector in a fundraising capacity. As our Annual Giving Officer, she thrived in stewardship and donor appreciation. Her career has centred on making people feel connected, so transitioning to a role focusing on donor appreciation and connection feels natural to her. Ashley is excited to connect with our incredible volunteers across the province and to show them our profound appreciation.



Elyse Bondar first got involved with RMHC Alberta in 2013 as a volunteer baker at the Edmonton House. In 2014, she became a staff member, starting as an Activity Coordinator then quickly switching to a Family Services Coordinator. Elyse eventually moved away from the city, but when she returned in 2021, she contacted RMHC Alberta to look into volunteering again. That's when she landed her previous role as Volunteer and Program Manager of the Edmonton House. Elyse is passionate about working with volunteers and thrived in that capacity in her previous positions. She is excited to focus on volunteers and work with Houses across the province.



Do you want to volunteer with RMHC Alberta, but you don't know where to start? With our new interactive volunteer guide, it's easy! See the last page for more details.

Slow-Cooker Peppermint Bark Hot Chocolate



Ingredients

8 cups whole milk

1 can sweetened condensed milk

3 cups bittersweet or semisweet chocolate chips

1/4 cup crème de menthe or vodka

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon peppermint extract

1/4 teaspoon salt

Sweetened whipped cream

Crushed candy canes

Directions

1. Put the milk, sweetened condensed milk, chocolate chips, crème de menthe (or vodka), vanilla extract, peppermint extract, and salt in a 7-quart slow cooker.
2. Cover and cook on high for 2 hours or until combined, whisking vigorously halfway through to help chocolate melt.
3. Switch to warm for serving. Set out whipped cream and crushed candy canes for topping.

Source:

<https://www.womansday.com/food-recipes/food-drinks/recipes/a39759/slow-cooker-peppermint-bark-hot-chocolate-recipe-ghk1213/>

Volunteer with RMHC Alberta

Are you interested in...

Working independently?

Cleaning and facility maintenance?

Home Refresher

Maintenance Support

Front Host

Talking to people?

Shuttle Driver
(Calgary/Edmonton)

Self-Care Volunteer

Programming, planning, or events?

Creativity?

Fundraiser

Recreation Volunteer

The holiday season?

Holiday Decorator, Gift-Wrapper, or Baker

Baking or cooking?

Recreation Volunteer

House Baker

Home for Dinner Host

To register for any of our events
visit rmhcalberta.org.

Follow us on social media:
[@RMHCAAlberta](https://www.instagram.com/RMHCAAlberta)

