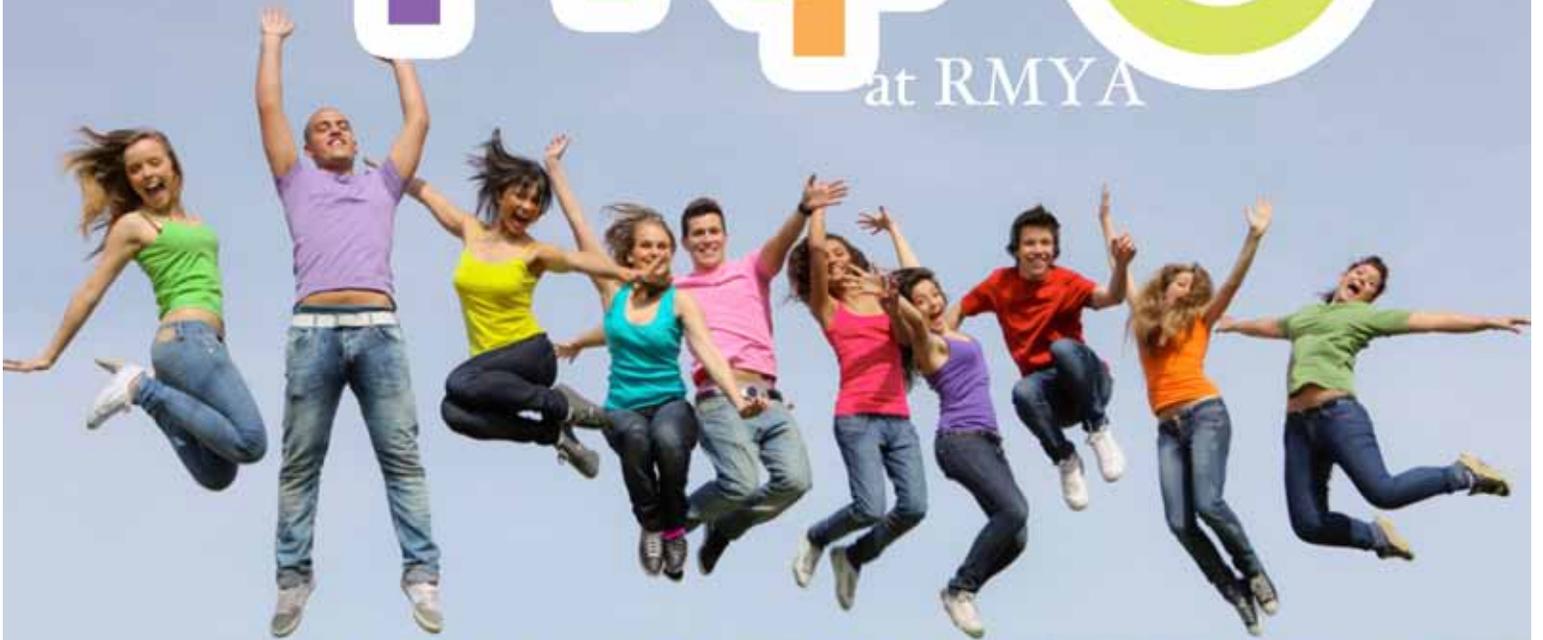


SPRING 2018

SPRING

at RMYA



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GIVING AND TAXES. IT'S COMPLICATED... SORT OF

*Give freely to the world these gifts of love and compassion.
Do not concern yourself with how much you receive in return,
just know in your heart it will be returned.*

—Steve Maraboli, *Life, the Truth, and Being Free*



I sometimes feel that nonprofit giving is a little bit of an economic mystery. (Of course, I'm reminded of the joke about the economist who was asked recently how the French revolution affected world economic growth and replied it was too early to say.) Part of the mystery is that people don't often speak directly about giving; yet talking about it is exactly the best way to understand the dynamics.

I am talking about giving today because of the changes brought about by the Tax Cuts & Jobs Act (TCJA). Depending on the source of your information, the TCJA is going to devastate the nonprofit community or enrich it greatly. On the positive side, donors may now give up to 60% of their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) to charity, up from the previous 50% limit—though this is not an option for most people. Additionally, many people will find themselves with more money in their pockets and could donate some portion of that money without affecting the net income on which they lived in 2017.

The most obvious negative impact is the increased standard deduction to \$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for couples, which is predicted to reduce charitable deductions by as much as 33%. When combined with limits on state and local tax deductibility, the number of taxpayers who itemize is expected to drop from 30% to 10%. The question is how much do donors really care about tax deductibility. Charity Navigator claims "12% of all annual giving occurs in the last three days of the year." Clearly, there may be some correlation.

We are already hearing about ways in which some people plan to donate so they can maximize any tax advantage. There are donors who are making "qualified charitable contributions" from their 401k accounts, which can be tax-advantaged and satisfies all or part of their required minimum distribution (RMD). Some folks are talking about "bunching"—this means they plan to "crowd" as many tax-deductible expenses in one year and take the standard deduction in the following year. Other donors are looking at donor-advised funds and the tax advantages they offer.

All of this is to say, we need to talk about it. It is difficult to plan a budget when charitable giving, which funds 30-35% of the work we do, becomes more unpredictable. Let us know if we can help you plan your continued support of RMYA. We are happy to assist. One of the statistics I didn't mention and in spite of our concern is that tax-deductibility is fifth on the list of reasons people give to charity. The number one reason people give is the belief that the organization is doing good in the world in the way you wish to see it done. In the end, we believe Maraboli is right and it's not that complicated—give with love and compassion and you will receive what you need in return.

Yours gratefully,

William F. Wilkinson, III
Chief Executive Officer



AN UPDATE

from the

FACILITIES TEAM DIRECTOR

Joseph Rudolph

Across two campuses in San Antonio and Boerne, RMYA maintains 28 buildings and 27 vehicles. Over the past year, our facilities team has worked hard to shift our focus from a reactive maintenance viewpoint to a proactive approach. This has enabled the facilities team to conduct building walk-throughs, conduct preventative maintenance on equipment, assess buildings and building equipment for projected replacement, and provide better quality service to the clients we serve. These changes in the facilities' work ethic have resulted in reduced emergency calls due to equipment malfunction, which has further reduced on-call technicians being called after hours and on weekends.

After opening the beautiful new Bridge Emergency Shelter over Labor Day weekend, projects have continued as renovations to the previous administrative offices and conference room are being turned into a permanent space for the newly established Centro Seguro Drop-In Center. The renovation will consist of approximately 2700 square feet of space being converted into a practical area to allow children to take refuge and rest, get a snack, or freshen up as they receive other services that are available. This center will be the first in Texas, and possibly the United States, to be open 24 hours a day for child sex trafficking victims. We are also in the process of renovating an additional 5600 square feet of space, in the former Bridge location, to accommodate a second emergency shelter for children needing therapeutic emergency placement. These renovations focus on bathroom upgrades, bedroom upgrades, restoring furniture, painting the rooms and the open areas, and providing a better overall environment for up to 16 kids at a time. This project is anticipated to be completed by May 31, with the Drop-In Center move-in to be as early as April 2.



The facilities team has also grown. Please welcome Raul Vasquez and Jesus Martinez to the San Antonio Campus and Martin Arevalo to the Boerne Campus. They have joined the team in the last couple of months and have hit the ground running. They are a valuable asset to the team and we are grateful that they are here.



OUR NEW PROGRAM: **CENTRO SEGURO** **DROP-IN** **CENTER**

Imagine you are 15 years old and alone. You ran away last year from an abusive home. You tried to ask for help and no one believed you, or they did but help came too late. You ran away thinking you would be better off on your own. Out on the street, you met someone who promised you safety and love if you went with them. They gave you somewhere to sleep, praised you, fed you your favorite fast food. You felt seen and valued for the first time in months or years. And then they asked you to earn your keep.

So many of our local children and teenagers enter the sex-trafficking world under similar circumstances. They leave homes or foster families in an effort to escape and find relief, only to fall victim to sex traffickers looking for vulnerable young people. Feeling alone, afraid, or angry, they are tricked into believing that only their traffickers can offer them safety and love. As far as they know, their only alternative is to be arrested and punished.

Centro Seguro, a joint effort between RMYA and Bexar County Juvenile Probation, is a 24-hour drop in center for young people who have fallen victim to sex traffickers and need access to services. The program opened October 1st and is the first drop-in center of its kind in Texas and only the third in the nation. Centro Seguro is a safe place for child victims of sex trafficking to find respite. Youth have access to an array of immediate services, including a hot shower, meal(s), a change of clothing, personal hygiene products, high school credit recovery programs, and individual/family therapeutic services. In addition to on site emergency drop in services, clients receive ongoing case management services including referrals for medical, dental, and vision care, as well as support groups. With an estimated 79,000 child victims currently residing in Texas, this program is essential to helping our community's children find a supportive network to help them reintegrate into "normal" childhood. Safety and security, in a non-judgmental atmosphere, are the priorities at Centro Seguro. The program's mission is to connect with children who are victims, or at high risk of being trafficked, in ways that create safety, to encourage them to leave their traffickers, and to assist in finding a safe place off the streets they can call home.

After just a few months in operation, we can already see the impact the program is having on this vulnerable population. In March, we're expanding our efforts by unveiling our **#SeeMeHelpMe** campaign to raise awareness about this hidden danger in our community as well as what resources are available for the public to help. We tend to think of sex trafficking as a problem in other, far away countries—but the truth is, this issue is hiding in our own back yard, at our sporting events and shopping malls. Victims are often identified by teachers and community workers who recognize the signs. We hope the **#SeeMeHelpMe** campaign will help others identify potential victims and speak up to help protect these vulnerable kids. See the next page for signs to look for, a list of resources, and ways you can help.





**#SEEMEHELPME
END CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING (CST)
IN SAN ANTONIO!**

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF CST:

- Lying about their age or giving a false identification.
- Unwillingness or inability to give a residence address.
- Story inconsistencies.
- Fear of another person or of social interaction with others.
- History of sexual assault/abuse.
- Shows signs of being under the influence or has a history of substance abuse.
- Previous runaway history.
- Excessive school absences.
- Pre-paid or multiple cell phones.
- Multiple hotel room keys.
- Accompanied by a seemingly controlling friend or significant other.
- Provocative clothing that is inappropriate for the child's age or for the season.
- Signs of physical assault or abuse.
- Tattoos/branding.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Report It!

- Contact law enforcement – 210-207-7273 (non-emergency SAPD)—if you see something suspicious. Make note of details such as clothing, physical appearance, license plate, etc.
- National Human Trafficking Hotline - 1-888-373-7888

Utilize Local Resources!

- Centro Seguro – 210-340-8090 – 24-hour facility for runaway/homeless youth/victims of sex trafficking 11 - 17
- Common Thread – 1-888-8-THREAD – 24-hour hotline for advocate and case management to victims of sex trafficking
- Rape Crisis Center – 210-349-7273 – 24-hour hotline for victims of sexual assault

Educate Yourself!

- Polaris Project - <https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking>
- Free apps to download for CST education and reporting: Redlight Traffic; TraffickCam; The STOP app

Donate!

- This program launched through funding from the Texas Governor's office but additional funding is required to sustain the program into the future. The vulnerable young people seeking services at Centro Seguro need us to meet them where they are and that involves extensive outreach and creativity to outsmart traffickers who manipulate the naivety of the most vulnerable young people in our community.

RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS:

- Victims may call 911 for immediate assistance. Programs such as Centro Seguro, Common Thread, and the Rape Crisis Center are available for services.

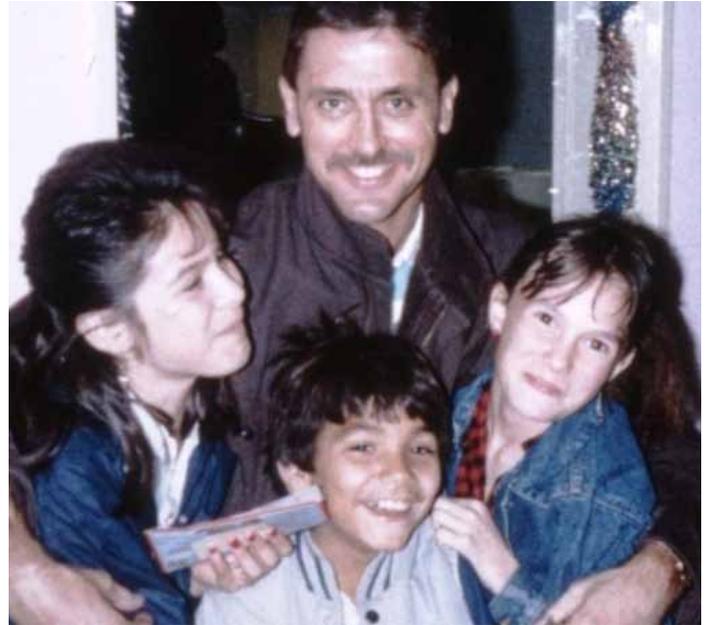
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL US AT (210) 340 – 8090 OR EMAIL CS-INFO@RMYA.ORG

- Victims may also text HELP to 233733 (BEFREE) or call the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

Roy Maas' Story Continues

by Derrick Bam,
Director of Program Operations SA Campus

Through the ages stories have played a central part in all cultures and communities. It has been the medium to maintain traditions, connect history to the present, and give one an avenue to dream about the future. Stories have illustrated moral virtue, painted tales of great heroism, and have been a source of unlocking the imagination for all time. There are stories that are a gripping adventure from the first word; others are a sad tale of suffering and struggle, bringing tears to your eyes and a pain to your heart. The account of Roy Maas is a story of hope and new beginnings. It is a legend much like the Gospel of Mark where the author leaves the ending to be decided by the reader. It is a tapestry started but unfinished, left for us to return to and continue the lines and circles to complete the design with the thread from the stories of children passing through the fabric of RMYA.



The San Antonio Campus has been collecting thread stories of staff and children to use in the ongoing completion of our tapestry. Centro Seguro opened its door to welcome a trickle of children from all over San Antonio. They came in ones and twos. The trickle turned into a stream which became a raging river of four and five children at a time, all bringing stories of hurt, despair, and abandonment. Several of these children have found a home at the Bridge and one is still living at TurningPoint after leaving the drop in center and returning again weeks later looking for help. Henri Nouwen penned these words, "In a world so torn apart by rivalry, anger, and hatred, we have the privileged vocation to be living signs of a love that can bridge all divisions and heal all wounds."

The daily commitment of the campus is client-centered, Restorative Trauma Informed Care. It is commitment to the stories of the children who complete the San Antonio campus tapestry. It is a commitment to being a hub for healing as children come from Meadowland to TurningPoint, from Centro Seguro to the Bridge, from the Bridge to Meadowland, from the Family Counseling & Resource Center to the Bridge, and from the community into the Counseling Center, the Bridge, Centro Seguro, and TurningPoint. It is a constant thread of healing woven into the canvas of hope one story, one child, at a time.

According to Nouwen, "Each day holds a surprise. But only if we expect it can we see, hear, or feel it when it comes to us. Let's not be afraid to receive each day's surprise, whether it comes to us as sorrow or as joy. It will open a new place in our hearts, a place where we can welcome new friends and celebrate more fully our shared humanity." That surprise comes to us each day in the stories our clients and residents share, as they invite us into the privilege of journeying with them towards healing and recovery.

The story of Roy Maas' dream to serve children continues into the future without end.

A BIGGER AND BETTER SCHOOL FOR THE CHILDREN WHO NEED US THE MOST.



**MEADOWLAND
CHARTER DISTRICT**

With the opening of a new campus on the south side of San Antonio, the Meadowland Charter School has restructured to accommodate our newest campus and prepare for future growth. We are now the Meadowland Charter District. The campus in Boerne has been renamed the OAKS ACADEMY, home of the MUSTANGS. The new campus on the South Side has been named LAKES ACADEMY, home of the RAMS. You can find out more information about the District at our new website: meadowlanddistrict.org.

Opening a new school campus is a long and difficult process, but the District was up to the task and Lakes Academy is up and running for the 2017-2018 school year. This campus provides educational services to the children living at the Guiding Light Residential Treatment Center (RTC), which serves children in a similar fashion as the Meadowland RTC. This project has been accomplished by working collaboratively with Southside ISD and Guiding Light RTC to provide all the necessary resources to make the campus a success.

Here is what's going on at both campuses!

What's happening at Oaks Academy? The Texas Education Agency awarded the Oaks Academy a \$1.4 million Texas Title I Improvement Program Schools grant. This grant has three key focuses: College and Career Readiness, Comprehensive Instructional Framework, and Community Involvement. These grant focuses have allowed the campus to implement great new initiatives to improve the overall educational program offered to the students.



College and Career Readiness. The Oaks Academy is working with local colleges to provide dual credit opportunities for students interested in college. The goal is to allow high school students to earn college credits while finishing their high school diploma. The campus has been conducting career interest surveys to identify careers students would like to explore. This has led to the creation of new campus clubs to help students explore these interests.

Community Involvement. Through a partnership with Hill Country Family Services, three residential students have been placed in job readiness internships. This has allowed the students to gain new job experiences in a workplace environment. Multiple events have been planned to allow outside organizations to come in and work with our students directly. Please see our website for more information about our community events.

Comprehensive Instructional Framework. The campus is striving for a stronger academic focus in the classroom. These focuses improve the daily academic model and help us continue the development of the whole school curriculum. The focuses in the first half of the year have been: academic language in classrooms, data driven instruction using frequent benchmarks, embedding Social Emotional Learning in our daily instruction, and using Restorative Practices as we work with our students—in and out of class.



What's Happening at Lakes Academy? The Lakes Academy is off to a great start educating the youth at the Guiding Light RTC. The campus collaborates with the Oaks Academy to create an educational program that meets the needs of the children the district serves on a daily basis. This approach means thinking outside the box and creating unique activities that educate and enrich their lives. The campus LMSW leads weekly psycho-educational groups, with a focus on teaching and modeling soft skills essential for success – including emotion regulation,

distress tolerance, mindfulness, and interpersonal effectiveness. The campus has partnered with Camp Roper—a local horse ranch run by Coach Sherri Mel, a certified adapted physical educator. During our weekly visits, students foster skills in teamwork, communication, relationship building and empathy while working in groups to care for the horses. Students also have the opportunity to learn and practice riding skills under the guidance of Coach Mel.

HOLIDAY *Recap*



The holiday season at RMYA is a very special time of the year. Our community feels called to share the bounty and blessings of the season with our children, and they couldn't be happier to be part of the cheer! We are very fortunate to have such a supportive network of businesses, faith-based groups, and families who come together every year to make the holidays a magical and memorable experience for our kids.

For many of our children, the holidays can be a stressful time. Most come from abusive and neglectful homes, and they associate a normally joyful season with memories of pain and loneliness. We make every effort to build happy experiences for them at this time of year, offering extra comfort and support to those who dread what should be a beloved time of celebration. The truth is that we couldn't do this hard work—making

sure each of the 135+ children in our care feel seen and cherished during the holidays—without your support. When our community comes together to plan holiday parties, gift exchanges, and fellowship, you create positive memories for our children, showing them they are loved and valued.

This year was no different: our kiddos enjoyed Thanksgiving lunch at Ruth's Chris Steak House courtesy of Lana Duke and family. They attended holiday parties sponsored by local businesses, church groups, and families both on- and off- campus. They were treated to world-class dining by Les Dames d'Escoffier. They played games, exchanged gifts, and built gingerbread houses. They attended exclusive movie events, and so much more. So many dedicated people came together to donate gifts, hold donation drives, wrap gifts with care, and create beautiful memories for our kiddos. For children who have experienced trauma so early in their lives, knowing that someone cared about them and chose to spend time with them is the greatest gift of all. Our veteran staff often see former residents return with their own families to visit the place they first felt safe and pass that feeling along to current residents. Seeing our kiddos grown and in successful, loving families is a testament to the legacy we build together.



You—our family of advocates, volunteers, and donors—give our children hope by improving their self-esteem and outlook on life. Thank you for sharing the warmth of the holiday season with our children!

This year we'd especially like to thank:

Acacia Landscape & Design

Aerotek

Bryan Heyne

Caliente Harley Davidson

Callie Knibb and Kristin Soileu

Cibolo Creek Community Church

Clark High School Student Council

Community Bible Church in Boerne

Cordillera Ranch

Cornerstone Church
 CPS
 Currey Creek Church in Boerne
 Discount Tire
 Discovery School
 Dr. Rountree Family and Friends
 Elizabeth Bazan Family and Friends
 First Baptist Church in Boerne
 Dr. R. Keith Franklin
 NuStar Energy
 Harland Clarke
 Harvesters
 Health Cell
 HEB PDC Warehouse
 JHOW Church
 Timberwood Park Residents
 Laura Ingalls Wilder Intermediate School
 Leon Springs Baptist Church
 Leon Springs Dental
 Les Dames d'Escoffier San Antonio Chapter
 LULAC LGBTQ "Orgullo de San Antonio"
 Ken and Christie Kahlich

Martin and Emily Strayer
 Matkin Hoover Engineering & Surveying
 Nova Aesthetics
 Patti Ansaldo Family and Friends
 Resurrection Baptist Church
 Ruth's Chris Steak House
 Ruthie's Mexican Restaurant
 Amanda Sauter
 Sharon Seal
 Sonora Bank in Boerne
 St. Mark's Presbyterian Church
 Tower of America
 University United Methodist Church
 USAA
 UTSA Orchestra
 Valero Alamo Bowl
 Valero Headquarters
 Woodforest National Bank
 World Karate
 Zena Macias Family and Friends
 Z's Wood Fired Pizza





THRIFT SHOP FOR A CAUSE

by Kaz Sephton

The RMYA Thrift Shop has been a San Antonio staple for decades, but has recently had a facelift which has taken the store to another level among local and regional resale lovers!

A fresh coat of paint on all 30 walls changed the overall look to a more sophisticated shop. Our windows were painted with our RMYA logo to attract passersby. Old lightbulbs were replaced with

energy-efficient LEDs. All the while, only our prices dropped while sales have soared! Our clothes are now in color and size order, and shoes have been reorganized by size and type; we are working on categorizing our book room, too! We rely on word of mouth to spread the wonder in this shop, from an extensive vinyl selection to collectibles, housewares, seasonal décor, and more!

Books are 5 for \$1.00, clothes in the main room are \$1.00 each or \$0.50 for kids' clothes, and art and frames are 50% off daily! Daily sales are posted on Facebook and Nextdoor.com, and specialty items are sold on Craigslist and eBay!

The RMYA Thrift Shop Manager is a Brit who has extensive experience in managing non-profit resale shops. Kaz Sephton is sure to explain to customers where their dollars are going and whom they are helping when they donate to, volunteer at, and shop here!

Thrift shops have always been a dream for customers who love a bargain, enjoy digging for treasures, and want to help non-profits, but do not always have the time to volunteer. It is a win-win for everyone and shoppers should feel especially wonderful when they leave RMYA because they got a special deal and helped very special children and young adults in our counseling and residential programs next door!

Memorials

GLENNA ENGLISH

Dee & Rick Carduner

ETHEL TALENTINOW

Dee & Rick Carduner

KAY BILLINGSLY

Georganne & Robert Freund

BONNIE CHERRY

Georganne & Robert Freund

LARRY ANDREW

Georganne & Robert Freund

JOSHUA PAVERSTEIN

Vernell Hoffmann

DON JORDAN, JR.

Sharlene Jordan

JANICE JORDAN

Sharlene Jordan

OLIVIA & JOHNNIE GARCIA

Patricia Mota

DEAC DAVIS

Arline & Gary Patterson

JOAN THOMPSON

Charlotte & Larry Travis

Honoraria

THE McCLELLAND FAMILY

Dee & Rick Carduner

POPE & DON CROOK

Dee & Rick Carduner

THE WHELESS FAMILY

Dee & Rick Carduner

COLLETTE & BARRY BROONER

Dee & Rick Carduner

SHARI & RANDY PULMAN

Dee & Rick Carduner

ALICIA TORRES & FRANK LEGACKI

Dee & Rick Carduner

MARIA & CARL NELSON

Dee & Rick Carduner

CATHERINE HOHMANN

Guy Hohmann

REBECCA SNIDER

Ginger McDonald

LARRY & SHARON GRAEBER

Doris Rips

GEORGANNE & ROBERT FREUND

-60th Anniversary Charlotte & Larry Travis

KEN & SARAH HAIRGROVE

Mary & Robert Zeigler



UPCOMING EVENTS

FIESTA at MEADOWLAND

FIESTA AT MEADOWLAND

Please join us on April 5th for our third annual “Fiesta at Meadowland”, supporting the children who make their home at the Meadowland campus in Boerne. Enjoy a tour of the campus, a catered dinner, a powerful testimonial from a former resident, and meet some of our kids—all to help raise money and awareness of the needs of the foster children at Meadowland. You can host a table and invite your friends or join us as an individual; all are welcome to this free friend- and fundraiser.

Questions on Fiesta at Meadowland? Contact Renee Garvens, Senior Director of Community and Donor Relations, at 210-340-8077 ext. 7001 or rmya@rmya.org

It's a New Day 5k

We are so excited to announce our second RMYA It's a New Day 5K run/walk, benefitting the Meadowland campus. This chip-timed run is the culmination of the running club that began as a way to promote exercise, create a healthier lifestyle, and help our children cope with stress. The 14-week training program lets those who have no athletic background ease into running, at a pace that is challenging, yet comfortable enough to offer success. We would love your support through a sponsorship, participation in the race, volunteering, or just cheering on the participants!



Questions on It's a New Day 5K?

Contact Kasham Laine, Program Administrator, at 830-816-2425 ext. 2120 or klaine@rmya.org.

Events like Fiesta at Meadowland and It's a New Day 5K are critical to building relationships in our community and raising awareness for our children. With over 140 children in our care at any given time, working with our network of advocates, volunteers and donors is essential to making sure our children have a chance to heal and build a positive future. If you'd like to consider becoming an RMYA volunteer, board member, or community partner, please contact Renee Garvens, Sr. Director of Community and Donor Relations, at 210-340-8077 ext. 1102 or rgarvens@rmya.org.



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WE NEED YOUR HELP TO MAKE SURE OUR KIDS HAVE FUN, SAFE SPRING AND SUMMER ACTIVITIES!

The warm weather is already arriving and our children want to shake off the winter weather and stretch. Summer vacation is a perfect time for them to explore camps, adventure parks, and more. However, with over 140 kids to care for, it's a challenge making sure everyone has something engaging to do. You can help by donating towards our Activities Fund, giving children a chance to build confidence and learn valuable leadership and collaboration skills through play. Make a donation using the enclosed envelope, or visit our fundraising page at www.rmya.org to give what you can!

