

Arkansas Children's  
Northwest Will Golf 4 Kids  
and Gala of Hope

Ronald McDonald House  
Charities offers a  
home away from home

Exciting summer  
festivals for the whole  
family to enjoy

# CitiScapes

## NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

PEOPLE • PLACES • LIFESTYLE • FOOD • JULY 2024



## Kids, Pets & Family

Organizations offer  
family support,  
pets find new beginnings  
and adventures await  
at Tulsa Zoo

*also:*

Follow the road to Cane Hill  
for a historical and fun-filled day trip

# A Home Away from Home at the Hospital

When Dr. Patrick Moran took the helm at Dentistry of the Ozarks in August 2022, he knew he wanted to instill a spirit of philanthropy into his practice.

In searching for a cause that supports families across Northwest Arkansas, he and his wife, the clinic's Marketing Director Cassie Moran, discovered Ronald McDonald House Charities of Arkoma, which provides a "home away from home" for those with hospitalized children. A neighbor who volunteers for the organization connected them with Chief Development Officer Lindsay Dixon, and thus began a blossoming partnership, the roots of which would grow deeper than they could have imagined.

In its first year, the family dental clinic in downtown Springdale donated 300 toothbrushes to the Fayetteville Ronald McDonald House at Washington Regional Medical Center and the Rogers Family Room at Mercy Hospital.



Cassie and Dr. Patrick Moran with Charlotte on location at the Fayetteville Ronald McDonald House at Washington Regional Medical Center

Little did the Morans know, Cassie would need one of those toothbrushes only a few months later.

Their fourth child, Charlotte Lily Moran, was born Dec. 19, 2022, by scheduled cesarean section at Mercy Hospital. Nothing had been out of the ordinary in comparison to their previous birth experiences, but upon seeing their daughter, Cassie noticed that her coloring was slightly blue. After a nurse took Charlotte to check her weight, the on-call pediatrician returned empty-handed, explaining that their 7-pound baby had been transferred to the neonatal intensive care unit due to low oxygen levels and seizure-like movements.

Charlotte was in the NICU for five days, during which an arctic blast had shut down the city. Although Cassie had been discharged, she was unable to drive and was breastfeeding every three hours. Fortunately, there was availability at the Ronald McDonald Family Room,

allowing her to remain near Charlotte while Patrick cared for their other children — ages 4, 6 and 8 — who were home, anxiously awaiting Santa's arrival.

As the hospital connects to the Family Room, a nurse easily transported Cassie in a wheelchair, bypassing the severe weather. Her stay was brief, but the impact of having a place to freshen up, enjoy a meal, store belongings, engage with other parents and sit with her husband was an undeniable blessing.

"I knew it was a wonderful cause, but until you walk through it, you don't really realize the pressure it takes off the family," Cassie said. "I couldn't fix whatever was happening with Charlotte, but I could at least hold her hand, feed her and talk to her, and that made me feel better."

At one point, Cassie counted 10 wires attached to Charlotte's little body, plus needles in her hand, foot and scalp. The neonatologist monitored

Cassie and Dr. Patrick Moran at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Arkoma's annual Red Shoe Soirée in April 2023





her vitals daily and determined that her symptoms were a stress reaction to the difficult birth.

Today, Charlotte is a vivacious 14-month-old who loves playing with her siblings and the family's Boston terrier. Looking at her, no one would know how her story began, and yet, for the Morans, her story is now a large part of their "why."

This year, Dentistry of the Ozarks is donating another 300 toothbrushes in addition to sponsoring the annual upkeep of a high-traffic bathroom in the Fayetteville Ronald McDonald House through the charity's Adopt-A-Room program. Come fall, the team will also participate in its Share-A-Meal program, the importance of which Cassie experienced firsthand when the hospital cafeteria was closed during the winter storm. She still had dinner, as someone had delivered warm tortilla soup and homemade Christmas treats.

"What's cool to me is how the story came full circle," said Dixon, who has worked for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Arkoma since 2017. "The Morans were already giving back before they ever needed our services. Our Share-A-Meal program was vital, and now, they're paying it forward by providing a Share-A-Meal as well."

While championing a cause can feel daunting, Ronald McDonald House Charities offers opportunities to get involved that cater to various levels of commitment. These include delivering a one-time meal, making a financial contribution, hosting a fundraiser, volunteering weekly or donating pantry items on the organization's Wish List, such as snacks, lanolin cream, breast pads, laundry detergent and other essentials.

"Nobody wants the experience of the NICU, but Ronald McDonald House eases the burden," Cassie said. "You don't have to commit a ton of time to make an impact, and you can give with confidence knowing that you are helping a family at one of their most vulnerable times." ■

#### FOR MORE INFO

Visit [www.rmhcarkoma.org/get-involved](http://www.rmhcarkoma.org/get-involved).



Dr. Patrick M. Moran  **invisalign**  
PROVIDER

(479) 751-8820 | [dentistryoftheozarks.com](http://dentistryoftheozarks.com) | 418 W. Maple Avenue, Springdale, AR 72764



Ronald McDonald  
House Charities  
Arkoma

**20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GOLF 4 A CAUSE**

August 26th, 2024  
Pinnacle Country Club  
Rogers, AR



**NEWLY WEDS** foods  
inspiring new tastes

**Tyson Foods**

**GOLF4RMHC.COM**