



Mission Statement

Ronald McDonald House New York provides a temporary “home-away-from-home” for pediatric cancer patients and their families.

The House is a supportive and caring environment which encourages and nurtures the development of child-to-child and parent-to-parent support systems. Ronald McDonald House New York is the largest facility of its type in the world.



**RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE® NEW YORK**

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**RONALD MCDONALD
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Hope Awards
April 28, 2011

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Ronald McDonald House New York 4th Presentation of the Hope Award

Welcome

Patrick J. Lenz
Director of Human Resources
& Volunteer Development

Invocation

Lizabeth Rodriguez

Ronald McDonald House Family Remarks

Raquel & Antoinette

Award Recipients

Patrick Dunne

Eileen McCarthy

Jeannie Riegel

Christine Taylor

Closing Remarks

William T. Sullivan
President & CEO

Patrick Dunne



Patrick “Pat” Dunne began his volunteer service at Ronald McDonald House New York in 2007. From the moment he was introduced to the House through the Children’s Happy Faces Foundation, he knew it would be a cause that he’d adopt with his whole heart. Pat immediately wanted to get involved with Team Ronald McDonald, the evening team programs, and found a home on the Friday night team.

Through his commitment and dedication to Ronald McDonald House, Pat has demonstrated his zeal for life. As a child, he lost his left leg to cancer, but few would know it because it hasn’t been a handicap. Pat’s experience would ultimately become an unexpected blessing to some families at Ronald McDonald House. This became true when one of our own young warriors lost his leg to cancer, and the child was having a rough time adjusting to the use of a prosthetic leg. Once Pat was made aware of the situation he used his Irish charm to cajole the young man into trying it out and accepting it as his own. This breathed new life into the child, who could then often be seen in the playroom taking no prisoners – even Pat – in a game of ping pong.

Pat is known for his always happy and smiling disposition. He was a founding member of the Children’s Happy Face Foundation (CHFF), and the Hibernian Provident Society; both of which provide funding and programs for Ronald McDonald House New York, including Christmas and Easter Parties and various other programs and activities throughout the year.

Not only does Pat exemplify the term HOPE; he demonstrates day-in and day-out the “art of giving” with a special unique style, and does so under the radar without expecting anything in return. In 2009, at another charity event, Pat bought two raffle tickets and put Ronald McDonald House New York as the name. Lo and behold, the winning ticket brought “home” a 2009 Jeep Liberty. Pat is a true hero in the eyes of the children and the families at Ronald McDonald House New York.

When he describes the House, he says, “It is an incredible place. It has helped me accept difficult things in life with a smile. I always feel renewed after leaving. You know money cannot replace a hug.”

Special Thanks

Ronald McDonald House New York wishes to thank the over 750 volunteers who give so much of themselves to ease the burden of children and families staying with us.

It is through your compassion, dedication, support and enthusiasm that we are able to offer each family a home away from home, where each child is a child first and a child with cancer second.

Ronald McDonald House New York Selection Committee

Kendall Carter

Chief Joanne Jaffe

Theresa Matrullo

Niki Sideris

Credit

Front & Back Cover Photos: Sara Jaye Weiss

**Ronald McDonald House New York
Hope Award Past Recipients**

2008

Niki Sideris
Stephen Petrillo
Phyllis Hahn
Jef Campion
Vivian Harris

2009

Bruce Dimpflmaier
David Lipson
Shelly Talan
Steve Simon

2010

Inspector Jimmy Murtagh
Lou Riccio
Anne Lekow
Betty Perez

Eileen McCarthy



Eileen McCarthy is the coordinator of monthly programs that are sponsored by the St. Stephen of Hungary Parish and School, through which members come to the House to cook and serve delicious dinners to the families.

This program is one of the longest running programs at Ronald McDonald House New York, and was created over 30 years ago at the 86th Street House when the pastor of St. Stephen's thought it would be nice to invite the families to dinner at the Church Hall. The weather was terrible on this particular Monday night in January, and no families were able to attend. The group then decided to move the dinner to the House; and a tradition began.

When parents from Ronald McDonald House New York are at the hospital all day caring for their children or waiting for the child to receive treatment, they have the unbelievable comfort of knowing that they do not have to think about what to prepare for dinner. They can concentrate solely on their child's health and treatment. The family returns to Ronald McDonald House New York, and is welcomed to a very fulfilling and satisfying dinner. Not only is filling physically it is also a great relief of a financial burden that is lifted from the parents.

As the leader of the group, the St. Stephen team of volunteers is a finely oiled machine, from set up to clean up. They take ownership of the evening, allowing the Monday Night Team volunteers to interact with the families.

Eileen is the embodiment of the heart-to-heart connection shared by the volunteers of Ronald McDonald House New York. Not only does she work hard at the House, Eileen is also known to promote community awareness at the church during Saturday Night's Children's mass where she works closely with children and families participating in the mass.

Asked why she volunteers, Eileen says, "I love children and I enjoy cooking. I am lucky to be able to help families face a very difficult time. The feeling that the efforts on everyone's part makes it a little easier on a family is quite rewarding."

Jeannie Riegel



Over 25 years ago, mother and school administrator Jeannie Riegel decided to give back to her community through volunteer service. She entered through the doors of a small brownstone and convent on 86th Street to begin helping children and families at Ronald McDonald House New York.

Jeannie started at the House helping out in any way she could from answering phones to helping families to navigate through the city at a very stressful time in their lives.

In 1986 Jeannie became our first Volunteer Coordinator, where she recruited, screened, trained and organized the very base of the volunteer structure that is in place today.

Over the years, Jeannie has seen the House change quite a bit, from the 24 rooms on 86th Street to our current 84-room facility the largest Ronald McDonald House in the world – from a small intimate kitchen and dining room to four spacious kitchens and a dining room for over 200. Although the House has grown, what has been a constant is Jeannie, or as some know her, the coffee and cookies lady, coming to the House. Every Tuesday and Thursday, Jeannie and her team can be found in the dining room with a pot of coffee, pitcher of lemonade and a tray of cookies.

This tradition of the cookies and coffee started back at the 86th Street House when Jeannie and her co-volunteer Hope Reese just wanted to lend an ear, and offer a warm cup of coffee to parents who had returned from a long strenuous day of treatments at the hospital. Jeannie fondly recalls that Hope would involve the children in an art project to give the parents a chance to converse with each other while the kids were distracted. Today the tradition continues with co-volunteers Mary Lambert and Louise Tashjian as they occupy the children, often by painting their finger nails.

Jeannie is most proud of her family, daughters Jennifer, Heather, Whitney and Cynthia and her 8 grandchildren. When asked “how do you feel about the House?” Jeannie responds, “In a sense it is my home away from home and these are my families too.”

Christine Taylor



Christine Taylor is a survivor. She came to Ronald McDonald House over five years ago as a Wednesday night team volunteer. After getting the better of her multiple myeloma, she decided that it was time to live life to the fullest.

Christine is an educator, but when diagnosed with cancer she had to give up her teaching job. Four years ago, the teacher in Christine was reborn. She created a new program called “Weird Science.” This new exciting program introduces hands-on fun exciting science projects to our children on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. It is not uncommon to visit the Lower Level Lounge and hear the squeals of delight as one of our young scientists has just exploded a volcano all over the playroom and several of those other scientists around them. Nothing can compare to seeing the smiles and excitement of children having fun, being children and not worrying about being children with cancer.

In addition to “Weird Science,” Christine has brought the art of film making to the House. She has turned New York into the hipper Hollywood and our children into cinematographers, directors, designers and most of all glamorous actors. This spring marked the premier of the third film produced, Planet WannaBe, with all of the fanfare of a Hollywood production including paparazzi, red carpet, and academy awards.

Christine’ husband Jim Taylor of WCBS Radio, a partner in her creative process. He is rarely surprised to come home to find her launching rockets across the living room or testing out the newest motorized boat project in the bath tub. Jim knows that she will never stop looking for the next best project and learning what she can do for the children of the House.

When asked “what does the House mean to you,” Christine responds: “My work at the House has made me look past my cancer... to envision that before I leave, I can and will make a difference in the lives of these amazingly brave and beautiful children. They are my heroes. “