



Ronald McDonald
House Charities
Oregon & Southwest Washington

SUMMER / FALL 2017

KEEPING FAMILIES CLOSE

Life inside Oregon's Ronald McDonald Houses

A COURAGEOUS TEEN, A LOVING GRANDMOTHER

Far from Home, a Family Draws Closer

Kierann Bailey was just 17 when her doctors in Anchorage, Alaska, discovered she had chronic myeloid leukemia. After two years of treatments, they recommended that she fly to Portland for chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant at Doernbecher Children's Hospital.

Now 19, Kierann and her grandmother, Martina, have been guests at Portland's Westside Ronald McDonald House for ten weeks. Her parents and younger brother, Caleb, who provided her transplant, have flown down for extended visits; Martina has stayed for the duration.

"It's hard to be away from my friends," Kierann says. "Also, because of my treatment, I can't be around a lot of people; I can't eat certain foods. It feels entrapping."

For the Baileys, long-term housing for their child was a must. "If Ronald McDonald House hadn't come through, we'd have had to try to find an apartment near the hospital," Kierann says. "We'd have needed to buy a car and sell it when we left."

Kierann says the House has been much

more than just a place to stay: She's been driven to the Japanese Garden and enjoyed a pair of OMSI passes; her grandmother loves the weekly grocery store shuttle: "An hour to get away means a lot," she says.



For the Baileys, being together physically has helped them draw closer as a family. "I think my diagnosis really opened our eyes," Kierann says. "I realize how much they love me, and being able to stay in the House together has strengthened that love."

Kierann also believes her situation has made her realize how generous people are — and how willing to help. "Staying at a Ronald McDonald House shows me that people are kind. It sounds cheesy, I know, but people are good. It's been humbling to see that."

Her grandmother agrees. "Staying with Kierann has been painful, because she's so sick and I've invested a lot in her life. But when she asked me to come, I came. I'm glad I did, because being here has changed my life."

AN EPIC BIRTHDAY BBQ BASH!

Celebrating the East House's 20th Birthday with a Fun-Packed Summer Party

On June 27, with the help of volunteers from Vital Life, a Marquis and Consonus Foundation, our Eastside Ronald McDonald House backyard transformed into party central, with kids, families, board members, and staff all gathered for our second annual Backyard BBQ. This year, however, there was something extra to celebrate: the East House's 20th Birthday!

The event was a blast: A jug band performed in front of the playhouse; Pirate Bob blew bubbles big enough to dance in; Cassie Fisher, our muralist, helped kids paint custom T-shirts.

And everyone loved the ponies, Rainbow and Jellybean!

After enjoying burgers and picnic fare provided by Portland Northeast Optimist Club, we sliced up a giant cake and gave away toys to every kid in attendance. It was a birthday party, after all: 20 years of keeping families close at our flagship East House.

One little guy, with cake on his face and arms loaded with loot, was heard to exclaim: "I hope they do this every year!" To which we say: We agree!



EXPANDING OUR COMPASSION

Our Hospitality Cart Serves Families *Inside* the Hospital

This spring, in partnership with Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel, we launched a new program that extends our mission beyond the walls of our three Oregon Ronald McDonald Houses.

The idea is simple: Families who spend hours or days at a child's hospital bedside often lack the kind of loving support and basic needs we provide. Stocked with hot drinks for adults and snacks and toys for kids, our Hospitality Cart moves between Randall's neonatal and pediatric acute-care floors. It's staffed by volunteers, and everything on it — from coffee to coloring books — is free.

Besides bringing comfort and support to kids and adults, our Hospitality Cart is a conversation-starter, spreading the word about who we are, what we do, and how Ronald McDonald Houses help families in need. The new cart has already served more than 2,300 children and family members, and we're making plans to roll it into other hospitals across the state!

If you're interested in donating items or volunteering for the Hospitality Cart, go to rmhcoregon.org/hospitality-cart.

