

PR – Ride-A-Thon

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., Nov. 18, 2005 – A sell-out crowd of more than 5,000 Central Floridians is expected to raise at least \$160,000 – a record – for Children’s Miracle Network at tonight’s *Disney Helping Kids Shine* Ride-A-Thon. The proceeds of the annual event – held at the Magic Kingdom – will go directly to Shands Children’s Hospital at the University of Florida and the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children & Women in Orlando.

“The Walt Disney World Resort, through its *Disney Helping Kids Shine* initiative, is committed to improving the lives of Central Florida’s children,” said Walt Disney World director of community relations Diane Ledder. “The record amount of money we expect to raise at this year’s Ride-A-Thon demonstrates just how strongly our Cast Members feel about giving back to their community.”

Walt Disney World Cast Members and employees of Shands Hospital and Orlando Regional Healthcare recruited participants and sponsors for the Ride-A-Thon, which encourages participants to ride select Fantasyland and Tomorrowland attractions as many times as possible. The event also provides a unique opportunity for participants to ride attractions with treasured Disney characters.

A Walt Disney World Resort stay will be awarded for the highest dollar amount raised by an individual and a Magical Gathering will be awarded to the team that raises the most money. Attendees will raise additional money through participation in a silent auction, which will feature more than 100 items.

“The Walt Disney World Resort has shown its commitment to our efforts in a big way,” said Children’s Miracle Network Events Manager Cathy Droke. “The money we’ve raised will help ensure that Shands Children’s Hospital at the University of Florida and the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children & Women will continue to provide the most advanced level of medical care for children in our community.”

The goal of *Disney Helping Kids Shine* is to engage children in society by creating healthy, guiding relationships with adults, providing constructive free time activities, offering character-building opportunities, and encouraging a sense of compassion for others, while helping those children who face adversity. In 2004, Walt Disney World Resort donated \$24.7 million in cash and in-kind support to the Central Florida community. Walt Disney World Cast Members also volunteered more than 185,000 hours to benefit local non-profit organizations.

Children’s Miracle Network – the alliance of premier hospitals for children – is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving and improving the lives of children by raising funds for children’s hospitals across North America.

PHOTO: Goofy joins in the fun at the 2006 Ride-A-Thon to raise money for the Children’s Miracle Network.