

## READY—SET—LEARN

Great Kids provides parents three programs to choose from that are designed to help their child make positive changes.

- Academic Enrichment Programs are church-based entry-level programs that focus on getting children ready to learn by motivation, behavior modification and academic small group tutoring.
- Christian Character Development is a separate program that immediately follows each Academic Enrichment program. Bible stories are used to teach Godly values and attitudes.
- Tutor Programs are offered to children from our Enrichment programs that are below grade level in reading. This is a one-one-one program gives the extra help they need to improve reading skills

### **Thank You to our 2007 Partners**

The Chrysalis Community Foundation	Ormond Beach West Rotary Club
Consolidated Tomoka Land Co.	Ormond Beach Rotary Foundation
The Daytona Auto Mall	The Checkered Flag Committee
DeLeon Springs United Methodist Church	Publix Super Market Charities
First United Methodist Church of Ormond Beach	Vince Carter's Embassy of Hope Foundation
Grace Episcopal Church of Port Orange	Volusia County
The Janus Foundation	Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market
The Jim Moran Foundation	Ormond Beach Wal-Mart Super Center
The Junior League of Daytona Beach	Z Graph
Kiwanis Club of Ormond Beach	

### Great Kids Welcomes Our New Board Members

#### **David S. Remey Sr. Vice President of A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc.**

David has been a supporter of Great Kids for the past eight years. He will be instrumental in the development of the Great Kids Foundation that will help secure the organization's financial future.

#### **Dixie Blake Retired Assistant Principal**

Dixie retired from DeBary Elementary School in 2006. She will continue serving the needs of Volusia County children through working with Great Kids. Her background in Volusia County's education system will be a benefit to Great Kids' future expansion.

#### **Francis J. Carroll Jr. Law firm Hassell, Moorehead, and Carroll**

Fran will work with Dave in the development of the Great Kids Foundation and he will also have oversight on legal matters.

#### **Phyllis Hogan Retired Bellsouth Engineering Manager**

Since retiring in 2002 as the Area Engineering Manager, Phyllis has become increasingly active in the Junior League of Daytona Beach. Her gifts and talents will be used in building community partners with other organizations like she did with the Junior League. The Junior League is providing 100 Great Kids families with Holiday food baskets this Christmas.

# The Quest



Nov. 2007 Edition



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Building a Better Tomorrow through Community Partnerships.

## Great Kids: Where are They Now?



**Office Located At:**  
50 S. Yonge St., Ste. # 5  
P.O. Box 2615  
Ormond Beach, FL  
32175  
386-676-0276

Abril, 5th grade (left)  
Jenny, 8th grade (right)

Abril and Jenny moved to Australia three years ago to live with their Grandmother. They are both doing well. Last year Jenny was first in her class. She is working toward that goal again this year in 8th grade. She wants to be a veterinarian and understands she will need the best grades possible to receive scholarships for college. The summer before they moved, Jenny went to camp and accepted Jesus as her Savior. She was baptized in the ocean by Pastor Phil from First United Methodist Church in Ormond Beach. It was a day Ms. Sandy, the director, will always remember because Jenny's mom shared how the love they received from Great Kids restored her faith. This is a family that had faced a lot of hardship and the kindness of strangers changed her life.

**Executive Director  
Program Director**  
Sandy Rakes

**Education Director**  
Donna Wood

**Board of Directors**  
Dixie Blake  
Francis Carroll  
Denise Faulk  
Phyllis Hogan  
Linda Kalaydjian  
Maria McCarthy  
Sue Morrison  
Sandy Rakes  
Dave Remey  
Lou Schmitt

Ashley attended Great Kids 11 years ago. Her mom was very ill and her dad worked out of state. Her school guidance counselor thought she could use some tender loving care. Through the love and caring that came from all the Great Kids volunteers, Ashley was able to deal constructively with her anger and fears. She worked hard in school and served in First United's Vacation Bible School for two years under the mentorship of Sandy Rakes. Then Ashley's mom got too sick to take care for herself and Ashley. They moved to up state New York where their family lived and received the help they needed. Ashley kept in touch with Great Kids and one day Ms. Sandy's phone rang. It was Ashley calling to say her mom was getting better. Her mom made a full recovery. Today Ashley is in her 3rd year of college. She has turned out to be a very responsible young lady with a bright future.



Ashley is in her third year of college in Ashville, NC



### My 10 Year Journey by Carol Cuppett

In July of 1998 my husband, Jim, and I moved formally to Daytona Beach. I had retired from teaching after 25 great years. I had been teaching children with reading problems in an intercity school for 20 years and I loved it. I wasn't ready to retire because I missed the kids. So when the bulletin at First United Methodist said volunteers were needed for Great Kids, I jumped at the chance. I needed to make some connections and I also needed to share my love for kids. I can't say those first few years were easy. Being a teacher you always think you know the right way to teach every kid and run every classroom. Sometimes I would go home and say why am I doing this, but I knew. It was the kids and they needed us.

*John and Robert, two of five brothers. Anyone who met this family could see the love and joy they had in their hearts. They may not have had material things but they did have love and faith and they had each other.*

Let me tell you a little about those kids.

First United started a Saturday night service and we saw this as an opportunity to reach out by bringing some of these Great Kids children to church. Very few of them went to church and we knew it would be great for them. Using the church's minivan Jim, my husband, and I started picking up kids each Saturday night. We loved it and the smiles on their faces were reward enough for the time it took. One of the families that came was a family of 5 boys. They lived in a camp ground sharing two tents with so little in the way of material things. Mom and Dad were struggling just to get food and basic necessities. There was not enough money for rent or any other type of housing. When we dropped them off each night at their tents, I cried all the way home. How could we be so blessed and these children had to live like this? But their mom and dad were trying and they were loved. And Great Kids gave them a place to belong.. Eventually they moved out west with the hope of getting a home. I believe the love we gave those boys will help them grow up and have a better life.

There are countless more stories I could tell. The work we do and the love we share makes a difference in their lives for many years. Things have changed a great deal since those first hectic years. Our program is more structured and has reached out to other schools in Volusia County. We have implemented an individual tutoring program which is so helpful to the kids who are failing in school. But one thing remains the same. These kids still need lots of love and some one to help them over some of the hurtles of life. It is not easy work. It takes patience and perseverance. It takes a willingness to give up control and work as a team following the plan.

One thing that is certain in my mind is that God loves each and everyone one of these children. And through His love we love them. Love is what drives each of us to show up and work so hard. Its tough, but we press on for the sake of the children.

*“But the greatest of these is Love.”*

### Celebrating The Great Kids 10 Year Star Volunteers



Denise Faulk



Norma Cole



Carol Cuppett



Jack Ellis

Being a faithful servant sometimes comes with challenges. You have to look beyond your needs and wants. You have to be willing to invest yourself in others. There are precious few who are willing to preserve and overcome the challenges that comes with growth and change. Great Kids has a volunteer team of over 50 caring, dedicated people from all across Volusia County. Some are new this year, some are working on their second, third, fourth or fifth year and four of them have served for ten years. Great Kids salutes all our volunteers. JOB WELL DONE!



***Improving children's ability to read is the single most important way to help them gain the skills and confidence needed to break the cycle of poverty and make a better life for themselves.***

### You Can Help Them Change Their Lives

Become a Volunteer Study Buddy helper in the Port Orange, Ormond Beach or DeLeon Spring's areas.

Sponsor a child. \$800 provides 3.5 hrs of tutoring each week till the end of May. Currently 78 children are funded. An additional \$57,600 will fund 72 more children.

Make a donation. All donations will be used for enrolling children to the various programs.

Open an account at SunTrust by December 31st and designate Great Kids as your charity of choice and they will donate \$100 in your name. Hurry to your local SunTrust branch or call 1-800-485-8982

### Call Sandy Rakes for more information at 386-676-0276



*Jonathan was very proud of himself for singing at the Great Kids benefit concert last year. He said that was the scariest thing he ever did but he was glad he did.*

Last year when Jonathan came to Great Kids he was very unmotivated and made very little effort. He didn't take responsibility and wasted much of his time doing nothing. It was impossible to find something to spark his interest. His mother was at her wits end. The dedicated volunteers and staff continued to try to help Jonathan. Close to the end of school, Jonathan started to make some improvements. But was it too late? His school believed he could do well if only he would choose to, so they gave him an extra chance and administratively assigned him to the 5th grade.

This year Jonathan has a new outlook on school. He is motivated and says Great Kids helped him to realize that he could be successful. He said he learned to keep trying even if its hard. When recently asked how did Great Kids helped him. He responded, "They never gave up on me."