

# Shriners Hospitals for Children Celebrates 85 Years of Caring

**I**N 2007, it will cost Shriners Hospitals for Children \$1.975 million per day to operate its extensive network of 22 hospitals, providing care and treatment to thousands of kids. This enormous effort, which has touched the lives of approximately 835,000 children and their families, began 85 years ago, with the opening of a single hospital.

Shriners Hospitals for Children was founded by Shriners of North America, an international Fraternity established in 1872 and based on fun, fellowship and the Masonic principles of brotherly love, relief and truth.

In the early 1920s, members of the Fraternity decided to establish an official philanthropy. Although the establishment of a hospital to treat children with orthopaedic problems resulting from polio, was originally suggested, the passing plan called for the establishment of not just one hospital, but a network of pediatric hospitals that provided all care and services at no charge.

On Sept. 16, 1922, the first Shriners Hospital for Children opened in Shreveport, Louisiana.

The first patient to be admitted was a little girl with a clubfoot. The Shreveport Hospital cared for 483 children in its inaugural year. The original wood-frame, 60-bed hospital was replaced with a new 45-bed facility in 1986. The Shreveport Hospital will officially celebrate its anniversary on Sept. 13, with a full day of activities, including exhibits, tours and a barbecue.

Three more Shriners Hospitals opened in 1923, followed by another three the next year. By the end of the decade, there were 15 Shriners Hospitals serving children with orthopaedic problems, from Honolulu to Philadelphia. Today, there are 19 Shriners Hospitals serving as major referral centers for complex orthopaedic treatments for children, including one in Mexico City and Montreal.



THE SHREVEPORT SHRINERS HOSPITAL – THEN AND NOW.



## An Expanding Mission

In the mid-1960s, 40 years after opening the first Shriners Hospital, the Fraternity opened three Shriners Hospitals specializing in acute and rehabilitative burn care. These hospitals continue to be pioneers in pediatric burn treatment and are actively involved in the development of innovative techniques for treating children with burns.

In the early 1980s, Shriners Hospitals for Children discovered yet another way to help children: by opening the nation's first spinal cord injury rehabilitation centers specifically designed for kids. Today, spinal cord injury rehabilitation is offered at three Shriners Hospitals. There, patients find a complete range of services needed in order to recover to the fullest extent possible.

Cleft lip and palate were added to the hospital network's treatment disciplines in 2005. Services available at Shriners Hospitals fill the need for coordinated, comprehensive multidisciplinary care for these children.

In addition to providing expert, family-centered care to its patients, today's Shriners Hospitals for Children are dedicated to conducting research to provide answers to complex medical difficulties affecting children. What began as a modest research effort with a \$12,000 allocation has become a sophisticated, world-recognized program with a \$37 million budget funding more than 140 projects in 2007.

The mission of Shriners Hospitals for Children also includes education; many of today's pediatric orthopaedic surgeons received some of their medical training at Shriners Hospitals.

As it has for 85 years, Shriners Hospitals for Children remains committed to providing care at no charge and relies on the generosity of Shriners and other donors to continue its mission of caring for children through treatment, research and teaching.

For more information, please visit [www.shriners-hospitals.org](http://www.shriners-hospitals.org), or call (800) 237-5055 in the U.S. or (800) 361-7256 in Canada.



**NOBLE** Ralph Hall with his first great grandchild, Caden R. Caris, who is 10 months old. Hall said he would like to sign Caden up to become a Shriners; that way he will grow into a Fez and become a good Shriners.

## Noble Ralph W. Hall

By HERMES BOYATIS

**O**N Friday, July 6, Noble Hall's funeral took place in the Wilson Chapel of New Bedford. Visitation was followed with a Masonic service. He was 87 years young.

Once again we paid tribute to a remarkable Mason/Shriners as he follows the route of the black camel.

His Rhode Island Shriners will never forget his columns for the Scimitar and his remarkable life. He graduated from New Bedford High School and Bristol Agricultural School. He was an active poultry farmer and a bank appraiser for the New Bedford Institute for Savings Bank.

During World War II he served in the Army Corps. Wounded three times and hospitalized, he was the recipient of the Purple Heart Award, the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Air Medals, serving as a member of the 398th Bomb Group.

His Masonic and Shrine memberships are wondrous: member of Noguchoke & Abraham Howland Masonic Lodges; past president of the Shrine Club of Southeastern Massachusetts; member of Aleppo and Rhode Island Shriners and the Valley of Scottish Rite Southeastern Massachusetts. He was responsible for publicity for Shrine activities there.

His achievements were endless — too many to cite at this time, but always to be remembered.

He was proud recipient of the Robert Gardner Wilson Medal; served in the Massachusetts State Guard; was member of the American Legion Dartmouth Grange; and Fairhaven Salt Water Fishing Club.

He has departed on the route of the Black Camel. Noble **Ralph W. Hall** leaves behind an unforgettable legacy.

## Healthy Bones, Healthy Bodies

### Shriners Hospitals Supports National Bone and Joint Awareness Week 2007

**Being healthy and having a disability are two different things. For example:**

**Thomas Markley**, 18, a patient at Shriners Hospitals for Children—Erie, has been playing sled hockey and wheelchair basketball for 12 years. He also lifts weights every other day. Being fit and in shape is so important to Markley, who has spina bifida. He volunteers in a summer fitness program for children with disabilities to help spread the message and encourage others.

**Fabrice Lekina**, 20, who has cerebral palsy, recently participated in a fitness program at Shriners Hospitals for Children—Chicago, and learned how to workout, eat right and stay in shape. He lost more than 23 pounds, has gained strength and stamina, and has improved mobility.

During U.S. Bone and Joint Decade's National Awareness Week, Oct. 12-20, Shriners Hospitals for Children will work to raise awareness of the need for children, especially those with special health needs, to have "Healthy Bones, Healthy Bodies." U.S. Bone and Joint Decade, which continues through 2011, is a concerted worldwide effort to increase understanding and treatment of musculoskeletal disorders and injuries through prevention, education and research.

Shriners Hospitals for Children is a leader in efforts to understand, pre-

vent and treat musculoskeletal problems associated with pediatric orthopaedic conditions and injuries. Having a physical disability that limits mobility can lead to a lack of exercise and additional health risks, including obesity, high blood sugar and high blood pressure, which can lead to cardiovascular problems. Limited mobility also increases the risk of osteoporosis.

"Like the rest of the body, bones are living entities," said **Donald Lighter**, M.D., associate director of medical affairs for Shriners Hospitals for Children. "Exercise and proper nutrition tend to increase bone density and improve skeletal health."

Most of the 19 Shriners Hospitals specializing in orthopaedic problems can provide information, resources, programs and activities to help patients maintain physical fitness, including access to a wide variety of adaptive sports, from archery to weightlifting. Adaptive sports offer the same benefits as traditional activities, including enhanced flexibility and balance, increased stamina and strength, and improved self image and social skills.

Shriners Hospitals are also involved in research projects to improve fitness opportunities for children and youth with special health



**CHILDREN WITH disabilities need opportunities for exercise. During Bone and Joint Awareness Week, Shriners Hospitals will work to raise awareness of this important issue.**

needs. These include a study to determine ways functional electrical stimulation can be used to initiate movement and provide the benefits of exercise for patients with spinal cord injuries or cerebral palsy.

Shriners of North America Temple leadership and hospital public relations staff are encouraged to organize community events and work with local media to increase the awareness of diseases and injuries of the bones and joints, and especially the role of

physical fitness in having "Healthy Bones, Healthy Bodies" during this important week.

To receive promotional materials, contact the public relations department at Shriners International Headquarters at (813) 281-8162 or [shrinepr@shrinenet.org](mailto:shrinepr@shrinenet.org). "Fit for the Future," a DVD featuring exercise routines for children with disabilities, as well as an encouraging message about future employment, is also available for \$5.