For Rick Davis and his wife, Dr. Marlene Pinera, life is all about the kids. The love and care they’ve had for children started early on in both of their lives. However, it wasn’t until they adopted their son, Michael, that they decided to create a therapy center that will help change the lives of children who have disabilities.

Michael, who is four-and-a-half years old, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy when he was born and has needed therapy throughout his entire life. When Michael was taken through a therapy known as TheraSuit, he began to hold his head up on his own. This made Mr. Davis and Dr. Pinera wonder, “If he did this every day what would we get?”

“My motto is never give up and never surrender. I want him to be the best that he can be,” Dr. Pinera said. With the time and money that came along with all these appointments and therapy sessions, they realized something else needed to be done. The couple created an organization called Heaven’s Special Children. Through this organization they have received IRS approval to build a free therapy center for children who have disabilities.

(Continued on page 23 as, ‘Heaven’s Special Children’)
Welcome Readers

It is with great excitement that we release this ninth issue of ON PAR, marking the two-year anniversary of the Division of General Pediatrics’ public relations magazine. What started as a simple newsletter has grown into a complete publication, with features, profiles, news, and announcements relevant to the interests of those whose work involves helping children.

With this issue we introduce our new Assistant Editor, Kendall Williamson. Kendall comes to us from the UF School of Nursing, where she is completing her senior year. Her cover story article on Heaven’s Special Children provides a glimpse into this talented writer’s many capabilities. Kendall has worked as a Volunteer Research Assistant for the division, and is slated to also begin work as a co-author on a targeted obesity intervention study. She is a student leader, an advanced scholar, and an honor to have on staff in each of her volunteer roles.

On the horizon is perhaps the most exciting milestone of all, the production of an ON PAR website to better serve our readers. Thank you for your interest in our publication, which has allowed us to grow in our endeavors to inform and empower pediatrician-researchers.

For the benefit of children,
Heidi Saliba
**Research News and Announcements**

**Free Patient Education Resources**
Credit ARNP Rosellen Dedlow with finding exciting resources available to those with interests in helping children: free downloadable health and nutrition posters from [www.learningzonexpress.com](http://www.learningzonexpress.com). The company, which offers a range of fun-to-read educational materials, makes creative new posters available every month. Free posters are but one aspect of the company’s website, which features traditional and multimedia products at affordable prices. Materials for ages pre-K through adult are available.

**Calls for Papers**
The *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics* has issued a call for papers related to “the role of genetics and genomics in education, development, and pediatrics/pediatric conditions” for a special issue to be published in mid 2010. Deadline for submission is January 1, 2010; visit [http://jdbp.edmgr.com](http://jdbp.edmgr.com) for submission guidelines.

*Epidemiologic Reviews* announced a call for papers for a 2012 issue on the theme of epidemiologic approaches to injury and violence. “Submission of manuscripts may also cover specific topics related to, for example, child abuse, suicide, drowning, firearm injuries and deaths, fires and burns, motor vehicle crashes and distracted drivers, occupational injuries, prescription drug abuse, and sports injuries,” among other items. Deadline is March 1, 2011; see [http://epirev.oxfordjournals.org/](http://epirev.oxfordjournals.org/) for more information.

**PAS Reminder**

**Attention All Research Coordinators!**
Research Coordinators in The University of Florida’s Health Science Center held a membership meeting October 1 to discuss plans for the formation of a consortium. The group was formed for educational, networking, and supportive purposes relevant to the needs and interests of research coordinators. Membership is open to full-time, part-time, and volunteer research coordinators in the UF Health Science Center. For more information contact co-leader Kelly Kenzik at kkenzik@ichp.ufl.edu.

**Send your research news and announcements to hsaliba@peds.ufl.edu.**
As one of the nation’s leading provider service networks, the Ped-I-Care organization has just completed another milestone in its commitment to quality care: approval of its 2011 cultural competency (CCP) plan. Federal regulations require that all health plans that participate in Medicaid must have a written cultural competency plan describing the health plan’s program to ensure that services are provided in a culturally competent manner to all enrollees, including those with limited English proficiency. This plan must be evaluated annually and updated based on the results of the evaluation.

Last year’s plan was the first for Ped-I-Care, and its focus was on establishing a basic understanding of the concept as a central component of quality care. “Beyond the Basics: A Proactive Approach to Culturally-Appropriate Client Communications and Service Delivery,” as it was entitled, laid the foundation for the 2011 draft, which was devised to further expand employees’ knowledge and understanding of the communicative cornerstones important in health care. Both drafts were co-authored by Dr. Onyekachukwu Osakwe, a physician from Nigeria who is completing an MPH degree at UF and hoping to begin a residency in orthopedics.

He was invited as a co-author based upon his pivotal role in studies conducted in General Pediatrics, as well as his aptitude for forming alliances, bridging communications, and navigating challenging circumstances with leadership and poise. The new plan, entitled, “Building the Framework for Learning and Leadership: Understanding and Applying Cornerstone Components of Intercultural Communication,” reflects Dr. Osakwe’s commitment to excellence in all aspects of patient care.

“Dr. Osakwe’s contributions are remarkable,” said Nancy Giunta, Executive Director of the program. “In addition to his proficiencies as a physician, we have benefited from his intercultural and linguistic skills sets,” she said.

The 2010 plan may be reviewed at Ped-I-Care’s website, http://pedicare.peds.ufl.edu. The 2011 plan will be uploaded in January.
**ON PAR Volunteer Staff Positions Available**

*ON PAR* Magazine, the Division of General Pediatrics’ Public Relations News Magazine, Announces Openings for the Following Positions:

- Writer
- Features Editor
- News Editor
- Print and Online Designer

These volunteer positions are open to UF students and UF/Shands employees. Join this growing team and gain experience in writing and publishing! Network with some of the area's leading pediatricians and researchers.

If interested, contact Heidi Saliba at hsaliba@peds.ufl.edu.

**Hey parents,**

Being in *ON PAR* is so much fun! Send your kids’ photos to hsaliba@peds.ufl.edu for consideration for use in an upcoming issue. You will get to review the photo and how it is used prior to publication. No copyrighted photos (professionally-made), please.

**Watch for it in the Spring 2011 issue:**
- ICHP, General Peds partners in pediatrics research
- CAPP achieving unprecedented successes
- The Source Program addresses domestic violence, assists with establishing safe living conditions

**Mark Your Calendars**

- **PAS Workshop**
  - Acceptance Notification
  - Friday, November 12
- **Gators March for Babies**
  - Sunday, November 14
- **Pediatrics Science Days**
  - Thursday and Friday, March 10 – 11
- **PAS 2011 Annual Meeting**
  - Saturday, April 30 – Tuesday, May 3

*Above: Colton K., age 5. Used with permission.*
Powerhouse Partnerships in Pediatrics: 
UF & Shands Pediatric Endocrinologists
International Leaders in Findings, Funding

Dr. Jennifer Miller, who specializes in treating children with Prader-Willi Syndrome and early onset obesity, devotes the majority of her time to clinical research. Her NIH-funded project, conducted with Dr. Daniel Driscoll of Pediatric Genetics, examines brain development and growth in children with these conditions. “In Prader-Willi syndrome you can prevent the obesity if you know the diagnosis early, but we typically do not see other children with early childhood obesity until they are already obese,” said Dr. Miller. The results of this study may indicate that by the time obese children are seen in clinic for treatment of obesity, the excess fat tissue may have already affected their brain development.

UF’s Diabetes Center of Excellence – Website Quick Facts

- November is Diabetes Awareness Month. The Center is accepting photo entries for the third annual “Blue Circle” contest. Navigate the ‘About Us’ tab for details.
- The ‘My Diabetes’ tab offers parents and children a wealth of resources relevant to the management of pediatric diabetes.
- The ‘Our Research’ tab features one-stop shopping for information on current studies, laboratory services, researcher profiles, and TrialNet affiliates.
- The ‘For Professionals’ tab may be of interest to physicians, nurses, and budding investigators in search of internship and other opportunities.
- On the ‘Clinical Care’ tab, site visitors may explore the Diabetes Self-Management Education program among other topics.

http://diabetes.ufl.edu/
When describing the pediatric endocrinology team, it’s difficult to know where to start. The impacts of their research and clinical leadership are evident around the globe. In this spotlight special section, we offer a glimpse into their contributions, which are of benefit to children throughout the world.

Dr. Janet Silverstein, Division Chief of Pediatric Endocrinology and Program Director for the Pediatric Endocrine Fellowship, is an internationally-renowned physician, researcher, and educator. Her work and influence span the globe: from Ecuador and Argentina to Canada, Italy, and the Czech Republic. Dr. Silverstein is known for her commitment to quality care, best practices, and research advocacy. Within the US, she’s held leadership positions with the Lawson Wilkins Pediatric Endocrine Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Diabetes Association, and the national Diabetes Education Program among others. Locally she established the Pediatrics After Hours clinic and the UF Obesity/Lipid Clinic, which works to connect doctors, nurses, and other practitioners around the state with children whose conditions are complicated and/or challenging.

Dr. Desmond Schatz has garnered more than $27 million in university-based, industry-sponsored, and NIH-funded projects since 1988. As professor and associate chair of the Department Pediatrics, he’s currently leading several NIH, Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, and industry-sponsored studies aimed at preventing or halting the progression of type 1 diabetes.
Speaking of Statistics

By Erik Black, Ph.D.

Sometimes researchers need to ask sensitive questions, such as, “Have you ever used an illegal drug?,” “Have you ever falsified a legal document,” or, “Have you cheated on an examination?” Researchers understand that those participating in a survey will often respond to a sensitive question with a ‘socially desirable response’. This type of response bias means that individuals will tend to overreport ‘good’ behavior and underreport ‘bad’ behavior. There are a number of domains that may elicit biased responses, including self-report on topics such as:

- Sexual behavior and fantasies
- Personal income and earnings
- Self-esteem
- Compliance with medication
- Religion
- Patriotism
- Bigotry
- Intellectual ability/achievements
- Acts of violence
- Illegal acts

So, what’s a researcher to do? There are assessments of social desirability, The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS), a 33-item assessment of an individual’s tendency to think and behave in a socially desirable fashion, for example. Unfortunately it is often unfeasible to ask an additional 33 questions on top of your survey, which may be lengthy in nature.

An interesting solution to the dilemma associated with sensitive questions was developed by D.G. Horvitz in 1967. Horvitz suggested using two questions, the sensitive question and an unrelated question, and the use of a randomization device to determine which question the respondent should answer.

For example:
Q1: Have you ever used an illegal drug? Yes or no?
Q2: Flip open a book (any book) and answer: is the page number even? Yes or no?
In order to determine which question to answer, the respondent will flip a coin. If the coin lands on heads the respondent answers question 1. If the coin lands on tails the respondent answers question 2. The researcher doesn’t know the outcome of the coin flip, so he or she also does not know which question was answered by the respondent. Because of this, anxiety on the part of the participant is reduced, which increases the chances for getting honest answers on survey questions.

We can diagram the probability of yes to either question, in which p=probability:

The probability of the coin flip is known (.5), additionally the probability of the response to Q2 is known (.5). Naturally we don’t know the probability of responses to Q1. But, we can solve for it using a simple algebraic equation:

If P(yes) = ½ * p + ½ * ½ then P (yes) can be simplified to p/2 * ½, if we have n participants and n1 participants responded ‘yes’ to Q1 then P(yes to Q1) = 2(n1/n – ¼).

Let’s take an example: We survey 400 college students using a random response model for the questions:

Q1: Have you ever cheated on an exam? Yes or no?
Q2: Flip open a book (any book) and answer: is the page number even? Yes or no?

The students use a coin flip to determine whether to answer Q1 or Q2. If heads, the student answers Q1, tails, they answer Q2. Suppose 302 individuals responded yes to the question. Using the formula above:

P(yes to cheating on an examination) = 2(n1/n – ¼) = 2(160/400 – ¼) = .505

Thus, using the random response model, we can estimate that 50.5% of our sample of college students has cheated on an examination.

References
In less than three years The Sebastian Ferrero Foundation has been successful in advocating for improvements in pediatric services, galvanizing the community, and expanding its region of support.

Since its establishment, the Foundation has not only fundraised and advocated for a full-service, state-of-the-art children’s hospital, but has also pushed for a dedicated pediatric emergency room. In May 2010 UF&Shands, under Dr. Guzick’s leadership, announced a five-year strategic plan entitled, “Forward Together.” The board approved, as a first step, creation of a dedicated pediatric emergency room by reconfiguring the previous emergency room in the north tower at Shands. It is due to be complete in the summer of 2011. This is a major milestone for The Sebastian Ferrero Foundation and its supporters, and the 2010 Noche de Gala event proceeds will benefit the $5 million project.

The third annual Noche de Gala event was held Saturday, October 23rd at The Besiu Collection in Micanopy. Hosted by honorary chairs Silvia and Benjamin Leon, Jr. for the
second year in a row, the event has been more and more successful every year. University of Florida Trustee Cynthia F. O’Connell, this year’s event chair, was instrumental in bringing regional event co-chairs to work to support the foundation and help increase awareness. The 2010 event leadership included co-chairs from Lake City, Tallahassee, Gainesville, and Ocala along with Coach Billy Donovan as the celebrity chair.

With support from across the state, Noche de Gala 2010, “The Grand Ball,” was a tremendous success with more than 1,000 guests in attendance, more than 120 sponsors, 200 volunteers, 200 silent auction items, and $250,000 from event proceeds donated to the dedicated pediatric emergency department project. This year’s gala received more than $300,000 of in-kind media donations, and the silent auction generated $80,000. Founders Horst and Luisa Ferrero announced a pledge of another $1 million to the Foundation over the next five years to further advance the shared vision with UF&Shands.

The UF&Shands strategic plan includes a commitment to creating a children’s and women’s hospital within existing space of the north tower at Shands at UF. In addition to the emergency room, they are planning on dedicating four floors, the lobby, outpatient and inpatient units, and an elevator bank that will take patients and families to these four floors exclusively. Under the condition of final board approval and completion of a fundraising feasibility study, UF&Shands aims to invest approximately $100 million over the next several years in pursuit of this project. The plan is subject to philanthropy success and will create the

(Continued on page 22 as, ‘Sebastian Ferrero Foundation’)
Celebrations of Research

After the initial introduction of the Celebrations of Research section that appeared in ON PAR’s March 2010 issue, we again present listings of newly-accepted textbook chapters and publications from those who work in the Department of Pediatrics at UF. This feature is slated to also run in the spring 2011 issue, with listings from November 2010 onward. Listings of presentations (including posters), editorship positions, and research grants and awards are also welcome. Send your submissions to hsaliba@peds.ufl.edu for publication consideration.

TEXTBOOK CHAPTER

PUBLICATIONS
“Adolescents with Life-Threatening Illnesses.” Caprice Knapp, Gwendolyn P. Quinn, Devin Murphy, Rebecca Brown, and Vanessa Madden. American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, 27(2):139-44.


Kellen B., age 12. Used with permission.
PUBLICATIONS


“Measuring Quality of Life in Pediatric Palliative Care: Challenges and Potential Solutions.” I-Chan Huang, Elizabeth A. Shenkman, Vanessa L. Madden, Susan Vadaparampil, Gwendolyn Quinn, and Caprice A. Knapp. Palliative Medicine, 24(2):175-82.


PUBLICATIONS, continued


Donations Needed for Families!
- Cabinet & Door Safety Latches
- Food or Food Store Gift Cards
- Educational Toys
- Baby Items
- Personal Hygiene Products

Contact Annie McPherson at (352) 334-1332 or mcphea@peds.ufl.edu.
The Parents’ Pages:  
An At-A-Glance Guide for  
Busy Moms and Dads

Time to Get Healthy!
Free Handbook for Healthy Eating and Living
Ever wonder what it means to eat healthily? How do you make good choices for your children’s meals? WellPoint and the American Dietetic Association have teamed up to provide a free, downloadable brochure entitled, “Healthy habits for Healthy Kids: A Nutrition and Activity Guide for Parents.” This easy-to-read, 13-page booklet discusses the food pyramid, family activities, and ways to help children who are overweight.
http://www.wellpoint.com/healthy_parenting/docs/Healthy_Habits.pdf

At Your Local Library
Some Alachua County Library branches offer free yoga and pilates classes, which may be available to teens. Visit www.aclib.us for details.

Now Hear (and See) This!
Free sign language classes are offered on Mondays at 5:30 at the Alachua Branch Library in meeting Room A. From fingerspelling and basic word signs to ASL sentence structure and a brief history of the deaf culture, this class is organized to empower both individuals and families. Class size is limited and participants must register. Contact Ann LeZotte at alezotte@aclib.us for more details or to get signed up.

Other Alachua County Library branches offer free ASL classes as well; visit www.aclib.us for a listing of locations then click on the events calendar on the left-hand side.
The Parents’ Pages: An At-A-Glance Guide for Busy Moms and Dads

Tips for Those Participating in Research

Like many parents who bring their children to UF pediatrics locations, you may have been asked to participate in research. UF physician-researchers are leaders in their field, and conduct ongoing research to help inform their practices and decisions. When you are asked to participate in research, keep the following in mind:

1) You do not have to participate in any research project. With most projects, your choice will not affect your child’s care or your insurance in any way.
2) Your health privacy will remain protected to the fullest extent of the law.
3) All research participants should understand what is involved if they choose to participate, and how to safely withdraw from the study if they change their mind.
4) You should be provided a copy of the Informed Consent Form, which will list the important phone numbers of those who are running the study along with all the details of your participation.
5) You may or may not be compensated for your participation. Not all studies offer direct benefits to the participants. Some studies may pose risks to the participants; all known risks should be listed on the Informed Consent Form. Some risks, however, may be unknown.
“There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million.”

— Walt Streightiff
In April 2008 our lives were changed forever. Our youngest son Dale, who is six, was diagnosed with Duchenne.

Duchenne is a progressive muscle disease that robs boys of the use of their muscles and strength and eventually their lives. Dale will be in a wheelchair by 11 or 12 years of age. Since our hearts and lungs are muscles too these boys will suffer cardiac and respiratory failure. Boys with Duchenne rarely live past their late teens or early twenties. There is presently no cure for Duchenne. Current treatments are long-term and can have difficult, unpleasant, and crippling side effects. Duchenne is 100% fatal.

No one should know the pain of listening to the dreams of their child knowing that they will never come true. We cannot sit by idly and watch our baby die a slow and agonizing death. We can’t let this happen! We are committed to stopping this disease from taking his body.

We need your help to save Dale’s life and the lives of the 20,000 more boys that are diagnosed with Duchenne each year. We are in a race against time. These boys get weaker each day. Dale has already lost his ability to run, jump and play like his peers. Our goal is to stop this dreaded disease before it kills our child.

Duchenne research is extremely under-funded. Only five cents of every dollar collected by MDA goes to Duchenne; even then only a portion of that five cents goes to research. There are several promising studies that are taking place right now and many more that are awaiting funds to begin their research. Please help us fund these studies. It takes years to go from the research phase through the FDA approval process. We have to get all of these projects started if we are going to have time to save this generation of boys.

- Rick and Lelia Ginder, parents of Dale

Please consider a gift of research support this holiday season.
One hundred percent of all proceeds will go to finding a cure for Duchenne’s.

www.curedalesduchenne.com

The Gainesville Community Foundation
5214 SW 91 Drive, Suite A
Gainesville, FL 32608
Phone: (352) 367-0060
Fax: (352) 378-1718
office@gnvcf.org
Ways to Help Now

Support the Boys & Girls Clubs, “The Positive Place for Kids.” Volunteers are needed to assist as area assistants in day-to-day activities. Contact Keith Blanchard at (352) 372-5342 or visit www.myboysandgirlsclub.com.

Dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers are needed at Children’s Home Society of Florida’s Tot Spot Thrift Store to help sort, process, and price donations, and greet and assist customers. Contact Rebeka Burns at volunteermidflorida@chsfl.org or (352) 332-0955.

Toy and gift donations are needed for the 1,100+ children in our care. To shop for a child please contact us and we will share their wish list with you. Contact Lindsay Fox at (352) 244-1519 or lindsay.fox@pfsf.org.

Volunteers are needed for one hour each week to help children with their homework, reading, math, or as a mentor. Contact info@kidscountalachuacounty.org or visit http://www.kidscountalachuacounty.org.

Project Learning Tree encourages educators to incorporate outdoor learning into curriculums. PLT is in need of monetary donations to help provide supplies to schools. Please contact Nancy Peterson at (352) 846-0848 if interested.

Thanks to ConKerr Cancer, bright, cheerful pillowcases can be found in pediatric cancer wards of hospitals all across the country. Connect with a chapter and donate your time, your money, or your fabric. Take a look at all the things you could do in all the places. Visit http://www.conkerrcancer.net.

You can help the CAC by volunteering in the office or at our events, donating juice boxes, snacks, or supplies to the Center, or by making a donation. For more information on how you can help, please visit: www.ChildAdvocacyCenterGainesville.org.

Ronald McDonald House Charities is in need of individuals and groups to volunteer in a variety of ways including baking cookies, cleaning the House, and preparing meals! For more information visit http://www.rmhcncf.org/RMH_WEBSITE.

There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.
-Nelson Mandela
Good News from the IRB

In addition to settling into new offices and promoting and developing its staff, the IRB-01 is working to improve its submission and revision application processes along with its customer service. The board has recently been AHRP-accredited to work with the VA, and has its sights set on further expansion of its operations. According to Director Michael Mahoney, a new staff person has been hired to help PIs with their submissions, make minor paperwork corrections for them, and guide them through the ins and outs of the approval process. Contributing to this support is the development of an online submissions process by which all aspects of IRB communication might be more efficiently processed.

“The IRB is in a state of flux,” Mahoney said, and it is working to fine-tune several of their policies with consideration to the issues of communication and consistency. One change investigators need to be aware of is the recent reinforcement of a long-standing policy: after an initial submission, PIs might be requested to complete minor revisions within a 24- to 48-hour time window. In the past, researchers were granted two to three weeks. This one- to two-day window is reflective of the time that investigators have prior to their submission being sent to the board; it does not mean that entire submissions will be returned if the deadline is not met. The IRB approval process, as many are aware, is multi-faceted and linear in nature, and designed in such a way that obvious mistakes might be caught and corrected prior to final review. This is in place to facilitate investigators’ success with approvals.

Welcome New Residents

Lara Al-Ejeilat
Christina Burzynski
Kristina Carswell
Peter Carter
Lilly Chang
Eric Coon
Christine Cuevas
Christian Kegg

Cameron McDougald
Colette Meehan
Phalyka Dum
Elaine Tsukayama
Karla Torres
Anna Tsikouris
Nargis Waqar
Katie Wolter

Congratulations to the New Co-Chief Residents

Teresa Lynch
Meredith Mowitz
most feasible and realistic outcomes to benefit children. The Foundation is advocating and fundraising to support and serve as stewards in ensuring that the best interests of children and families are realized and protected.

Other successes the Foundation has advocated for include the EPIC electronic medical record system implemented at Shands, a UF College of Medicine new patient safety and quality of care curriculum, and a “Condition H” patient safety helpline. There has also been successful completion of the children’s hospital Independent Needs Analysis. This was a partnership between the Foundation and UF&Shands that yielded a shared vision of being, “the leading provider of pediatric health and wellness services in the state of Florida and a national leader in pediatric research, innovation, and education.”

Continuing collaboration between UF&Shands and The Sebastian Ferrero Foundation is central to the completion of the Foundation’s mission. The Foundation is credited with motivating Shands to prioritize children’s services and committing to transformative change. The process will not be completed overnight, but a great amount has been accomplished in three short years. Numerous endeavors are on the horizon for the continuation of what has already been a successful journey in overcoming tragedy with a passionate pursuit of contributing to the greater good.
disabilities such as cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, and neurological disorders. This facility will not be a replacement, but an addition to therapy the children are already receiving. It will contain the traditional physical and occupational therapy as well as a variety of therapies including hippotherapy, aquatherapy, and TheraSuit therapy. Holly Billings is an occupational therapist that has been working with Michael for two years and is also planning to be trained in hippotherapy. She has dedicated her time and effort and is excited to work with the kids that are able to come to the center. Mr. Davis and Dr. Pinera would like to bring in a therapist from Georgia to train others in each of the various therapies. “I’m not a therapist, I can’t do it, but I can build it so that they can do it,” Mr. Davis stated.

Therapy isn’t the only thing that Mr. Davis and Dr. Marlene are looking to do. They would also like to help children learn while they are at the facility. Tutors would come in to help teach the children and provide opportunities for one-on-one learning experiences. They would eventually like to combine the therapy center with a charter school. Mr. Davis has built a greenhouse to be used to benefit the children. He has heard that organic food might contribute to the children’s healing, and wants to use the greenhouse to organically raise foods for the kids.

Mr. Davis and Dr. Pinera want to share the therapy center with the community and open doors that are closed to so many parents with kids who have disabilities. It is being created to take off the financial burden on other people so that it benefits everyone. “We’re all about volunteering,” Mr. Davis said.

The facility will be set up so that it is friendly to all children, regardless of whether they have a handicap. Mr. Davis has already built a sandbox and a pirate ship treehouse that is wheelchair-accessible. He’s planning on building a zip line that will empty into the solar-heated resistance pool used for the aquatherapy. There will be horses for the healthy children to ride and tutors to help them with their school work.

As of now Mr. Davis and Dr. Pinera are still raising money so they can complete the facility. They have the horses, some therapists and teachers on board, and are in the process of building the solar-heated resistance pool. Mr. Davis explains, “The reality of life is the kids need the therapy, and the government can’t afford to do more than they’re already doing, so we, as volunteers, have to do it.”

(Continued on next page)
For More Information on Heaven’s Special Children:
Visit: www.heavensspecialchildren.org
Email: info@heavensspecialchildren.org
Call: (352) 472-6288

“\The reality of life is the kids need the therapy, and the government can’t afford to do more than they’re already doing, so we, as volunteers, have to do it.\”

- Rick Davis

Above and right: Michael, four-and-a-half years old, has cerebral palsy. His parents hope to finish construction of Heaven’s Special Children to help other children who have disabilities.

Backdrop: Rick Davis built a special pirate ship treehouse that is accessible to children who use wheelchairs and other mobility equipment. The facility is in need of financial and volunteer contributions to complete their mission.

Ways to help create the facility:

- **Donations** - Buy raffle tickets and get the chance to win a beautiful, wooded five-acre buildable tract of land in Lake City, Florida.
- **Sign up** - Therapists who would like to be trained or train others in various therapies are needed.
- **Get involved** - Volunteers are needed to help with the grounds and the horses. Side walkers are needed for the therapy horses.