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PMC employees extend holiday cheer

TITUSVILLE, FL (December 22, 2005)— Parrish Medical Center board members, employees, physicians and volunteers helped make Christmas wishes come true this year for 59 children in the North Brevard community.

As part of the hospital's annual "Adopt-a-Child" program, more than 400 brightly wrapped packages and shiny new bicycles were picked up December 16 by employees and friends of the Florida Department of Children & Families' Community-Based Care initiative for distribution to boys and girls in need of some holiday cheer.

Gifts were stacked around Christmas trees at Parrish Medical Center, as well as the Parrish Health and Fitness Center in Titusville.

The program grows bigger each year because of the compassionate care partners (board members, employees, physicians and volunteers) at PMC.

Two of PMC's core values are compassion and stewardship. These values were especially shown this year with the outpouring of gifts and the way so many people stepped up to adopt families and children.

A number of PMC departments chose to forego departmental holiday gift exchanges and instead pooled money together to adopt a family or child. As an example, PMC employees in the Food and Nutrition department collected enough money to fulfill the wishes of two children. One was a Mongoose DX-R AL 21-speed mountain bicycle, along with a safety helmet and other gear, and another who wanted rollerblades and safety gear.

"I just wish we could see the boy's face when he gets his bike," said Christine Andrews of Titusville, who has worked in the Food and Nutrition department at the hospital for nearly a year.

Cheryl Waters of Mims, also an employee for the food and nutrition department, said employees go all out to make Christmas special for recipients, and she speaks from experience. In 2004, her 33-year-old son, who is raising a little boy by himself, was struggling through a challenging time. He received help that year with holiday gifts for his son from PMC employees.

“What he received (in gifts) just brought me to tears; it was so wonderful,” said Waters. “I wanted to give back because they did so much for him last year.”

Beneath the Christmas tree at Parrish Health and Fitness Center, gifts ranging from bicycles and dollhouses to toy trucks and PlayStation game systems were ready to bring smiles to children in the Adopt-a-Child program on Christmas morning.

Fitness center employees, as well as members, participated in the program by adopting a child and fulfilling their wish list. Members of Girl Scout Troop No. 2111 of Titusville, which meets at the fitness center, took the Adopt-a-Child program on as their project this year. They decorated the tree with the children’s names and wishes, and donated gifts to the program.

Kathie Coon, who works in the communications department at PMC, lead the coordination efforts of the medical center’s “Adopt-a-Child/Family“program. Robin Rymkos, who teaches aerobics, coordinated the Parrish fitness center’s “Adopt-a-Child” program this year.

North Brevard is fortunate to have so many loving residents working together to spread joy and goodwill not just during the holidays, but all year. Thanks to everyone who helped make this year’s Adopt-a-Child program a huge success.