“I was scared the whole pregnancy,” said MaryAnn, Faith’s mom. “But I received so much support and I fell even more in love with our daughter as time went on.”

(Photography by Fagan Studios)
FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Wintry season's greetings from the Ronald McDonald House of Rochester, Minnesota,

The cold weather and snow signals the arrival of December and reminds us we are nearing the end of another year (our 41st!) of serving children and families at the Ronald McDonald House of Rochester. We hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones well and enjoying the holiday season.

While 2021 did not bring a complete return to typical operations at the House, it was nonetheless a significant year of mission advancement.

We were privileged to provide safe shelter, a comfortable bed, and a warm shower to hundreds of children and families who traveled to Rochester for health care this past year. With the help of generous partners and dedicated volunteers, we provided warm meals and nutritious food for families. Books, arts and crafts, toys, and puzzles provided a welcome distraction from appointments and treatments, as did the virtual family activities.

And a kind word and listening heart reassured families that our Ronald McDonald House community was standing alongside them to provide support and assistance.

Thank you for strengthening and sustaining our mission and supporting ill and injured children and their families. May all the joys of the season be yours.

Happy Holidays!
Peggy Elliott, Executive Director

MISSION STATEMENT
The Ronald McDonald House of Rochester, Minnesota, provides a home away from home and gives support to families seeking medical care for their children.

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When MaryAnn became pregnant, she was both happy and shocked. However, her doctor declared her a high-risk pregnancy and referred her and her wife, Sheila, to Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

“I was scared the whole pregnancy,” said MaryAnn. “But I received so much support and I fell even more in love with our daughter as time went on.”

Faith was born with Trisomy 21—Down syndrome—with a heart defect. T21 occurs in 1 out of every 691 births and causes a child’s body and brain to develop differently.

“It was very scary and so emotional,” MaryAnn said. “But we were where we needed to be...in Rochester and at Mayo Clinic.”

Faith received the best care and was stable and in good health.

Shortly after her birth, MaryAnn and Sheila learned about the Ronald McDonald House of Rochester from a Mayo Clinic social worker. Before that conversation, they didn’t know anything about the House.

“It quickly became our second home,” said MaryAnn. “The staff and volunteers accepted us
and showed us love and support; they treated us like family.”

“Their open arms and open hearts made a difference.”

MaryAnn shared how the House impacted her family in a positive way: meals, art, games, words and smiles—it all meant a lot. Even when the family has been unable to physically stay at the House, they received food and activity bags and gas cards.

And she will never forget the people who made it possible.

“Everyone who has donated to the House... thank you,” MaryAnn said. “You are amazing people and you made our lives so much better.”

Faith will be a regular visitor to the Ronald McDonald House, Mayo Clinic, and Rochester. Her heart defect requires echocardiograms—a test using high frequency sound waves—often and multiple studies: feeding and nutrition, sleep, hearing, weight, etc.

She will also need a Glenn procedure—an open-heart surgery—in the near future.

And the family of three will always have a place to say: their second home.

“The smiles at the House are pure love.”

Faith and her moms, MaryAnn and Sheila
(Photography by Fagan Studios)
FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Children and families staying at the Ronald McDonald House of Rochester, as well as children and families staying off-site, received Family Activity Bags filled with age-appropriate fun and activities all year long!

Family Activity Bags were made possible by the generous support of the Astrup Family Foundation!
The Ronald McDonald House of Rochester team is growing to better serve children and families!

Lauren Brown

Started as Development Officer in December

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, Feb. 5, 2022

Attend the 19th Annual Hearts & Diamonds presented by Sterling State Bank from anywhere in the world!
Click here for more information!
HOLIDAY GIVING

Every year, the Ronald McDonald House of Rochester goes the extra mile to make the holiday season special for children and families. This is not possible without the generous community providing financial support, toys, food, and other needed supplies.

How can I support the children and families of the Ronald McDonald House of Rochester?
Please visit www.rmhmn.org/holidays for frequently asked questions and more.

WOW! $57,000!

Thank you to all who gave generously on Give to the Max Day, especially Otto Bremer Trust and the two anonymous donors for their matching gifts!

Click here to read about Give to the Max Day!
SHARE YOUR STORY!
Each family who has stayed at the House has a unique and beautiful story!
Your story is the reason people support the House!

Contact Jacob Dreyer, Communications Director, for more information.

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