

Fall / Winter 2025

# Heartstrings

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Colorado

**Remi**

The boy who can



INSIDE:

THE **CATLETT** FAMILY

**2025** AT-A-GLANCE

WAYS **YOU** CAN HELP

GIVING BACK

# THE CATLETT FAMILY



As a Mom to four children, Rachelle has had a LOT of experience.

Observing her youngest newborn son, she knew something was wrong. **“I became obsessive. Remi didn’t move. He was like a limp noodle. He had a cough...”**

Trusting her intuition, Rachelle scheduled appointments with doctors and looked for specialists.

It’s called “practicing medicine” for a reason. It wasn’t that doctors meant to misdiagnose Remi, or that they didn’t believe Rachelle, they simply did not yet know.

Until they did

At two-months-old, Remi was diagnosed with SMA, Spinal Muscular Atrophy. The prognosis wasn’t great. A doctor in Wichita, KS said he might not see his 1st birthday.

Discharged from the hospital, Rachelle and Remi headed back to their home in Johnson, Kansas, without a feeding tube, ventilator or suction.

**But, Rachelle had hope. And HOPE is impossible to extinguish.**

Thus, she pressed in, researching Remi’s diagnosis.

Part of her findings led Rachelle and Remi to Children’s Mercy in Kansas City, MO, eight hours from their home. Chasing what they hoped would help, they loaded up in search of answers. Now three-months-old, Remi was given a g-tube, a ventilator and the medical apparatus required to survive.

While at Children’s Mercy, their family learned of an experimental drug that could help Remi do more than just survive; it could help him thrive.

With recent FDA approval, Remi received an IV infusion of Zolgensma, a new gene therapy drug, in Garden City, KS. When it was done, Rachelle loaded Remi into their car for the 1 ½ hour drive back home. Rachelle was exhausted as she pulled into their driveway. She stared out the window before pulling herself out of the car. Opening the back door to unbuckle Remi, Rachelle’s knees buckled under her. It was nothing short of miraculous. REMI HAD HIS THUMB IN HIS MOUTH.

**Prior to this treatment, Remi had not had ANY bodily movement.**



**Rachelle recalls her overwhelming sense of gratitude.**

That stream of gratitude still flows. Remi is now SIX YEARS OLD. And, this young man has big plans.

We first met their family in 2024 when Remi was receiving serial casting. The goal was to create range of motion for Remi's feet, as they had previously been permanently stuck down. Driving four hours each way, they came back every week for new casts, becoming like family. On one of their FIRST visits, it just so happened that Santa Claus was being delivered to our Holiday Party from a Colorado Springs Fire Department firetruck. Excited, Remi wheeled towards Santa, with his arms outstretched for a welcoming hug.

Rachelle was again undone by the now familiar combination of overwhelm dancing with gratitude.

**"You love our family so well,"** she said. Rachelle recalled when she first entered our Ronald McDonald House, "Everything was SO CLEAN! And, everyone is so friendly!" She was amazed to learn that three healthy and nutritious meals were provided each day. "What you do here is extraordinary!" She went on, "Here, Remi and I are welcomed. Your House is bright and full of love. We look forward to when we can come back."



Rachelle shared that her other kids are jealous of when she and Remi are at the House, saying, "Take us! We can skip school!"

On a recent visit, Remi delighted in showing staff, volunteers and other families just how fast his new electric wheelchair can go (topping out at 6 mph).



“Here, Remi and I are welcomed. Your House is bright and full of love. We look forward to when we can come back.”



In our indoor playroom, Remi wondered aloud about Rachelle wearing a microphone. For one who the docs said would never talk, Remi has a LOT to say. Putting the mic on his shirt collar, he asked, “Where’s the speaker?”, and, “Can you hear my voice?” His mind is sharp, his spirit, curious, and his body never stops moving.

As frequent guests at our House, Rachelle said, “**Your team and your volunteers recognize us every time. It’s a gift.**” She went on, “One day, when we were struggling, staff reached out, asking, ‘Are you OK?’ We weren’t. Remi needed Pedialyte, but I couldn’t leave him, or risk taking him out to get it.” She smiled and said, “Your team brought it to us. When we are feeling vulnerable, the ‘little things’ really DO become the ‘big things!’” Rachelle was grateful.

“When Remi’s appointments are an hour away, it’s worth it for us to stay at your Ronald McDonald House. We get up early to make his appointments on time.” Those appointments include a lumbar puncture every three months, GI appointments, swallow studies and energy testing.

“I LOVE taking care of Remi. I love being his Mom.” Rachelle said. The rest of their family – and their community – does, too. Somewhat of a local celebrity, everyone shouts out to Remi when they see him.

**Last fall, Remi started FULL DAY kindergarten.** Here’s to growing and learning and taking it all in. Our team holds them in our hearts until they again cross the threshold of our House. Then, we hold them in our arms, too.



Rachelle ended our time by sharing, “**You all make a huge impact. You care.** Anyone can see that this is not just a 9 to 5 job for any of you.” Remi smiled. He said, “We feel seen here.”

We love seeing them thrive. If you would like to help support their journey and the journeys of families like theirs, please scan the QR code or use the enclosed envelope to make your safe and secure donation. What you do matters. We are thankful. ❤️



“You love our family so well.”

# More than just a House **2025 at a glance**

(year to date, January 1 - October 31, 2025)



**8,661**

Daily guests at  
Ronald McDonald  
House®



**3,230**

Overnight stays  
representing  
522 families



**8,752**

Ronald McDonald  
Family Room®  
guest visits



**9,872**

Ronald McDonald  
Hospitality Cart  
visits

**No one who stays at our House ever receives a bill!**



**7,000+**

healthy, nutritious  
meals served



**\$75**

RMHCSC's cost is \$75 a  
night to keep a family  
together

Saving families more than  
**\$1,100,000**  
in food and lodging expenses

**30+ service dogs**  
provided more than  
**290 hours**  
of comfort



Serving families from  
**38 Colorado counties**  
54 families from out-of-state

This is all possible because  
**296 volunteers**  
gave over  
**19,050 hours**  
of their time  
valued at  
**\$662,783**



***Caring for families since 1987***

# WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Our **Ronald McDonald House®** and **Ronald McDonald Family Room®** provide healing and support for the moms, dads, siblings and extended family of hospitalized children. It's hard to imagine how much life can change when you have a seriously ill or injured child - until that child is yours. Some families spend days, weeks or months away from home to be near their child's bedside. They bear the emotional burden of their little one's health, well-being and care.

The **Ronald McDonald House®**, across the parking lot from Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Springs, provides a warm, welcoming environment for up to

twenty families each night. With two kitchens, oversized dining and living rooms, laundry facilities and indoor and outdoor play areas for children, **our House helps families feel at home - even when they can't be.**

Our **Ronald McDonald Family Room®**, located inside Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Springs, is a peaceful place to catch a moment of solitude, grab something to eat, find time to decompress and accept a caring smile — all within footsteps from their child's hospital room.

If you'd like to help support our mission, check out the QR codes below.

## Create a Fundraising Event

- Garage sale
- Wish list drive
- Bike for bucks
- House party
- Tasting
- Card party
- Cooking
- C



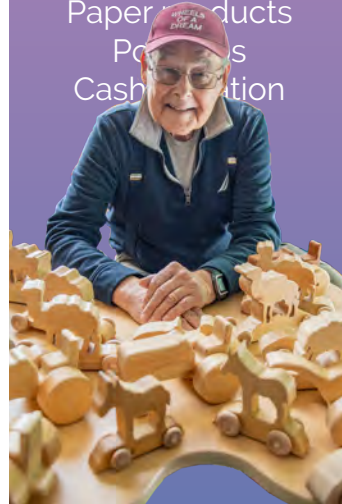
## Make a Meal

- Cook with:
- Your team
- Your family
- Your golf pals
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Bun buddies
- Hill friends
- ch



## Donate

- Gift cards
- Be a sustainer
- One-time donor
- Give an old car
- The Legacy Wall
- Food items
- Clothing
- Paper products
- Posters
- Cash donation



## Volunteer

- Guest services
- Volunteer at events
- Work reception desk
- Decorate
- Shuttle families
- Arrange folders
- Move furniture
- Work Family Room
- ge







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## GIVING BACK

For more than 50 years, RMHC's original founding partner has walked side-by-side with Ronald McDonald House Charities, supporting this organization and the children and families it serves. Through in-store purchases and donations to sponsoring fundraising events, sustaining rooms/spaces in our House, providing Meals that Mend and encouraging customers to Round Up, we are **THANKFUL** for the commitment and care from the locally owned **McDonald's** stores.

We are **GRATEFUL** for the support from local Owner Operators, Larry & Maria Reinerth, Purvi & Nayan Naik, Jim Boselli, Brett Bronson, Todd McMillan, Jenny Long-Walker, Jason Thompson, Scott Angelos, Dave & Kevin Napier, James & Paul Nelson, Gisela Phelan, Chad Furler, and the McDonald's-Denver Field Office. Anytime you visit one of their Southern Colorado McDonald's, please share your appreciation for all they do for "the House that Love Built". And, get some tasty fries, while you're at it. **We, like YOU, are LOVIN' it!**

