



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Alberta

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

FAMILIES RELY ON THE CARE WE PROVIDE

History Edition

Message from Denise	2
Warm Welcome	3
RMHC History	4
RMHC Alberta Expansion	7
1000 Hours Society	8
Mike Stern	9
Safety Corner	10
Information Session	11
Upcoming Events	11
Word Search	12

"FAMILIES RELY ON THE CARE WE PROVIDE"



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VOLUME 3/ 2023



Message from Denise

Our signature events run by RMHC Alberta raise over \$1 million every year for our Houses, programming, and services. These events are critical in raising funds and awareness for our mission so that we can continue to provide a Home away from Home for hundreds of families who need to travel to access care for their ill or injured child. These events are simply not possible without our dedicated volunteers. It has been a pleasure over the past two months meeting so many volunteers at our golf tournaments.... whether you were sitting on a hole, securing auction items, welcoming participants at registration, selling raffle tickets or taking photographs....THANK YOU! We could not have done it without you!

The other critically important event to recently occur was the groundbreaking event for our Calgary expansion. After serving thousands of families over the past 40 years, we are thrilled to be adding 60 suites in Calgary to create space for even more families. Groundbreaking day was incredible with over 100 attendees celebrating with us. This included community members, donors, government officials, media, families and dozens of volunteers. Not only were the volunteers a key part of the day filling critical roles, but they created an excitement and buzz to the day that would not have otherwise happened. It was amazing to see volunteers from near and far celebrating at the event with us.

Volunteers are a vital part of the RMHC Alberta family. They provide comfort, support and assistance to us and our families. Thank you.

– Denise Kinghorn, Chief Development Officer



Warmest Summer Greetings to all the incredible volunteers at Ronald McDonald House Charities Alberta!

Summer is a season of joy, laughter, and cherished moments with loved ones. You bring that spirit into the lives of families staying at Ronald McDonald House, offering them a sense of comfort and a supportive community when they need it most. Your kindness and compassion create a ray of sunshine for those going through difficult times.

In between busy shifts in the houses and all the places we find our volunteers over our incredibly busy summer calendar, we hope you are finding time to rest, relax and soak up time with your own families. We couldn't make it through our event seasons without the generous help of our events volunteers, and it really is incredible to see how many regular in-house volunteers faces we have seen at events so far this year!

If you can believe it, we are halfway through the year. It has been an honor to get to work along side this group of dedicated, talented and selfless group of volunteers. Celebrating with you in person in April, seeing you in the houses, working along side you at events, having you at groundbreaking, seeing you at the volunteer meetings are true highlights for us. We can't wait to see what the second half of the year brings!

Thank you for being the shining stars that make Ronald McDonald House a place of hope, comfort, and smiles.

Wishing you a wonderful summer,

-The RMHC Alberta Team



RMHC Global History

Dr. Audrey Evans, a pediatric oncologist at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, saw families spend night after night in the hospital while their children received treatment. She knew there had to be a better way, and envisioned a simple house where families could stay during these stressful and uncertain times.

At the same time, the Philadelphia Eagles were raising funds in support of player Fred Hill, whose daughter Kim was being treated for leukemia at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children. When the Eagles General Manager Jimmy Murray approached St. Christopher's about making a donation, Dr. Lawrence Naiman suggested there was an even greater need for funds resting with Dr. Evans.

Jimmy Murray met Dr. Evans and quickly learned of her concept of a home for families. He reached out to McDonald's® with the idea that they could offer the proceeds from their Shamrock Shake sales to benefit this new House. McDonald's® agreed, and the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House was born on October 15, 1974.

– as told by Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Philadelphia





RMHC Alberta History

Calgary House

Our first Calgary House opened in 1985 in Calgary's Killarney neighborhood. The House served nearly 18,000 people over the span of two decades before relocating across the street from the new Alberta Children's Hospital in March 2007. The Calgary House offers 27 private in-house family suites with one and two-queen beds, private bathroom and additional closet space. The common living areas includes fully equipped kitchen stations, laundry rooms on each floor, a fitness room, games room, craft room as well as an amazing playground and outdoor patio with a barbeque. We are also part of a pilot project for off site living and have 5 self-contained family apartment style suites for families with immune compromised children.



Edmonton House

In December 1983, Ken Solomon, who had lost a daughter to leukemia, announced that Edmontonians would build a 16-bedroom House for the families of sick children in the city for treatment. McDonald's® pledged \$250,000 to make this dream a reality and volunteers went into the community to raise the rest.

By the summer of 1984, a group of dedicated volunteers, members of the Edmonton Oilers and Edmonton sports teams, media celebrities and children broke ground on 107th Street. Edmonton's Ronald McDonald House opened to families on August 15, 1985. A lot has changed since 1985, and you are welcome to see for yourself by taking a tour.

Red Deer House

In 2012, we opened our Red Deer House next to Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre. Over 2,300 families have stayed overnight in one of the 11 family suites while their child received medical treatment. Each suite contains two queen sized beds, private bath and closet space. As well as the common living areas, the spacious 20,000 square foot facility has nursing and laundry rooms on each floor. Other amenities include a fitness room, games room, craft room as well as an amazing playground and outdoor patio with a barbeque. The Red Deer House has built an incredible Day Pass program, which has the highest usage in Canada.

Medicine Hat House

Our fourth Ronald McDonald House in Alberta opened in August 2020 and welcomes families traveling to Medicine Hat with their sick or injured child.

We have six bedrooms to serve families in our brand-new facility and are looking forward to providing services to families in Southern Alberta.

Grande Prairie & Cold Lake

On May 1st, 2012, Ronald McDonald House Charities® Alberta opened an office in Grande Prairie, Alberta to service the Peace Region. With such great response from families and donors the decision was made to have local representation in Cold Lake, the Lakeland Region, in May of 2014.

Our Regional teams raise over \$800,000 annually from signature events, grants, and regional corporate and individual donors. They are essential in providing programming and for fundraising for the families who stay at RMHC Alberta. Our staff team in Grande Prairie and Cold Lake are unique within the RMHC system as we are the only chapter to have staff in a location that does not have a Ronald McDonald House.

RMHC Alberta Expansion



Calgary rendering pictured on the left. Edmonton rendering pictured on the right.



(Pictured from left to right)
Jordan Brown, Honourable Adriana LaGrange,
Lanny McDonald, Bob Robinson, Kate Horton,
Lisa Jensen, Jason Evanson (RMHC Alberta CEO)

We are expanding! Currently, RMHC Alberta is meeting 14% of the demand for services. Despite being the largest Ronald McDonald House Charities chapter in the country, we are serving the fewest families per capita, leading to long wait lists in Calgary and Edmonton. After more than 10 years of planning, a campaign quietly launched last fall to raise \$80M to triple our capacity.

Construction began in Calgary earlier this month. On June 14, we proudly hosted approximately 150 stakeholders at a groundbreaking event. We are adding 64 bedrooms to the existing 27, for a total of 91. We are also increasing common area square footage, adding a quasi-commercial kitchen and many outdoor amenities. Construction will wrap at the end of October next year and families will move into the expanded facility in January 2025.

As of today, Edmonton is eighteen to twenty four months behind Calgary, by plan. We've acquired all the land we need and are currently rezoning it. Design schematics are complete; the building will host approximately 100 families.

When all is said and done, we'll have space for nearly one out of two eligible families, substantially reducing the service gap. We can't wait!

To date, we've raised 50% of the funds we need for Calgary and 30% overall. We're busy working with prospects and lobbying the government for financial support. If you know someone that would like to get involved, please let us know. – Jason Evanson



1000 Hour Society

At Ronald McDonald House Charities® Alberta we were pleased to share our new celebration structure with our volunteers back in April which included our brand new 1,000 Hours Society! The 1,000 Hours Society is comprised of volunteers who have volunteered with us for over 1,000 hours, which is an incredible amount of dedication. This year across the province we had 13 inductees into the society for a total of 23,564 hours between them. You will recognize them in the houses and at events by their gold color lanyards, that signify this great achievement.

Members of the 1,000 Hours Society are unsung heroes who have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the Ronald McDonald House mission. They have become pillars of strength and a source of hope for families facing unimaginable difficulties. Through their dedication, they have provided comfort, and a sense of belonging to those who need it the most.

The impact of the 1,000 Hours Society cannot be overstated. Volunteers who achieve this milestone have spent countless hours supporting families, making magic room visits special, driving shuttles, preparing meals, supporting the front desk, and creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere within the Ronald McDonald House. Their contributions not only alleviate the burden on families but also foster a sense of community among residents and staff.

The 1,000 Hours Society stands as a testament to the power of volunteering and the profound impact it can have on the lives of others. It serves as a source of inspiration for those who aspire to make a difference and encourages others to join in the cause. By recognizing and celebrating these dedicated individuals, the society highlights the vital role that volunteers play in helping families find strength and solace during their most challenging times.





Mike Stern

At RMHC Alberta we know that every family who stays with us has a powerful story. So do our amazing volunteers. One of those volunteers, a shuttle driver in Edmonton since 2017 is Mike Stern.

Mike first learned about the Shuttle Driving opportunity through a current volunteer, Ted. Ted and Mike would often ski and cycle together and during one unexpected conversation, Mike learned about the opportunity back in 2016. This was approximately 1 year before Mike retired, and the conversation got him thinking about joining as it was for a good cause and would allow him to continue to contribute to society. Shortly after Mike retired and he began shuttle driving for RMHC Alberta in 2017.

At the beginning, Mike casually picked up shifts here and there, but overtime got onto a regular schedule coming in Monday and Wednesday mornings. This allowed him to plan his week's activities around his Shuttle shifts as his time was quickly filling up. Mike has seen lots of changes within the House over the last 6 years, but the one that stands out the most is the Shuttle being on an on-call basis.

"The system for Shuttle Driving is more efficient than it was back in the day when we were on a fixed schedule. It was a lot of driving and wasted gas when we would go to and from with no passengers."

What keeps Mike coming back each year is the families and how appreciative they are for what Mike says is a small effort on his part. Also living a quick four-minute walk from the House does not hurt!

Stories can be found everywhere, and Mike helps families ease their worries during the rides to and from the hospital with interesting tidbits about the new city they are in. He likes to start a conversation with bits of history surrounding the city of Edmonton.

Mike has his own beautiful and adventurous story as well.

He was born in England but moved to Africa due to limited work opportunities as a Mining Engineer. He unfortunately did not find the fame, fortune, and adventure he was hoping for in Africa. **As luck would have it, he found something more special – his wife of 42 years, Yvonne.** Together Mike and Yvonne moved to Canada 34 years ago in 1989 where they landed in Edmonton and have made impactful contribution over the past 3 decades.

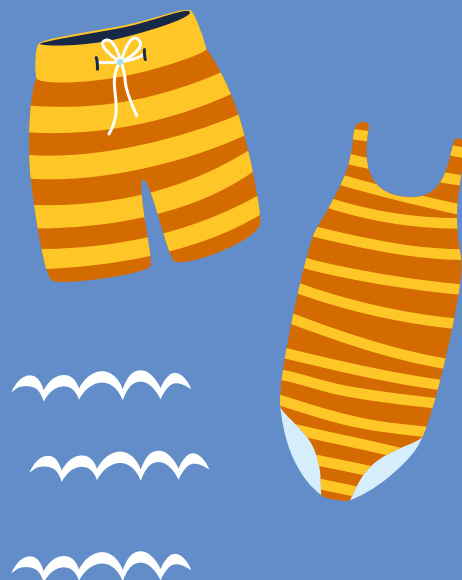
As Mike says, "RMHC Alberta has always been welcoming! Volunteers have always been valued and I have never experienced any clashes and it is a nice working atmosphere. You get up in the morning and you look forward to coming."

Mike is a part of the small but mighty group of volunteers who were welcomed into the 1000 hours society on April 2023. To date Mike has provided over 1,800 hours of time to families who have resided in the Edmonton House. You can often find Mike joking with fellow Shuttle Drivers about them living in the van because of all the hours they give (without realizing he is in that group too!).

Thank you Mike, for your miles and miles of support over the last 6 years.

Safety Corner

The color of yours, or a child's, bathing suit is more important than you may realize & could determine if it can be immediately seen if someone happens to go underwater. For open water and pools, bright neon colors, including orange, yellow and lime green tend to be the safest choice. Experts suggest having large chunks of color blocks or pairing contrasting colors to not be mistaken for debris or reflections on the water. It is always recommended to wear a life jacket and stay within arms reach of anyone who is inexperienced or young while in water. Stay safe this summer.



Provincial Volunteers Meeting

These meetings are where our volunteers can come together and learn about the most recent and important happenings in the houses as well as share in celebrations! These meetings are virtual on teams and you will be emailed a link to join!

Upcoming volunteer meetings:

August 2: 7pm

September 6: 7pm

October 4: 7 pm

Information Sessions for Prospective Volunteers

These meetings are for folks who are interested in learning more about volunteering with us. They are informal and give a great overview of opportunities with RMHC Alberta. Feel free to let your friends know! These meetings are virtual and your friends can sign up by heading to the volunteer page of the website.

Upcoming information sessions:

August 10: 7pm

September 14: 7pm

October 12: 7 pm



Events for your Calendar!

September 9 is Shoot for the House! This iconic event is back for it's 11th year and you can still sign up a team if you are interested in heading up to Grande Prairie. You can reach out to **Megan mdurda@rmhcalberta.org** for more information.

The **Hustle for the House** is BACK and IN PERSON! We will be having live events in **Cold Lake, Edmonton** and **Calgary** on **September 23**. We will be keeping our **virtual component September 18-23 2023**. You can head to our website to find out more!

Word Search

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other.
Use the word bank below.

G	E	Y	H	Y	R	A	G	L	A	C	L	V	S	T
R	C	U	K	B	T	Z	A	R	G	A	U	D	U	T
O	W	V	T	N	V	F	N	W	I	L	N	Q	I	R
U	A	O	K	L	Y	Z	N	N	P	B	J	B	T	E
N	X	N	O	T	N	O	M	D	E	E	B	N	E	H
D	P	E	E	B	X	M	W	Z	I	R	Z	H	S	E
B	R	Q	Q	Z	K	D	U	O	E	T	R	S	Q	C
R	E	X	P	A	N	S	I	O	N	A	F	R	G	J
E	E	Y	L	I	M	A	F	K	P	E	E	L	Y	T
A	T	V	I	P	W	W	Z	D	U	Q	I	W	O	I
K	N	C	U	O	C	F	M	M	A	J	N	K	O	G
I	U	W	M	Q	E	V	E	N	T	Y	I	F	A	B
N	L	N	O	W	A	P	S	U	M	M	E	R	H	D
G	O	N	O	I	T	C	U	R	T	S	N	O	C	L
D	V	X	H	E	M	M	R	I	E	C	M	Y	P	H

GOLF

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