



Spring 2011

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A publication of
Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southeastern Michigan

The Kennedy-Crawford Family Story *of Hope and Love*

Marleasha Kennedy and Bradley Crawford met many years ago while working at McDonald's and little did they know at that time, that their relationship would blossom and grow into love and eventually bring into the world, baby Ava Marie.

Their story starts out like many young couples. They met, became friends, fell in love, got married and planned on having children. Shortly after their marriage, Marleasha became pregnant with little Ava Marie. What Marleasha and Bradley didn't know was Ava Marie planned on entering the world much earlier than planned.

One day in August, Marleasha was rushed to the hospital with stomach pains. She was checked out and released. In the middle of that night, Marleasha was in severe pain and within minutes, baby Ava Marie arrived prematurely weighing 1.8 pounds and was 12 inches long. Bradley, who acted immediately, called the paramedics and then went on to help deliver baby Ava Marie. The paramedics said that had he waited just 4 more minutes, he would have lost both his wife and their baby.

The baby was transferred to Hurley Hospital and then eventually airlifted to Children's Hospital of Michigan, where she stayed for six months. Ava Marie has gone through nine surgeries and a shunt revision twice.



During those six months, the Kennedy-Crawford family stayed on and off at the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit. At first, Marleasha was scared and wasn't sure if she would like staying at the House, but within a day she said that the staff and other families put her at ease.

The Ronald McDonald House of Detroit has become like a second home to Marleasha and

Bradley. Their longest stay was 21 days and have stayed at the House nine separate times.

"This house is like our second home now. We get delicious, home-cooked meals, hot showers, comfortable beds and people who really care about us." Marleasha told us.

She and Bradley both said that from now on they always put money in the canisters at the

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Please Note: The enclosed donation slip and return envelope is part of our **Mother's Day and Father's Day Holiday Season Fundraising Appeal**. Please remember the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit for your year-end, tax-deductible donation.

NOTE: A special 'Incentive' tax credit law has been enacted by the State of Michigan. If you are a Michigan resident, your gift to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of SE Michigan is eligible for 50% tax credit limited to a gift of \$200 (\$100 credit) per year for individuals and \$400 (\$200 credit) to those filing joint returns.

Thank you to our Major Donors!

- Art Van Furniture
- Bissell
- CBS
- Coca-Cola
- Detroit Yacht Club
- Dr. Pepper
- Ford Motor Company
- Georgia-Pacific
- General Motors
- Home Depot – Lake Orion Store
- IADT – Detroit Campus
- International Association of Home Stagers
- JC Plumbing
- Johnson Controls Inc.
- Kyla Marcial – Mrs. Michigan 2010-11
- La-Z-Boy
- Lachinva and Loverich
- M and M
- McCann Foods
- ME Consultants
- Pepsi Bottling Co.
- Quicken Loans
- Radisson
- Ronald McDonald House Board Members
- Sander's
- Southeast Michigan McDonald's Owners Association (SEMMAOA)
- Southwest Airlines
- The English Touch – Heather Roberts
- UAW-Ford
- USA Today
- Walmart
- Wisner Electric

...and to all of the donors, sponsors and volunteers who have given their time, energy and love to our charity!

RMHD Wish List...

There are many ways you can help us provide a home away from home for families in need. You could prepare a meal for the families at the House or supply the House with non-perishable food items. Canned food drives are a wonderful gift to the House! And we always need toys for children that stay at our House.

Remember, its **cash and gifts-in-kind** that will help the families that stay at the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit. Look over the list below and see if you can help with any of these much needed items. Please make your donation today! Contact **Jennifer Litomisky**, Executive Director at 313-745-5911 for more information.

Urgent Needs:

- Hand-held games for the children @ the House: PSP + Games, Nintendo DS + Games.
- Wii or PS 3 with games
- Target Gift Card – or any gift cards

Food & Kitchen Supplies

- Sugar, flour
- Cooking oil
- Canned soup (any brand or type)
- Disposable plates, cups and glasses
- Plastic utensils
- Zip Loc bags (all sizes)
- Plastic wrap
- Silverware
- Styrofoam take-out containers

Bedroom/Bathroom

- Pillow Protectors
- Queen and twin size - mattress pads

- Clock radios

- Toilet paper, Kleenex

Cleaning & Laundry

- Dow bathroom cleaner, Windex
- Laundry and dishwasher detergent
- Fabric softener sheets
- Bleach (Color Safe Clorox)
- Comet cleanser, Pine Sol
- Air fresheners spray
- Air fresheners – solids
- Glade Plug-Ins and sprays
- Carpet Fresh
- Paper towels

Children's Stuff

- Games for Wii
- Newly released family videos
- Disposable diapers
- Portable cribs
- Strollers

- Legos

- Educational toys

Office Supplies

- Batteries – AA, AAA, C, D and 9 volt
- Light bulbs – 60, 75 watt and 3 way
- Forever Stamps
- Avery Labels 5160 or equivalent
- Computer diskettes or Re-writable CD's
- Copy paper
- Pilot Rolling Ball pens – all color
- Scissors, Scotch tape, staples and White Out
- Permanent markers – Sharpies all colors
- Colored file folders

BIG ITEMS

- White appliances
- Microwave ovens
- Room Renovations

...a Story of Hope and Love

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McDonald's and purchase Happy Meals when they go out, because they know it is helping the Ronald McDonald House.

On this Mother's Day, Marleasha shares this message for all mothers and fathers who have critically ill children in the hospital and who are staying at the House.

"Don't lose your faith. Even though your child is helpless, keep your faith and lean on the families and the staff. They are there to help you get through your toughest times."

Please remember the House for your yearly donation to charity. We want to continue helping families like the Kennedy-Crawford family. And remember to keep the faith.

Winter and Spring Events Raise Funds, Create New Volunteers and Donors!

Dal LUV Classic – SW Airlines Golf Outing

This year, the 11th Annual Phoenix LUV Classic and Party was held on May 14, 2010, while the Dallas LUV Classic and Party celebrated its 25th annual event on October 1, 2011. Through these tournaments over the years, Southwest has raised more than \$11 million for the various Ronald McDonald Houses across the country. SW Airlines gives the money directly to Houses in the cities that they serve; Houses where staff often volunteer to cook meals and help.

The Houses that receive funding from the golf classic, typically use the money for operational needs such as purchasing beds for the families or for capital campaigns for their expansions since these are the areas that it is harder to find interested donors.

This year, proceeds from the Phoenix LUV Classic went to Phoenix, Tucson, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis. Proceeds from the Dallas event benefited the Houses in Dallas, Detroit, Ann Arbor, and St. Louis.



SW Airlines Check Presentation to the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit

UAW Ford Post Auto Show Gala

The UAW Ford NPC (National Program Center) held a black tie gala, post International Auto Show, on January 14, 2011, where over 500 guests attended to raise funds and awareness for the House.

UAW Ford presented a check for \$62,000 and toured the House in February. After learning more about our charity, the UAW Ford Vice President, **James Settles**, also committed to renovating a room at the House. Renovations on Room 2 started in mid-March and will be completed by early April.

The UAW Ford also shot a regional PSA which

featured a story of UAW member who used the House and focused on the volunteer efforts made by the local UAW Ford members (which includes meal preparations and gift delivery to the children). The PSA will be aired in the mid-west starting in April 2011.



UAW Ford Leadership, including Vice President of the International Union, UAW, James Settles, presents check to RMH of Detroit.

Home Depot Renovates with a \$10,000 Grant

Thanks to McDonald Owner/Operator **Teresa Saputo**, the Detroit Ronald McDonald House opened the door for the House to receive a \$10,000 Renovation Grant.

Team Depot arrived at the House and renovated 3 bedrooms and the laundry room. The rooms are clean, comfortable and beautiful. These four new areas are completely renewed with new bedding, furniture, flooring, tiles, sinks and closets.

Team Depot, out of Lake Orion, is now trying to help the House secure another \$25,000 grant for additional renovations.



RMHC Vice President, Deborah Virgiles Presents Appreciation Placard and Delivers Dessert to Team Home Depot!

93.9 The River Sells Music CDs and Raises Funds and Awareness!



The staff of **93.9, The River**, raised funds and awareness through music CD sales and raised \$1,050 in just one month!

They will be selling the CD's again this spring – all funds to benefit the House! Tune in, make a donation and support the House!

A Night to remember Gala – An Amazing Night!

Mrs. Michigan, **Kyla Marcial**, chose the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit as her platform for speaking engagements and fundraising efforts during her 2010-11 reign.

Kyla has spoken to several civic organizations and has raised significant funds for the House during her year as Mrs. Michigan and on March 12th, she and her family organized

Mrs. Michigan, **Kyla Marcial**, **Cheryl Pniewski**, **Michael Marcial** and **Deborah Pringle** (*Visions of Paradise Landscaping*) strike a pose during the program.

“A Night to Remember” gala that raised \$15,000 for the House, through sponsorships, silent, live and chance auctions and a pre/post raffle.

Kyla has made a commitment to remain a key volunteer for the House after she gives up her crown in May.



Imagine Fashion Raises Funds on the Catwalk!

Once again the students from **IADT - Detroit Campus**, organized the **Imagine Fashion Show**. The Royal Oak Music Theater acted as the perfect setting for the event held March 16th.

Students designed one-of-a-kind clothing for the models who took to the catwalk and showed off their fashions all to benefit the Detroit RMH. Over 500 guests attended the show and topped off the evening with an afterglow bash that went well into the night.

Preliminary fundraising results have not been announced at the time of printing, but RMHC Board Member,



RMHC Board Member, **Cynthia Bechill** (second from right) presents certificate to winning designer.

Cynthia Bechill hopes to raise several thousand dollars for the House again this year. Last year's event raised over \$2,000.

MAHS/MASC Raises Big Bucks for the RMHC!

Big, big thanks to all of the students in Michigan for raising over \$54,000 for the RMHC! **Eisenhower High School** that originally nominated our RMHC in March 2010, raised over \$20,000 and **Brandon School** raised \$15,000! Kudos to all the students from all the high schools that participated in fundraising for the House this past year!

First Annual Chili Cookoff Heats Up Fundraising for the House!

Big thanks to **Milt and Jenna Greenman** for their first annual Chili Cookoff, held on March 12th that raised over \$3,000 for the House. It was a perfect night of fundraising for the 20+ couples that got to taste-test yummy gumbos and chili!

Board of Directors and Staff -2010

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*Special Events and
House Maintenance Director*
Linda Porter
Event Consultant
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Data Entry Manager
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Welcome New Board Members!

We want to welcome our three new board members to the Ronald McDonald Charities of SE Michigan

- **Gail Gotthelf**, *Hour Magazine*
- **Yvonne Haddix**, *YH Design*
- **Melvin Jones**, *McDonald's Owner/Operator*

Checkout our NEW Website

www.rmhc-detroit.org

Do you 'LIKE' us?



Follow us on our Facebook Fan Page at Ronald McDonald House Charities of SE Michigan. Be sure to press the LIKE button to keep up on events, stories and House updates!

twitter

And don't forget to follow us on Twitter at RMHC_Detroit



RONALD McDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES

The mission of the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit is to provide a home away from home and support services to families of hospitalized children.

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