

Ronda Wilson Is Honored Guest At McDonald Christmas Party

DURHAM—Five-year-old Ronda Wilson was back in the Ronald McDonald House here. But, this time she is not a patient. Ronda is the guest of honor at a Christmas party being given for the chronically ill children and their families staying at this "home-away-from-home."

To the Richlands, Va. native, this trip across the mountains has been dramatically different from past trips. This Christmas is the first time Ronda's cancer is in total remission.

According to Ronda's physician, Dr. John Falletta, "We think her disease is under control and may well be gone permanently."

Following a 1980 operation at the Duke Medical Center for the removal of cancer at the base of her spine, Ronda spent three months at the Durham Ronald McDonald House with her parents, Ronald and Mary Wilson.

Then for two years, Ronda and her parents traveled the long hours back and forth across the mountains while she underwent treatment for the rare form of cancer. On each trip the Wilsons stayed at the Ronald McDonald House.

"It was a Godsend and a blessing," said Rondal Wilson. Before the family discovered the Ronald McDonald in 1980, they spent large sums of money for motel rooms during their visits to Durham.

The Wilsons were directed to the temporary residence by Dr. Falletta. Falletta is one of the founders of the non-profit organization, Pediatric Family Center of N.C., Inc., which operates the House. Many members of the organization are parents who have personally experienced the emotional, physical and financial upheaval associated with a chronically ill child. Together with a network of volunteers these people carry out the day-to-day operation and fundraising for the house.

"The best thing about the Ronald McDonald House is the strong sense of community displayed by everyone," said Wilson. Each person is treated equally despite their handicaps.

The residence provides emotional stability for children who are out-patients by keeping families together in a home-like atmosphere. Each family provides their own food, and kitchen and laundry facilities are available. Everyone contributes to cooking and cleaning the House.

"Ronda's always wanted to meet Ronald McDonald," Wilson said, "but it just never worked out." Each time the famous clown visited residents at the house, Ronda was in treatment at the Medical Center.

Ronda's dream has come true this Christmas with her return to the House. She met Ronald McDonald at the Christmas party held at 4:00 P.M. December 16th at 506 Alexander Avenue.

"We just can't believe that all this is happening," Wilson said of Ronda's invitation to be the guest of honor at this year's Christmas party.

The party was sponsored by McDonald's Restaurants in North Carolina, Eastern Tennessee and upper South

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SECTION B

Edenton, North Carolina, Thursday, December 23, 1982

SECTION B

Sen. Helms Offers Christmas Thoughts

WASHINGTON—Every year for a long time, when the Christmas season approaches, I have thought of Dr. Peter Marshall. Peter Marshall's life was brief, but he lived it with zest and love. As a consequence he earned a certain immortality because he touched the hearts and lives of so many.

Dr. Marshall, a Presbyterian minister, served for a while as Chaplain of the U.S. Senate. He was born in Scotland, and he never lost his unique accent. So impressive was he that the Senate Chamber was almost always packed with visitors each morning when Peter Marshall entered quietly to offer the opening prayer.

THREE DECADES—It was 35 years ago, December 19, 1947, when Dr. Marshall offered a prayer in the Senate which, ever since, has been a part of our family's Christmas:

We thank Thee, O God, for the return of the wondrous spell of this Christmas season that brings its own sweet joy into our jaded and troubled hearts.

Forbid it, Lord, that we celebrate, or, like our counterparts so long ago, fail to see the star or hear the song of glorious promise.

As our hearts yield to the spirit of Christmas, may we discover that it is Thy Holy Spirit who comes—not a sentiment, but a power—to remind us of the only way by which there may be peace on earth and good will among men.

may we not spend Christmas, but keep it, that we may be kept in its hope, through Him who emptied Himself in coming to us that we might be filled with peace and joy in returning to God, Amen.

Edwards, My former neighbor, two doors up Caswell Street in Raleigh, was Dr. Albert G. Edwards. Al and Margaret moved into

a new home in 1981. He, too, is a beloved Presbyterian minister. He, too, was born in Scotland. And he, too, still possesses the delightful accent of his homeland.

In so many ways, Al Edwards is similar to Peter Marshall—in personality, in dedication, in the depth of his faith. Al is a wonderful friend and neighbor.

In years gone by, Dr. Edwards appeared on television each year for a special Christmas message. Always he would tell a little story to emphasize the meaning of Christmas.

I shall always remember his story of a little farm boy, years ago, who had never seen a circus. So, when a circus came to a near-by village, the little boy's father gave him a silver dollar, and suggested that the little boy ride his pony into town to attend the circus.

CIRCUS—The lad arrived in town just in time for the cir-

cus parade down Main Street. He marveled at the elephants and other animals. He was thrilled by the marching band. And he laughed at the antics of the clowns.

The clowns danced from one side of the street to the other. Suddenly, one of them stopped in front of the little boy, and stretched out his arms. The lad, knowing nothing about circuses, assumed that he was supposed to give the clown his silver dollar—and so he did.

After the parade, the little boy rushed back home, and told his father about the wonderful things he had seen.

When the little boy had finished, his father said sadly: "My son, you missed the circus; you saw only the parade."

Dr. Edwards' point was that so many of us risk missing the real meaning of Christmas. The tinsel and the bright lights and the parties and the gifts—these are fine, and they are enjoyable. Like

the little boy, however, unless we are careful, we will see only the parade.

Mrs. Helms and I wish for all North Carolinians, indeed all people everywhere, a wonderful and meaningful Christmas—and as Peter Marshall put it, may we not spend Christmas, but keep it, that we may be kept in its hope.

Dinner Is Held

Center Hill Extension Homemakers Club met on Tuesday night at the Center Hill Community Building for a covered dish dinner.

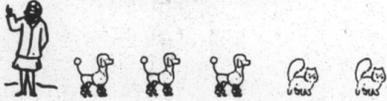
Mrs. Helen Hollowell welcomed the club members, husbands and guests. After the table blessing everyone enjoyed a delicious meal.

Mrs. Gladys White was in charge of recreation; gifts were exchanged and everyone enjoyed the party.

CHRISTMAS DREAM GRANTED—Five-year old Ronda Wilson of Richlands, Virginia, receives her Christmas wish of meeting Ronald McDonald. Ronda, daughter of Rondal and Mary Wilson, is the guest of honor at a Christmas party at the Durham Ronald McDonald House celebrating the total remission of her cancer. Ronda was the first resident of the "home-away-from-home" for chronically ill children.

Merry Christmas

Carolyn Raines and Her Pets are here to say—
"Have a happy Holiday!"



Carolyn, Be Be, Lassie, Popcorn, Kitty Bear and Bloopers

wish for you...

A very happy New Year, too!



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