



May 30, 2010

Vol. 26 No. 25

Santa's Children Christmas Village

Orien Hodges spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on Saturday about Santa's Children Christmas Village. He has been doing Santa Visits for 13 years. Santa's Village focuses on children with serious and life threatening illnesses.

Santa's Village moved to Macedonia in 2004 and 27,882 hours of volunteer time have been invested there. In October 2009, as part of the University of Nebraska at Omaha three days of service program, youth from Treynor, Riverside, Lewis Central, and Omaha North High Schools, contributed over 1300 hours in volunteer time working on Santa's Village. They repaired and painted the entry way, main hall on the first floor, three walls in the gym, the locker rooms, stairway, and two rooms.

Last year Santa's Village sponsored Christmas parties and Santa Visits for over 1500 children and their families. They included children in Children's Hospital, Nishna Valley School, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Open Door Mission, Children's Square, and other children in need.

AmeriServe International, which supports persons with special needs throughout their life, started bringing 4-5 clients to the Village on Tuesdays in 2009 and have provided over 560 hours to the KIDS Program and general cleaning. The KIDS program provides free clothing, books, and toys to children in highly stressed situations.

Two intern CASS students from Iowa Western Community College volunteered in May and June last year to start a two acre garden program. The garden produced over 10,000 pounds of food that was given to individuals and families through food pantries and social service organizations, including Micah House, Mohms Place, Boys and Girls Clubs, AmeriServe International, In Jesus Name Services, Youth Care and Beyond, Omaha Salvation Army, and Open Door Mission.

Some Riverside classes went to the garden to sort potatoes by color, put them in bags, and take some back to school to clean and eat. They also saw a beaver dam at the garden pond.

Santa's Village has given over 12,000 books to Children's Hospital, Nebraska Medical Center, Open Door Mission, MICA House, Children's Square, and many other children during Santa Visits.

Santa's Children Christmas Village began a Day Camp program in 2007. They had 27 campers in 2007, 168 in 2008, and 439 in 2009. They are expecting 700-800 in 2010.

Orien spent last week at Camp Courageous last week, being trained as a volunteer in all activities at the camp. Camp Courageous is in Monticello, Iowa and serves over 5000 children each year with special needs. The Santa's Village day camp program is being modeled similar to the Camp Courageous program.

Santa's Village is always looking for volunteers, helping with repairs, the garden, and especially for Christmas parties and Santa's Visits in Macedonia, Iowa. If you can help for a few hours, please call 712-486-2599. More information is also available at their temporary website at treynoroptimist.org/SC.

Meeting Minutes

On May 30 Gary Gutttau opened the meeting with the pledge and Bob Hibbard gave the prayer. Keith Denton and Richard Vorthmann provided jokes. There were 17 members and six guests in attendance.

Kari Ticer and Taylor Clark collected a check for the Jr. Optimist Club from the Can Kennel for March. The check was for over \$900. They talked briefly about the activities the Jr. Optimist Club was involved in this past year.

Chad Gutttau contributed to the Youth Fund for his picture in the newspaper as volunteer of the year for the YMCA. Charlie Johnson contributed for his niece and nephew who were visiting. His niece graduated with a degree in Elementary Education.

Bill Vorthmann, Chad Gutttau, and Gary Gutttau helped with the Can Kennel on Wednesday. Several people also helped Mike Travis' fifth grade class plant three trees at the softball fields on Thursday.

Gerald Forrestall won the 50/50 drawing. Dee Gutttau won the attendance drawing, but did not collect.

Rod Roberts, a candidate for Iowa Governor will be the speaker next week.

CALENDAR

June proceeds for the Can Kennel will be for the Min-4H
 June 16, time TBD p.m.
 June 30, time TBD p.m.
 July 29 to August 1 - Iowa Optimist District Convention

Birthdays

June 5 - Bob Abbott
 June 9 - Les Harvey
 June 16 - Dale Willenborg
 June 20 - Jeff Jorgensen
 June 22 - Kevin Elwood

Anniversaries

June 1 - Kevin & Shana Elwood
 June 3 - Arlyn & Wanda Norris
 June 5 - Steve & Debra Irvin
 June 15 - Steve & Jeanie Chambers
 June 26 - Larry & Sharon Kramer
 June 28 - Mick & Judy Gutttau

Speakers

June 5 - Rod Roberts, Candidate for Iowa Governor

Programs

June - Linnea White
 July - Jeff Jorgensen
 Aug - Charlie Johnson
 Sept - Eric Allen
 Oct - Steve Irvin
 Nov - Arlyn Norris
 Dec - Chuck Nielsen/Keith Denton