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BC is making this...

A very special Christmas



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Something new is happening on Brevard College campus this Christmas season. Something good! the Service Corp along with the faculty, students, and Office of Student Affairs will spread Christmas joy, spirit, and love by giving toys and household items to families less fortunate.

It all began when Sybil Dodson, Service Corp coordinator, came up with the idea of collecting toys for the local Brevard Sharing House. The Service Corp met and made decorative boxes which were placed in all dorm lobbies, Beam Administration, and McClarty-Goodson. The toy drive which began on Nov. 15 will continue until Dec. 8.

But this was only the beginning of what would end up to be an unforgettable Christmas season.

Giving toys to needy families turned into also giving the special gift of understanding and compassion to families of those in Western North Carolina who are suffering from AIDS.

The Service Club traveled to Asheville Saturday Nov. 18 to help restore an old home for AIDS victims. As students raked and did odd jobs, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Sharon Waggy and Dodson spoke with an AIDS victim who addressed BC students at the AIDS seminar in October. Sharon Waggy said in recent conversation that the subject of Christmas was brought up when "Bill" stated that many families did not know what to do about Christmas this year. Sharon and Sybil looked at one another and things started clicking. They then began planning and decided to help AIDS families.

"These people represent a group with special needs," said Dodson. Due to the costs of fighting AIDS, most victims cannot afford such items, such as blankets, detergent and other household items.

Because AIDS victims do represent a group with special needs, most of these needs are not met because they are socially unacceptable. Dodson added that Brevard College could do something, even if it is only a fraction.

The entire BC family (students, faculty, Administration, staff) will get a chance to help these families. Tonight is the annual Christmas tree lighting. the special activities will begin at 5 p.m. At that time the College will hold an open house. Faculty and their families have been invited to the dorms to visit students. Following the open house, they will gather in the dorm lobbies to decorate Christmas trees donated by the College and enjoy refreshments. Finally, the grand finale: at 8 p.m. everyone is invited to the annual Christmas tree lighting and carol singing. Jan Gilleen has organized the event. Hot

chocolate will be served and faculty musicians (Preston Woodruff, Devin Brown and Jock Lauterer) will also perform

Christmas music at this time, as everyone gathers around the tree. Those who bring a gift for the AIDS families will place the gift

near the tree to be gathered and given to those families to ensure a happy Christmas holiday.

Waggy stated that the faculty has been very supportive of the event. She added that due to other cost she did not expect students to donate. Emilee Wilkins, Cory Clark, and Julie Connell are roommates who joined the Service club to help people.

According to Waggy, there has been some negative feedback about BC students participating in helping AIDS victims. "It shocked me about the lack of actual knowledge these people have," said Waggy. She added that the students are very careful. The contact in which the students engage with the AIDS victims is safe. "If anyone has any questions they should contact the nurse," said Waggy.

The toys collected will be divided. The toys appropriate for the AIDS families will go to Asheville and all other toys will be given to the needy children at the local Brevard Sharing House.

Waggy said, "This is an important thing to do at Christmas. We should share what we have. Even if it is something small, it will bring a lot of happiness."



Getting into the Christmas spirit early, the BC Service Corps is seen decorating toy drive boxes before Thanksgiving. The group includes, front row, left to right, Jeff Angelo, Melissa Ingram, Lori Babb, Penny Lane, Mark McCarthy, Cory Clark, Emily Wilkins, Brooks and Leslie Goodwin and Burney Mack; back row, co-advisors Clyde Carter and Debbie Garrick, Service Coordinator Sybil Dodson and students Aldrin Cataby and Julie Connell. Service Corps members not pictured include Joyea Warren, Kathy Crates and John Kanipe. (Clarion photo)



Freshman Todd Wysong bags leaves along with Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Sharon Waggy.



Raking leaves at the Western North Carolina AIDS Project group home in Asheville on Saturday, Nov. 18, BC Service Corps members are, left to right, Lin Redmond, Penny Lane and Missy Ingram. (Clarion photos by Sybil Dodson)