

# Johnson Co.

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## Family thrilled by new home

*Special features will smooth care for young boy*

**By Shelley Swift**

Star correspondent

Sometimes a dream come true can bring smiles — and tears.

That's the way it was for the Long family last week, as they toured their new dream home in the Calvert Farms subdivision in Greenwood.

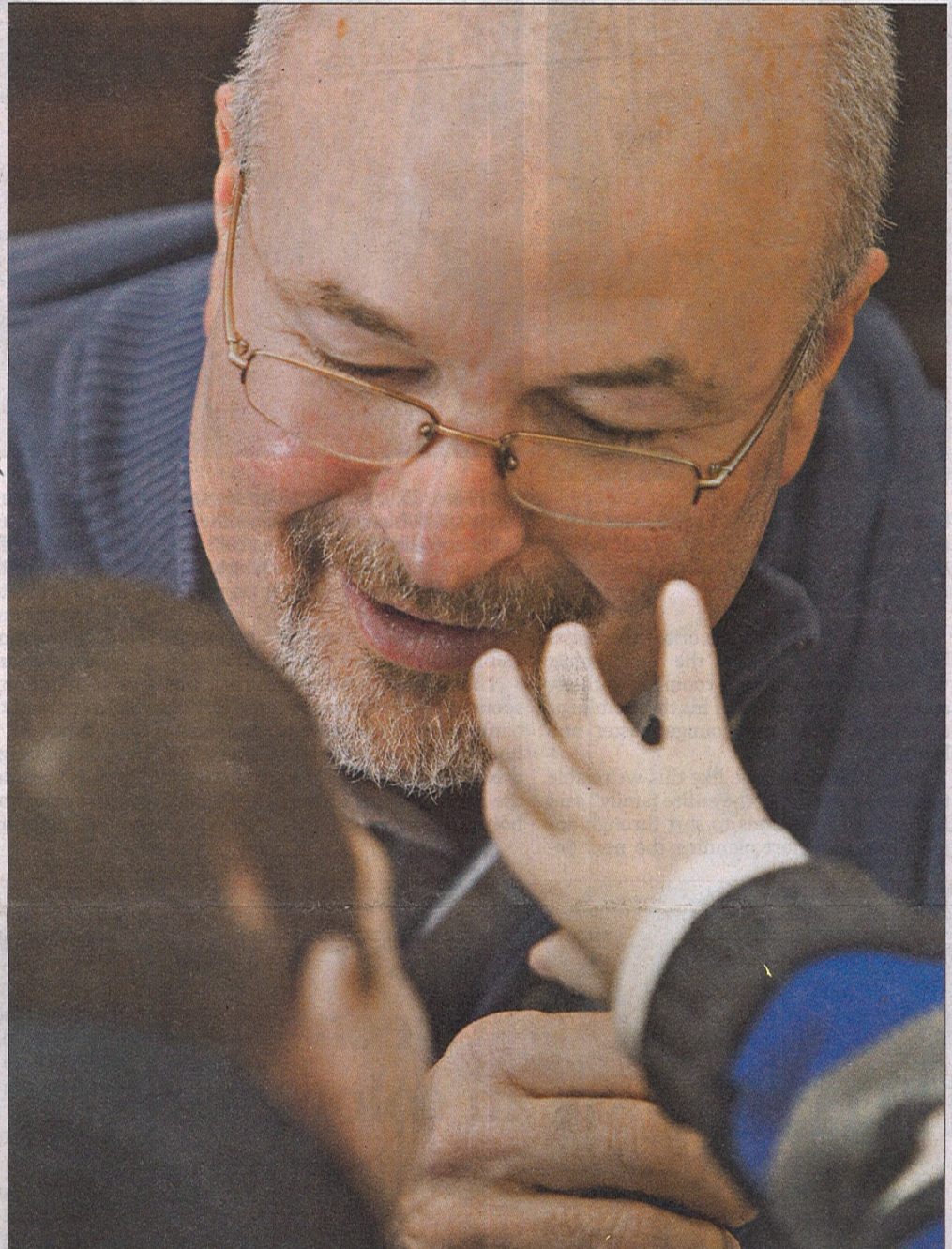


**Anthony Long, 7, was born with severe cerebral palsy and gets around in a wheelchair.**

Seven-year-old Anthony Long was particularly thrilled to see his Indianapolis Colts-themed bedroom, a room any boy would envy.

Long's family is the latest recipient of a specially equipped home built by Samantha's House, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the housing conditions and accessibility of seriously injured or otherwise impaired young adults and kids.

A crowd of about 100 people turned out to show the family their new home on Feb. 10.



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**Ed Huck, Greenwood, greets grandson Anthony Long, 7, at the Long family's new Greenwood home built by Samantha's House Foundation. Anthony has a Colts-themed bedroom and a therapy room in the house.**

"The reveal was awesome," said Jim Keller, who founded Samantha's House after providing legal counsel to Samantha Allen, who was paralyzed at the age of 8 in a car accident in 2003.

Long was born with severe cerebral palsy and is mostly nonverbal. However, he had no trouble expressing his joy as he and his family toured their new home.

"He was excited that there

were a boatload of people there cheering and clapping. He absolutely loved it. He had a big smile," said his mother, Rosie Long, who couldn't contain the

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tears herself.

"I felt like I was walking through the centerpiece home at the Indianapolis Home Show," she said. "The house is amazing, and the decorators really nailed my personal taste. They hit it on the head."

Anthony's father, Nick Long, was also beaming. "He pulled the mini van in the garage like three times to say, 'Honey, I'm home! What's for dinner?'" his wife said.

The home is truly a dream come true for the Longs, who have struggled to care for Anthony in their current 1,200-square-foot Greenwood home — where the hallways are too narrow to accommodate his wheelchair.

His parents have always left his wheelchair at the front door and carried him wherever he needed to go, a task made tougher as Anthony has grown.

Their new house is equipped with just about anything needed by a child who uses a wheelchair, including a special track in his bedroom that transports Anthony to the bathroom and a pulley system that lowers him into a therapeutic tub.



Nick Long and Anthony exit an elevator in the new handicapped-accessible home that includes features recommended by a therapist.

One of Anthony's favorite therapists helped builders design the new home, which includes a therapy room for Anthony and bedrooms for each of his three siblings, a teenage sister and younger sister and brother.

"By building a house like this we're able to improve the life of the entire family," said Keller, who is anxious to sort through applications and start planning the next Sa-



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mantha's House home project — the organization's fifth. The Longs can move into their home as soon as the mortgage is cleared through the bank, hopefully by next week. (Most of the house cost was covered by donations, but the Longs took out a mortgage in roughly the same amount as that on their current home.)

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The move will hopefully be a fresh start for the family.

Anthony and his mom spent the first six weeks of the year at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio as Anthony underwent extensive brain surgery to alleviate seizures.

"He's doing good now. We are definitely starting to see the possible light at the end of the tunnel," said his mom.