



# The JOURNAL

Spring / Summer 2005

Ronald McDonald House Charities®

Vol. XVIII, No. 1

## Trying To Beat The Odds - Danielle's Story



Six year old Danielle has always been a fighter since being born fifteen and a half weeks early and weighing only one pound and two thirds of an ounce. She has spent most of her childhood in and out of the hospital with pneumonia and RSV. In December 2003 Danielle was complaining of side pain and experiencing unexplained fevers. Several trips to the doctors proved unsuccessful in diagnosing Danielle's situation. The Perkins' family moved in January 2004 from Roundup, Montana to Butte, Montana. There was still no explanation for Danielle's pain or fevers at that time. However, before the family had a chance to unpack, Danielle was diagnosed with a Wilms Tumor. The tumor had taken over her left kidney, and the doctor sent the family to Spokane for treatment the next day.

The doctors removed the kidney and the tumor. By June it looked as though she was free of cancer. However, in September the reports showed that the tumor had grown back where the kidney was. Danielle endured chemo and radiation every week until the tumor was small enough to remove yet again. Through the sickness caused by treatment and also the loss of her hair, Danielle continues to smile and fight to survive. She tells her mother, Misty, her constant companion, that she will continue to be brave and strong because she knows her mother would be lost without her.

Danielle and Misty stay at the Ronald McDonald House while Danielle's father, Bill, remains at home working a new job and visits as often as he can. Her eleven year old sister, Ashley, is staying with her grandparents back in Roundup so she also can continue school. The distance has been hard on the family. Danielle has not seen her sister Ashley who she calls her "best friend" for nine weeks. Danielle keeps Bill and Ashley close by with pictures and phone calls. She often sleeps with a picture of her father when she feels he is too far away.

The House provides a stable homelike environment for the Perkins' family, a place to have a meal together around a table or watch a favorite movie together. The Perkins spent Christmas at the House and both Danielle and Misty have celebrated their 2005 birthdays there. Danielle continues her battle with cancer trying to beat the odds. She will need to remain in Spokane for continued medical treatment. During their extended stay, the Ronald McDonald House will continue to be a home away from home for the Perkins' family.



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## THE JOURNAL

The Journal is published three times a year by Ronald McDonald House Charities of Spokane. RMHC of Spokane, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, provides temporary housing for families who travel to Spokane seeking medical care for their children. We create, find and support programs in the Inland Northwest that enhance the health and well-being of children and families. Your comments and questions are welcome. Call (509) 624-0500 or fax (509) 624-3267.

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Spokane  
1015 W. 5th Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99204-3001

Newsletter Creator and Editor: Nickie White

Visit our Web site at [www.rmhsokane.org](http://www.rmhsokane.org)

E-mail: [info@rmhsokane.org](mailto:info@rmhsokane.org)

## About Our Family...



Mike Forness, Executive Director

Everyone who stays at our house is considered part of a large family. And just like any other family we have our stories to share. Some stories have happy endings, others are in progress, and some are nearing their final chapter. What we end up with are the memories of the time we spend together getting to know one another. These stories make us stronger and help us to understand that what we do at the Ronald McDonald

House makes a difference in life. We hope you enjoy the stories of our large family in this issue of *The Journal* and thank you for making a difference in their lives through your support.

Your Share-A-Night contributions allow us to continue our vital mission to serve families with seriously ill or injured children.

Thank You

## Ronald McDonald House Wish List

**These are items we always need. If you can help us out, your donations would be most appreciated.**

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Laundry Detergent  
Toilet Tissue/Kleenex  
Cleaning Rags  
Lysol Bathroom Cleaner  
Lysol Spray Disinfectant  
Powdered Bleach  
Window Cleaner  
Light Bulbs-75 W, 3-Way,  
75 Watt reflector flood

### Food Items

Tuna  
Canned Meat  
Canned Fruit  
Cooking Oil  
Hearty Soups  
  
Ground Coffee (Decaf)  
Coffee Creamer (powdered)  
Granola Bars  
Canned Juice (8 oz. size)

### Kitchen Items

Saran Wrap  
Aluminum Foil  
Paper Towels  
Pots and Pans (call House for sizes)  
Sets of new silverware  
Casserole dishes  
Microwavable Cookware

### Office Supplies

HP #15 Ink Cartridges  
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Writing Journals for the families

**Volunteers are always needed: Please call our  
Volunteer Coordinator at (509) 624-0500  
for more information**

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Ronald McDonald House Charities of Spokane would like to express our sincere appreciation to the following individuals, businesses, service organizations and groups who demonstrate their friendship and support in so many ways. **This list is intended to acknowledge all contributions received from September 1st, 2004 through February 28th, 2005.** If we have erred or omitted anyone, please accept our sincere apology. You can help us correct our records by calling (509) 624-0500 or writing to Ronald McDonald House Charities, 1015 W. 5th Ave., Spokane, WA 99204. Thank you for your generous support!

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## A Personal Thank You From Our Families

To the Staff and Volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House,

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the wonderful volunteers and staff at the Ronald McDonald House in Spokane Washington. Our daughter and her husband (Natalie and Brett Remund) have just spent the last five weeks at this magnificent place. They had twin baby girls that were delivered two months early; needless to say, the babies needed to have special care at the Deaconess Medical Center. Thank you so much for allowing them the privilege of staying at the great place. WE so appreciate the caring atmosphere, a place to rest if only for a little while, snacks, a kitchen to prepare meals, special nights when food was brought in to feed them, a family room to help them feel at home, laundry facilities that would help them keep in clean clothes, phone service so that we could check in often. This has been a time of great worry for our family, but the Ronald McDonald House has helped to ease our concerns, just knowing that our kids had a place during this time of such worry. I am pleased to let you know that our babies are doing well enough to be released from the hospital, the doctors seem to think that they will be able to grow and develop much like any other healthy baby. WE are so pleased and our hearts are full of much love and gratitude to our Heavenly Father for these little blessings ( our twin baby girls) and also to you for helping our family in such a time of need. May you know that the service you offer is so needed and we are so grateful to have been a recipient of such wonderful care.

THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!  
Michael and Carolyn Dalton



To all of those who put time and love into the Ronald McDonald House,

Thank you so very much for providing such a wonderful place, it truly has been a blessing for all of my family. We have been here three weeks and my girls, ages 1 1/2 and 4 1/2, always felt at home. I feel that it has been an honor for me to be able to experience what you do for the community. I would have never known if I had not stayed here. The staff, volunteers, community people who donate, my family and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your kindness and generosity. May God bless each one of you for all that you give the House.

With deepest thanks,  
Courtney, Jodie, Kiley, Abrianna Brennan

## More Than Just A Place To Stay

### Sarah and Parker's Story

**Sarah Brown** recounts the morning she found her one-year old saturated in blood from head to toe from a nose bleed during the night. Just three days later **Parker** was diagnosed with cancer and the family was sent to Spokane for treatment. Sarah and her husband Josh found themselves in a strange town with the youngest of their three children hospitalized. Although the family had participated in their children's school pop-tab drive to benefit the Ronald McDonald House, they were unfamiliar with the program's services. Upon arriving at the hospital, they learned that the Ronald McDonald House was a place for them to stay until Parker was able to go home. However, there was a waiting list and until a room came open they would need to find lodging at a nearby hotel. Sarah notes, "The hotel had no place for the kids to play or to store food. It was like putting everyone in a box and hoping for the best. We only had to stay there two nights, and I don't know how we could have managed it any longer." Besides the inconvenience, staying at the hotel would have put an enormous financial burden on the family. Half of the Brown's income was lost when Sarah had to close her in-home daycare to take care of Parker.



*"The Strongest Bond" by Dorothy Fowler*

Sarah and her family stayed for twenty nine nights at the Ronald McDonald House. When asked about their experience at the House she said, "The Ronald McDonald House was more than just a place to stay. The atmosphere was very heartwarming and supportive; it was just what we needed at the time."

Parker was able to visit the House on occasion and the family celebrated both his second birthday and Christmas under our roof. Although he is doing well, Parker and his family will need to travel to Spokane for many more doctors appointments in the future. With your continued support, once again we will be here to care for the Brown family in their time of need.

## Important Dates

### Wednesday, June 14th:

**"Family Tree of Giving" Dedication** - at the Ronald McDonald House

### Sunday, September 18th:

**"Tents, Hats and Champagne" Polo Benefit** - at the Peter Dix Polo Fields

### Saturday, October 8th:

**"Bear Necessities" Auction** - at The Davenport Hotel

**All Summer:** Bears on display throughout Spokane area - for more information regarding this project, call (509) 624-0500 or visit [www.thebearnecessities.org](http://www.thebearnecessities.org)