

# HOUSE HAPPENINGS

— a monthly collection of moments from —

Ronald McDonald House Charities®  
of Central and Northern Arizona



Winter 2025



## Former McDonald's Employees Find Comfort Amid Family Crisis

Johnny Acosta and Maria Bautista met while working at a McDonald's in Yuma as teenagers. Little did they know they would marry, start a family ... and years later rely on Ronald McDonald House Charities® as a home-away-from-home while their premature baby fought for his life.

Baby Ozzie, the couple's third son, was born at 25 weeks gestation in 2023. He weighed just one pound. Days before giving birth, **Maria was transferred from Yuma to a Phoenix-area hospital by helicopter to give Ozzie the best chance of survival.**

"We didn't know what was going to happen," said Johnny. "Were we going to have to rent a hotel room? Live in the car? We were without income. Ronald McDonald House gave us a place to stay and meals at no cost."

Ozzie spent three months in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Valleywise Health Medical Center. After about six weeks, Maria and Johnny reluctantly returned to Yuma to work, while Ozzie remained in the NICU.

For the rest of Ozzie's hospital stay, **the couple traveled to Phoenix every weekend, staying at Ronald McDonald House, then returned to Yuma for the work week.** The couple brought their other sons to visit Ozzie whenever possible.

On December 23, the family rejoiced as doctors sent Ozzie home in time for Christmas. He weighed six pounds.

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"When our older boys came with us, it was almost like a mini getaway."

— Maria Bautista



# Building for the Future with a Growth Mindset

Arizona continues to be among the fastest growing states with our population expected to more than double by 2050. With such growth, the need for quality children’s healthcare services will only increase.

In response, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central and Northern Arizona is creating new ways to serve more families. The first is the **new Day Use program at Cambridge House on the campus of Phoenix Children’s**. The program is designed for families with a child receiving care who do not need overnight accommodations and who live within 30 miles of the hospital. They now have access to many of the same essential resources as overnight guests receive, including a family room, community kitchen, shaded playground, showers, laundry, and a quiet place to rest outside of the hospital.

In April, we’ll begin **much-needed renovations to our Dobson House on the Banner Children’s at Desert campus**. This project will modernize the main entryway

and reception area, remodel the community kitchen and family dining area, upgrade the children’s play area, and refresh guest rooms. We’ll also create a new Day Use room for families who don’t need or qualify for overnight accommodation.

Later this year, we plan to open **the Valley’s first Ronald McDonald® Family Room within Banner Children’s at Thunderbird**. The Family Room will provide a quiet place of respite for families to recharge, grab a bite to eat, make a call or rest.

As we celebrate our 40th year in the Valley, our approach will be to continue to provide the best quality programs and services for families while setting a strategic growth course. With incredible supporters, volunteers, and donors like you, we will stay true to our mission to provide essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families, and promote healing.



With gratitude,



## Former McDonald’s Employees Find Comfort Amid Family Crisis

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But Ozzie wasn’t out of the woods yet. When the family came to Phoenix in early 2024 to buy a new vehicle, Ozzie stopped breathing. An emergency room visit ensued, followed by a helicopter ride to another hospital where doctors removed a cyst from Ozzie’s lung.

For the first half of 2024, Ozzie and his parents traveled to Phoenix for follow-up care every few weeks. So far the

family has spent more than 80 nights at Ronald McDonald House, and they continue to stay at the House every time they must return to Phoenix.

“I feel like we’ve become family and friends,” said Maria. “Ozzie sees the staff at Ronald McDonald House and smiles because he knows them.”



## Renovated Cambridge House Reopens

Because of your generosity, parents of children receiving treatment at Phoenix Children's now have access to both overnight accommodations and a new Day Use program at our Cambridge House. **RMHCCNAZ reopened our Cambridge House on the hospital's campus in December**, following a 15-month renovation in which we made an investment of \$4.5 million.

Cambridge House's 12 guest rooms, six studio apartments, and common areas were updated and refurnished.



The property also includes a new shaded playground, solar canopy, and electric vehicle charging stations.



## Because Food Is Love

We need volunteers aged 16 and up to prepare home-cooked meals for guest families at each of our three locations. The families rely on these meals, and your favorite dishes will provide them with both nourishment and comfort. To learn more, visit [rmhccnaz.org/meals](https://rmhccnaz.org/meals).

*Left: Haley Marin, an RMHC volunteer, prepares meals for guests at Dobson House.*



## Your Cup of Tee?

Hit the links to help families at the 2025 FORE the House Golf Tournament on April 28. Our annual golf event will take place at Papago Golf Club and feature on-course games, prizes, live music, and a Helicopter Ball Drop. To reserve a foursome or sponsorship, visit [rmhccnaz.org/golf](https://rmhccnaz.org/golf).



## Keep Your Tax Dollars Local

Do you owe 2024 state taxes? Instead of paying the State of Arizona, put your tax dollars to work helping families at RMHCCNAZ. Give up to \$470 per individual or \$938 per couple by April 15 and you can get it all back as a credit on what you owe, thanks to Arizona's Charitable Tax Credit. Learn how at [rmhccnaz.org/taxcredit](https://rmhccnaz.org/taxcredit).

## About Us

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central and Northern Arizona provides provides essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families, and promote healing when children need healthcare. The nonprofit operates three Houses in the Valley, two in Phoenix and one in Mesa.

## Follow Us



[rmhccnaz.org](https://rmhccnaz.org)

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