



# Compassion Around the Corner

June 2021

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## WISHLIST

We currently need:

### Chapstick

Any brand



### Deodorant

Any brand



### Lotion

Any brand, 8-16oz.



### Gift Cards

\$5.00 to Wal-mart/  
Fast Food



### Hygiene Products

Bar soap, shampoo,  
conditioner, etc.



We accept donations from 9:00-3:00  
Monday through Thursday OR order  
through our Amazon Wishlist page  
and have items shipped right to us.

## Board of Directors

Mark Morris, *President*  
Barry Kramer, *Vice President*  
Beth Yock, *Secretary*  
Marla Gregory, *Treasurer*  
Matt Hevrin  
Kyna Lucas  
Bobbi Marks-Cooper  
Bob Mellon  
Dee Lacny, *Executive Director*

## PEACE FOR HURTING HEARTS

Happy June! The warm weather has been wonderfully refreshing!

With the better weather, more children are coming to RHK. However, with the increase, we are seeing growing pains once again. Kids are coming back and they seem to have forgotten the rules. Tensions are high and volunteers are not at full capacity. Unfortunately, we are having to start from scratch with some of the kids. This means going over the rules repeatedly.

Many of the kids have returned angry and many of the situations in their lives have been less than desirable. What many people don't realize is anger is a secondary emotion. What does this mean? Typically, one of the primary emotions, like fear or sadness, can be found underneath the anger. Fear includes things like anxiety and worry, and sadness comes from the experience of loss, disappointment or discouragement.

There is one little boy who is in first grade, let's call him "Keith." He came to RHK one evening, extremely angry. As one volunteer stated, "trying to keep a handle on him is like herding cats." He is super-fast and stealthy. I can see a football career for this young guy. I am hoping he becomes a running back for the Chicago Bears!

What we have noticed with Keith is he needs one on one attention. This is not always an easy task. Many times, we are running short on volunteers and there just aren't enough hands-on-deck to provide the extra care.

One night, I had the privilege to be the extra hands. Keith was out of control and running through the hallways, refusing to eat and refusing to sit. Basically, refusing to do anything we asked of him. When I finally caught Keith, I had to use my CPI training, which is the ability to contain a child with specific holding techniques which do not hurt you or the child. As we were sitting there, he kept thrashing and screaming. This went on for a good 5 or 10 minutes. Then it happened! You felt his little body relax. Keith began asking me questions about my life. When he asked about pets, I pulled out my phone and showed him my dogs. We then took a picture together (which is now my phone's screen saver). This first question prompted another set of questions and another and another. Then, the last question he asked was if I would be his mom because he doesn't have a mom. My heart melted. I know this is not true. He does have a mom. What I know is she is a struggling mom who tries to take care of her children, but unfortunately, the stresses take over and the kids get the brunt of her stress.

My heart broke at that very moment! Oh, how I wanted to wrap him up in my arms and never let him go. Eventually, Keith went back with his classmates and did a great job listening and participating. Then the end of the night came and he did not want to get on the van to go home. So, I went with him and he wanted to sit next to me.

continued ►

## PEACE FOR HURTING HEARTS *continued...*

As we were riding, I felt his little head rest on my arm lightly. His little body grew heavier. By the time we reached his home, he was so relaxed he was drooling in his sleep!

Keith sleeping so soundly reminded me of Matthew 11:28 (NASB) “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He is holding onto some heaving burdens, especially for a six-year old.

This is the reason RHK is so important. We are a safe haven, where a child can lay down their burdens for three hours a night and let their guard down. Each child needs to have a place they feel safe and know they are loved unconditionally.

The only way we can continue to provide this nurturing environment is with the help of the RHK community. We need people vested in the lives of the children. They deserve help for today and hope for their future. We need people to come and be an arm for a child to lean on. We need people to be a nonjudgmental, listening ear. We need tender people who care and love those, who at times, are hard to love.

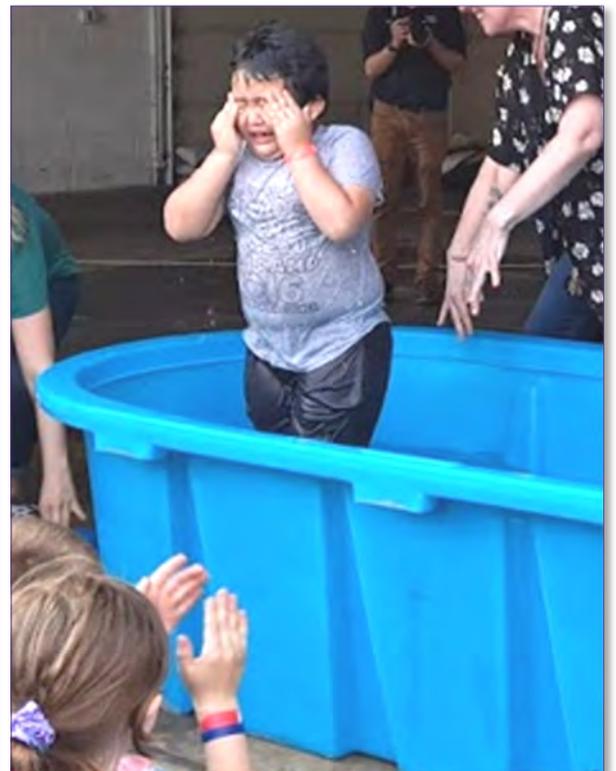
We understand not everyone is able to come and be onsite with the children. But, can you take time throughout your day and pray for the children, volunteers, and staff? Would you pray for protection, guidance, and wisdom?

Are there people you know who need to hear about RHK and the children we serve? I would love to talk to your church, organization, or small groups either via ZOOM or in person. Or better yet, would you like to schedule a tour of the facility so you can see firsthand where the children are having their daily needs met in a safe environment? If so, give us a call at 815-962-5067 to set up an appointment.

*Dee*

Dee Lacny, Executive Director

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*Congratulations to this young boy as this special day marked the start of his spiritual journey! Now being baptized in His name and walking in His ways, we pray that he will come to know what God has planned for him.*

## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Barry Kramer



Barry Kramer joined the Rock House Kids Board of Directors back in August of 2020 and now serves as Vice-President. Barry may have been born in Chicago, but he is a proud Rockfordian through and through! He is a graduate of Boylan Catholic High School, where he excelled at football and baseball. He went on to graduate from Rock Valley College where he continued his football career. He then received a full athletic scholarship from the University of Arizona where he majored in Broadcast Journalism and is also a graduate of Concordia University where he majored in Business Management and Communications. In 2018, Barry was inducted into the Rock Valley College Athletic Hall of Fame for his amazing football accomplishments. He was very humble about this, so we had to do extra research...and it was VERY impressive.

Barry currently serves as a Wealth Advisor and Vice President for Illinois Bank & Trust. He is no stranger to volunteerism. He serves on the RVC Foundation Board, and formerly served on the Boylan Alumni Board. He volunteers at Stroll on State, and for Sharefest through Forest City Church, where he is also a member.

Barry joined the RHK Board because he feels “what Rock House Kids does, fills a big need in our community” and he wants to help be a part of making connections for more people to help. Along with serving on the board, he and his wife, Diana, serve hot meals to the children during programming nights. He says, ‘I love the people who have a heart for what we are doing and for those who are trying to help. When we sit with kids and hear their stories, it is often difficult to relate, but we can feel it and share our compassion for them and make them smile. They don’t get that every day. The more time we spend with them, the better we get to know them.’ He hopes to see Rock House Kids grow and be able to serve even more kids so they can be “a part of the opportunities available to them and realize their true potential.”

Barry has been married to his wife Diana for 36 years and together they share a daughter, Stephanie. Barry enjoys golfing, vacationing in Eagle River, his Men’s Group at Heartland on Wednesdays and enjoys good food! He is pretty lucky to have a culinary expert and personal chef as a wife!

## ROCK HOUSE KIDS ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

*Streets & Sweets*  
Annual Fundraiser 2021



Save  
the  
Date!



September 23  
6:00 pm



We are so excited Streets & Sweets is back and is finally happening! As you know, we had to cancel last year’s event, which makes this year’s event that much more special.

We hope you consider joining us for a fun filled evening with amazing appetizers, delicious desserts, and of course the best part of the night: the live performances from the kids!

Please be sure to mark your calendar and watch for the next newsletter on how to purchase tickets!

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



We can't believe May has already come and gone! The kids are having a lot of fun and excitement as we gear up for the summer months. The Pottery Lounge helped the elementary level create and design their very own tiles to be placed in the new expansion area once it is completed. It was great to see their individual creativity!

The teens wrapped up their abstract painting series with artist, Laura Gomel. This was a great way for the teens to decompress, relax and utilize art as a way to express themselves in a healthy way.

Alpha Delta Nu, the Rock Valley College Nursing Honors Society, came out and did a fun and informative session on nutrition, exercise and hygiene. The kids got a kick out of traveling to the different stations and participating in the interactive lessons.

Positive Choices was back again this month at RHK and the topic was "Making choices." They used role playing and real life scenarios to explore if the teens were confronted with certain situations, what would their options be and how to respond? A lot of good discussion came out of this lesson, and we hope the kids will put what they learned into action.



Bowling was an added treat! Even though we are still under a mask mandate, it felt good to finally get the kids out and participate in a field trip again! We feel confident we can plan more trips for this summer and we certainly have some time to make up for due to COVID-19. The kids are especially looking forward to heading to summer camp!



Last, but not least, it was Baptism month here at RHK! This is a long culmination of the ABC's taught here at RHK: Accept Jesus, Believe in Jesus, and Confess. We teach the children Baptism is a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ, the outward reflection of what HE has done on the inside! It is the favorite night of the year for everyone at RHK!

Along with their hot meals and kid-friendly food take home bags, the kids all received care packages this month filled with an abundance of essential hygiene supplies, along with hand sanitizer and jump ropes.



## YES! I want to help Rock House Kids!

I want to be an **Angel of Love!** Please send more information.

Use my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ where most needed.

My donation is  in honor of:  in memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

I would like information on volunteering.

I/My group would like to provide a hot meal. Please call me.

I have included Rock House Kids in my estate planning.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail to:**  
Rock House Kids  
1325 7th St.  
Rockford, IL 61104

**If you would like to change your method of newsletter delivery to email or unsubscribe, please call our office at 815-962-5067.**

**Thank you!**