

From the Wotanim Wowapi ~ December 7, 2006

"Christmas on the Reservation"



Christian Smoker, Vice President of the Poplar Middle School Student Council, did her best carrying as many gifts as she could when sorting through the thousands of presents donated by 100 chiropractors to the Fort Peck reservation this week. - See story page 3 - (Lisa Perry photo)

Doctors donate gifts to kids

**By Lisa Perry
For the Wotanin**

POPLAR - The spirit of giving is abundant across the reservation this week as around 3,000 hand wrapped gifts began arriving for reservation children.

Students in grades kindergarten through the 12th grade in Frazer, Wolf Point, Poplar, and Brockton will receive the gifts this week.

"Every student will be receiving a gift," stated Kenny Smoker Jr., Health Program Specialist in an interview on Tuesday morning.

The gifts, which included clothing, such as coats, snow boots, sweat suits, and toy's were made possible by 100 chiropractors from across the United States, who donated the gifts.

The Fort Peck Tribal Council also declared this week Fort Peck Chiropractor Appreciation Week.

On Wednesday, the two main chiropractors, Dr. Ed and Dr. Kevin will arrive at Fort Peck and will be honored by the Fort Peck Tribal Executive Board.

The doctors will also be presenting a few special gifts of their own to community members.

The doctor's goal was to help a third world country, but after much thought, they decided what

a better way to help people in our country, especially the Native American, who live in the same conditions as most third world countries.

"The purpose is to have a healthy community, especially around Christmas time. It is a joyful and happy time, but with the unemployment rate so high, they just wanted to be able to give what some may not have gotten otherwise, stated Smoker.

The cost to ship the gifts to Fort Peck ran the doctors anywhere from \$6,000 - \$7,000.

The gifts were sorted according to age, gender, and size, and will be distributed to each school to hand out at their convenience.

This past May, the doctor's visited Fort Peck and volunteered their time and effort in painting and re-roofing the old Glacier Theater in downtown Poplar.

Their dream is to open the movie house by next summer to give the kids in the community a healthier lifestyle besides using alcohol and drugs.

Distribution of the gifts will begin this morning (Thursday) at around 9 a.m. when the Frazer students will get their gifts at school.

And at 2 p.m. Brockton students will

receive them and then on Friday students at Poplar and Wolf Point will be getting their Christmas presents.

The Poplar Middle School student council volunteered by sorting the gifts earlier this week at a storage place located at A & S Tribal Industries.

Student council president, Mariah Dimas, vice president; Christian Smoker; secretary, Taylor Eder, and three 8th grade representatives, Kelly Tuttle, Jacoby Holte, and Lorraine Hopkins.

Another big plus for the community from the chiropractors is the training being provided for a student to attend Chiropractic School.

Local student Brandi Charette was selected and when finished with her schooling she will return back to the reservation to service the local population.

The chiropractors also want to build a chiropractic office complete with a wellness center and gymnasium.

"We want to honor them by their contributions to the reservation and by helping out the Native American people here," stated Smoker.

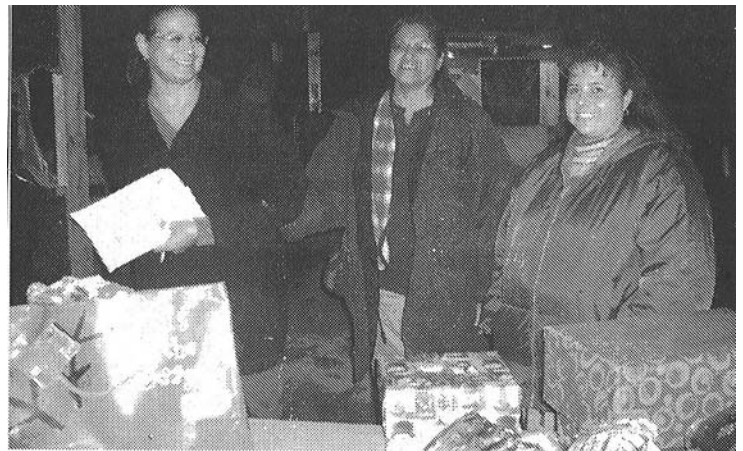
Santa's Helpers



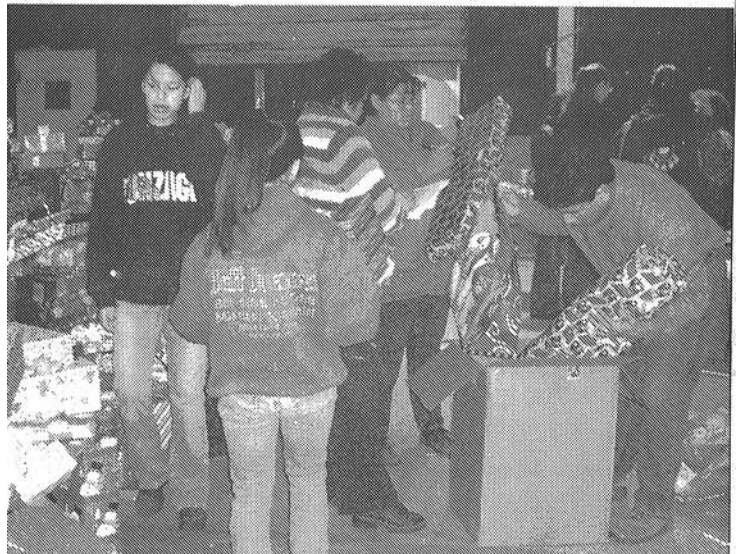
Members of the Poplar Middle School Student Council were busy all week helping sort through the 3,000 wrapped gifts at a storage spot at A&S Tribal Industries. The gifts were made possible thanks to around 100 chiropractors nation wide and will be distributed this week to students in Frazer, Wolf Point, Poplar, and Brockton. Student Council members include back row l-r: Lorraine Hopkins, Taylor Eder, and Kelly Tuttle. Front row l-r: Christian Smoker, Mariah Dimas, and Jacoby Holte. (Lisa Perry photo)



Frazer parent Taryn Jackson, along with Frazer School's Character Ed teacher Sonya Smoker-St. Marks, and paraprofessional Marla Jackson helped sort packages for students in Frazer. (Lisa Perry photo)



Rae Jean Belgarde, Ruth Walking Eagle, and Cheri Nygard stopped in to lend a hand for the Brockton Schools. (Lisa Perry photo)



Each one of the presents were each wrapped individually in the most beautiful wrapping paper money could buy. The gifts are being distributed to each student in grades kindergarten through 12th grade at the four reservation schools. (Lisa Perry photo)