

BSU helps bring Christmas to kids in need

Volunteers prepare charitable gifts for the holiday season

BY VALERIE SPENCER
Staff Reporter

The season of giving has arrived.

Members of the Baptist Student Union, Rehoboth Baptist Church and the Kirksville community are coming together to participate in Operation Christmas Child.

The charity is part of Samaritan's Purse, a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization that helps those in need in other countries.

Participants fill shoeboxes with gifts ranging from candy to toys to hygiene items for children ages 2 to 4, 5 to 9 or 10 to 14, according to Samaritan's Purse.org.

Samaritan's Purse began Operation Christmas Child in 1993 and since has distributed more than 46 million boxes of gifts to children in more than 130 countries, according to the Web site.

Junior Lindsay Allan, a Rehoboth Baptist Church member, said this is her first year participating in the organization but that she thinks that it positively affects the lives of the less fortunate.

"The whole goal is to spread the good news, the gospel, to tell people about Jesus Christ," she said. "And we do this with the Christmas story. So kids receive these

boxes full of presents, ... and then they [learn] the story of Jesus and how Jesus is a gift to the world. The gift that they receive represents the similar gift we received when Jesus was born."

Allan said she helped host a shoebox wrapping party on campus to encourage students to take part in the charity. She said she enjoys planning events and thought the party would be a good way to bring people together.

"[Rehoboth] really wanted to get Truman students involved in it, so I volunteered to host an event where people from Truman can wrap their presents together, fellowship together and affect a lot of people," she said.

"I think, especially as a college student, my life usually revolves around my own needs and what I want. I think when doing something like this, you can take the focus off yourself for a little while and think about blessing someone else, especially during the holiday season."

Liz Morrey
Junior

Rehoboth Baptist Church has been participating in Operation Christmas Child for several years, but Allan said she wanted to see more University students and community members involved. She said she spoke to several different campus organizations and was able to attract more attention to the cause.

Sophomore Taylor Warden said she heard about Operation Christmas Child when Allen came to speak at a Campus Christian Fellowship meeting. Warden said she and a few friends purchased gifts to fill the shoeboxes according to a suggestion list provided by Samaritan's Purse and attended the wrapping party.



(From left to right) Sophomores Taylor Warden and Lisa Langenfeld, junior Lindsay Allan and sophomore Amber Lusk participate in Operation Christmas Child in the Planetarium on Saturday.

"I love kids," she said. "[It's about] giving what we have and other people don't. And we're able to go out and get things like this, so why not give to little kids?"

Junior Liz Morrey said she participated in the operation with her family when she was younger and was excited to get back into the giving spirit.

"My whole family would go and buy stuff," she said. "A lot of times I would [shop for] a girl that was my age, so when I was like 8 I was just

picking out stuff I would like, and I would always write a little note and send my picture. ... It was fun."

Morrey, an active member of the BSU, said she found out about the local involvement in Operation Christmas Child through Allan and also has tried to get others involved. Morrey said she enjoys participating in the charity because it gives her the chance to share the joy of Christmas with the less fortunate.

"I think, especially as a col-

lege student, my life usually just revolves around my own needs and what I want," she said. "I think when doing something like this, you can take the focus off yourself for a little while and think about blessing someone else, especially during the holiday season."

Allan said people who participate can take their boxes to special collecting points around the country. Rehoboth is one collecting point for Kirksville. Members of Rehoboth then take the boxes to

progressively larger collecting points until they reach a shipping point, Allan said.

The national collection week is this Monday through Saturday, so those wanting to help with Operation Christmas Child should turn in their filled shoeboxes, plus \$7 to cover the cost of shipping, to Rehoboth as soon as possible, Allan said.

"I'd like to see Truman turn out as many boxes as possible," she said. "That'd be a great goal."

Deer season attracts hunters to Kirksville area



Jackson Groves/Index

Saturday marked the beginning of deer hunting season in Kirksville. More than 1,200 deer were killed in Adair County in the first weekend.

BY ABBEY SNYDER
Staff Reporter

Let the game hunting begin.

Michael Jones, wildlife regional supervisor for the Northeast Missouri Department of Conservation said that Saturday, Nov. 10, marked the beginning of firearms deer hunting season, which is popular in the Kirksville area.

"This is just a good destination for deer hunters," Jones said. "We're known for big deer hunting, [and] that's why we have such high hunting pressure."

Jones said there are many factors that set Northeast Missouri apart from other regions when it comes to good places to hunt.

"We have excellent habitat throughout most of the region," he said. "We have good genetics in this part of the state so we can grow larger and good-quality deer."

Jones said hunting is important in this area to keep the populations of different animals at a manageable level.

"It's one of our main ways to manage the different wildlife species we have out there, especially deer," he said. "Also, it's a traditional activity that ... a lot of people like to do. [It's] just a big time for people to get together and socialize."

Jones said that in addition to being important for the animal population, the hunting season brings a large amount of money into Missouri.

"I've seen figures that the deer season will bring around something like \$800 million for the state of Missouri," Jones said. "That's taking into

consideration people buying equipment, guns, ammunition, groceries, gas, vehicles, four-wheelers, that kind of stuff. So it has a huge economic impact ... in Missouri."

Freshman Luke Crader said he enjoys deer hunting for the social aspect as well as the excitement factor.

"Shooting [the deer] is probably the best part," Crader said. "After I get done I'm shaking like crazy. They call it buck fever. It's just so quiet and you try not to make a noise, and I guess after you get done you're so excited that you shot it that you just start shaking."

After all is said and done, Crader said he has the game he's killed processed into various meat products.

"I take it to a meat shop and get it processed into whatever you want: summer sausage, brats, jerkey," he said. "Depending on the size of the deer it costs about \$200."

Thalia Gander, an employee at Gander's Gun and Archery Supply in Shelbyville, Mo., said a love of hunting and the popularity of hunting in this area led her husband to open their store in 2000.

"We call our area 'Deer Alley,'" she said. "I mean they are everywhere. It seems like you get a lot of people wanting to get out of the cities, so they come up here to do their hunting too."

Gander said she thinks hunting is a fun way to spend time with mother nature.

"[It's a] time to get out, enjoy nature and just be out in the fall," Gander said. "Everybody just talks about how much they enjoy it, ... and [there's] the thrill of looking for that big buck."

Jones said hunting also can be a time to create good memories with family and friends.

"My dad died three years ago, and we spring turkey hunted together," he said. "That was kind of his favorite activity, so most of my fondest memories are hunting with him each spring for spring turkey season. We always looked forward to doing that activity together."

For those interested in getting involved in hunting, Jones said the best thing to do is to find someone who can teach them.

"I would say the first step especially for kids is to find an experienced hunter that can mentor them, whether it's a family member or a friend," he said. "[Then they should] attend a hunter-safety course. The Department of Conservation teaches hunter-safety courses throughout the year."

Jones said hunter-safety courses are required to be able to hunt and that they're important so people know how to be careful and considerate hunters.

"I just encourage everybody to use good ethics and be safe while they're out there," he said. "There are a lot of people in the field, and we just want to make sure people stay safe and abide by the rules and regulations so we'll have a safe, quality hunt."

In the opening weekend, hunters killed more than 100,000 deer in Missouri and more than 1,200 deer in Adair County, according to the Missouri Department of Conservation. Macon County made the biggest kill in the northeast with more than 1,900 deer.

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