

Fa La La La La, La La La La



“We Wish You A Merry Christmas,” rang out across Damar’s main campus on Saturday, Dec. 13 as **Southport Middle School** returned for their fourth year to spread some holiday cheer.

“We look forward to this every year,” said school representative **Kathy Riesenmey**, who organizes the activity.

Every fall, the Southport Middle School requests the holiday wish lists of Damar’s 125 residents and creates a giving tree from which students and staff choose names, purchase and wrap the gifts. A select group of staff and families come to Damar to spread joy to the clients by giving gifts, singing holiday carols and playing

Southport Middle School came out to spread some holiday cheer to the children at Damar.

the hand bells. “The singing was really good,” said **Renee**, a Damar resident. “It was really nice of them to bring presents and sing to us. They all seemed so nice.”

In recognition of Damar’s selection as the school’s Charity of the Month in November, they also presented Damar staff with a \$248 check raised through a student Jeans Day fundraiser.

A woman was walking along a beach filled with starfish. As she walked, she would stoop down, pick one up at random, and throw it back into the ocean. A man came upon her and asked why she was bothering with throwing some back when there were so many- how could it possibly make a difference? She picked up another starfish, threw it back into the ocean, and said, “It made a difference to that one.” – Author Unknown

Happy New Year!



I would like to thank each and every one of you for contributing more than

16,000 hours in volunteer time during 2008. As I think

back at all of the volunteer activities, as well as relationships that have been built, it has truly been a blessed year. The Volunteer Resources program has been able to accomplish so much with your assistance.

On Thanksgiving Day we rolled out the new Damar website content. If you have not had a moment to check it out, please do so at damar.org. I am very happy with the way the volunteer pages look and the fact that potential volunteers can sign up on the inquiry page.

Let's start out the new year by telling our friends and businesses about the many opportunities for volunteers here at Damar Services.

Sincerely,

Donna Stutler

Volunteer Resources Director

Gleeful Holiday Wrappers



Holiday volunteers wrap gifts for deserving children at Damar.

On Saturday, Dec. 13, more than 100 volunteers with scissors in hand took on the monumental task of wrapping 800 plus gifts that were given to Damar clients this holiday season. Wrapping began at 10 in the morning and thanks to the dedication of the workers, everything including cleanup was done by noon.

According to volunteer **Kristin Kramer**, MP3 players, CDs and DVDs were popular items this year. While these were easy

to wrap, other gifts provided more of a challenge. Volunteers laughed over the best way to wrap spike-backed dinosaurs, body pillows and other awkwardly shaped items.

"As our mission grows, so does our need for dedicated volunteers to help with special projects like this one, and we appreciate the help of our holiday gift wrappers who help make the holidays brighter for the hundreds of deserving children we serve," said **Donna Stutler** volunteer resources director.

Special Thanks Due

Girl Scout Troop #1955 of Mooresville Christian Academy returned on Dec. 4 to create holiday crafts with some of young female clients. This was the group's second activity.

Santa and his **Delta Theta Tau Sorority** member elves visited with clients on the evening of Dec. 8. After sitting on Santa's lap to tell him of their holiday wishes, clients had fun making a holiday creation.

Preparations for the Elvis concert were made easier thanks to six ladies from **Eli Lilly's Research and Development Human Resources and Training** staff who helped set up over 300 chairs in the gym for the concert. Their gift of time allowed other maintenance staff to spend their time doing other much needed work.

On Dec. 11, 2008 ladies of **Delta Chi Sigma Sorority** volunteered their time to assist Damar with the annual holiday card mailing. They worked quickly and their efforts were much appreciated.

As newcomers to Damar, members of the **Original Circle City Corvette Club** had a chance to help with their first Elvis show on Dec. 11. In addition to sponsoring the treats for the audience, the members passed out the treats and helped ensure Santa's arrival for the show wrap up. In the spring, they plan to host a car show.

Congregation members of **First Free Will Baptist Church** brought some new dance moves to the clients as their all female praise dancers performed on the evening of Dec. 12. Following their performance they took a few minutes to go over the moves and teach them

to interested clients. The young men from the youth group played board games with some of our clients. This was the group's second activity at Damar.

Many volunteers were busy on Dec. 15 as Damar hosted its annual Santa Shop.

Santa visited Damar again on the evening of Dec. 15 along with his helpers of the **Catholic Youth Organization (CYO)**. The group distributed gifts and treats to all 125 clients living on Damar's main campus. This annual tradition of giving is cherished by everyone at Damar.

Elementary students from **IPS #49 Peace Club** spent the first two weeks of December designing gift tags for all of the clients' gifts. They made more than 800 tags by hand.

Volunteer Success Story

Cara and Eric Luecking decided last year that they wanted to pay it forward by giving back to the community. Advice from a friend, who had served as a one-one-one volunteer at Damar, led the couple to campus where they, too, sought the opportunity to befriend a child who could benefit from a special relationship with caring adults.

"I think Eric and I made a perfect match for David," said Cara, adding that David shares two of the couple's favorite hobbies.

Eric loves music, an interest he shares with David. In an effort to further this interest, the couple took David to a John Legend concert and arranged for him to go back stage. Cara enjoys making crafts which David also likes. The two spend quality time together making jewelry, crocheting and working on other similar projects.

Over the past 18 months, the Cara and Eric have exposed David to many other unique experiences and allow him to help choose the activities they can all enjoy during their time together. He loves to help them cook dinner at their house, go to the library in downtown Indianapolis, and play sports such as miniature golf and basketball. David has also written poetry with the couple, which has inspired him to write on his own.

"Eric and I have a great time hanging out with David. We really enjoy being a part of his life," added Cara.

They feel being a part of David's life has taught them a lot about



Cara and Eric Luecking smile for the camera.

themselves and what it means to be accountable to someone else. They feel it has been great practice for the child they are expecting in late spring.

For David, having Cara and Eric means always having someone there for him during the good and bad times.

"My life is better because I never really had a person to just spend time with me who was not getting paid," he said. "I feel safe with them. They love me. They are my heroes."

GivingBack

Thank you to the following volunteers for "giving back" in NOVEMBER 2008 by contributing 1561.25 hours.

Becky Anderson
Pam Ball
Melvin Bolden, Jr.
Amanda Budhi
Luther Budhi
Beth Calvert
Donna Clair
Jennifer DeBolt

Diana Douglas
Betsy Shaw Elsassner
Colleen Fly
Shelley Frederick
Stephanie Garner
Ron Gasvoda
Barb Hittle
Danielle Hopwood

Brittaney Humphrey
Joe Kemp
Polly Keown
Jamie Kitron
Lisa Knott
Pete Koers
Zachary Koehler
Kay Landis

Chuck Lindgren
Nancy Lippens
Cara Luecking
Eric Luecking
Krisy Mahome
Kenya McMillin
Sam McNeal
Audrie Meredith

Megan Monday
Stephanie Nicolini
Jessica Parsley
Jamie Petty
Shane Riddle
Miriam Savage
Lauren Schelle
Jeff Schabel

Toni Schabel
Greg Smith
Laura Smith
Debbie Swinney
Greg Swinney
Stephanie Weber

Groups

IUPUI Service Learning Group
Eli Lilly Employees
Butler Delta Tau Delta Fraternity
IUPUI Rotary Club

First Free Will Baptist Church
Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
IU School of Occupational Therapy
IUPUI Delta Sigma Pi Fraternity

Butler Alpha Phi Omega
Salvage Yard Christian Church
Girl Scout Troop 1955
Butler Delta Tau Delta Fraternity

Remember . . .
 Please turn in your December
 volunteer/intern hours by
 JANUARY 5, 2008

Damar Services, Inc.
 6067 Decatur Blvd
 Indianapolis, IN 46241



Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Special Events

Wednesday, January 14, 2009	6:30 p.m.	Scrapbooking for Bradford, GTU-R and All GSL Transition Homes
Sunday, January 18, 2009	2 p.m.	CYO Karaoke
Monday, January 19, 2009	9 a.m.	IUPUI MLK Day of Caring
Wednesday, January 20, 2009	5:30 p.m.	Camby Chaos Softball Team Activity
Sunday, January 25, 2009	6 p.m.	Grace United Methodist Church of Franklin Sponsors Movie Night
Wednesday, January 28, 2008	6:30 p.m.	Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Activity



If you are receiving this newsletter by mistake or no longer wish to receive it, please contact Molly Wells at 317.856.5201 ext. 238 or mollyw@damar.org.