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RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES OF RICHMOND CELEBRATES 35 YEARS

Charity Announces New Fundraising Event and Launches New Program to Support Pediatric and Neonatal Patients and Their Families

Richmond, VA (March 26, 2015) – Since opening the doors at Richmond’s Ronald McDonald House® in 1978, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Richmond (RMHC®) has helped ease the burden of having a sick child for thousands of families, keeping them close by and together during an unimaginable time. On April 24th, the Charity and its local supporters will come together to celebrate that 35 year legacy at the first annual Red Shoe BBQ. During the event, the Charity will pay homage to those who have utilized its family-centered care programs and will announce the launch of a new program to support pediatric and neonatal patients and their families.

The first Ronald McDonald House was inspired by former Philadelphia Eagles player Fred Hill and his wife, Fran, who spent nights sleeping next to their daughter’s hospital bed while she battled leukemia. The Hills’ story inspired the opening of the first House and generated awareness around the impact and need for family-centered programming. RMHC has pioneered programs and services that meet those needs and today operates 340 Ronald McDonald Houses, 195 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms® and 52 Ronald McDonald Care Mobiles in 62 countries and regions. Through those programs, RMHC directly improves the health and well-being of nearly nine million children and families globally each year. The Richmond chapter of RMHC operates a nine bedroom Ronald McDonald House on Monument Avenue and two Ronald McDonald Family Room programs at Bon Secours St. Mary’s Hospital and Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU.

“This is an important year for us and we are thrilled to celebrate 35 years of serving as a care partner with Richmond’s medical facilities,” said RMHC Richmond’s Executive Director Kerry Blumberg. “Our priority is giving the highest level of comfort and care to the families who walk through our doors. It is our goal to get more people from our local community involved in connecting with and supporting our mission through events like the Red Shoe BBQ.”

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The Red Shoe BBQ will celebrate the anniversary with an evening of delicious barbecue, beer and wine, outdoor games, and a silent auction. In addition, the evening celebration will include live music by country-western band Jackson Ward. The event is open to the public and information on ticket sales is available below.

During the evening, one of the families served by the Charity, Mark and Kristy Seredni of Williamsburg, will share their heartwarming story about how a Ronald McDonald Family Room provided them with comfort and care during their newborn son's hospitalization in Richmond. "The relief that we felt knowing we would be able to be by Max's side was tremendous. We were able to be an active part of his progress, which was really important to me," said Kristy. "I honestly can't imagine what we would have done had we not been able to stay in the Ronald McDonald Family Room. I attribute a lot Max's growth and success to the fact we were able to be with him so much from day one and could focus on his well-being instead of where Mark and I were going to sleep."

This year, RMHC Richmond will launch a new program called Happy Wheels. The concept is a hospitality cart that will be pushed through the Pediatric and Neonatal Units of the hospital. It is fully stocked with coffee, juice boxes, granola bars, crackers, coloring books, Play-Doh, toiletries, and other small comforts. These items will be provided to families and children on the units free of charge. It is the Charity's hope that Happy Wheels will be a simple reminder to these families that they have a network of supporters quietly working to bring them relief during a challenging time.

About Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Richmond

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Richmond, a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) corporation, creates, finds and supports programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children. Through its two core programs, the Ronald McDonald House® and Ronald McDonald Family Room®, RMHC provides stability and resources to families so they can get and keep their children healthy and happy. All RMHC-operated and supported programs provide access to quality health care and give children and families the time they need together to heal and cope better.

2015 Red Shoe BBQ

www.rmhc-richmond.org/bbq

Friday, April 24, 2015

6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Sabot at Stony Point School (3400 Stony Point Road)

Tickets start at \$35 and are available for purchase online

Country-Western attire strongly encouraged.

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