

Evening Echo

BASILDON Wickford Billericay Stanford **

30p

Friday March 22 1996 No 6741

ONE FOR THE GIRLS: P22



CHILD OF THE YEAR

FIRST FINALISTS: PAGE 14



THE NEW CAR AIMED AT THE WOMEN'S MARKET

MOTORING ECHO

PAGE 27

DON'T MISS THE ECHO'S 24 PAGE SUPPLEMENT INSIDE



'I'M SO PRETTY'



FROM LINDA CHRISTIE IN ROCHESTER MINNESOTA

THIS is the picture every Echo reader has been longing to see.

After years of heartache and months of preparation and fundraising, Glen James has his new face. And he looks a beautiful little boy.



■ Glen before his operation

When the four-year-old saw himself in the mirror after the operation Glen confided: "I look so pretty."

The lad from Eastwood, underwent major surgery on Monday to remove a be-

● Continued P2

Over 25
Scandal
EVERY FRIDAY
Fri 29 March

BACK TO '89
THE FIRST THREE SUMMERS OF LOVE

LIVE Shades of Rhythm

SOUND OF EDEN SWEET SENSATION

ADMIT 2 FOR £2 EACH
BEFORE 10PM WITH THIS AD ANY FRIDAY
IN MARCH AND APRIL

Adlib

smart dress 9pm till 2am
LUCY ROAD • SOUTHEND
01702 469469
rights of admission and change of promission reserved

Beware bogus home help

ELDERLY people in Basildon are warned to be on their guard against a woman posing as a home help. The woman struck on Sunday between midday and 4pm in Chesterfield Green. She took the 90-year-old's pension book and said she would go and collect her money for her. The 'home help' never came back. Anyone with information should phone Basildon police on 01268 532212.

TRIAL DELAYED: The trial at Basildon Crown Court of Patrick Savage, of Coleman Street, Southend, charged with having sex with two young girls through the 1970s and 1980s, closed early yesterday because the judge was ill. The trial continues today.

TICKETS PLEASE: Season parking tickets for Southend seafront car parks could be up for grabs for everyone and not just residents, if councillors back an idea at tonight's highways and transport committee. Director of engineering Derek Reader's report says anyone should be able to buy the £36 annual parking permits.

CASH THEFT: Cash totalling £15 was stolen from a house in Appleford Court, Pitsea, after thieves broke through a lounge window

FIESTA ALERT: Police have asked Ford Fiesta owners to take extra care with the security of their cars after a spate of thefts in Benfleet. Four were taken from the area last week and another was taken from Gilbert Close, Rayleigh, on Sunday night between 11pm and 5.30am the next morning. The white E-registration XR2 worth £2,000 was parked outside its owner's house, locked and had the alarm switched on. Thieves still managed to get away without alerting anyone.

CHEAP TALK: Cheaper bus passes are on the timetable tonight. Cuts to the cost of Southend concessionary bus passes are due to be recommended by councillors at highways and transport committee. The reductions mean half-fare passes for ordinary OAPs fall from £25 to £22.50 and pensioners on benefits or with specific disabilities pay £6.

SCIENCE FEAST: A festival of chemistry is promised at a Southend college tomorrow as part of the nationwide science, engineering and technology week. South East Essex College in Carnarvon Road plays host to the festival, which includes projects from school children, a chemistry magic lecture and a powered egg race.

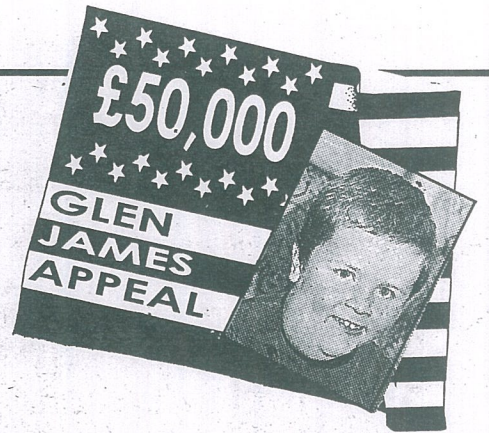
JEWELLERY TAKEN: A pearl necklace, a man's wedding ring, and a video, altogether worth £1,500, were stolen from a house in Great Mistley, Basildon, on Saturday after burglars forced their way through a conservatory.

DRUG WAR: An action team has been formed in Essex to tackle the problem of drug misuse. The group is made up of top representatives from groups such as social service, health authorities and Essex Police. The 200 delegates will meet tomorrow at police HQ in Chelmsford.

TAKE HEART: Interested visitors went for a heart to heart in Basildon Hospital's cardiac department, as part of the Can You Hear Your Heartbeat day arranged by the department to let everyone know what they do.

SAD WORDS WHICH ALMOST HALTED OPERATION

'I'm going to die and go to heaven, daddy'



Glen is okay after op

● From P1

already face another trip to the States to allow surgeons to tackle the lump that has appeared on the back of Glen's head. There was no time to remove it during yesterday's operation.

But before Dr Kasperbauer set to work yesterday morning, Fred asked to speak to him alone.

Fred explained: "I wanted a private chat with the man I was putting in charge of my son's life for the next few hours."

"I told him if at any time the surgery became difficult, I wanted him to stop immediately, whatever stage he was at."

"Later he said he knew I had been on the verge of changing my mind about going ahead."

"But I decided I hadn't come all this way to back out now."

"I did think, am I doing the right thing putting Glen through all this. Would it be better to enjoy what years we have with him?"

With tears rolling down his cheeks Fred said: "I don't know how much longer I have on this earth but when I'm dead, I hope Glen will remember what his dad did for him."

If surgeons hadn't operated, the cystic hygroma growth on Glen's face may eventually have pressed on his windpipe forcing doctors to perform a tracheotomy.

It is not known what life expectancy sufferers have but as Fred said: "How many adults have you seen with lumps on their faces?"

Dr Kasperbauer removed 80 per cent of the growth — his original estimate, but if Glen had stayed in England he would have faced a whole series of operations with only five to 10 per of the tumour taken away each time.

Fred added: "We couldn't have done this without Echo readers, they have been wonderful and have responded in a fashion that has touched my wife and I."

"As soon as the paper took Glen under their wing, the appeal fund rose by £2,000 and when our bank statement came it was four pages long."

GLEN James's dad Fred nearly called off the operation to remove the lump from his son's face at the 11th hour when Glen told him: "I'm going to heaven daddy."

Glen made the heartbreaking statement as the family prepared for bed on Sunday night and his parents choked back tears as they tried to turn it into a joke.

Fred revealed: "The first time he said it we just ignored him, but he repeated 'I am going to die and go to heaven.'"

"I just laughed and reminded him of a film he and his brother Mark had seen called All Good Dogs Go To Heaven."

Glen has a great day out

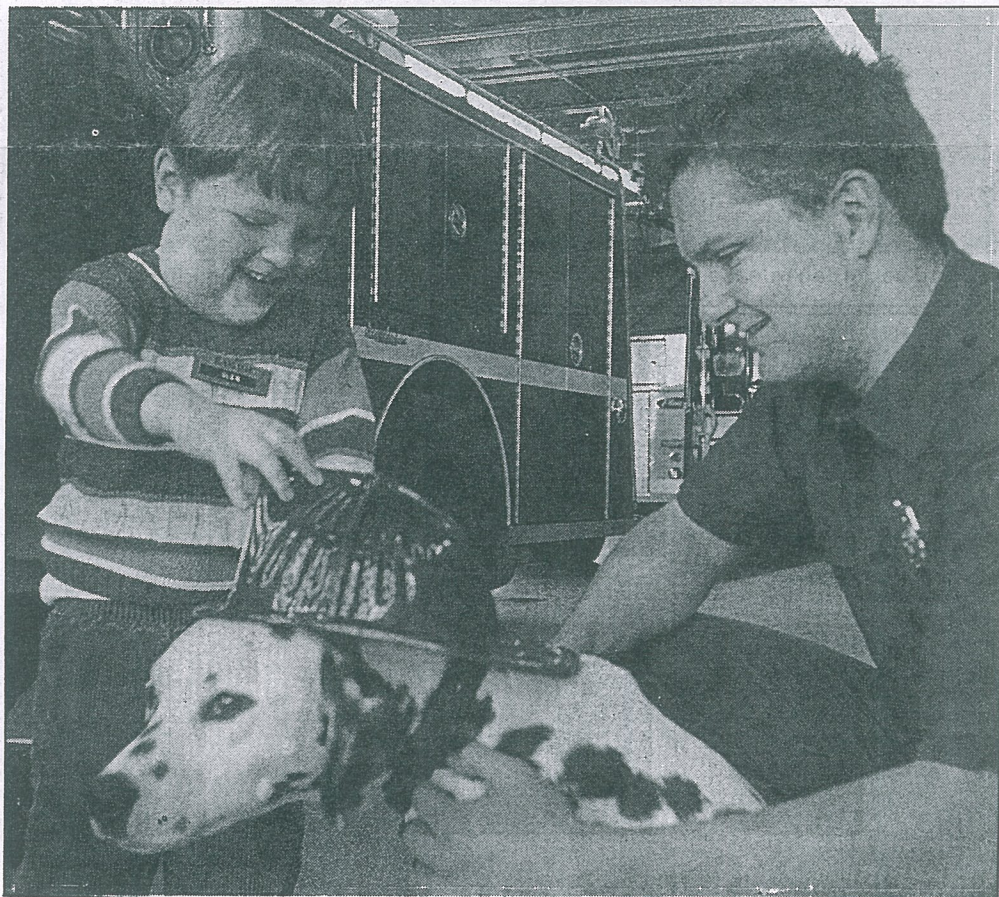
LIKE any four-year-old Glen loves a shiny, red fire engine. And they don't come much bigger or shinier than in the USA.

A couple of days before his operation a trip to Rochester's Number One Precinct proved one of the highlights of his stay in the city, and included a ride in one of their newest engines.

Officer Pat Shanahan, pictured with Glen, also introduced Glen and his brother Mark to Sparky the dalmatian.

The two-year-old is the station mascot.

Firefighters at Rochester cooked hamburgers for the boys and gave them T-shirts to wear.



'My heartbreak moments'

IT WAS Fred James who held the tiny body of his youngest son Glen while the anaesthetic went to work and put him to sleep.

And it was Fred who placed his limp frame on the operating table so surgeons could cut open the youngster's face.

But just before Glen fell unconscious the 53-year-old lorry driver had to stand by and watch while four nurses held Glen down.

He said: "Glen hated

having the mask put over his face so they could give him gas.

"He became really distressed and was crying for them to stop."

"It was heartbreaking."

Here is the countdown to Glen's new face.

● 6am Minnesota time (noon in Britain) — Glen arrives at St Mary's Hospital, Rochester, part of the world-famous Mayo Clinic.

● 8am — Glen is taken to the operating theatre and doctors began five

arduous hours of surgery to remove the growths on his face and neck.

● 1.30pm — the news the family have been waiting for. "The tumour is cut."

● 3.05pm — Glen leaves the operating theatre, seven hours after surgery has begun.

● 5.30pm — Glen is well enough to be taken to his room in the children's wing.

Glen even managed to wave hello to his brother Mark and held his hand for several minutes.

some day, but not yet.

"Then she suggested Glen had received a message from Jesus that he was going to take him away today."

"I told her we preferred option A."

Fred and Bernie also had a lump in their throats after witnessing a touching scene between Glen and his brother Mark, aged six.

The pair share a king-sized bed at the Ramada Inn in Rochester and the night before Glen's operation they snuggled up in each other's arms.

Fred revealed: "They never usually do that."

"Mark pulled him close and told him to get better soon."

FROM LINDA CHRISTIE IN ROCHESTER MINNESOTA



"I said to him 'You're not a doggy are you? You don't go woof woof then he started giggling.'"

Glen's mum Bernie admitted: "When he mentioned heaven I felt cold shivers go down my spine. We don't know what made him say it."

The couple told one of the sisters at St Mary's Hospital about Glen's shocking statement.

Fred said: "She said perhaps he meant he would be going to heaven