

GLENN NEEDS A VAN

STORY BY STEPHANIE DOYLE

PHOTOS BY CHERYL VAN STOCKUM

GLENN HALL loves applesauce. And Elmo. His favorite toy is a mirror. His mom straps the mirror to his wheelchair so he can't throw it. Because his favorite thing to do is to throw – anything.

“He can throw very well,” Margaret Hall said, scrambling to pick up a stuffed teddy bear and an Elmo book that quickly went airborne in his Shelbyville bedroom. Throwing the animal and book, rather than cuddling or reading them as many children would, is the way Glenn plays.

Glenn, who is 14 and will be in eighth grade at Shelby County High School this fall, has an extremely rare chromosomal disease called partial trisomy 6q. A portion of the 6th chromosome is present three times, rather than twice, in the cells of the body.

Symptoms vary in severity from person to person but many affected infants and children have slow physical development; mental retardation; malformations of the skull and neck; abnormal bending or fixed extension of certain joints; and other physical abnormalities.

Glenn already has had hip surgery and on June 5 had double knee surgery at Kosair Children's Hospital. Sporting red-white-and-blue casts on both legs, he was maneuvering well throughout the Halls' home on Southlawn Drive on a recent Tuesday morning.



Photo Credits
Margaret Hall, top, pushes her son, Glenn, down the ramp in front of the Southlawn Drive home. The ramp was built about three years ago by the Centenary United Methodist Church Ramp Ministry, the first ramp built by the Ministry.

Margaret Hall, right, picks up her son Glenn's toys. Throwing them in his bedroom is one of the ways he plays.





But when Glenn is out of his chair Margaret has to lift him. She is quite adept at lifting his 75-pound frame into his bed. And back into his wheelchair.

The problems arise when she tries to put him into her van, which is too old to convert into a wheelchair friendly vehicle. “He’s all dead weight,” she said.

And he’s only getting bigger.

Hall was a semi finalist in a contest she had entered May, but – competing against families in cities such as Chicago and New York – she did not receive enough votes to win a fully equipped van with wheelchair access

as she was so hoping.

Her hopes are renewed, however, thanks in great part to Tony Carriss, who attends First Christian Church with Hall.

A new committee of about 40 people met recently at First Christian, determined to raise enough money – \$30,000 — by Christmas Eve to buy Hall the van she dreams of having.

Carriss, magistrate in District 6 in Mount Eden, is heading the “Van for Glenn” committee, which aims to try everything from bake sales to street intersection collections to silent

auctions to raise the money needed to purchase the van. The board of the Shelby County Community Charities is also helping with the project.

“We together have an opportunity to make someone’s life a little easier,” Carriss said. “It will take us all to make this work, and whatever part you can play small or large is appreciated.”

Hall choked back tears as she talked about the community’s efforts to help her.

“Words can never explain what these people are doing,” she said.

DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. CHECKS CAN BE MADE OUT TO SHELBY COUNTY COMMUNITY CHARITIES. IN THE MEMO SECTION WRITE CYSTIC FIBROSIS. SEND CHECKS TO P.O. BOX 284, SHELBYVILLE, KY 40066.