

Santa's Children Christmas Village

Orien Hodges from Santa's Village spoke at the Optimist Club on April 18. This is his 12th year of Santa's visits to children in crisis. They have been very busy at Santa's Village in Macedonia this past year. Just two weeks ago they had about 60 children visit from Children's Square. They went home with over \$2000 of new, free toys, clothing, and books.

Santa's Village started having Day Camps two years ago. The first year they had 23 children attend and last year there were 168. This year they expect to double or triple that number. The Day Camps include fishing at the three ponds on Jim Henry's farm East of Macedonia, games, crafts, and a variety of other activities.

This year Santa's Village will begin a garden project to raise food for local food pantries. They will have two or three students from the Service Learning project at Iowa Western Community College run the project. The students are from Central or South America have a six week internship in Agriculture. They will provide a write-up from the project and take it home to their country to implement there.