



Hand-in-Hand

How you are helping to keep families of seriously ill children together

Their Unbreakable Bond

As a police officer, Matthew Barnwell has to be prepared for anything.

But what he and his wife, Rebecca, could have never prepared for was their first child being born so early.

Rebecca's water broke two months before she was due. "I was really surprised ... and scared," she remembers. She immediately headed to the nearest emergency room, where she was told her baby — a boy they would name Ty — was in distress. Because prematurely born babies need to be monitored closely for possible complications, Rebecca was transferred by ambulance to a hospital with a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

"It was the first ambulance ride of my entire life. It just added to the anxiety," recalls Rebecca. Doctors delayed Rebecca's labor for as long as possible, but Ty soon muscled his way into the world weighing five pounds.

Doctors whisked Ty into a corner of the delivery room for closer examination. The young couple

held their collective breath for what seemed like an eternity.

Then, they heard Ty cry for the first time.

It was the sweetest sound they could have hoped for. The nurse brought Ty over to an exhausted Rebecca and placed him in her arms, where she cradled her newborn and nuzzled his face.

"For a moment, you forget what your body has gone through. I gave him a kiss and welcomed him into the world. And then, he was taken away to the NICU," she says tearfully.

The Barnwells say that everything happened so quickly they hadn't given much thought to where they would go while Ty was at the hospital. They lived more than an hour away, and Rebecca didn't want to leave her baby's side for

one moment — much less one hour.

"I wasn't ready to leave my baby so far away," says Rebecca.

Thanks to the Ronald McDonald House®, she didn't have to.

A Welcoming Home

"I wasn't sure what to expect," Rebecca admits when she first learned she and her husband could stay at the House. "I thought it might be like barracks with a cot. And that would have been fine, too, as long as I was near my baby. I even

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Rebecca and Matthew Barnwell with newborn son, Ty. "Every day I am amazed at the amount of love you're shown here," Rebecca says of the Ronald McDonald House.

INSIDE: *How You Helped One Teen in His Battle for Recovery*

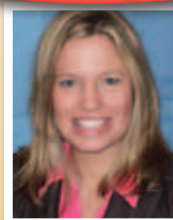
You're Invited ...

For more than 30 years, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of the Miami Valley Region has opened its doors to families of critically ill, hospitalized children in our region. On March 19, 2011, homeowners in the Dayton community will open their doors to welcome guests into their homes to share a dinner prepared by some of the area's most elite chefs.



The evening will continue with guests converging at THE After Party featuring a dessert and coffee bar, after-dinner drinks, a live band and more.

Many Thanks!



Jennifer Fox



Ann Berger

Event Co-Chairs

For more information ... please contact Brandy McFall, RMHC PR & Events Associate, at 937-224-0047, ext. 20. Learn how to reserve your seat today at www.RMHCdayton.org.

What's Your Legacy?

How can you leave behind a charitable legacy? One option is a charitable gift annuity.

When you transfer cash or securities of more than \$10,000 to The Dayton Foundation, the annuity guarantees you a fixed stream of income for life. The income would flow to you (and to your spouse, if you desire), after

which the remaining principal of the annuity becomes a gift to a charity or charities of your choice. This provides a current income tax savings and possible capital gains savings.

For more information, please contact Lezley Pisone at 937-224-0047, ext. 16.

Our Newest Adopt-a-Room Sponsors

Welcome to our new 2010 Adopt-a-Room sponsors!

- Drs. Carole & Emmett Broxson*
- Lee & Rita Cyr*
- Kathy & Ken Herr*
- Lezley Pisone & Mohammed Jamal*
- Alex & Richard Muzechuk*
- Nancy & Rodgers Morgan*
- Kirk & Wendy Reich*

If you are interested in becoming an Adopt-a-Room sponsor, please contact Lezley Pisone at 937-224-0047, ext. 16, or lpisone@RMHCdayton.org.



Rita Cyr
Executive Director

The Giving Season

Dear Friend,

Thanksgiving is just around the corner.

But here at our House, we give thanks every day.

We are thankful we can be supportive of the families who stay at our House while their seriously ill child is in treatment nearby. The courage and compassion they show us — and each other — are daily reminders of how to live bravely, even under the most heartwrenching circumstances.

We thank our wonderful staff and volunteers. Their time and dedication help make our House a home for moms, dads, grandparents, and siblings whose days and nights are often filled with worry.

And we thank generous friends like YOU, whose continued donations and support make it possible for us to provide care and comfort for families in the first place.

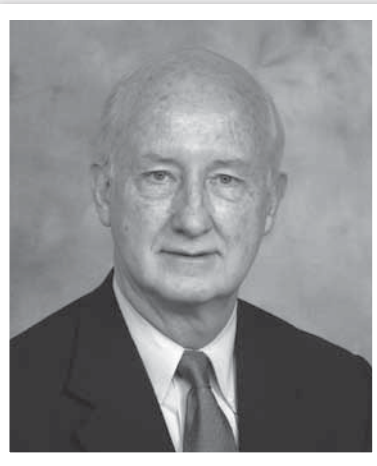
We're honored to serve the families who stay with us — and honored you are our partner in their journey of healing.

So thank you, from the bottom of our hearts. Your ongoing gifts help us provide lodging, comfort, and care for families just when they need it most.

Sincerely,



As a parent and respected pediatrician, Dr. Falletta is on the frontlines helping children and their families fight illness.



Dr. John M. Falletta, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics,
Duke University
RMHC Global Board Member

“There isn’t an organization I am aware of that focuses on the whole family like Ronald McDonald House Charities®. It was so innovative when it was started, and still is. The Ronald McDonald House provides support without regard for the diagnosis or kind of illness a child is fighting. Its programs help meet an immense need for supporting the entire family in order to strengthen the child.”

Brice the Fighter

Brice Porter is like any other 14-year-old. He enjoys skateboarding, listening to music, drawing, playing drums, and fighting the bad guys in video games.

But Brice is also fighting something else ...

Cancer.

Earlier this year, a biopsy of a tumor in his left leg revealed bone cancer. Brice has been through round after round of chemotherapy since. In April, doctors removed his left leg.

It’s a lot for anyone to handle, much less someone who’s only in the eighth grade. Chemotherapy robs Brice of his energy and his appetite. But he somehow manages to smile when he can. It’s often an exhausted smile, but it still lights up the room.

A trooper, Brice’s mom Jenny calls him. A trooper with a heart of gold.

When they first learned Brice had cancer, Jenny says she fell to the ground. But Brice’s reaction stays with her — and still inspires her — today.

“He was shocked and overwhelmed, but thankful they caught it. He was very hopeful. He takes each day as a gift.”

One of the gifts they felt they have been given is their time staying at the Ronald McDonald House near the hospital where Brice is in treatment.

“I have been amazed by the generosity and caring here,” Jenny says. “You feel overwhelmed by the kindness. It takes on a whole new



Though Brice, 14, is facing a long road to recovery, he stays hopeful. And his smile still lights up the room! “He is fighting so hard,” says Jenny, his mom.

meaning of caring.”

Like other families who stay at the House to be near their hospitalized child, Jenny and Brice can enjoy cooked meals, do laundry, and find support from other families going through a similar ordeal. It gives them a home to go to — a place to unwind after long days of tough treatments.

Brice and his mom plan to stay at the House until Brice is in remission. Meanwhile, he takes each day as it

comes. Jenny says he has good days and bad days that really test his strength, but he’s resilient in a way that few adults would be.

“He is fighting hard, and he has the spirit of a thousand angels,” says Jenny. “And he is hopeful.”

Please help us give more families fighting serious illnesses like Brice’s the love and support they need. Send another donation today. Thank you.

“I have been amazed by the generosity and caring here.”

Story continued from cover ...

Unbreakable Bond

considered sleeping in my car just to be close to Ty. But the House was just wonderful.”

Because Ty was a “preemie,” doctors watched him to make sure he was able to suck, swallow, and eat on his own. But Rebecca says she always felt immediate relief as soon as she walked into the House.

“It’s not just a house — it’s a home because there’s family support,” she explains. “You make friends who are in similar situations, and that gives you hope.”

Matthew also stayed at the House and commuted to his job. Both parents spent as much time with Ty as hospital staff would allow. Rebecca says the loving bond they have been able to establish with Ty has only been possible because the House is near the hospital.

“I can be there and hold him. If I couldn’t stay at the House, he wouldn’t know me as well. He even seems to take more of his bottle from me than the nurses. I don’t know how I would do it otherwise. I’m just so grateful,” she says.

Thanks to your support of the Ronald McDonald House, parents like the Barnwells are able to stay in a “home away from home” close to their hospitalized child. Your gifts make it all possible. Thank you.



REBECCA & Ty

Memories from Home

Two decades ago, Karin, then 10 years old, was having stomach pain that left her weak and sick. She was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, a chronic disease of the large intestine.



The Kravits family 20 years ago, when Karin battled her disease.

At age 12, a three-part surgical procedure — considered experimental at the time — took place over six months. Ultimately, it saved her life.

Karin’s mother, Barbara Kravits, stayed with her daughter at the hospital whenever she could. She even slept there, leaving only briefly to check on her house, shower, and change clothes. Karin recalls the longing she felt as a

young girl for her mother’s return.

Then, a nurse told Barbara about the Ronald McDonald House nearby — and how she and Karin’s father, Alan, could have all the amenities and support of a “home away from home” during Karin’s surgeries and recovery.

Barbara recalls how comforting the House felt the moment she walked in. “The Ronald McDonald House became my home, providing me with everything I could possibly need. Without the House, I don’t know what I would have done.”

The House became as much a part of Karin’s healing process as her surgeries. While Karin was getting better, the only place outside the hospital she was allowed to go was the Ronald McDonald House. “The House was the only place we could be a family together,” Barbara says.

Today, Karin is married with a young daughter of her own. But

their time at the House 20 years ago remains with them to this day. Barbara has become an ardent supporter and generously gives her time and talents to help other families as she is able.

“Thank God the House was there for us. Everyone needs a place to stay to be close to their ill child,” says Barbara.



The Kravits family today. They are so grateful for their time at the Ronald McDonald House.