



THE ALEXANDRAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUEEN ALEXANDRA COMMUNITY LEAGUE

JANUARY 2012

SKATING DAY FUN FOR ALL



On December 29th we sent out an email to all QACL members letting them know that the next day a few folks were going to be at the rink for a fun skate and rink-side picnic. On December 30th, six households and about 25 people attended. Not bad for a last-minute idea and 22 hours notice. Not only did the kids have a fun time showing off their moves to one another, but the adults had a chance to socialize and all had the opportunity to share in some hot dogs and a few yummy goodies.

If you haven't yet given the rink a test run, there's still much winter left to enjoy! The rink is located on the east side of our hall building and outdoor lights should be on from approximately 5pm to 10pm daily. Please keep in mind that skate changing is outdoors and there are no outdoor washrooms available. Be sure to review the community rink rules posted on the hall building near the rink. If you have any questions, please contact Ken at bond.ken@gmail.com or 780-432-0807.



SPRAY PARK OPENING PARTY

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP PLAN ANNUAL EVENT

Last year's spray park opening party was a ton of fun and the league has received many requests to make it an annual event. The spray park is now debugged and will be fully operational for the upcoming summer. If you are interested in making a splash to kick off winter and bring in summer celebration, consider helping plan the big party! The Spray Park Opening Party will take place at the end of June. Anyone who is interested can email Ann at spraypark@qacl.ca.

LEAGUE EVENTS

JANUARY 28, 12:00NOON-4:00PM

Winter Fun Day

Queen Alexandra Hall

JANUARY 31, 7:00PM

Monthly General Meeting

Queen Alexandra Hall

QUEEN ALEXANDRA COMMUNITY LEAGUE

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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS— RONALD McDONALD HOUSE

by Julie Kusiek



When I first moved to Queen Alexandra, I hadn't any idea what that big building was at the corner of 107 street and 78 avenue. Then, one day I read the sign and it said "Ronald McDonald House." I still didn't really know what the building was for. All that changed after I met the Dugas family (Marty, Wendy, Kayden, and Maya) at a neighbour's place for a get-together.

Marty became the Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House last summer and Wendy is the former Campaign Director. I was able to pick the minds of Marty and Wendy on what is currently going on at RMH and thoughts for the future, including taking a tour of the House. I'd like to share with you some of what I learned.

The mandate of RMH is to be the Home away from Home for families with seriously ill children. That is certainly the feeling one gets as they walk through the halls,

seeing the families, staff, and volunteers that fill the House with so much hope and so much life. This is the community where families with seriously ill children reside while their children receive treatment and forms a substantial part of their support network. Most families do not know anyone in the city. Some haven't been to a big city and at the same time are facing the biggest challenge of their lives. They are not alone when they come to RHM thanks to the great staff and volunteers who make the place tick.

The Dugas often describe Ronald McDonald House as a magical place. Inside the walls of 7726 – 107 street you will find an

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In every QACL newsletter, Community Connections features one story that aims to build familiarity and ties among neighbours within the community— whether it is about someone's hobby, a physical gathering place within our boundaries, or a recollection of how a set of neighbours first met and became friends. Any community member with an idea is encouraged to email Julie Kusiek at news@qacl.ca.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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education and recreation program, “home for dinners” program, a quilt room, a mother’s room, a playground, and a teen room, among many more. While this list in itself doesn’t say much, the impact of what each of these rooms does for families and children is incredible. For example, the quilt room is simply that – a room with floor to ceiling shelving filled with beautiful donated quilts. Many are knit or homemade patchwork. In an effort to make every ill child and their family feel at home, upon arrival each child is encouraged to choose a blanket. The blanket becomes theirs to keep for their stay and for many, upon their return home. For the children who leave their families behind, the families can take their child’s blanket home with them and that can aid in the grieving and healing process. Visiting that room and many of the others is a very powerful and almost overwhelming experience. It is very clear that an intense amount of detail and thought has been put into taking care of the well-being of each member of the family – including the parents and siblings of the sick child.

Outside the walls of RHM you may also cross paths with families that are staying at the House. They might be the children walking by your house and jumping in that freshly raked pile of leaves waiting

to be bagged on your boulevard, or the new face at the playground, spray park, or Scona Pool. Often, these are the siblings of the sick child who also come to stay at RMH in order to form a full family of support for the child undergoing treatment. These siblings can continue their schooling via the education and recreation programs at RMH for the duration of their family’s stay.

I had no idea such a profound and compassionate service was

located right in our own backyard but am grateful to have learned a bit more, from a couple of fellow Queen Alexandrians, no less. If you are interested in finding out more about Ronald McDonald House, you can go to their website at www.rmhnorthernalberta.org or email Marty directly at martin@rmhnorthernalberta.org. If you are interested in volunteering, you can contact the volunteer coordinator directly at alan@rmhnorthernalberta.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JANUARY 28, 12:00 NOON–4:00PM

Winter Fun Day

Queen Alexandra Hall — 10425 University Avenue

Activities: Wagon rides, bonfire, skating, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing (weather permitting).

Things to bring: skates, cross-country skis and a cup.

Provided: snowshoes, smokies, hot chocolate

RSVP: Sue Wasson at sports@qacl.ca.

JANUARY 31, 7:00PM

QACL General Meeting

Queen Alexandra Hall — 10425 University Avenue

All League members are welcome and encouraged to attend. This will be the first meeting of 2012. If you have an item for the agenda, contact Doug at president@qacl.ca.

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