



Teresa Spague, and Carmen Graham help Curtis Scales and Ahmad Spague shop for the perfect toy during the gift card giveaway at Toys R Us last week. The event was sponsored by the Chris Paul Family Foundation and Flow Buick and GMC.

What can 200 children buy with \$100 each? Foundation finds out

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Thanks to the generosity of the Chris Paul Family Foundation, 200 local children will wake up on Christmas morning with gifts under the tree.

Last Thursday, the organization teamed up with Flow Buick and GMC to give each child a \$100 gift card and an evening of carefree shopping at Toys R Us.

According to Charles and Robin Paul, the parents of NBA All Star point guard Chris Paul, the children were selected from the Ken B. Carson Boys and Girls Club, local recreation centers and schools. During a brief interview with *The Chronicle* among all the fun and excitement inside the toy store, Robin Paul mentioned the foundation has been holding the event since 2008.

She said the annual Christmas event is

unlike any other because it teaches children to give as well. Each participant that received a gift certificate had to buy at least one item for someone else.

"That's the only stipulation," she said. "We felt it was important that the children learn to give. That's what Christmas is about: giving and caring for others."

While navigating her way through the maze of toys, Christeannah Nesmith, a sixth-grader at Philo-Hill Middle School, said she was looking for something for her cousin.

"I think I'm going to get my cousin something he can learn with," continued Nesmith. "I can't wait to see him open it. I know he will be surprised."

The Chris Paul Family Foundation was founded in 2005 with a mission to help children and families by leveling the playing field in all aspects of life, including sports and education.



Robin Paul directs local children during Toys R Us gift card giveaway on Thursday, Dec. 15.



Sisters Lorri and Juliana Davis check out after an evening of shopping at Toys R US.



More than 300 children received brand new toys last weekend during the 24th annual Peace Toys for War Toys event.



Tajae Clark tries out her brand new bike during the 24th annual Peace Toys for War Toys program on Saturday, Dec. 17.

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More than 300 children trade violent toys for good toys

BY TEVIN STINSON
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The Winston-Salem Fairgrounds Education Building was filled with joy and laughter last Saturday afternoon as more than 300 children gathered for the 24th annual Peace Toys for War Toys program.

During the gathering, sponsored by the city Recreation and Parks Department, children had the opportunity to swap toys like guns and knives for less violent toys like board games and basketballs. What began as a small community event

held at the Sims Center Recreation Center in the Happy Hill neighborhood has grown to become one of city's most anticipated holiday events.

Now the supervisor at Carl Russell Sr. Recreation Center, Ben Piggott said when he started the event in 1992 he had no idea the event would grow to what it is today. Piggott started the event just one year after losing his brother to senseless gun violence.

He said, "The vision was to let kids know at an early age to put the guns down and let them know that there are people in this community who care."

"That was the vision but I had no idea it would evolve into this," smiled Piggott. "The first year we were in a small room, and then the next year we moved to the gym. It's amazing to see how it has grown over the years."

Along with the toys, 115 lucky children also left with a brand new bike. According to Piggott, the bikes and toys were donated by Carolina Cruisers, a local motorcycle club; The Prince Hall Shiners; the local chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity; and countless others, including the fire and police departments, who squared off in a

charity game last month to collect toys.

"I feel blessed to have so many sponsors," said Piggott. "I'm overwhelmed that so many people are willing to give."

After helping her daughter Tajae pick out a bike, Latoya Clark said after hearing about the event from friends, she decided to check it out.

"I think this is a wonderful event because it teaches kids early that violence isn't the way," said Clark. "We have to teach them early that guns and weapons only create more problems."

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