



Winston-Salem

Caring for families caring for children

# Heart to Heart

Issue 77

November 2008

419 South Hawthorne Road, Winston-Salem, NC 27103 (336) 723-0228 www.rmhwinstonsalem.org

## Our Team is Stronger Thanks to You!

In recognition of your dedication to the Ronald McDonald House and Family Rooms, you and a guest are invited to attend a

### Volunteer Appreciation Tailgate

Saturday, November 15

12:00 Noon

at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

520 Summit Street, Winston-Salem

### Special Guests and Speakers



- Minor Variations, a WFU choral group
- RMH family, The Rasnicks, and their Football Coach, Bobby Wyatt

We invite you to wear your favorite school team colors and join us for our indoor tailgate!



Please respond by November 6 to:

AbbyB@rmhwinstonsalem.org or 723.0228 x11

We hope you can join us for our celebration. As we mentioned above, we encourage you to wear your favorite school team colors. We also invite you to help us decorate our tables. When you RSVP, please let us know what school you plan to support so we can try to have a table in those colors. In addition to tables, we welcome you to bring memorabilia from your school to the Ronald McDonald House prior to the event or to St. Paul's the day of the luncheon. For example, Abby plans to bring her Deacon mascot figurine and pennant!

Feel free to call/e-mail if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you on November 15th!

### The Red Shoe Award



In February 2007, the Ronald McDonald House established a new award for volunteers named the Charlie Mays Red Shoe Award. Charlie was our first recipient of the award. As a retired engineer, Charlie began volunteering in 1992 as our trusted handyman and continues to help on a weekly basis. For the families we serve, Charlie has established footprints that will always make their stay more comforting.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> we honored our second recipient of the Charlie Mays Red Shoe Award, Irene Covington. Irene began her service at the Ronald McDonald House in 1999 as the first Family Assistance Program volunteer. In 2002 when we opened our Brenner Family Room, she helped as one of the charter volunteers. Today you can find her greeting guests in the Family Room on Monday mornings and helping with the Bingo fun and McDonald's food at the House on Monday afternoons.

Irene's closest friends and family members gathered with us to celebrate at the Pegg House Tea Room in Kernersville. Irene thought she was coming to a new Bingo volunteer training. Her guests kept our secret and we all enjoyed her shocked response when she learned the party was to honor her and all her dedicated years of service. As part of the program, Chacy SanFilippo asked former families to write letters about their experiences with Irene. The following is an excerpt from one:

Irene, My family can't begin to thank you enough for the times you allowed us to be a part of your life. Serena loves coming to the Ronald McDonald House, and one of the reasons for this is You ... Bingo was just a game until we experienced it "Miss Irene Style." ... The many prizes she won were never for her, but for the loved ones we missed so much from home. You gave my sweet Serena a way to still love on her family while we were away from them. My two younger children always became very sad before we would leave for Winston-Salem to come back to the hospital. Serena would say, "I'm going to win some toys for you when I play Bingo." ... You made our roughest times a lot smoother. As for me as a stressed and worried mother, you gave me conversation and a smile that hugged me.

You will always be a part of our family.

Irene expressed her love and appreciation for the Ronald McDonald House, but our families are the ones who are so blessed by her service. We are forever thankful for Charlie, Irene and all our volunteers who help make our house a home.



## Volunteer "Lunch Bunch"

The November "Lunch Bunch" will take place on Thursday, November 13 at 12:30 p.m. at the Ronald McDonald House. All House, FAP and Family Room volunteers are welcome to join us. Please call Judy (x39) or Abby (x11) by November 11 and let them know you are planning to attend. Please also tell them whether you would like a tuna or club sub. If you have signed up in the red folder in the Family Room or at the House, you don't need to call.

Our topic for this meeting is "Holiday Stress." We will be sharing and comparing our holiday delights and disasters while making new friends and enjoying the company of some of the nicest folks in the Winston-Salem area: our super volunteers! For inspiration we are making available several copies of the very funny and heartwarming book **Skipping Christmas** by John Grisham. Copies are available in the Family Rooms or by calling Judy. You do not need to read the book to attend "Lunch Bunch."

## Volunteer Opportunities at the Ronald McDonald House and Family Rooms During the Holidays

If you would like to spend some time with our House or Family Room guests, we would love to have help from you and your family. If you are able to help at the House, please contact Abby (723-0228 x11). If you can help at the Family Rooms, please contact Judy (723-0228 x39). We will be opening the Family Rooms for about two hours to serve a light meal. Opportunities in the Family Room are on Thanksgiving and Christmas Days. Family Room volunteers are welcome to also help at the House. Open shifts at the House are on the following days:

**December 13, 14, 20, 21, 24, 25**

Those who have volunteered on past holidays guarantee that is a very rewarding experience. Your time and service are wonderful gifts to the families we serve.



Congratulations to House volunteers, Dave Comeau and Mary Cunningham, who were married October 4, 2008. We wish you many years of happiness!

## Calling All Bingo Volunteers!

Once a month on Monday nights, would you or someone you know like to:



- 1) play a combination of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny?
- 2) see the smiles and hear the laughter of stressed families relaxing?
- 3) help our families reach out and connect with one another?

If you or someone you know who is at least 21 years-old is interested in becoming a Bingo volunteer one Monday night per month from 5:30-6:30pm at the Ronald McDonald House, please contact Chacy at [ChacyS@rmhwinstonsalem.org](mailto:ChacyS@rmhwinstonsalem.org) or 723.0228 x20.



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