

Eliada Home Smothered In Love



40 children from broken or troubled homes have 600 new friends—all employees here at Pisgah Forest. These new friends filled this past Christmas for these kids with joy and love. But most important the love and attention continues to flow.

Joe Collett, a broke handler, is a name firmly attached to this story, but Joe wants to make it clear that he was only a bit player in the rush of events.

Joe has regularly volunteered some of his time, energy and attention to people who needed it. He would visit the Brian Center nursing home and visit with patients who didn't have family or friends.

In 1983 some people who worked with Joe on his shift asked what they

could do. "That was the first sign of the great reservoir of love and kindness that was out there in the plant," Joe said.

About 70 folks on Joe's shift put together a Christmas party in 1983. They purchased gifts for each patient that didn't have family and they shared their time and caring at the nursing home. "Things started to roll from that point," noted Joe. "I couldn't have stopped it if I wanted to. More and more people here heard about what we were doing and asked what they could do."

The next event was a bingo party for Brian Center residents. Over 100 people gave to the party gifts, food and their time.

With more and more people wanting to participate in similar programs Joe looked around for another worthy



organization. He investigated Eliada Home for Children in Asheville and felt the home would benefit from the rush of love and attention being generated around him.

A grass-roots organization developed throughout the paper and film plants under the direction of Joe. A list of needs was distributed.

By Christmas over 600 people were involved. Two Christmas parties were held with over 150 paper and film employees and their families attending. They brought bikes, dolls, stereos and great gobs of caring.

Every child at the home had an individual sponsoring family who spent time with the child.

"What's most exciting is what's happened since Christmas," said Bob Hoffman at Eliada. "Over 25 families have made application to be a sponsor family and several families have taken the training to enable them to take a child into their home on weekends or overnight. Company employees are attempting to recruit people and materials to expand workshop programs."

1 Joe Collett from Finishing has his hands full with one of his new young friends.

2 Joan Owen from Finishing enjoys a child's happiness with his new doll.

3 Joe, Joan, and Jerry Owen from Machine Room and Steve Underwood from Finishing stand in new kitchen in a cottage remodeled in part with \$2200 in safety prize money.

4 Steve talks with two old friends in one of the cottages.

"I've seen a lot of remarkable things," concluded Joe. "The power of a group of people who organize themselves, decide what needs to be done and then do it. The ability of people from all areas and all levels to work together. The large number of people who want to help other people.

"Together we brought out how important it is to have unity and cooperation in order to fulfill our common purpose.

"I continue to be amazed how employees have extended this program into the community. Brevard businesses and churches have made significant contributions." ☺