



MARY DAWSON adds her students' coins and dollar bills to the growing collection for Ronald McDonald House. In the background are teacher assistant Patricia Cobb and teacher Bonnie Stanley, who spearheaded the effort.



STUDENTS (from left) Joanna Bryant, Jade Bass, Alan Leggette, Denae Stanley and Matthew Ferster in Bonnie Stanley's class use "100 Boards" as counting aids.

## Union's First Graders Collect Pennies For 'McDonald' House

**BY SUSAN USHER**  
When first grade students at Union Elementary School in Shallotte celebrated the 100th day of school last Wednesday, there was no cake or candles—just loose change and lots of it.

As 11 a.m. approached, Alyssa Granados and other students in Bonnie Stanley's class were counting mounds of pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters as quickly as their small hands could manage. So were their counterparts in four other classrooms, each class wondering who had collected the most money.

Alyssa is one of approximately 150 first graders at the school taught by Cindy Covil, Amy Watkins, Mary Dawson, Edna Bellamy and Stanley. All pitched in to collect pennies and more.

Shortly after 11 a.m. the five classes presented \$224.41—the equivalent of 22,441 copper pennies—to Dennis Anderson of Wilmington, a McDonald's restaurant franchise owner and volunteer representing the four Ronald McDonald houses in North Carolina.

It was Stanley's idea to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House and incorporate it into students' studies. The notion caught on quickly, first in her own class, and then throughout the first grade as other classes joined the project. Classes collected anywhere from \$27.39 to a high by Stanley's class of \$53.07.

The children's love gift will go to the Ronald McDonald House that serves UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill, helping provide a homelike place for families to stay while a terminally or critically ill child is being treated either as an inpatient or outpatient.

"What you're contributing to is changing the direction of medical care," Anderson told the youngsters. "Love is a very strong component of the healing process, physical, mental and emotional."

"I thank you from the depths of my heart because it is your nickels and dimes that make it happen."

Love is one of the motivating factors of Ronald McDonald houses. The concept of the Ronald McDonald House is to provide a friendly,

warm, homelike place that recalls "the way America used to be, a trusting nation," said Anderson. A container of coins rests by the pay telephone. Families stay at the cottage on the honor system. A \$5 per day donation is requested, but parents can stay even if they don't pay. Sometimes children are able to leave the hospital for weekend stays with their family at the house.

The gift from Union first-graders will help people like fellow first-grader Alyssa Granados, who with members of her family has stayed at the Ronald McDonald House, Stanley's nephew, A.J. Hewett, and the late Rebecca Russ.

Alyssa was diagnosed with leukemia at age 3, which marked the start of regular trips to the hospital for treatment.

Today, sporting a Ronald McDonald House button on her sweater as a memento of past stays there, she is leukemia-free. Alyssa still returns to the hospital for regular check-ups; that's where she was to spend Valentine's Day. When the nurses draw samples of her blood for testing, she said proudly, "I don't cry."

A.J. was born prematurely and returns with his family regularly to Chapel Hill for medical treatment.

"Now they can go to the Ronald McDonald House if they choose," Stanley told the mass of first graders last week. "You've helped Mrs. Stanley in a big way. If my nephew could speak he would say a big 'thank you,'" she said.

A week before the project ended, Stanley's class also met with Polly Russ of Shallotte, a Brunswick County Board of Education member who lost a daughter, Rebecca, to terminal illness.

When Rebecca was sick and undergoing treatment at UNC Hospitals, there was no nice place to stay like the Ronald McDonald House, she told the children during a second visit last Wednesday.

As a way of doing something special to remember Rebecca, however, many friends now send money to the Ronald McDonald House to make hospital stays easier for other families.

"You can do that too," said Russ.

## Area Parents Announce Births

### Milliken

Julie Milliken of Shallotte has announced the birth of a son, Richard Kyle Milliken, Feb. 7 at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

Born at 11:26 a.m., Richard weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and was 20 inches long. He has a sister, Daphne.

Grandparents are Sandra and Ralph Milliken of Ash.

### Latta

Martin Gerald Latta Jr. and Jody Colleen Linder of Shallotte have announced the birth of a son, Jason Martin Latta, Feb. 8 at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

Born at 7:17 p.m., Martin weighed 9 pounds, 4 ounces, and was 19 1/2 inches long.

Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Colin McCoy of Shallotte and Hilda Ann Latta of Ocean Isle Beach.

Great grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Mische McCoy of Shallotte

and Helen Brown of Ocean Isle Beach.

### Rankin

Elwood Bell and Shirly Rankin of Shallotte have announced the birth of a daughter, Lateasha Lashae Rankin, Feb. 7 at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

Born at 9:26 a.m., Lateasha weighed 7 pounds, 1/2 ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Grandparents are Elouise and Norwood Gause of Shallotte and Orine and Everal Rankin of Shallotte.

Addie Gause of Shallotte and Hollis and Margie Gause of Shalotte are the great grandparents.

### Pittman

Lee and Marilyn Pittman of Ash have announced the birth of a daughter, Hanna Lea Pittman, Feb. 5 at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

Born at 11:57 a.m., Hanna weighed 8 pounds, 12 ounces, and was 21 inches long. She has a sister, Stephanie Ward.

Grandparents are Paul and Phyllis Gore of Ash and Dorothy Pittman of North Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Elma Milligan of Sunset Beach is the great grandmother.

### Kohler

James and Leigh Ann Kohler have announced the arrival of a daughter, Cassie Leigh Kohler, born Feb. 2 weighing 7 pounds, 10 ounces and measuring 21 1/2 inches long.

She is the granddaughter of Scotty and Bobbie Kohler of Ocean Isle Beach and Loretta Lovitt of Shell Point. Great-grandfather is Robert D. Norton Sr.

She has three older brothers, Jamie, Jonathan and Cody.

### Reeves

Gerald and Kim Reeves of Shallotte Point have announced the birth of their third son, Tres Chaz Tyler, at 11:23 p.m. Jan. 10 at New Hanover Regional Medical Center.

He weighed 9 pounds and was 22 1/2 inches long. He joins brothers Dylan Graham and Tanner Krystian.

Grandparents are Jackie and Nellie Reeves of Holden Beach and Ron and Destyna Lofland of Ocean Isle.

### BBQ Dinner Set At Town Creek

Town Creek Volunteer Rescue Squad will serve barbecue dinners on Saturday, Feb. 19, beginning at 11 a.m. at the squad building.

Plates will include barbecue pork, cole slaw, candied yams and hush-

## Rosemobile Scheduled

The mobile office of Congressman Charlie Rose will return to Brunswick County Wednesday, Feb. 23, with stops at Leland Post Office, 9-11 a.m.; and Winnabow Post Office, noon until 2 p.m.

A representative of Rose's office will be available for conferences at

those locations. Appointments are not necessary.

"Anyone having a problem with a federal agency or wishing to express an opinion regarding federal legislation is invited to visit the mobile office," said Rose staffer Wayne Jackson.

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