STRICKEN BOY GETS ALTERNATIVE CARE

children and their families by fusing Western medicine with touch, encouragement and alternative therapies meant to enhance healing. But to Logan, Beider has no titles. She's just the kind lady with the magic hands who promises to relax him and soothe the itchiness that has resulted from his synthetic-morphine drip. Logan rolls up his sweat pants in anticipation.

Rachelle – “I live at the hospital when Logan is here,” she says – rises from the chair that folds out into her bed and greets him with a smile. Beider begins massaging and caressing Logan, asking him to visualize peaceful, happy scenes such as waterfalls and Disneyland, as she talks to him through his pain and discomfort, knoading his muscles. It’s all he can do to keep his eyes open, until he falls asleep. And he reawakens to a baby-faced teen enjoying a lazy afternoon nap than a patient who may need surgery.

It’s all a day’s work for Beider, as hands-on on a head of a nonprofit as you’ll find. The Lees pay nothing for her services. The family’s relationship with Beider and Integrative Touch stretches back nearly a year. The organization selected the family last summer as one of five to attend an annual weeklong retreat in which health professionals gather with families that have children who are afflicted with genetic disorders. They network and collaborate in healing and coping.

In addition to the hospital visits, ITK operates an annual healing retreat. Last year’s event at Marana’s White Stallion Ranch included 60 healing-arts practitioners, nurses, medical advisers and volunteers who offered the children acupuncture, massage, reflexology, craniosacral therapy, reiki, shiatsu, shamanic journeying, hot-stone massage, water aquatic therapy, laughter yoga, sound healing and music therapy, play therapy, and equine therapy.

The next retreat is at the Rim Ranch in Amado, June 26 through 29.

For more information, or to make a donation, contact Rachelle Beider at 573-1350 or rachellebeider@yahoo.com.

Soothing therapy is hands-on, and that’s just fine with him

By Phil Villareal

Logan Lee has grown up at University Medical Center, and his latest stay has been a touching one.

Associated with congenital hepatic fibrosis, autosomal recessive polycystic kidney disease, the 13-year-old Alice Vail Middle School student has stayed in every room of UMC’s third floor. Those stays started when Logan was 18 months old, and the longest of his life was one year.

On March 1, Logan doubled over from stomach pain, and his mom, Rachelle, took him to the emergency room, where doctors discovered that he had an enlarged pancreas. You step into his room, shared with another kid and dying mother, and expect to see despair. But instead, Logan is as sanguine a kid in the cafeteria line on pizza-and-fries day.

“I love it,” Logan says to Shay Beider, a licensed massage-therapy president and founder and executive director of Integrative Touch for Kids, a nonprofit organization that helps sick children and their families by fusing Western medicine with touch, encouragement and alternative therapies meant to enhance healing. But to Logan, Beider has no titles. She’s just the kind lady with the magic hands who promises to relax him and soothe the itchiness that has resulted from his synthetic-morphine drip. Logan rolls up his sweat pants in anticipation.

Rachelle – “I live at the hospital when Logan is here,” she says – rises from the chair that folds out into her bed and greets him with a smile. Beider begins massaging and caressing Logan, asking him to visualize peaceful, happy scenes such as waterfalls and Disneyland, as she talks to him through his pain and discomfort, kneading his muscles until he falls asleep. And he reawakens to a baby-faced teen enjoying a lazy afternoon nap than a patient who may need surgery.

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