

National Philoptochos Grant brings comfort to families at Ronald McDonald House Mobile



MOBILE, AL — October 8, 2026 — National Philoptochos is proud to support Ronald McDonald House Mobile with a \$91,351 grant establishing the Family Care Van, a new transportation program serving families whose children are receiving medical care in the Mobile, Alabama area.

The grant made possible the purchase of a new 15-passenger van, two car seats, and a wheelchair-accessible conversion, along with the first year of a part-time driver. Through this program, families will have daily transportation between Ronald McDonald House Mobile and USA Health Children's & Women's Hospital, as well as rides to other area hospitals, medical appointments, pharmacies, and, when needed, work. Twice-weekly shopping trips and occasional outings will help families care for their everyday needs while they are far from home.



RMHM van donation by the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society on Thursday, Oct. 8, 2026, in Mobile, Alabama. Photo by Mike Kittrell/RMHC Mobile, AL

For several years, families returning home from Ronald McDonald House Mobile have named transportation as the service they need most. For parents already carrying the weight of a child's illness or injury, something as simple as a ride can mean being present at a child's bedside, receiving their own medical care, or bringing home a needed prescription.

To celebrate this milestone, National Philoptochos President Debbie George traveled to Mobile alongside Metropolis of Atlanta Philoptochos President Effie Moraitakis, who were joined by Sarah Kalaris and Despina Koulianos. Together, they were welcomed by the Ronald McDonald House Mobile team to see the Family Care Van firsthand and celebrate the difference it will make for the families who call the House home during their time of need.

Speaking at the celebration, President George reflected on the meaning behind the organization's name and the families at the center of this work.

“Philoptochos means ‘friend of the poor,’ and for nearly a century, the women of our organization have tried to live up to that name: showing up for families in the moments when they need it most,” said President George. “And there are few moments that ask more of a family than when a child is sick.”



National Philoptochos President Debbie George speaks at the RMHM van donation by the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society on Thursday, Oct. 8, 2026, in Mobile, Alabama. Photo by Mike Kittrell/RMHC Mobile, AL

Recalling the moment the grant was first awarded, she shared how seeing the van in person brought its purpose to life.

“At the time, it was a number on a page and a hope for what it could become. Standing here today, seeing it in person, it feels like so much more than that,” she said. “Because this van isn’t just a vehicle. It’s a ride to a treatment that can’t be missed. It’s one less thing for a tired parent to worry about. It’s a few quiet minutes together on the way to the hospital, and maybe, someday, the drive home.”

President George also extended her gratitude to the staff, volunteers, and supporters of Ronald McDonald House Mobile, thanking them for creating a place where families can feel held during the hardest chapters of their lives.

This grant is a testament to the devotion of Philoptochos members at the local level, who recognized the need in their own community and guided the application through the National Philoptochos grants process. Paul Giardina, Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Mobile, shared his gratitude for their efforts, noting that the advocacy, generosity, and compassion of local members helped turn an idea into a service that will benefit families for years to come.

In closing, President George spoke directly to the women whose service made the day possible.

“To our Philoptochos sisters, here in Alabama and across the country, this is your love in motion,” she said. “Every gift, every fundraiser, every act of service made this day possible.”

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc. is the philanthropic arm of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. With over 90 years of experience, Philoptochos has served communities in need through fundraising and charitable programs. The Society includes more than 400 active chapters nationwide. Learn more at www.philoptochos.org.

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