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Cross Country Journey to Raise Money for Ronald McDonald Houses Ends in Syracuse

In honor of their late mother and her courageous battle with cancer, Blair and Kelsea Hickman, and family friend, Stephanie Whitaker, recently visited the Central New York Ronald McDonald House. It was the last stop on their "Casseroles for Cancer" 12,000-mile cross-country tour to raise awareness about the importance of non-medical support for families living with cancer.

"Casseroles for Cancer" raised money for families staying at Ronald McDonald Houses and took the women across the country in an effort to recreate a trip their mother made with friends in 1977 prior to her illness. The women visited nine different Ronald McDonald Houses across the country, including Chattanooga, Tenn.; New Orleans; Austin, Texas; Loma Linda, Calif.; San Francisco; Seattle; Colorado Springs, Colo.; Chicago; and Syracuse, N.Y. They prepared meals at each House and worked to achieve their goal of \$6,000 for families staying at the Houses. The women collected donations through their Web site and in each city they visited. They chose \$6,000 as the goal in memory of the total number of years their mother was ill. By the end of their journey in Syracuse, N.Y., they raised more than \$7,000 for Ronald McDonald Houses across the country.

"We are honored to be chosen as the last stop on the Casserole for Cancer fundraiser," said Beth Trunfio, executive director, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central New York. "Families that are staying at the CNY Ronald McDonald House are going through the toughest times in their lives, similar to what these women went through. During their visit, the women provided support and a sense of inspiration to those staying at the House."

To learn more about Casseroles for Cancer, visit www.casserolesforcancer.com.

About Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central New York: Ronald McDonald House Charities of CNY operates the 16-bedroom CNY Ronald McDonald House 24-hours a day, year-round as a "home away from home" for families whose children are hospitalized with serious illnesses or injuries. RMHC of CNY is planning to build a new, larger Ronald McDonald House that will allow the organization to help keep even more families with seriously ill children together. For more information or to donate, visit www.cnyronaldmcdonaldhouse.org.

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