



September 2024

around the HOUSE

3413 10th Street • Lubbock, TX 79415 • 806.744.8877

The June Family Hayden, Ethan, Erika, & Cameron



WHEN THE UNIMAGINABLE HAPPENS

When Hayden became critically ill and had to be put on a life-saving machine, the June Family knew they couldn't leave her side. With RMHC's help, they were able to stay just steps away from her hospital bed. When they left the hospital, they did it all together, as a family. *Read more inside*

Watch their story here:



Photo: Teague Dill, The Owen Group

From the Desk of the President & CEO



Dear Friends,

As we prepare to share our latest newsletter, I am filled with gratitude and awe at the incredible sense of community that defines Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Southwest. This edition is centered around a theme that is close to my heart: **connection and community**.

In our mission to support children and families through challenging times, we often see how seemingly **small actions can collectively create a powerful impact**. It is the dedication of our volunteers, the thoughtful contributions from our donors, and the consistent support from our staff that weave together to form a robust network of care.

Every effort—whether it's a kind word, a generous donation, or a few hours of volunteer work—contributes to something far greater than the sum of its parts. These small yet significant actions foster a supportive environment that makes a world of difference for the families we serve. **Your involvement, no matter how modest it may seem to you, plays a crucial role in transforming lives and providing hope.**

As we celebrate the essence of community in this newsletter, let us take a moment to recognize the collective strength we possess. It is through our shared commitment that we can create a ripple effect of kindness and support that reaches far beyond our immediate surroundings.

Together, we are making a significant impact, and together, we will continue to make a difference.

Warm regards,

Emmanuel Ramirez

Emmanuel Ramirez
President & CEO

P.S. This summer, our leadership staff and I were able to learn, share, and celebrate at the RMHC International Conference. It is inspiring to see how RMHC of the Southwest fits into the global community of "keeping families close". We hope you join us in celebrating RMHC Global's 50th Anniversary on October 15th and our collective impact on families worldwide.



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The June Family



A trip to the ER is not what any kid hopes for on their birthday. On Hayden's 12th birthday—that she shares with twin sister, Cameron—her parents knew something was seriously wrong. Their active, young daughter wasn't getting better from what they originally thought was the flu. Hayden wouldn't get out of bed, even for her favorite breakfast or to open birthday presents.

Ethan and Erika, Hayden's dad and mom, borrowed a pulse oximeter from family and discovered Hayden's oxygen levels were dangerously low. They rushed her to Midland Memorial Hospital. The hospital knew that Hayden would need more care than they could provide and arranged a flight crew to bring her to Covenant Children's Hospital in Lubbock.

"She had severe pneumonia, one of the worst they'd seen in a child," Erika recalled. Erika and Ethan went to Lubbock while Cameron stayed with her grandparents in Midland.

The June Family were originally told to expect to stay in Lubbock 5-7 days, so Erika booked a hotel room. But, after a few days, Hayden wasn't getting any better. Then, Hayden's condition became

critical. Hayden was put into a medically induced coma so she could be put on an ECMO machine to work as a lung bypass and keep her breathing.

That's when RMHC of the Southwest came in to help. It was hard for Ethan and Erika to leave the hospital to sleep or shower, even before Hayden was put on ECMO. **Erika remembers thinking at the time, "I can't leave my daughter. There's no way."** Erika and Ethan were able to stay just a few floors down from Hayden in a sleep room at the Ronald McDonald Family Room.

The June Family were relieved to have a comfortable bed, a shower, and the ability to do laundry while remaining close to their daughter. The sleep room also gave Ethan and Erika a place where they could process the experience they were going through. "We sat in there and we cried. It was the first night we got to sit and talk about how we were really feeling in our own protective area," Erika said.



Tears of sadness were able to turn into tears of joy. After 3 long weeks, Hayden was able to come off ECMO and breathe on her own. Her recovery was a miracle. After 61 days in the

ICU, she was able to walk out of the hospital with her family.

To our community of supporters, Erika wanted to share, **"Being there and not having to leave Hayden's side, helped her. She felt her loved ones around her. And, you gave that to us."**

Hayden will have long lasting effects from her illness, but she isn't letting that stop her from getting back to what she loves. She is back to playing volleyball and being a typical pre-teen girl with her family still close at her side.



Hayden and her family were able to be together during this unimaginable time thanks to you.

We couldn't provide for these families without your help. Please donate today to ensure that RMHC of the Southwest can continue to offer a safe home away from home for families like Hayden's. Studies have shown that children heal better and faster when their families are with them.

P.S. The enclosed envelope makes it easy and free for you to send in your donation today. You can also visit RMHCsouthwest.com to give securely online.

How You Have Been Changing Lives



When we posted on Facebook that we had an urgent need for snacks, you stepped up big time. We had a tremendous outpouring of support and love from our community! Thank you to the many amazing families, groups, and businesses who helped us provide snacks to our kids all summer long.



We had a very special volunteer at the beginning of the summer at our Ronald McDonald Family Room at Medical Center Hospital. Dr. Ram spent 26 hours volunteering in our Family Room. He did everything from cleaning and laundry to baking cookies and painting wooden cars for children. Dr. Ram took the time to greet families warmly, lend a listening ear to their concerns, and simply be present for them during their most challenging times. He did all this even after a full day of completing ICU rounds inside the hospital, on the weekdays, and even on the weekends. Dr. Ram made such a positive impact on our families and staff during his time volunteering at the Family Room. Thank you!



Blackbeard Operations in Midland donated diapers, wipes, and other necessities for our families at our Family Room at Midland Memorial.



Witt Law Firm, Revolution Mortgage, and Key Animal Clinic made sure the kids in the House went back to school with everything they needed.



Lubbock Matadors player, William Rodrigues, visited one of our RMHC kids, Augusto, and brought him lots of Matador goodies. Augusto was in an accident which caused him to be transferred to Lubbock and ultimately led to the loss of his leg. His parents stayed at the Ronald McDonald House during his surgeries and the beginning of his rehab. Augusto loves soccer and is an amazing soccer player. His amputation will mean huge changes for him as a young athlete, but he has a great attitude and the biggest heart. We know there are great things in store for this young man.

Summer Snapshots

Summer at RMHC means more kids in the House and Family Rooms. Thanks to our community, we're able to provide kids a fun summer vacation, even if it looks a little different than normal.



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From donating to volunteering, you are making moments like these happen. Thank you!

Your Impact: April-June



151
families stayed in
the House



698
total guest count



16
nights at the House per
family (average stay)



2,344
total number of
nights provided



254
families served in the
Family Rooms

Quarterback S.A.C.K. Kick-Off



We had an amazing kick-off to our 2024 Quarterback S.A.C.K. Campaign! Thank you to everyone who attended and has already made a pledge or donation to Support And Comfort Kids (S.A.C.K.). Thank you to our presenting sponsor, United Supermarkets, Coach Joey McGuire & Texas Tech Athletics, and emcees, Christy Hartin and Kase Wilbanks, for helping us kick-off this campaign in a spectacular way.

What is Quarterback S.A.C.K.?

Quarterback S.A.C.K. lets you turn every sack into a victory for families. **Step 1: You Pledge.** Make a pledge for every sack the Texas Tech Defense gets on the opposing team's quarterback or make a one-time donation for the whole season. **Step 2: Tech Sacks.** With every sack, you'll be directly supporting RMHC and cheering on our defense. You can follow along as we "track the sacks" on our social media. **Step 3: Kids Win.** At the end of the football season, we'll tally up the sacks. Your donation provides support for the kids and families of RMHC of the Southwest.



Presenting Sponsor



GET IN THE GAME

to Support And Comfort Kids



Pledge



Donate

[RMHCsouthwest.com/
quarterback-sack](https://RMHCsouthwest.com/quarterback-sack)

Memorials & Honorariums

April through June 2024

In memory of:

Susan Andrews
Rusty and Linda Andrews

Jerald Dalton Askew
Steve and Tresa Sparks

Jesse Chesser
Ross and Connie Chesser

Harvey Cottrell
Ed and Melinda Felton

Marilyn Gipson
Gabe and Lauren Orta

Haley Harvey
Hyatt Harvey

John Huckabee
Ed and Melinda Felton

Mike Welch
Ross and Connie Chesser

Jonathan Weldy
Raleigh Lane

Janie Loise Woodman
Charles and Lois Gober

In honor of:

Mike Ansolabehere
City Bank

Todd and Melissa Bains
City Bank

Benjamin Figueroa
Debi Driscoll
Deborah Figueroa
Nancy Gamroth
Denny and Susan Milligan

Dr. And Mrs. Charles Fisher
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Luis and Lissette Miranda-Castillo
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Tom and Carolyn Neal
Mike and Patty Horridge

Farley Reeves
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Jordan Clay Shuman
Ernesto and Ann Navarrette

Sebastian Alex Terrell
Terrell Consulting

Taylor Wutz
Jim and Deborah Wutz

RMHC Scholars



At RMHC of the Southwest, we realize that a serious illness of a child can have a significant emotional and financial impact on the entire family. That's why we offer scholarships to high school seniors who have had a serious childhood sickness or are a sibling in an illness-affected family. Our 2024 RMHC Scholars are:

Margaret Greenwood

Dina Jeffries Leadership Scholarship

Margaret's parents stayed at the Ronald McDonald House in Indianapolis when their oldest daughter, Betsy, was receiving medical treatment. The experience made the family, especially Margaret, passionate about RMHC's mission and children's healthcare. Margaret graduated from Artesia Public High School and plans to pursue a degree in nursing. She eventually wants to become a midwife or nurse practitioner and open her own clinic to support pregnant women in rural areas.



Koda Biggam

Janice Flemmons Scholarship

Koda's younger sister has a rare genetic disorder which has caused the family to spend a lot of time in hospitals and in multiple Ronald McDonald Houses across the United States. The Biggam Family used to volunteer as Guest Chefs every month for 10 years before moving away from the area. Because of his experience, Koda is passionate about healthcare. He hopes to become an anesthesiologist and help bring more access to medical care to rural areas.

Be Part of the RMHC Community!



Donate

\$100 provides a family with a one night stay at the House. Any amount makes a difference in keeping families together.



Volunteer

Volunteers help us keep our programs running! Whether you have 1 hour a year or 1 hour a month, we need your help.



Share

Whether you share in person or online, when you tell others about RMHC's mission, you are helping us serve more families.

Learn more on our website: [RMHCsouthwest.com](https://www.rmhcswest.com)