



November 2023



Compassion Around the Corner

Monthly Newsletter

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Our Mission

Sharing God's love with inner-city children through Biblical principles, with physical and spiritual solutions.

Our Vision

To meet the physical, emotional, and educational needs of inner-city children by instilling hope in a safe, Christ-centered environment.

Our Motto

Help for TODAY, Hope for ETERNITY!

Contact Us:

Rock House Kids
1325 7th Street
Rockford, IL 61104

Phone: 815-962-5067

Email: Info@rockhousekids.org

Web: rockhousekids.org

Office Hours: M-F 9 AM-3 PM
Program Hours: M-Th 5 PM-8 PM

Scan for more information about Rock House Kids



Board of Directors

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

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Writing about being thankful in a November newsletter is so cliché, but my heart is overflowing with thanksgiving. There is no other subject to write about.

In January of 2024, I will start my sixth year as Executive Director of RHK, and May will be my tenth anniversary of being a part of the RHK team. To say it has been a whirlwind would be an understatement.

So much has happened throughout the years. Here are a few of the changes in this short time.

- One night of programming to four nights
- From three full-time and one part-time staff to 7 full-time and one part-time staff
- Having no vehicles to pick up kids to now having three 15-passenger vans. Some thought this would never happen.
- Having 75 kids a week to over 225 a week
- Kids graduating from RHK are returning to serve because they want to impact the next generation like the people of RHK did in their lives.
- Having a mortgage to being debt-free
- Having buckets throughout the building due to a leaking roof to a new roof over the entire building
- Having half the building as RHK to now owning the whole building (just waiting for renovation to begin so more children will have the opportunity to be safe and off the streets – praying for no further delays)
- Our Streets & Sweets Fundraiser went from 75 people the first time to over 550 people last year.
- Going from a majority of people not knowing what RHK is to people now saying they have heard about RHK and love what is being done for the kids to bring hope
- Few partnerships with other nonprofit organizations to many – we are not an island – more help means more kids benefit from the partnerships.
- The RHK kitchen went from not being compliant with the health department to being fully compliant.
- Standing strong after COVID while other nonprofits were not so blessed

Continued on pg 2 >



“GIVE THANKS” continued...

These are just a few of the changes. The Lord has blessed RHK in ways we were too shortsighted to see. Along with the amazing changes come challenges. More kids means we need more adults with a heart for bringing hope to inner-city children. We have three vans with only enough drivers to send out two to pick up kids. Imagine yourself having to tell kids they cannot come to RHK because there is no more room on the vans, while a third one is just sitting in the parking lot, not being used. It's not an easy thing to do.

Or imagine you are checking kids in for the evening program, and you have to tell the family their child cannot come due to a lack of volunteers. Seeing their disappointed faces as they walk back out the door is very hard.

People have heard me say many times, "In difficult times, we can crumble in a corner or stand up and fight." We at RHK choose to fight, to stand in the gap for the kids, no matter the cost.

I would like to personally thank each of you reading this newsletter for giving your time, having us come and speak to your organizations/groups/churches, being on our prayer team, and supporting RHK financially or with in-kind donations. We could not do what we do without this support.

Most of all, I am thankful the Lord is the head of RHK, and He allows us (all of us) to be a part of His ministry. I do not know how long the Lord will allow me the privilege to be the Executive Director at RHK, but I know I have been blessed beyond belief seeing kids grow up and come back to share what RHK had meant to them.

The common comment they all made was, "I don't know where I would be today if I didn't have RHK."

Thank you for making a difference in a child's life. Thank you for helping bring hope to a child. Thank you for choosing to be a part of the RHK family.

Blessings,



Dee Lacny, Executive Director, Rock House Kids

Happy
THANKSGIVING

MEET OUR NEWEST RHK STAFF MEMBERS

Welcome
**TO THE
TEAM**

Mackenzie Gottman
Program Coordinator



rockhousekids.org

Welcome
**TO THE
TEAM**

Kandi Fenton
Office Coordinator



rockhousekids.org

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING!

Collection Drives - Is your church or organization interested in holding a holiday collection drive for RHK? We would love to help. Call our office to learn what items are needed most, and let us know when your event is happening.

Need help with posters and flyers? We would be happy to design them for you. Give Melanie a call at 815-962-5067 to discuss your needs.

NOVEMBER HOLIDAY HOURS!

NOVEMBER 20-23: No Evening Programming (No School)

NOVEMBER 24: Thanksgiving Holiday - Office Closed/No Programming

NOVEMBER 25: Thanksgiving Holiday - Office closed



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS WRAPPING PARTY

Date: Saturday, December 16 Time: 9am-12pm



Want to have some fun and bless some great kids at the same time?

Gather a few friends and come to Rock House Kids for our wrapping party! We would love for you to join us as we wrap LOTS of gifts for the kids.

There will be Christmas music, yummy treats and refreshments on hand for everyone to enjoy, too!

Please RSVP to Kandi Fenton at
815-962-5067
to reserve your volunteer spot

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT - DEBBIE BURROWS

Debbie grew up in a small farming community and graduated from Ashton High School. She then served four years in the US Navy.

When she married, they both loved to travel, so they decided to homeschool their children to give them more flexibility to travel as a family. Her sons are now both in their twenties, so she considers herself a "retired" homeschool teacher.

Debbie heard about RHK through one of our daytime volunteers, who told her he thought she would love serving with us. He was right! She has now served with our Pebbles (1st & 2nd grades) group for over two years.

She said, "When I am serving, I love drawing with the kids. Drawing together seems to open up communication with the kids. I get a lot of 'I love you' and hugs from these sweet kids. My heart is full when I leave, and at the same time, I keep them in my prayers."

She connects with the kids and says she is sad whenever she has to miss a night like she is letting them down. "There is nothing like seeing a child peek around the corner, scanning the room, looking for you. Then, you see their eyes light up when they see you and come running up for a hug."



WELCOME,

NEW RHK VOLUNTEERS!

Ben Gottman Marsha Rodriguez
Leah Rahim Colleen Blaney
Jenise Lucas Sondra Archibald

CAN YOU HELP?

RHK had so many new and returning kids attending that we couldn't handle more without more new volunteers to serve them. We made the tough decision to stop taking any more new sign-ups until January. It is hard to say no when so many want to come, but we have no choice.

Volunteer mentors are so crucial to the work God is doing at RHK. Do you or someone you know have a heart to minister to children? Give Kathy, our Volunteer Coordinator, a call to discuss if RHK is the place for you.

Learn more about
Volunteering at RHK

kathy@rockhousekids.org
815-962-5067 Ext. 113
rockhousekids.org



For more information
and to apply

November Stop:

RHK BIG EATS TOUR

MOD Pizza

November
19, 2023



Take a break from your holiday prep. Treat yourself to dinner from MOD pizza.

Place an order anytime on November 19 and MOD Pizza will donate 25% of the sale to help our kids. Just show the flyer or use this code for online orders: MODGIVE25.



Scan here for flyer

Where: MOD Pizza

1419 West Lane Rd, Suite D; Machesney Park, 61115

When: 10:30-10 PM

We will see you there!

MONTH AT A GLANCE

686

TOTAL ATTENDANCE/
MEALS SERVED

NEW KIDS

14

27

RETURNING KIDS
(AFTER 6+ MONTHS ABSENT)

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

154

1

VOLUNTEERS (NEW)

VOLUNTEER HOURS

1039

The holidays are upon us, and we are in full Christmas preparation mode for the kids. Any help you can give will be a blessing.

Donations can be dropped off at our office from 9 AM to 3 PM (M-F) OR order through Amazon or Walmart and have them delivered during office hours to us at 1325 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104. Please include your name on the receipt so we know who to thank.

Thank you!!



NOVEMBER

Wish List



Gift Cards - \$25 Walmart & Meijer, \$10 McDonald's

Christmas Candy

Squishmellows

Winter Boots - Girls sizes- 1-4, 7; Boys sizes- 1-8

Slime

Marshmallows - regular and mini

Fuzzy Slippers

Cologne sets



Thank you for supporting our kids!