The Schwehm Family Story

Since 1986, Ronald McDonald Camp (RMC) has been a place where children go to reclaim their childhood; where life once undone is perfect again for an entire week. It’s a place where children with cancer and their siblings build memories for a lifetime and it’s a place that changes you forever. For 28 years, RMC counselors have said time and again, “it changed my life forever” and for one couple in particular, camp has played a lasting role they never could have imagined.

As camp counselors, Jeremy and Liz Schwehm recall summers filled with wonderful memories at Camp Timber Tops in Greeley, Pennsylvania—the same location that transforms into RMC at the end of each summer; and neither could have guessed that their time at camp would open the doors to marriage and a family one day. From 1999 to 2001, Jeremy would extend his stay at Camp Timber Tops to help staff RMC and it was there that he saw first-hand the importance of the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House’s Camp. “I remember seeing campers who were fighting for their lives and campers who were healthy as could be, and for one week the playing field was even for everyone,” says Jeremy.

Years after meeting at Camp Timber Tops, Jeremy and Liz were married, and in 2008 they welcomed their first daughter, Meg. Several years later when the Schwehms thought life couldn’t get any better, they found out they were expecting a second child. On April 27, 2011, they welcomed their newest addition and in homage to the town where Camp Timber Tops is located, named their new daughter: Morgan Greeley Schwehm.

In September 2013, Morgan went from being a playful two-year-old to suffering from debilitating stomach aches and eventually stopped eating. “Within a matter of weeks she changed from a normal and happy child to a child that needed critical care,” says Liz. That September is forever engrained in the Schwehm Family’s minds and hearts as it’s the month that doctors diagnosed Morgan with neuroblastoma—a cancerous tumor that develops from nerve tissue, most commonly affecting children under the age of five.

One week after receiving the devastating news, doctors at the Arkansas Children’s Hospital mapped out a treatment plan to save Morgan’s life—starting with chemotherapy. Morgan immediately began to experience the agonizing effects of treatment and after six months of aggressive medical intervention, Morgan’s mother explained that her daughter was beginning to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder from the hospital stays and medication. “We needed a change and that’s where The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) came into play,” explains Liz.

As Jeremy and Liz prepared to bring their family to Philadelphia to receive treatment at CHOP, Jeremy recalled on his past experience as a camp counselor at RMC remembering that the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House had served as a home away from home for so many of the campers he had seen throughout the years. Likewise, Liz had fond memories of volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House of Augusta, Georgia as a college student. Both knew that their family could count on the Ronald McDonald House during this challenging time and that’s when they made the call. The Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House became Jeremy, Liz, Meg, and eventually Morgan’s temporary home during treatment at CHOP in Spring 2014. “For the majority of our stay, one parent would sleep in the hospital with Morgan and one would stay at the House with Meg,” says Liz. “It was very helpful for Meg to meet and interact with other children whose siblings were going through the same thing as Morgan; Meg got to see a different side the story—a story of survival. It gave her hope that her sister would experience the same thing.”

The Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House was also able to ease the stress of staying in the hospital for Jeremy and Liz with the Ronald McDonald Family Room located in the Oncology Center at CHOP. “Having a meal or a special event at the hospital was a wonderful diversion for Morgan,” says Jeremy. “She even got a manicure on her last day of treatment—it was really nice for her.”

(The Schwehm Family Story continued on page 7)
Dear Friends,

Composing this message comes with ease because we are so fortunate to have hosted an array of successful events throughout the year that have sustained this wonderful organization and the families we serve. And, with each event hosted, it would not have been possible without the dedication and foresight of our incredible volunteers and staff.

In our 40th year of existence as the world’s first Ronald McDonald House, we celebrated the 20th year of our Read for Ronald program; our 6th Annual Plane Pull; the 14th Annual Hit ‘Em for the House Golf and Tennis outing with Cards; Ronald McDonald Camp; the Adopt A Room program; our 40th Anniversary Celebration with upwards of 1,100 attendees, and finally, our Annual House Lighting Celebration and Donor Reception which concludes our year and affords people the opportunity to make a meaningful year-end gift to help us start off the New Year with funds to continue our work.

Many are not aware of the tremendous people power it takes to coordinate and run the events that raise vital capital for PRMH. The money raised goes towards operating our two Houses which serve as a community of comfort and hope for 65 families each night; two Ronald McDonald Family Rooms at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, which provide much-needed respite for families who cannot leave the hospital because they need to be by their child’s bedside; one Kiosk which extends the comforts of PRMH to families in the critical care unit of St. Christopher’s Hospital; and our Camp program which provides the opportunity for children with cancer and their siblings to experience the joys of summer camp each August.

This message is to say thank you—to all of you for making what we do possible. I cannot put into words the immense difference that your contributions make to help over 2,000 families who walk through our doors each year.

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the Annual House Lighting at our Front & Erie House. A staff member shared with me that once the House was decorated and lit and everyone went back inside, a mother and father stood outside with their arms around one another, staring at the holiday lights—deep in thought. We can only imagine what they must have been going through at that very moment; however, it’s because of your generosity that we can give them some peace and comfort during this difficult time in their lives. Kindness knows no boundaries and has no schedule, so I would like to encourage you to show someone exceeding kindness this holiday season—as we all know this time can be extra challenging for many.

So with an overflowing heart, I end this holiday message with much gratitude for all of you that make life a little easier for families going through crisis.

I wish you and yours health and happiness this coming year and ask you to keep the families we serve in your hearts.

Fondly,

Marlene Weinberg,
President of the Board

“This message is to say thank you—to all of you for making what we do possible. I cannot put into words the immense difference that your contributions make to help over 2,000 families who walk through our doors each year.”

Your Gift at Year-End

When you make a charitable gift to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House, you not only support the families of seriously ill children but you may also benefit from substantial tax advantages. Your thoughtful contribution of cash, appreciated securities, or a life insurance policy will help sustain our work to provide families comfort and hope at a challenging time in their lives. Please note that for a cash gift to be tax deductible in 2014 your gift must be postmarked, delivered or transacted by Wednesday, December 31, 2014.

If you have any questions on making a year end gift, please contact Lawrence Jacobson, Director of Leadership Giving, at 215.387.8406 or via email at lawrence@philarmh.org. You can also make a quick, easy and secure donation on our website: www.philarmh.org.

Thank you again for your generous giving that ensures our continuing care for families!

For specific tax questions please consult your financial advisor or visit http://www.irs.gov for IRS rules regarding charitable contributions.
Adopt A Room

One moment can turn your whole life upside down. Just ask the families staying at the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House right now. For many of the 65 families at our Houses, just one phone call or doctor’s appointment changed everything. Not only did these families have to suddenly cope with the fear and helplessness of having a seriously ill child, they had to travel to a faraway hospital in an unfamiliar city for immediate medical care, leaving behind their support networks, struggling to pay for a mountain of new expenses, and wondering where they’d sleep each night to make sure they were close to their child at all times.

Many of the families we serve stay for an extended period of time and, on occasion, we have had families stay for up to a year without returning to their hometown once. We make sure families have the strength and support they need to face their child’s illness and you can help.

By Adopting a Room at our Houses, your gift of $2,500 or $5,000 will ensure that each family who stays in that room throughout the year has a comfortable, restful place to call home—complete with home-cooked meals, transportation, and an array of other complimentary services just minutes from the world’s best hospitals at little to no cost. You will help parents better maintain their own well-being and manage their stress levels so they can be there for their children—both patients and siblings. You will help moms and dads feel less isolated because they have the support of other families who understand what they are going through. And, you will help children have a better experience in the hospital because their family never has to be far from their side.

Join us in supporting more than 2,000 families who stay with us each year by becoming a partner in our Adopt A Room program.

Exclusive Room Sponsor - $5,000 tax deductible gift
Donor will have exclusive sponsorship over one guest bedroom for the period of one year.

Partner Sponsor - $2,500 tax deductible gift
Two donors may be assigned to the same guest bedroom for the period of one year. Paired donors will not be in competing industries.

Adopt A Room Benefits
• Prominent signage outside your Adopted Guest Room
• Name placement on high-visibility recognition wall
• Letters from families
• Personalized plaque recognizing your generous contribution
• And most important - knowing that your gift will make a significant impact on the lives of the many families who stay at the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House in 2015.

To become an Adopt A Room partner today, please contact Chris Callanan, Director of Special Events & Corporate Development, at: 215.387.8406 or via email at chris@philarmh.org

A Company’s Commitment

Thank you to CSL Behring, a global leader in the plasma protein biotherapeutics industry, Adopt A Room partner, and longtime Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House supporter for their unwavering commitment to PRMH and the thousands of families we serve each year.

“CSL Behring is always happy to support the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House, and especially the Adopt A Room program. Each year at our holiday party, we raise money by raffling prizes, and each year our employees ask if it will be donated to the Ronald McDonald House. Because CSL Behring is in the business of taking care of patients with rare diseases, we are particularly sensitive to families who are going through difficult times, and we know that having a safe and comfortable place to stay can help ease that burden. Thanks for making this program available!"

- Amy McCullen, Executive Assistant to Paul Perreault, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director CSL Limited

What PRMH Families Are Saying About Adopt A Room

“Thank you for the opportunity to stay here in a clean, comfortable, and fun atmosphere. It definitely helped with our treatments at the hospital. We are very grateful for your generosity."

- Katina Leake, Room 41

“From our family to you, we wanted to express how extremely grateful we are for this temporary home you have provided for us to use, 3 ½ months and counting. Words could never fully express what this blessing means to us. Again, thank you! Much Love!"

- The Guzmans, Room 20
Adopt a Camper Donors

Mrs. Gisela Alter
Mrs. Deirdre R. Anderson
The Andrea Cavitolo Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Ehlers
Mid-Atlantic Family Restaurants, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. Brad Aronson
Mr. and Mrs. Rob Aronson
Harley Bike Nights
Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell Black
Harley Davidson of Long Branch Fundraiser
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dratch
Mr. and Mrs. John M. DiDonato
Ms. Maureen Gardner
Mr. Peter J. Degnan and Dr. and Mrs. David Y. Cooper
Ms. Andrea Melia
McDonald’s of Haines Road
Mr. and Mrs. Andy Merz
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Merola
Ms. Andrea Melia
Adopt a Camper Donors

Steve Feldhamer
Exeter Supply Co., Inc.
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RPM Equipment Co.
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Ms. Barbara Y. Camp
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Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ehlers
The Eden Charitable Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher F. Moore
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Mr. and Mrs. Michael Murray
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Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dratch
Mr. and Mrs. John M. DiDonato
Ms. Maureen Gardner
Mr. Peter J. Degnan and Dr. and Mrs. David Y. Cooper
Ms. Andrea Melia
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Kim Weinberg

Kim Weinberg

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Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Cantrell
Ms. Barbara Y. Camp
Mr. David Caddick
B-Strong Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Merola
Ms. Andrea Melia
McDonald’s of Bristol Pike
Mr. and Mrs. Andy Merz
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Merola
Ms. Andrea Melia
Adopt a Camper Donors
A Note From A Camper

Dear Donor,

I cannot possibly thank you enough! Because of you, I have been able to meet and grow up with so many wonderful people. There are so many kids that I meet here with the same experiences that I’ve had and it’s just a blessing to give hope to children who are still going through treatment and to know that no one ever has to feel alone. Because of you, a lot of kids who have nothing to do but sit around a hospital room all day for months at a time can get out and be active together. Without a doubt, Ronald McDonald Camp is the highlight of our lives and you had a part in making that happen. My dear, you are a beautiful person and I have no idea how to thank you!

Love,
Madeline
(pictured here on the bottom, left)

Donations From The Heart (7/1/2014 - 9/30/2014)

$25,000 and above
Ronald McDonald House Charities
Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Philadelphia Region

$10,000 to $24,999
Connelly Foundation
Glaxo Smith Kline - Navy Yard

$5,000 to $9,999
Audi Willow Grove
Employees Community Fund of The Boeing Company
Ms. Ruth Caroselli
Greater Philadelphia Radio, 97.5 The Fanatic
Katie’s Krusaders
Keenan Auto Body
Lend a Hand for Olivia Foundation
Pfizer, Inc.

$2,500 to $4,999
AnnieMac Home Mortgage
Attalon Partners, LLC
AutoTrader.com
Comcast Spectacor
DHL Global Forwarding
Finish Line Collision
Mr. Peter Hecht
Mr. Jason Heupel
Integrity Staffing Solutions
Irene D Cunningham Trust
The Merck Foundation
Stephen and Salli Mickelberg
Beth and Jim Reeves
Ms. Jill Snyder
Suelle Corporation/Joan Shepp

$1,000 to $2,499
Ms. Carrie Delgott
Elle Koerner Leukemia Foundation
Mr. Duncan Ellis
FIS Foundation
Prof. Femida Handy

Image FIRST Uniform Rental Services Inc.
Johnson & Johnson - Matching Gifts Program
Just Born Quality Confections
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Kerley
Mr. Mike LeVasseur
McDonald’s of Bristol Pike
Ms. Maureen McGinley
Mr. Nathaniel Measley
Anonymous
Mr. Hassel Perrel
Tech Impact

$500 - $999
Mr. Richard J. Adelizzi
Allstate Giving Campaign
America’s Charities
AT&T United Way/Employee Giving Campaign
Mrs. Michelle Breslin
D.A.T.S Enterprises
Delmac
Mrs. Victoria Dougherty
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Ms. Leslie Harris
HopDial Phone Systems
IBM Employee Services Center
Mrs. Melanie Johnson
Mr. Steve Kennard
MacQuarie Group Foundation
McDonald’s Corporation
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin S. McGarry
Rebecca Meyer Memorial
Mr. James Nauer
Norwood Fontbonne Academy
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Raynor
Mr. Kevin C. Schildt
Tech Impact

Due to space limitations, we are unable to list donations of less than $500. All donations are sincerely appreciated.

All 40th Anniversary supporters will be recognized in our special 40th Anniversary issue (2015 Volume 1).
We’re So Thankful For...

1. The USA vs. Ireland Golf Classic
   Thank you to our friends at Ronald McDonald House Charities Ireland for hosting a golf tournament on August 29 in Dublin, Ireland. Funds raised from this event benefited The Ronald McDonald House in Ireland. Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital in Dublin, and the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. 18 teams competed and raised $4,000 total with 50% of proceeds going towards assisting families staying at PRMH.

2. Racing to Register Check Presentation
   Racing to Register is a proud partner of the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. This year, this amazing organization donated $2,500 to our Family Fun program which provides tickets to local attractions in the Delaware Valley. Racing to Register is focused on increasing the number of potential donors available to patients of all races, ethnicities, and ages, who are in need of a life-saving bone marrow or stem cell transplant. Please visit www.racingtoregister.com to learn more about how you can help!

3. Run for the House 5K
   On September 20, the Young Lawyers Section of the Delaware County Bar Association hosted their 4th Annual Run for the House 5K. All proceeds from this wonderful event were generously donated to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House to support our programming. We thank the Association for their continued support and dedication towards raising vital funds to benefit the families we serve.

4. Conkerr Cancer Event at the Oncology Family Room at CHOP
   Our friends at Conkerr Cancer hosted an incredible evening for families utilizing the Family Room in the Oncology Center at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia on September 23. Conkerr Cancer, a volunteer-driven organization, visits children and families in the hospital and gives them the opportunity to select a fun fabric and sew a personalized pillow case. These fun pillow cases not only brighten the day for patients and family alike, but add much-needed comfort and warmth to the hospital setting. Thank you for all that you do to help children feel special while battling life-changing illnesses.

5. Andrew Renzi Field of Dreams Youth Baseball Tournament
   A big thank you goes out to the Andrew Renzi Field of Dreams Youth Baseball Tournament for raising $2,242 for our Houses. We truly appreciate all your generosity and support. It goes a long way in helping our families during their time of need.

Do You Have An Idea For A Fundraiser?

Do you, or does your company or organization have an existing event that is in need of a charitable beneficiary?

If so, contact Chris Callanan, Director of Special Events and Corporate Development, for more information on how you can organize an event to benefit the families we serve.

215.387.8406 or chris@philarmh.org
Throughout their stay, the Schwehm family had the opportunity to experience the friendship and comfort that is so freely given at the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. “We enjoyed talking with other families who knew exactly what we were going through, but we also had the chance to encourage a mother or father who was just beginning their journey,” says Liz. “Another thing we really loved about the House was all of the activities. They were a nice distraction from the hospital setting and just added some normalcy to our day. The House’s amenities like the Guest Chef Groups and Healthy Breakfast Program took away the stress of planning meals for my family—I didn’t have to worry about where we were going to eat before or after a long day at the hospital.”

As Morgan’s health progressed, she and her family stayed in Philadelphia to complete her final stages of treatment which included radiation and immunotherapy. “The House really helped us during this extremely difficult time,” says Liz. “During our stays, the therapy dogs came, the Philadelphia Zoo visited the House, and we even watched a magic show in the living room—the activities got us through those tough weeks.”

The Schwehms are now back home in Arkansas and Morgan’s health is continually improving. This past summer, Jeremy and Liz’s lives truly came full circle as their oldest, Meg, was able to participate in a special day program at Camp Timber Tops—the place where her parents first met. “As young adults, camp played a pivotal role in our lives and there we were again this past August, but this time dropping off one of our daughters,” says Liz. The family can’t wait until Morgan turns seven so she can bring older sister Meg to Camp with her and together they can experience the magic of RMC—their parents know it will change their lives forever...and Morgan will finally know just how special her middle name really is.

To learn more about the Ronald McDonald Camp program, visit www.philarmh.org/Camp.

Wish List

This holiday season, while most of us are celebrating with our loved ones, many families with seriously ill children will spend their time at the hospital, far away from home. Thanks to your support, the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House is able to make the holidays—and the road ahead—a little brighter and you can help by making an in-kind donation. Your gift will help bring the comforts of home to those we serve. Listed below are items we are in need of right now. To donate an item on this wish list, please contact Tina McDonnell, Director of Operations, at (215) 387-8406 or via email at tina@philarmh.org.

- Flashlights
- Batteries (various sizes)
- Temporal Thermometers
- 24”-27” Flat Screen TVs
- White Bath Towels & Washcloths
- Visa, MasterCard, Amex, and Wawa Gift Cards ($25 denomination)

“The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others.”
-Mahatma Gandhi
“Within a matter of weeks she changed from a normal and happy child to a child that needed critical care…” – Liz Schwehm

Continue reading on the front cover…

Morgan (left) and Meg (right)