

The CARING TOUCH

The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center For Children, Inc.

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Aquatic Therapy Makes a Big Splash

by Donna Payne

Is there anything more common than a 3-year-old boy playing in a swimming pool on a hot August day? But there is nothing typical about this day, this pool or this boy.

It's therapy day for Jake Self, the son of Carolyn and Anthony Self of Barling. Jake was born 13 weeks prematurely and his parents were told that because of bleeding in his brain, he would have severe physical disabilities, including being deaf and blind. So the fact he walks through the doors at The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center For Children saying, "Pool, pool, pool!" is, to say the least, a miracle.

The pool he is so eager to spend time in is a miracle of sorts, also. The Kistler Center has always been on the cutting edge of pediatric therapy. The late Wayne Kistler, one of the Center's founders, had to build equipment for the Center in the beginning because it was impossible to find therapy aides suitable for children. When the Center opened in its current location in 1996, the pool was the crowning jewel. It remains one of the few centers with a therapy pool in this region.

Because Center executive director Jennifer Kistler is a swimmer herself, she understands how beneficial time in the



Jake "swooshes" in the water to relax his hips

water can be. When her daughter, Michelle, was born with spina bifida, Jennifer had a pool built in her back yard. Michelle, who died in 2003, had no use of her legs but became a powerful swimmer, giving her greater confidence. Because the benefits were so obvious, for years Jennifer allowed the Kistler therapists to bring kids to her pool.

What Jake does in the pool isn't much different than what any other child does but it's different for Jake. On land, he uses a walker but in the water, it's another story.

"It's amazing to see legs that don't move on land working like this in the water," physical therapist Adele Glensky says during a recent pool session with Jake. "They can do things in the water they've never done before."

His mother agrees.

"We've only been doing it a few weeks, but I definitely notice a difference with him getting around in our pool," Carolyn says. "Now, he doesn't want to cling to you."

Jake began therapy at the Kistler Center when he was about 5 months old. Carolyn says he was behind in all of his developmental milestones and, although their struggle isn't over, she sees progress. "I always wonder, if we hadn't come to the Kistler Center, would he have been able to sit up, crawl and use his walker?"

And improvement continues. Sometimes, Carolyn said, Jake will let go of his walker and just stand there and he's able to "cruise" while holding onto things around the house. One time, Carolyn remembers, she noticed Jake and his 2-year-old sister, Molly, had gone outside without telling her. She found the two of them in their older



Jake works on upper body strength & mobility with Adele Glensky

brother's treehouse -- Jake's walker sitting at the bottom of the tree.

Aquatic therapy starts where the kids are, just like in swimming lessons. The kids have to be comfortable, both physically and emotionally. The Kistler pool is heated and the warm water helps them relax and helps their muscle tone. Adele said the goal is to get arms and legs working together, which is more difficult for some children than you would imagine.

About three dozen kids have aquatic therapy each week. The Center has a 1-on-1-plus-1 policy, which means one child, one therapist and one other person for safety. Adele uses floating devices to get Jake into different positions in the water. She puts a "pillow" behind his head or gives him a noodle to hang on to and encourages him to move around in the water but Jake needs a goal. He's not going to do all that work to get across the pool for nothing.

Jake and Adele are never still. Even while he sits on the stairs in the pool, Adele is stretching the muscles in his feet while Jake unknowingly works the muscles in his hands by showering her with a squirt toy -- this only after he has stood in the water and stretched to retrieve it.

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Aquatic Therapy Makes a Big Splash *continued*

"The body is lighter in water and allows the kids to get upright easier," Adele says. "They're not inhibited by gravity in the water like on land."



Physical Therapist Kristin Perdue helps Jake improve strength & balance during land therapy

The left side of Jake's body is more involved, so Adele encourages him to reach for toys and pour water with his left hand. He occasionally struggles to put his right hand into play but he's so involved in what he's doing, he quickly turns back to his task.

Using the pulling motion similar to what you see on a BowFlex infomercial, Jake struggles against the resistance of the water to "crash" Styrofoam barbells in front of him. He repeats this exercise - or trick, if you're Jake - to the delight of his audience. The bigger the laugh, the bigger the crash.

Jake gets "land" and "water" therapy, as well as speech therapy and occupational therapy, several times a week from different Kistler therapists, which Adele thinks is a good idea. "More than one therapist gives you more sets of eyes," she says.

His mother's eyes are also watching. "He gets around in the pool just as well as anybody else." Carolyn says wistfully.



Jake Self

"I feel like I've dedicated half my life to therapy and I wouldn't do it if I didn't believe in it," Carolyn says. "Having the Kistler Center is crucial. We're fortunate that we have jobs and good insurance but without the Kistler Center, a lot of kids would have to go without therapy."

But that's all a little too complicated for Jake. To him, it's all just another day at the pool.



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March 4, 2006 - September 7, 2006

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Corrections

If we have reported your gift incorrectly or failed to include your gift, please call the Kistler Center at 785-4677. Thank you for your support!



OPPORTUNITIES

Currently seeking speech-language pathologist and occupational therapist. For more information, contact Jennifer Kistler at 479.785.4677. www.kistlercenter.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Celebrity Classic - 12th Annual September 29 - October 8

Friday & Saturday, September 29 & 30
Bowling/Billiards/Poker Tournament
at *Bowling World*

Saturday, September 30

14th Annual Survivors' Challenge 5K Run
(RRCA Grand Prix Series Race) and
2K Wellness Walk at 8 a.m.
in *Beautiful Historic Downtown Fort Smith*
WALK WITH THE KISTLER GROUP FOR FREE!

Saturday & Sunday, September 30 & October 1

Celebrity Classic Criterium (Cycling)
at 8 a.m. in *Historic Downtown Van Buren*

Friday, October 6

Community Day for Celebrities
*Celebrities Visit Beneficiaries in the
Community*

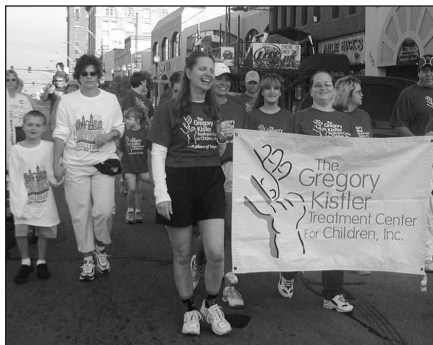
The "Celebrity Classic" Spirit Gala
In Memory of Mac McGehee
Fort Smith Convention Center

Saturday, October 7

Celebrity Tennis Tournament at 9 a.m.
"TENNIS BALL DROP" & Exhibition
at 12 p.m. at *Fort Smith Athletic Club*

Saturday & Sunday, October 7 & 8

Celebrity Golf Tournament
at *Eagle Crest Golf Course in Van Buren*
and *Fianna Hills Country Club in Fort Smith*
6:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.



Candy Bar Sales October - December

"World's Finest Chocolate" gourmet candy bars in a variety of flavors this year! We will have 40 bar cases with milk chocolate and almonds, milk chocolate and caramel, milk chocolate crisp and plain milk chocolate. Each bar includes a coupon for a free Big Mac. These delicious candy bars are available at the Center or from volunteers within the community for only \$1 each.



Knights of Columbus 21st Annual Oktoberfest

Friday, October 13th, 5:00 pm - 11:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 14th, 11:00 am - 11:00 p.m.

Columbus Acres on Brooken Hill, off Hwy. 71 South -
donations accepted at admission.

A Celebration of German culture
benefitting the Kistler Center. Bratwurst, sauerkraut,
German potato salad, apple strudel, hamburgers,
funnel cakes, and more, **AlpenMusikanten Band**
playing 7-11 p.m. Friday night; Saturday 3-5 p.m. &
7-11 p.m. Local performances Saturday afternoon,
starting at 1:00 p.m. Children's activities, arts and
crafts, silent auction, donation drawing featuring
2 tickets on Northwest Airlines.

Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 996



National Philanthropy Day

November 14, 2006 - Tuesday Established by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, National Philanthropy Day is a time to honor all who change the world through a giving heart. The staff and board of directors of the Kistler Center celebrate and appreciate all our donors each and every day of the year.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

A Night in the Caribbean
Saturday, May 5, 2007



Teddy Bear Tea

December 2, 2006 - Saturday

Great Fun for children ages 2-10!
Admission - \$15 for each child
and one adult; each additional
adult \$5. 5 x 7 portrait with
Santa and story time with
Mrs. Claus. Lunch, goody bags,
and a variety of seasonal
entertainment. Wonderful
donation drawing prizes
and "Beary" nice door prizes.

Holiday Inn City Center



Cell Phone Drive

On-going

**Take that old cell
phone out of
retirement and
put it to work!
Participate in the
used cell phone drive.**



The Kistler Center will receive a monetary
donation for each working cell phone donated. The
better the phone, the more money we will receive.
Older model phones may not generate any funds,
but they will be recycled properly.

All donations are tax-deductible. Consult
your tax advisor to determine the value.
Donation receipts may be generated at
www.cellulardonation.org.

To donate, please bring your used cell phone to the
Kistler Center, Moore Dental Care, Rhodes
Chevrolet, or Sutherlands. Don't forget to erase
the address book and any personal information.

Printer Cartridge Collection Drive

On-going

**A great way to help raise funds for the
Kistler Center with little effort and no cost!**

Collect used Canon, Dell, HP, and Lexmark
printer cartridges from friends, family, and your
office to help Kistler's Kids. To donate, bring
your cartridges to the Kistler Center, Moore
Dental Care, Rhodes Chevrolet, or Sutherlands.
Please put cartridges in a plastic bag.

The Kistler Center will receive \$2 for every used
cartridge collected.

**To request a collection
box for either of our
on-going events, call
Kathie at 479.785.4677.**



For more information, contact
Kathie at 479.785.4677

Miss Martha To Leave After 27 Years

by Donna Payne

After 27 years at The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center for Children, physical therapist Martha Osburn is retiring.

She began talking to center executive director Jennifer Kistler last spring about leaving. Martha now is down to treating about half a dozen patients one day a week.

Martha was pregnant with her oldest son when she started working in 1979 as the second therapist at the Kistler Center, then located in the old Sparks Nurses School building. She and her husband, Bill, have two sons: Josh and Nathan. Josh is finishing his 4th year of medical school in Dallas and is beginning interviews for his neurosurgery residency. Nathan is a scientist at the University of California at San Francisco doing medical research for children with brain disorders. He plans on attending medical school to become a research physician.

She now will devote more time to her extended family, including visiting her sons, and her work as coordinator of parish religious education at Immaculate Conception Church, which she has been doing on and off for about four years.

"It's time for me to look at other things in my life. I have so many interests, and ministry is one of them," Martha said. She also believes her work at the Kistler Center has been a ministry.

"I have seen miracles happen," Martha says earnestly. "The joy the children has brought me – that happened every day." "Having worked with us since nearly the beginning, Martha has a special

understanding and gratitude for what this building and the Kistler Center represents that will be missed when she is gone," says executive director Jennifer Kistler. "She has been a life long friend of my family as well as a skilled and dedicated therapist. We expect Martha to have a continued presence in our mission."

Empowering parents has been a big part of Martha's focus while at the Center because she believes continuing therapy at home is of the utmost importance to progress for children.



Martha Osburn helps Garrison Dodd build upper body strength.

"I've really loved treating babies, giving those young mothers confidence that they can do this," she says. "They don't always understand what a difference they can make in their children's lives."

The biggest change she has seen has come from progress in medical treatment, as well as early intervention. While in training at Easter Seals in Dallas in the 1970s, they never saw patients before they were 2 years old. "When I first started treating extreme premies, they had more severe problems," Martha says. "Now, because of medical advances and early treatment, that same number of weeks (gestation) doesn't mean the same outcome."

A recent occurrence has been the most rewarding for Martha. She has begun to reconnect with some of her early patients who are now young adults.

"They just wanted their old physical therapist because they knew I would understand their bodies and what they had been through. They hoped I would remember things and I did."

Recently, a 27-year-old former patient who had contacted Martha suggested to a friend who has cerebral palsy that he also call her. He didn't realize it, but Martha had treated his friend too.

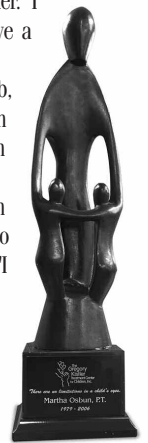
She usually talks with them over lunch, helping them come up with a home program to work on some of the difficulties they are currently having. But the help goes both ways. Martha said she came out of the visits with an education, too. The young men were able to share with Martha what was important to them about therapy and how they were feeling when they were 12 or why they did something they did at the time.

She said it made her feel good to know these young men were also helping each other. "I was so proud of my boys. They have a great spirit."

As far as that final day on the job, it will be bitter sweet for the woman that has seen an explosion in growth for the Center.

"I walk around the clinic and listen to the children laughing. I just so appreciate the clinic," Martha says. "I might retire but I'll never leave."

Martha Osburn's 2006 Commemorative Service Award



SHARING THE SPIRIT

GERRY MCEVOY



Gerry McEvoy, Board President, traveled to his hometown of Dublin, Ireland, at the invitation of Athletics Ireland. He was invited to attend a reunion of 1976 national champions in track and field. Gerry was the 1976 National Shot Put Champion and Irish national record holder from 1978-1992. This event was held in conjunction with the 2006 Irish National Track and Field Championships.

LEDA LEE



Leda Lee, Schedule Coordinator, joined the Kistler Center staff in March, 2006. She has primary responsibility for managing the patient schedules while striving to meet the needs of our families. Leda has lived in the Fort Smith area for nine years with her husband, Rick, and three children, Tim, Nathan, and Matt. She enjoys camping, swimming, and spending time with her family.

JENNIFER GRAYSTON



Jennifer Grayston, Occupational Therapist, interned at the Kistler Center this past spring and joined our staff in August, 2006. She is a recent graduate of the University of Central Arkansas with a Master of Science degree in occupational therapy. Jennifer enjoys going for walks and watching movies with her fiancé, Ilya. She leads an active, healthy lifestyle of daily exercising and vegetarian eating.

JENNIFER KISTLER



Jennifer Kistler, Executive Director, was named the 2006 Boss of the Year by the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinators Association during the Summit conference in Little Rock. The award is given annually to a boss who exhibits outstanding leadership and provides an environment for effective and efficient volunteer management. "There are so many wonderful volunteers and people that are giving in our community, it's nice to be a part of that. It's quite an honor," Jennifer said. She is a registered nurse, a certified volunteer manager and a member of the River Valley Chapter of the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinators Association.



MICHELLE NEEDHAM



Michelle Needham, a senior at the University of Arkansas Fort Smith is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature with a concentration in rhetoric and fine arts. She joined the Kistler Center staff in July 2006, and conducts maintenance of the pool area, equipment safety inspections, and various other endeavors on the grounds. She has another occupation, graphic design. Michelle lives in Van Buren with her husband, Gary, and an adorable cat. In her spare time she loves to write, paint with oils and acrylics, experience new things, travel, and spend time with family and friends.

SHIRAE WALLACE



Shirae Wallace types 95 words per minute. It is this skill that recently landed her the position as typist for our therapy staff. In this role, she is responsible for preparing and disseminating evaluation reports and other correspondence and for responding to medical record requests. Shirae is a 2006 graduate of Van Buren High School and plans to attend night classes at UAFS to become an elementary school teacher. She lives with her parents, Dave and Mindi, and brothers, Spenser and Cade. Shirae enjoys reading, writing, traveling, and photography.

October is Physical Therapy Month!



The Michelle Kistler Memorial Endowment Fund

In loving memory of Michelle Kistler, the Board of Directors of The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center For Children, Inc., has established an Endowment Fund. This endowment, through its earnings, will be used to help fund needed therapy to more of our special children so the Board of Directors can continue the philosophy of never turning a child away for financial reasons. Additionally, as the Kistler Center's Board directs, some earnings may be directed to operational activities to sustain and grow the Kistler Center's ability to provide the most up-to-date occupational therapy, physical therapy, and/or speech-language therapy possible for children. Contributions may be made as a single gift or spread over three to five years.



WISH LIST

For oral-motor activities

Sour candy • Sour balls • Sweet tarts • Lemons Graham crackers
Beef jerky • Pretzels, small packs • Chips, small packs • Popcorn,
small packs • Carrots • Nuts • Gum • Gummy candy Starburst candy
• Tootsie rolls • Taffy • Caramel • Hot tamales Twizzlers • Bubbles
Whistles • Toothbrushes, child size soft

For hand activities

Floam • Koosh balls • Playdoh – Playdoh brand only • Squish balls
Tangles • Worry stone

Other

Double A batteries-lots of them • Don't Wake Daddy game
Electrical tape • Industrial paper shredder, confetti type • Razor scooter

Specialty items

Aquatic aids, ~\$30 each • Switch toys, ~\$50 each
For more information, call Jennifer at 785-4677

One Size Fits All



Have you been searching for just the right gift? One with special meaning? Then consider making a donation to the Kistler Center in honor of a friend or family member. That "gift" will not only mean a lot to the recipient, but it will also mean continued care for children in need.

Special Letters From Our Friends



7/5/06

Dear Julaine and Staff,
I wanted to thank you for all you did for Cayla. Even though she did not require continued speech therapy I appreciate your "second" opinion and for all the material you provided for us to work with her at home.

We were only at the Center a couple of times, my eyes were opened to what a wonderful facility Fort Smith has, we are so lucky to have the Center for our kids.

Thank you again

Doreen & Steve Cider

SERVICES PROVIDED

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Early intervention
- Developmental guidance
- Sitting, crawling, walking
- Feeding, talking
- Playing, dressing
- Reading, writing readiness
- Aquatic therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Evaluation
- Treatment
- Home program
- School consultation
- Equipment recommendation
- Equipment loan locker
- Wheelchair evaluation
- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy
- Language therapy
- Augmentative communication

479.785.4677
www.kistlercenter.org

The Gregory Kistler Center accepts and acknowledges gifts and memorials in honor of friends and loved ones.

Enclosed: _____ *In Honor/Memory Of (if you wish)*

_____ \$25 Name _____

_____ \$50 Address _____

_____ \$100 City/State/Zip _____

_____ Other We will send notification of your contribution to the family.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Please mail your contribution to
 The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center • 3304 South M Street • Fort Smith, AR 72903

I (we) will support **The Michelle Kistler Memorial Endowment Fund**, that will be used to help fund needed therapy to more of our special children so we can continue our philosophy of never turning a child away for financial reasons. I (we) commit to this fund a total of \$_____ to be given as follows.

(Please indicate one.) One-time 3-years 5-years

\$_____ Monthly \$_____ Semiannually

\$_____ Quarterly \$_____ Annually

Beginning Date: _____/_____/_____ Enclosed with pledge card \$ _____

Please Print Name/Names _____

Mailing Address _____ Phone (_____) _____

City/State/Zip _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Please consider the Kistler Center in your will.



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