

says Frank Norton, who volunteers with his wife, Carol.

"This is neighborhood. These are folks you may not know but you could know. They may be your nextdoor neighbor or your cousin."

The head neighbor of all this is retired Army Col. John G. Campbell, president of the nonprofit group. Not surprisingly, his consulting firm has donated office space to Kids.

He's a tall, handsome Texan with an endearing drawl, a killer grin and a disarming demeanor. At Kids events, he's everywhere at once, announcing the next guest or simply rounding up metal folding chairs for the artist he's enlisted to draw pictures of the children. Col. Campbell's stunning wife, Jan, who is Kids secretary/treasurer, and the rest of the volunteer army work the huge crowd. "A brilliant, brave soldier with a touch of bravado," says Sen. John Warner, Virginia Republican, of Col Campbell, with whom he has worked for many years on Capitol Hill.

Yet Col. Campbell takes great pains to point out that this is an all-volunteer organization. What little overhead there is pays for a certified public accountant and for operating licenses. Kids could not survive on just John Campbell, and he knows it.

"While most of the news you read is bad news, there are a great deal of good things going on," he says. "People are willing—and eager—to help if they know it's going directly to a worthy cause."

The first child Kids helped was 8-year-old Andrew Bley, who suffered from a brain tumor. The boy went to the same church as Col. Campbell, a Burke resident, who at the time was a well-connected Army liaison officer to the U.S. Senate. He and several others met with then-Rep. Earl Hutto, Florida Democrat, and Frank Borman, then-chairman of Eastern Airlines, whom Col. Campbell knew while on the faculty of West Point. They pooled their resources and sent Andrew and his family to Walt Disney World "for what was really their first real, great family vacation."

"The family's resources were exhausted—which, by the way, is frequently the case in all of these things," Col. Campbell says. Andrew was "a brave, cheerful kid who fought until the end and died," says Col. Campbell, his voice ebbing.

The boy, as they say, did not die in vain. The trip created a lasting impression on the volunteers.

"It was so rewarding for those of us who participated in it, we thought, 'Gee, we ought to try and to this on some sort of organized basis.'" Col. Campbell says.

A framed check dated Dec. 28, 1983, on the wall of Col. Campbell's office is signed by Mr. Warner for \$250. This marked the first actual donation, opening the bank account the day Kids officially went into business.

The orders came in immediately. Some children wanted—and got—events such as being onstage with Bill Cosby or trips to Ocean City or the circus. (One child even went fishing in Alaska.)

Others received items such as a new wheelchair, an automatic page turner, art lessons, home computer, a canopied bed or a pneumo-wrap, which helped a 16-year-old boy with Duchenne's muscular dystrophy breathe more easily. One heartbreaker wanted an Easter dress and matching bonnet. Another just wanted a Barbie doll.

Some of the other requests weren't so simple, but were attainable. A little boy spent a few nights on the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga and sat in the cockpit of a jet. ("They made him an honorary member of the squadron and gave him a leather jacket," says Col. Campbell.) Kids has also taken children on elephant rides, trips to the FBI's target range and up in the air in a hot air balloon.

The first year, 1982, Kids helped seven children. The numbers doubled the next year, and last year the organization helped 60 children.

The Kids brochure stresses that the families of the patients are involved as much as possible. "Generally in these situations the family is wiped out," Col. Campbell, "but in the end we do what the child wants to do."

This message pervades conversations with participants. In the pauses, it's evident that childhood illness is very democratic, within and without.

"It affects the entire family," says retired Army Col. Frank Norton, a member of Kids' 28-member advisory board. "It's not just the child suffering. The other children in the family watch their parents have to put all their money, time and energy into this one child, and they may not have time to do other things with the other children. Kids is a way to help the entire process, and I think they have been successful in a wonderfully low-key way."

While Kids' heart is in the right place, it does not—and cannot—accept everybody. There are 10 specific requirements. One is that children must be recommended by a social worker or other health care professional. Another specifies that children be 16 or younger, though Kids can be flexible on this point.

As it is with any well-oiled charitable machine, once word gets out about its success there seems to be more people in need than there is money. Kids raises its funds through events—such as the annual Kids Celebrity Tennis Party and the Kids Hot Air Balloon Rally, golf tournaments, art auctions, movie premieres and car shows.

Despite the complexity of such operations, the events themselves come off pretty casually. The children, sometimes wearing crisp, colorful Kids T-shirts and ball caps to shield their shaved heads from the sun, show up with their parents and brothers and sisters. The picnics are filled with games and food, and the volunteers seem to have as much fun laughing and playing as do the families.

"In terms of the parents, they are profiles in courage," says Mr. Warner. "They want to do everything they can to bring some happiness into that child's life. And then you see in the child's face equal or even greater courage. They may have some knowledge of their terminal nature and yet they retain that youthful vigor."

Connections are crucial for a nonprofit in this town, and Col. Campbell makes no bones about using his to keep Kids afloat. On the wall is a framed 1992 excerpt from the Congressional Record, which contained Mr. Warner's remarks about the value of Kids. He and his Senate pals Strom Thurmond, Alfonse D'Amato, Pete Domenici and Trent Lott are on the Kids board of advisers, as are Reps. W.G. Hefner and Bob Livingston and former Sen. J. Bennett Johnston.

Mr. Warner has been a mainstay at many Kids events, as has Mr. Thurmond. Former Sen. Bob Dole even took time from his presidential race last year to show up at a Kids event at the Capitol. There must be something going on here, because sick children can't vote.

"I think this organization achieves its goal," Mr. Warner says. "A moment, even though fleeting, of happiness for both parents and child."

Kids can be reached at 703/455-KIDS, fax 703/440-9208, or write 9300-D Old Keene Mill Rd., Burke, Va. 22015.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT OF THE STUDY ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECT OF THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 50

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit the Study on the Operation and Effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as required by section 512 of the NAFTA Implementation Act (Public Law 103-182; 107 Stat. 2155; 19 U.S.C. 3462). The Congress and the Administration are right to be proud of this historic agreement. This report provides solid evidence that NAFTA has already proved its worth to the United States during the 3 years it has been in effect. We can look forward to realizing NAFTA's full benefits in the years ahead.

NAFTA has also contributed to the prosperity and stability of our closest neighbors and two of our most important trading partners. NAFTA aided Mexico's rapid recovery from a severe economic recession, even as that country carried forward a democratic transformation of historic proportions.

NAFTA is an integral part of a broader growth strategy that has produced the strongest U.S. economy in a generation. This strategy rests on three mutually supportive pillars: deficit reduction, investing in our people through education and training, and opening foreign markets to allow America to compete in the global economy. The success of that strategy can be seen in the strength of the American economy, which continues to experience strong investment, low unemployment, healthy job creation, and subdued inflation.

Export growth has been central to America's economic expansion. NAFTA, together with the Uruguay Round Agreement, the Information Technology Agreement, the WTO Telecommunications Agreement, 22 sectoral trade agreements with Japan, and over 170 other trade agreements, has contributed to overall U.S. real export growth of 37 percent since 1993. Exports have contributed nearly one-third of our economic growth—and have grown three times faster than overall income.