

Morgan Templar
Press Release Story
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The Kitchen of the Ronald McDonald House is a place for guests to mingle and find support for their common situations, but not a place where you would expect to find soldiers.

The Ronald McDonald House at 935 E. South Temple is a community supported “home away from home” for families of seriously ill children who must travel long distances to receive long-term medical care. Volunteers are critical to the operation of this non-profit service.

Volunteering is part of the mission of the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association, said Command Chief Warrant Officer Daun Arsenberger. Last week, 15 members of the Association spent one evening at My Girlfriend’s Kitchen preparing a meal and another evening serving dinner to the families currently staying at the House. Warrant Officer Sabora Parry organized the activity.

“When the guys realized they had to put meals together, they asked, ‘Can we bring our wives?’” Parry said.

One of Parry’s friends once stayed at the House after donating a kidney to her daughter. The friend was released from the hospital several days before her daughter, and she stayed at the House as an alternative to high-priced hotels until the child was released.

The House usually has sufficient donations that guests are charged only \$10 of the actual cost of \$50 per night. The House relies on volunteer service and donations of time and materials to keep costs down.

“I bring as many people here as possible,” Parry said.

Volunteers are always welcome. The House solicits donations of materials through various sources, including a community newsletter for residents of the Salt Lake Avenues area.

Some groups make a long-term commitment to donating time. Qwest Communications brings in dinner every Wednesday night rotating the opportunity to different departments each week. The Warrant Officer Association donates one night every quarter with food provided each time by My Girlfriend's Kitchen, a store that lets customers prepare dinners and bake them at home.

"This is our way of giving back to the community some of what they have given to us," said Warrant Officer Harry Trease, president of the Association.

Pat Mize understands this very well. Mize has volunteered at the House every Thursday night for 10 years. She spends her time at the main desk, as a resource for the guests, cleaning up the kitchen, taking new guests on tours of the house, and generally helping out. It's very rewarding and fun, she said. Her favorite memories are of holding the kids on her lap and entertaining them by playing games or telling stories.

"The hard part is that you get really close to the kids. Some of them don't make it. But it's more good than bad," Mize said.

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Sources:

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