

The CARING TOUCH

The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center For Children, Inc.

Volume 14, Number 1

Spring 2004

A Boy Named Willie



Willie Bradshaw is an amazing six year-old boy who has come a long way, thanks to his great-grandparents and his therapists at the Kistler Center. Willie was born with a rare form of muscular dystrophy known as Congenital Myotonic Dystrophy. This form, like all cases of muscular dystrophy (MD), is hereditary. Unlike other types of MD, however, muscle weakness is accompanied by myotonia, a delayed relaxation of muscles after contraction. Many symptoms are present at birth, hence the term congenital. These symptoms include a profound weakness that manifests first in the muscles of the face, neck, hands, forearms, and feet.

When Willie was born, his family knew something was wrong. According to his great-grandmother and caretaker, Edna Rushing, "Willie was like a limp washrag." He was flown from Hastings Indian Hospital in Tahlequah to Tulsa's St. Francis Hospital within an hour after birth for intensive pediatric care. He couldn't suck, and had to have a feeding tube inserted for weeks after birth.

As a result of his weakness, Willie could not raise his head, sit up, or crawl. When he was five months old, Edna and her

husband Marvin became his custodians and brought him to the Kistler Center. In addition to intensive treatment at the Center, the Rushings devoted much of their time to working with Willie to build his strength. Edna and Physical Therapist Lori Hannon got on their hands and knees to teach Willie to crawl, while Marvin tied brightly colored toys to Willie's stroller to encourage him to grasp, instinctively targeting his upper body strength and trunk control.

Edna believes that "Willie would not be where he is today without the Kistler Center. No one knows what the Kistler Center has done for this family." The Rushings utilized the Center's equipment loan program, borrowing a standing frame, a corner chair, and a walker for Willie as he learned to stand and then to walk.

Willie was also fitted for braces in the Kistler Center's Fabrication Room to stabilize his feet and ankles and to enable him to improve ambulation skills and lower extremity strength. As his strength increased, Willie graduated from leg braces above the ankle to braces below the ankle, and began to walk on his own without a walker. His teacher at school joked to Edna: "This little boy wasn't supposed to walk, now he's chasing the girls!"

Addressing his physical delays has certainly had a positive impact on his social, emotional, and cognitive development. By learning to jump off a bench and climb steps in therapy, Willie is able to tackle the 8" playground divider at school and enjoy recess!

In addition to the strides he has made physically, Willie has made quantum leaps in speech-language therapy within the last year as well. A year ago, Willie was withdrawn and unable to communicate with others, except to cry or call for Edna, whom he calls "Ma." His treatment program includes facial strengthening exercises, which allow his once-slack jaw to open and close for proper swallowing, eating, and articulation.

While he continues to develop his capacity for speech, Willie is using an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Device to



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A Boy Named Willie

supplement his communication. It is also teaching him grammar, syntax, and spelling as he learns to key in complex thoughts in sentences and paragraphs. With his new-found power of communication and the novelty of using a talking device so adeptly, Willie has become everyone's buddy at school, and he has opened up to staff, patients, and other children at the Kistler Center. Once shy of crowds, Willie was delighted to show off his AAC skills by talking to a large group of MASH students who toured the Center.

Willie's great-grandparents and his therapists have worked well together to bring him to this advanced level of



functioning, but Edna is quick to point out that it is Willie's determination that has gotten him this far. Speech-language pathologist Holly Goodnoh agrees, "Willie is amazing! The doctors said he would never walk. In spite of his disabilities, he is a wonderful, fun-loving boy. His great-grandparents have been a constant source of support to him, giving him everything he needs." It is this mutually supportive network of caring family members and treatment staff that enhances Willie's own efforts in therapy, and the same team approach that benefits all the children at the Kistler Center.

Looking for a great gift for Mother's Day?



Give Mom or the mother of your children a wonderful evening of great food and entertainment: bring her to **A Night in the Caribbean** at Beverly Enterprises Saturday night, May 8th. Or get a great deal on silent or live auction items for her

(or yourself!), while supporting the children of the Kistler Center. A variety of gift items will be auctioned, including weekend getaways, fine art, jewelry, pampering services, and tickets for two to the Caribbean on American Airlines.

At just \$50 a ticket (\$35 of which is tax deductible), you can enjoy unlimited food and beverages, including seafood and Bahaman-basted roast pork. An open bar will be available all evening, and a very special dessert will be featured: a cascading fountain of chocolate with a variety of fruit and other goodies to dip in the chocolate! Madame Bijoux Chocolatier will be on hand to explain the fine art of chocolate fondue.

If that weren't enough, Zero Mountain, Inc. is sponsoring the award-winning musicians of the **Barrio Band**, who will perform their unique blend of American, Caribbean, and Latin Jazz. Funky front man Al "Papa Rap" Lopez will even throw in a little Hip Hop Salsa. This is a musical experience you won't want to miss — *bring your dancing shoes!*

There will also be an opportunity to enter and win in the Drawdown event that evening. A Drawdown is a donation drawing in which the last name drawn wins; in this case, half the cash pot will be the prize. Cash Drawdown tickets will be available at the event for \$20 each, or \$15 each if purchased in advance with reserved event tickets.

Seating is limited, so make your reservations early. Special corporate tables are available for businesses or groups of eight, with multi-media advertising for the corporate sponsor and 8 Drawdown tickets included. Please call the Kistler Center for information or reservations.

SHARING THE SPIRIT



GENE BRUICK

Congratulations to Gene Bruick, a member of the Kistler Center's Advisory Board. Gene and his wife Ruth received the Mayor's

Good Neighbor Award for February. Gene and Ruth will also be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary May 15th!



BILL REYNOLDS

Bill Reynolds, a partner with the law firm of Nolan, Caddell & Reynolds, P.A. in Fort Smith, has received the 40 under 40 Award. A

distinction voted on by fellow businessmen, Bill was one of only two attorneys statewide named to the list. Bill is a member of the Kistler Center Board of Directors. He and his wife Alice have two children: a daughter Ashley and a new son William Grant, so they have much to celebrate.



RALPH SMITH

Advertising Plus, Inc., owned by Advisory Board member Ralph Smith, took home 13 Addy Awards. One of the awards was for the

logo design for *A Night in the Caribbean*. Congratulations to Ralph and his talented staff!

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November 1, 2003 - April 14, 2004

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Corrections

In the Fall 2003 Newsletter, Buddy & Jean Hendricks were listed under Contributions. Their gift was actually a Memorial for Bill Bower.

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!

Kistler Center Wish List

Feeding Therapy Items:

Animal cookies
Applesauce (ind. serving sizes)
Boxed juice drinks & Capri Sun pouches
Cereal
Goldfish crackers
Instant oatmeal packets
Jello mixed with fruit (ind. serving sizes)
M & M candies
Popcorn (ind. microwave bags)
Pretzels
Pudding (ind. containers of chocolate & vanilla)
Smarties candy
Yogurt

Occupational Therapy Items:

2 16" Butcher paper rolls (white)
Children's scissors
Glitter glue
Washable glue & gluesticks
Hi Ho Cherry-O game
Magna Doodle
Washable markers
Washable tempera paint (small bottles)

To Build a Sensory Garden:

8-16 Railroad ties
1/2 Truckload of topsoil
Potted herbs (mint, thyme, rosemary, basil, etc.)
Sprinkling can
Shovel
Digging toys

Physical Therapy Items:

Electrical tape
Masking tape - 1" and 2" wide

2 "Back Jacks:" floor sitter chairs for therapists to work with babies, and for children with poor trunk control to sit for extended periods; ordered from therapy catalogues.
Child size: \$40, Adult size: \$60

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April Occupational Therapy Month

April 4th, Palm Sunday All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast Sacred Heart of Mary Church

8:00-11:00 am
Unlimited pancakes, sausage, biscuits & gravy, and beverages.

April 1st – April 30th "Your Receipt is Our Hope"

Burger King Drive for the Kistler Center

Burger King wants you to Have it Your Way and help Kistler Kids, too!

The Kistler Center will receive 10¢ for every receipt of food or drink purchased at any Burger King restaurant in Ft. Smith, Van Buren, Alma, and Poteau. Just place your receipts in the collection box at the inside counter or ask the drive-through associate to place your receipt in the box.



April 18th – 24th National Volunteer Week

May Better Hearing and Speech Month

May 8 – Saturday "A Night In the Caribbean" Beverly Enterprises

A dinner/dance with live and silent auction
Entertainment provided by the Award-winning **Barrio Band**. (see article on pg. 2)

Schedule of Events:

6:30 – 7:00 pm	Cocktails Silent Auction Cash Drawdown Sales
7:00 – 7:45 pm	Dinner & Dessert
7:45 – 8:45 pm	Live Auction
8:45 – 9:45 pm	The Barrio Band
9:45 pm	Close of Silent Auction Auction Checkout
9:45 – 11:30	The Barrio Band



May 24th – Monday Kistler Classic Fianna Hills Country Club

Registration: 10:30 am
Shotgun Scramble: 12:00 Noon
Sponsorship Opportunities:
Hole Sponsor: \$1000 – 4 players
Tee Sponsor: \$ 500 – 2 players
Green Sponsor: \$ 150 – no players
Entry Fees:

Team of 4: \$400 Individual: \$100
(Includes Lunch, Drinks, and Dinner)

Awards

Longest Drive
Longest Putt
Closest to the Pin

Door Prizes
*Lunch by
Schlotzsky's and
drinks courtesy
of Belle Pointe
Beverages &
Coca-Cola*



July 17th & 18th – Saturday & Sunday 17th Annual Classic Truckers & Cruisers

"All Truck Round-up & Car Corral" Columbus Acres

For More information, contact:
The Classic Truckers & Cruisers
(479)452-7299
dandph@msn.com



September 25th through October 2nd The Mercy Celebrity Classic

Saturday, September 25th
Survivor Challenge Walk/Run 8am – 10am
Cycling Criterium 10am – 5pm
Downtown Fort Smith

Sunday, September 26th
Cycling Criterium
Downtown Van Buren

*Tuesday, September 28th –
Thursday, September 30th*

Mixed Doubles Tennis
Fort Smith Athletic Club

Friday, October 1st

Celebrity Community Outreach
Pairings Party

Saturday, October 2nd
Golf Tournament

Eagle Crest Country Club
Tennis Tournament
Fort Smith Athletic Club
Celebrity Dinner Show
Holiday Inn City Center

Sunday, October 3rd

Golf Tournament
Fianna Hills Country Club
Tennis Tournament
Fort Smith Athletic Club
Celebrity Awards Dinner
Fianna Hills Country Club



For event information,
call (479) 785-4677



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To find out how, please call 785-4677.

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SERVICES PROVIDED

- 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

The Kistler Center is funded by your private donations, fund raising and third-party reimbursement.

Please consider the Kistler Center in your will.



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