

Santa's Camp and Wonderland



Orien Hodges spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on April 7 about his 15 years of work at helping children in crisis. This is accomplished through programs of Santa's Children Christmas Village and Santa's Camp and Wonderland.

Santa's Village was in the old Macedonia Middle School until last year when the school was torn down. They moved 7 semi-loads of books, clothing, and other items to an old calendar factory in Red Oak. Over 50 people from Zion church in Treynor and Jr. Optimist Club members helped with the move.

The main base of operations for Santa's Village is now Orien's acreage East of Oakland. AmeriServe International (ameriserveintl.com), which serves people with the diagnosis of developmental disabilities and unique intellectual challenges, has supplied over 3000 hours labor in Macedonia and Oakland over the past 1½ years through its outreach programs.

This is the fourth year for the garden project for Santa's Village. The garden project supplies fresh garden produce to local pantries and charitable organizations. They will have five gardens in Oakland this year. Earl May has supplied over \$1000 in plants over the past four years. The garden has supplied over 20,000 pounds of produce.

This fall AmeriServe and others helped construct a Tunnel of Hope light display in Oakland. Santa's visits were performed at the end of the tunnel, near some fire pits. Children in crisis received toys, books and clothing.

Santa's Village also sponsors trips to the fishing ponds at the John Henry farm East of Macedonia.

Orien would like to expand operations at his acreage over the next few years by building small buildings for various activities. He is planning to initiate a Capital Campaign by the end of the year. For more information, visit SantasCampAndWonderland.org, or call Orien Hodges at 402-657-6034.