



Casey delivered last week's invocation / inspiration.

"Actions portray what a person is. Words portray what a person pretends to be."



Nonnie George was our presenter last week representing Ronald McDonald House.

Before we begin, I must confess, the only thing I knew about Ronald McDonald House is that there was a coin drop at the drive-through that I rarely dropped any kind of money into. That changed for me last week.

Nonnie has been with Ronald McDonald House Charities for over six years and been its Director of Events and Engagement for about a year and a half.

Nonnie opened the meeting with a [YouTube video](#) of the Moser family from Central Point, OR.



The Moser's son, Dagan, had been riding his bicycle home when he was hit by a car in the crosswalk. The significance of his trauma, with a broken skull with traumatic brain injury, broken bones and destroyed spleen, meant a LifeFlight trip to Portland.

For those of you that don't know, Central Point is over 250 miles from Dagan's new home for the next two years at Doernbecher

Children's Hospital.

He would spend his first ten days in PICU. About four days in to their stay in Portland the Mosers, with their two daughters, the family was offered a room at the Ronald McDonald House.

This allowed the parents to have the girls with them on weekends and enjoy some sense of normal. Having a home away from home gave the parents a chance to sleep and recharge for whatever would come next.

Each room has its own kitchen but there is also a communal kitchen where parents can connect with other parents and families.

Of course, no home away from home would be complete without an arts and crafts room and outdoor play structure! It made an easy place for the girls to look forward to.

"What happened to our son immediately severed us from the lives we had been living sending you suddenly on a different path making it easy to think the world is an unsafe and difficult place to be. But being at Ronald McDonald House, seeing the compassion of the staff and other families and volunteers, and the behind the scenes donors and supporters are there for us was incredibly hopeful experience. It reminds me that the world is a good and safe place where people care for each other."

The qualifications to stay at RMHC (Ronald McDonald House Charities) are that the patient be under 21, be referred to RHMC by a doctor or social worker, and live at least 30 miles away.

Oregon Health Sciences University approached RMHC with a proposal that, if OHSU built a House, would RMHC furnish and maintain it and allow some of the space to house occasional adults. Yes, they would, now they do.

Kids served are those with chronic conditions, complications at birth, pediatric surgery, cancer treatment and diagnostic testing.

Orientation on arrival is lots of love but not a lot of rules and conditions.

A stay at RMHC means dinner is prepared seven days a week. After long days with their hospitalized kids, parents don't have much energy left for meal creativity.

There's pet therapy, like Piles of Puppies for kids to play with.

There are music lessons by vocal and instrumental teachers.

There are craft nights and visits from princesses and super heroes, meditation/ yoga classes, Blazers / Timbers nights, and a community of support.

There's the aforementioned communal kitchen. A toy store (each child gets a gold token when they arrive). A Wishing Tree filled with all sorts of wishes from silly to heart wrenching. The game room gets occasional visits from Blazers and Timbers players. There's even a karaoke room.

The Hospitality Cart began 6 years ago and is simply a volunteer with a cart of coffee, sweets & treats and toys. It's also a little piece of conversation with a friendly non-doctor face.

3,246 sweets/treats/games/necessities went to 1,777 families.

Meals From The Heart encourages the community to cook and donate meals.

Another [YouTube video](#) showcases the impact that RMHC made in our community in 2022.

21,711 free night stays saving families \$5.4 million, a new family checked in every 2.7 hours to an Oregon House, 1,304 meals saving families over \$2 million in food costs.

The 3,206 families that checked in saved an average of \$1,125 in food and lodging at a cost to RMHC of \$250 per family night.

There are 365 homes worldwide with 4 in Oregon. One each in Bend and Springfield. The "Portland East" house has 25 rooms. "Portland South Waterfront" has 38 rooms. The room sleep up to six.

RMHC is funded by generous donors with cash and in kind contributions. Also by fund raisers and events.

And portions of some food items sold by McDonalds restaurants also help fund the charity.

Over 6,000 donors have made over 12,000 donations contributing over \$5 million to support RMHC's mission. .

You can help by volunteering, cooking a meal or joining Freezer Friends, help with a signature event, make blankets, host a toy/blanket/food drive, donate cash, shop [RMHC's Amazon Wish List](#), or promote and attend and event.

Touching Fact: The concept of Ronald McDonald house goes back to 1974 when a Philadelphia Eagles player and his wife were fighting to keep their child's fight with leukemia. But I'm out of room, so [click this one last hyperlink.](#) ;)