

CAP's Christmas basket program brightens holidays for thousands

During this special holy season, it is customary to bestow and receive gifts from friends and family, 'tis the time of giving. However, sometimes there are those within our midst that go without, that will have no presents due to limited finances, lack of employment or circumstances beyond their control. These individuals number in the thousands, throughout eastern Kentucky, and some will be touched by the generosity of the Christian Appalachian Project's Christmas Basket Program.

Santa's elves at the Christian Appalachian Project began their work during the heat of June, sending appeal letters throughout our nation to spark interest and involvement in the Christmas program. CAP caseworkers compile "wish lists" from local families in need. The "wish lists" travel to donors across the country, as well as real nearby. The holiday packages begin to make their way to Kentucky just after Halloween and continue to arrive through the mail up until the first week of December.

Distribution of the holiday packages begins a week before Christmas in eleven counties which include, Garrard, Knott, southern Madison, Rockcastle, Owsley, Jackson, McCreary, Johnson, Floyd, Magoffin and Martin. Local churches open their

doors to CAP and provide participants with a special service before the gift distribution to rejoice in song and praise. It becomes a joint community effort, as a number of religious lend their space and sanctuary to the programs within the various counties.

Throughout the course of December, the CAP Christmas basket program will provide gifts, food and brighten the holidays of over 5,000 Appalachians, who otherwise would have a rather bleak, sparse Christmas.

"My children would not have had a Christmas if it hadn't been for CAP, they've been a true blessing to our household," remarked a participant in McCreary county.

Not only during the holidays but throughout the year, The Christian Appalachian Project (CAP) is there lending a hand up. CAP is an interdenominational, nonprofit Christian service organization committed to serving people in need in Appalachia by providing physical, spiritual and emotional support through education, crisis intervention and community development. With more than seventy programs and services, CAP's efforts reach people through the thirteen Appalachian states.



Teenage Mothers Networking Group celebrated the holidays.

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The Rockcastle Teen Center was the setting for a warm and delightful evening of celebration with young mothers in the Mt. Vernon area, who are involved with Christian Appalachian Project's Parents Are Teach-

ers, Rockcastle Teen Center and Resource Mothers Group through the Cumberland Valley Health Department.

Approximately forty mothers and children gathered 'round a Christmas

tree and visited with one another. The women received gift packages from CAP and the Health Department.

However, they experienced something more valuable. They came away with the opportunity to interact and communicate with other mothers, the majority of them single.

"It gave the moms the chance to see other mothers relating to their children and it's been enjoyable for me to see them relaxed in an atmosphere that is baby friendly, they can sit back and enjoy motherhood," stated Suzann Fenton of Christian Appalachian Project's Parents Are Teachers. Suzann, a Developmental Interventionist with the Christian Appalachian Project's Parents Are Teachers Program, serves families of children (birth to three years of age) with developmental delays and/or physical disabilities. Her role as a Developmental Interventionist and provider of First Steps services, provides and instructs parents on activities to enhance their child's growth and development.

Also, the children got a surprise visit from the jolly old elf, Santa Claus, who came with a sack full of Christmas packages and toys that would contribute to their development. The children were elated with the appearance of the bearded guest

and spent time pulling his whiskers and enjoying their surprises.

Being a teenage parent, they can miss out on a lot, everyone coming together tonight allowed them company and fellowship they ordinarily would not experience," commented Glenna Robinson, Manager of CAP Rockcastle Teen and Youth Center, where a few of these young women participated earlier in their young lives.

"It was so much easier this year, doing the Christmas party, in relation to space and resources, we all three worked very well together," stated Regina Hamm of the Cumberland Valley Health Department. She is manager of the Resource Mothers group that provides intervention up until age one, her networking group numbers over twenty moms.

Suzann and Glenna Sempley, the Christian Appalachian Project (CAP), is an interdenominational, nonprofit Christian service organization committed to serving people in need in Appalachia by providing physical, spiritual and emotional support through education, crisis intervention and community development. With more than seventy programs and services, CAP's efforts reach people through the thirteen Appalachian states.



Students from St. Xavier in Cincinnati assist Christian Appalachian Project Outreach with their Christmas basket distribution.

CAP's JobStart receives the holidays software donation

A sizeable donation of computer software has answered a critical need in Christian Appalachian Project's JobStart program. SmartForce, formerly CBT (Computer Based Technology) a leader in the design and development of interactive educational software for information technology professionals worldwide, provided the donation which will place JobStart participants on the cutting edge of technology.

The donation consisted of software educational packages totaling seven thousand dollars. Three main components: A+ Courseware, SmartForce's TechEd Series and the Can I Series comprise the in-kind inventory. The gift makes an overwhelming addition to the curriculum of JobStart, a program that equips participants with a multitude of specific skills and competencies affording them more marketability.

Brent Bundy and former CAP volunteer Bill Wilder, both of SmartForce were instrumental in coordinating the partnership and bringing the JobStart staff up to speed in utilizing the technology. The A+ courseware will teach participants how to diagnose problems on their PC's and replace damaged components of their computer. This courseware is highly sought after and will capture the attention of prospective employers, thus increasing the value of the donation. The TechEd Series provides course-

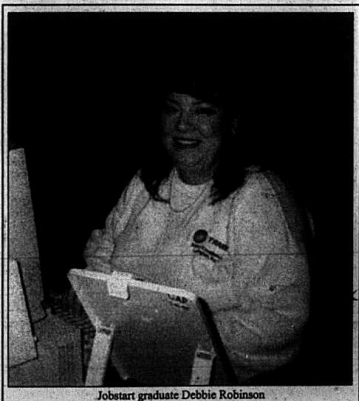
ware for Microsoft Office User Certification, targeting Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Outlook programs. The Can I Series consists of sixteen interactive multimedia programs emphasizing "soft" skills such as listening successfully, dealing with conflict and thinking creatively.

"This gives JobStart participants more credibility and elevates our computer education component, placing us on level with professional computer training companies," stated Janet Ryan, CAP JobStart manager.

In addition to the donation, a possible mentoring program is underway with SmartForce which would offer JobStart participants access to free technical support.

Close to 250 individuals have benefited from the JobStart training program, with local employers partnering with CAP to provide a working environment and job shadowing opportunities.

JobStart is a program of the Christian Appalachian Project (CAP), an interdenominational, nonprofit Christian service organization committed to serving people in need Appalachia by providing physical, spiritual and emotional support through education, crisis intervention and community development. With more than seventy programs and services, CAP's efforts reach people in the thirteen Appalachian states.

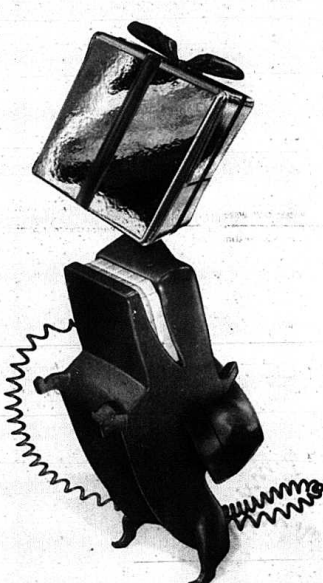


Jobstart graduate Debbie Robinson

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