

# Sports

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## Chance to be young, wish of kids

United Press International  
ANAHEIM, Calif. — Mickey, Fransie and Alicia got to run through one of the world's biggest playgrounds Wednesday, reveling at sights in the rare camaraderie of children who must race the sunset of old age through their brief childhoods.

The three youngsters, from Texas, California and South Africa, were brought together to tour Disneyland.

All suffer from progeria, an incurable disease that ages them 10 times faster than normal, leaving

them . . . wrinkled and bald like 80 year-olds and subject to death from the diseases of age.

Eight-year-old Fransie Geringer of Orkney, South Africa, romped through another amusement park, Knott's Berry Farm, Tuesday with Mickey Hays, 9, of Hallsville, Texas.

Alicia Gowens, 11, of San Jose, Calif., joined Mickey and Fransie at Disneyland.

Donations from newspaper readers who were touched by Fransie's dream — to see Pinocchio at Disneyland — brought him

from South Africa, and the publicity attracted the attention of the parents of the other two.

The children, who did not know about each other until recently, have enjoyed learning that they are not alone in the world.

"Fransie can't believe Mickey looks the same," Herman Geringer, Fransie's father, said. "He said now he knows he's not ugly. He thinks they look very smart."

The two boys and their families were taken Tuesday to Knott's Berry Farm, where they watched a western stunt show and puppet

show and went on several rides. They were also given T-shirts and souvenirs.

The boys' original meeting at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim last weekend marked the first time either had met a child with the same affliction.

"Mickey can't keep his hands off Fransie," Mickey's mother, Cindy Edwards, said. "I don't think he can believe he's real."

"I don't think they've been separated five minutes. To watch them play, you'd think they'd known each other for years."

The boys exchanged gifts visited for about an hour after arriving at the hotel Sunday. When they returned to their parents, they telephoned each other to continue their conversation.

They spent Monday together at the hotel — riding through the sprawling country on riding paddleboats in a small pond and playing in a waterfall.

"When you see a change in life too," Mrs. Edwards

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## UFO cover-up has existed for years, researcher says

United Press International  
DEKALB, Ill. — A researcher claims the federal government is involved in a massive UFO cover up to keep the public from panicking.

Robert Hastings, a Northern Illinois University graduate student from Albuquerque, N.M., told a campus crowd Monday that documents he obtained under the

Freedom of Information Act indicate a huge cover-up on UFOs has been under way for years.

Hastings, who began studying UFOs after he spotted one near Great Falls, Mont., in 1967, said the government is withholding information about UFOs to keep the public from panicking.

"I believe we're on the threshold of an extremely exciting

period in the history of mankind," he said. "I'm preparing for some small way for an announcement from the Oval Office."

Hastings said he does not expect any kind of announcement from the subject of UFOs in Washington now because of President Reagan's conservatism, he said, word will have to eventually

## Coupon for dog food causes huge response for promoters

United Press International  
MILWAUKEE — The Great Dog Food Giveaway drew more responses than promoters ever expected.

A Milwaukee newspaper ran an ad in its Oct. 8 edition announcing a new dog food named Meaty

Meal, providing a toll-free number to call for a coupon good for a free 5-pound bag.

The response so overwhelmed the promoters of the coupons — set to expire Nov. 1 — that the coupons did not reach most homes until last week. In some areas, the coupons were out of the new products stores, most of them were out of the new products stores.

But Dennis Shemick, manager of Templin-Shemick Bros. Co. that represents Meaty Meal in Wisconsin, said Tuesday coupons would be hard to come by through the end of the year.

"Nothing like this has been tried before in the pet industry," he said. "The response was overwhelming. In today's economy, when you start giving away a 5-pound bag of dog food, it's a big thing."

Herbert Meier, general manager of Toughies Division of Starkist Foods, said the response was beyond the firm's expectations.

"The reception to the campaign was so good that the company hired to take the calls just to handle all of them," he said.



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