

Taking Heart



UPDATE

May 19, 2011



Troopers Dave Bump and Mike Duffield, on the left, are busy painting some shelves while Jennifer Bump helps Lt. Ron Wall put together a bedframe.

The bedroom that brothers Fabian and Angelo Berrios share just got a little crowded. Nemo, Sheriff Woody, and characters from the Pixar movie "Cars" moved in with the brothers after a handful of volunteers remodeled their room on Sunday as part of a charity wish granted to the Berrios family.

It was the Berrios family wish that the room be remodeled not only to look better, but to make things more comfortable for 3-year-old Fabian who was born with two congenital heart defects. The toddler had outgrown his crib, plus, needed a humidifier to help with his health issues. As medical bills mount, it was hard to stay afloat financially let alone pay for a much needed remodeling project.

The Wish Upon The North Star (WUNS) charity provided the funds and Alaska State Trooper Lt. Lonny Piscoya, deputy commander of D Detachment in Fairbanks, provided the backbone to get the boys' room a make-over. On Sunday, a handful of Fairbanks troopers, employees and family members spent five hours in the Berrios family's Fairbanks home. They were joined by Adam Nash, a recent graduate from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Tanana Valley Law Enforcement Academy.

The group fixed outlets and the ceiling light. They added a humidifier, a nice toy box, a fan, two floor lamps and two brand new beds and mattresses, complete with new bedding with Pixar animated movie characters. The aging television was replaced with a flat screen that now hangs on the wall. The room was totally repainted and a border with "Finding Nemo" characters running along the walls.

While the work of a group of volunteers may have taken five hours on a Sunday afternoon, the results will register forever on the minds of the little boys and the family they helped. Piscoya said the reaction from Fabian's mother, Ilea, when she saw the finished room was priceless.



Those who helped remodel the room were (back row from left to right), James Wall, Jennifer Bump, Trooper Dave Bump (in front from left to right) Lt. Lonny Piscoya, Zach Wall, Lt. Ron Wall, Sgt. Chad Goeden, Tresa Duffield, Trooper Mike Duffield and Adam Nash. Volunteers who also helped, but are not pictured, were Sgt. Mike Roberts, Jenn and Pat Skinner and Kelly Goeden.



"She was teary eyed and couldn't believe it. That 15 seconds of reaction on her face made the five hours of work worth it," Piscoya said Tuesday. "The real benefit will be when he comes back after the operation, which happens tomorrow.

"She and her son's name are no longer just names on a WUNS application," he said.

For the previous story about Fabian Berrios and the charity that helps to provide relief to his family as they with the challenges that comes with having a child with life-threatening illness, go to:

http://www.dps.state.ak.us/PIO/TrooperTimes/ArchiveStories/TakingHeart_050211.pdf

For more information on these charity efforts, visit



Alaska State Troopers Adventure Relay

Wish Upon The North Star
at www.wishuponthenorthstar.com/

at www.alaskastar.org
or email ASTARelay@gmail.com



Photos by AST Lt. Lonny Piscoya
D Detachment Deputy Commander
Story by Beth Ipsen
AST PIO and ASTAR Organizer

