

FALL/WINTER 2023

# heartstrings



## OUR COVER STORY

"While hospitalized, the boys required four emergency surgeries, three of them at 2AM."

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM AN AMAZING YEAR

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**Ronald McDonald  
House Charities®**  
of Southern Colorado

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP

in addition to donating money, there are many ways you can contribute to our mission of keeping families together during a time of medical crisis.





## “HOW MANY DO YOU SEE?” MAEGAN TEXTED HER FRIEND.

Disbelieving, she looked again at the ultrasound. Her friend, also an ultrasound tech, sent the message back, “I see two.”

Working for a medical center in Pueblo, a newly pregnant Maegan had taken the opportunity to “self-scan”. (Much like when you use the self-check-out option at the market, only WAY different.) Already a mom to three-year-old Everleigh, she and Dominic were thrilled to know they were again expecting. But, this. This was more than they expected!

Experienced at interpreting grainy ultrasounds, Maegan looked carefully, wondering if the twins she was carrying might be conjoined, as they were so close.

An ultrasound at 12 weeks’ showed her twins were indeed close, as they were mono-mono twins. Monoamniotic twins are identical. In addition to sharing space in utero, they also share the amniotic sac and placenta, with each having their own umbilical cord.

This same exam led Maegan and Dominic to believe their twins were boys, which was later confirmed with blood work.





The preparations began. Needing to find and secure an OB/GYN who specializes in delivering mono-mono twins, the goal was for Maegan to deliver no sooner than 32 weeks. However, life doesn't always go as planned. At 24 weeks, Maegan was hospitalized and monitored daily with multiple in-depth scans.

At 27 weeks' gestation, their sons arrived. Conner weighed 2 pounds, 11 ounces and Cameron was just 2 pounds, 6 ounces. Fitting into the palms of their parent's hands, the Perkins moved into our Ronald McDonald House, staying with us while their boys were hospitalized.

"I remember a friend saying, 'You didn't live in your home for five months?! That's crazy!', but, the truth is, it wasn't crazy. Your House became our HOME". Maegan said. "Cameron was in the NICU for 105 days, with Conner adding another 50 days to his stay at Children's Hospital." Each and every one of those days (and nights), Maegan, Dominic and Everleigh were just a minute away at our Ronald McDonald House.

While hospitalized, the boys required four emergency surgeries, three of them at 2 am. "Being so close at your House allowed us to get over to the hospital and see the boys before they went into each surgery," Dominic said.

"When the majority of our time, energy and thoughts were with the boys, staying with you meant that we didn't have to worry about everyday things." Dominic went on. "Anytime an emergency arose, we were grateful to be so close."

Maegan added, "As a family, we all felt so comfortable here. The House became our home, with your staff and volunteers welcoming us in. You were always checking on the boys and Everleigh was so very loved!"





# “WE WOULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED WITHOUT YOUR HELP”



That's what our Ronald McDonald House does. We care for families who are facing unforeseen medical crisis, attending to all of their needs, so that their primary focus is being with their hospitalized children.

Maegan said, "You helped us transition from being a family of three, with both parents working, to overnight becoming a family of five, with Dominic, Everleigh and I at the House full-time."

Even with the support from their families, Maegan said, "**We couldn't have done any of this without the Ronald McDonald House.** We were looking at a high-risk pregnancy with me being hospitalized from 24 weeks, on." She continued. "We imagined that we

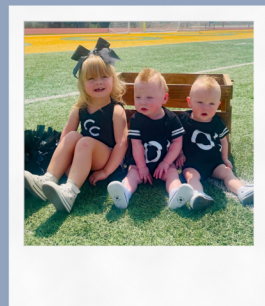
might have a one-month NICU stay, and that turned into five months."

Dominic finished her thought. "Mentally, physically and financially, **we would not have survived without your help.**" Maegan added, "Our situation was impossible. Your care made it possible for us to be there for our boys and for our daughter."

Today, Dominic is the boys in-home CNA, providing for their daily needs. Each with different diagnoses, the Perkins continue to come to Colorado Springs to receive the specialized medical care their boys require. Now, at 14 months old, Conner weighs 21lbs and Cameron weighs 17lbs.

"Staying at the House during both Thanksgiving and Christmas was special.", Maegan said. "Celebrating the holidays with you helped us feel like we were home. You loved our family well." Maegan went on, "Even with a surgery the day before Thanksgiving, you took great care of all of us." She closed her eyes, smiled, and said, "During a season when we typically 'give thanks,' we simply cannot thank you enough."

At this time of year, your support of families like the Perkins is the best gift we could ask for. To donate, please use the enclosed remittance envelope or make a secure donation by going to our website, [www.rmhcsoutherncolorado.org](http://www.rmhcsoutherncolorado.org) THANK YOU!





# An Amazing Year... by the numbers



**8,350** Daily Guest Overnight Stays at our House (January-September)

So far this year, RMHCSC provided more than 8,000 overnight stays for families with sick children.

representing **3,394** children & their families served

it costs about **\$50.00** a night

to keep a family together at our Ronald McDonald House but families are never sent a bill

Families served by RMHCSC saved more than \$368,000 in out-of-pocket lodging and meal expenses, thanks to our Ronald McDonald House and Ronald McDonald Family Room programs

**\$368,230**



## Our House provides:

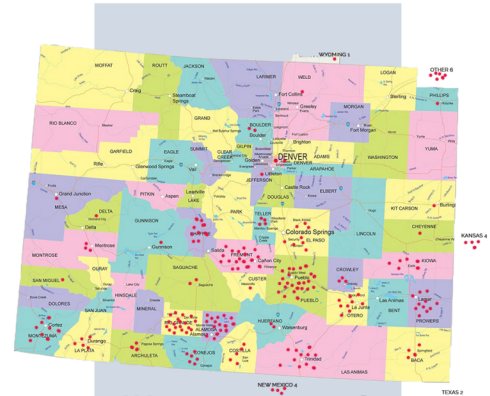
- A safe lodging alternative
- Higher quality sleep
- Indoor/Outdoor play areas
- Close proximity to hospitals
- Better perceived quality of life
- Strengthened coping abilities



RM Family Room Daily Guests

**3,650**

Representing 680 families & 1,436 individuals



Families came from **72** Colorado Counties in addition to **32** out-of-state counties

This was made possible in part because

**229** volunteers gave **13,858** hours of their time

RMHCSC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, relying on the support of the entire community to help keep families close when they need it most. THANK YOU for partnering with us!



# WAYS YOU CAN HELP

## ➔ Donate



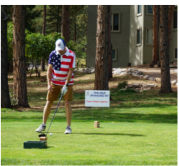
Your donation means the world, giving families of severely ill children a comforting, safe place to stay while remaining close to their hospitalized child. Donations are not limited to a one-time cash donation, as you can also donate monthly, donate a car or even collect pop tabs. Explore all the options on our website.  
<https://www.rmhcsoutherncolorado.org>

## ➔ Volunteer



We have volunteer opportunities for everyone! From floral arranging and daily baking, cooking, cleaning and clerical needs to gardening, events and special project support, we would love your help!

## ➔ Sponsor an event



Every year there is a full schedule of events that are organized by and benefit our charity. These events vary in appeal with a variety of ways to come on board as a sponsor. Check out the Events Page on our website to learn more.  
<https://www.rmhcsoutherncolorado.org>

## ➔ Create a fundraiser



The possibilities are limitless! Host a House Party with your friends and neighbors, organize an event with a club or business you belong to or plan a collection drive of needed Wish List Items. You'll find more helpful ideas at [www.rmhcsoutherncolorado.org/create-an-event/](http://www.rmhcsoutherncolorado.org/create-an-event/)



# A FAMILY'S PERSPECTIVE

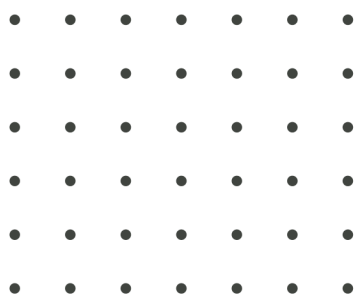
When your choices of where to give are many, we appreciate when you choose to help support the important and unduplicated work of our charity.

A Mom who stayed with us said, "THANK YOU so much for providing a place where I can take a breath. My child arrived at the hospital on his last leg with collapsed lungs and on a vent. Today, he opened his eyes and is starting to respond. While it's hard, I'm thankful for this place where I can take a moment to exhale."

Your contributions, in part, made that possible for 8,350 Daily guests and 3,394 Daily families who've been with us so far this year.

Thank you!





# 2024 Dates to Remember



## June 7th Sporting Clays

In its 6th year, our annual Sporting Clays Shoot has become a must attend event for sporting men and women in the Pikes Peak region. Held at the acclaimed Pikes Peak Gun Club, an Isaak Walton range, in association with the Kids & Clays Foundation, this day will test your skill and present you with an opportunity to take home some great prizes.



## July 27 Riders 4 Children

Riders 4 Children is a nonprofit group that organizes a scenic motorcycle ride through the heart of the front range. Proceeds from the ride benefit our southern Colorado Ronald McDonald House. We'll post registration details on our website as we get closer to the event.

## October 7

### The Cameron Memorial Golf Tourney

This will be the 32nd year of this Award Winning golf tournament, played at the scenic Perry Park Country in Larkspur. The field is limited and foursomes fill up fast.







**Ronald McDonald  
House Charities®**  
of Southern Colorado

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# Our Charity

We believe that when families are together, they are stronger. We believe that seriously ill children should have their families with them. We believe that the love and support of family is as powerful as any medication. And, we believe in keeping families near the care and resources needed to thrive. Keeping families close - when they need it most - is why we exist.

## Ronald McDonald House

At 25,000 square feet, the fully accessible Ronald McDonald House® provides a warm, safe, clean and friendly environment for up to 20 families per night. At no cost, families stay as long as their critically ill child is hospitalized and/or is receiving treatment.

## Ronald McDonald Family Room

Located in Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Springs, the Family Room is a comfortable space that serves as a refuge where families can rest and recharge within the hospital walls.

*Our Ronald McDonald House Charities helps families feel at home, even when they can't be.*

