

## Alpha Phi Omega builds parade float for the Gifts for Kids program March in Marine Bank parade

by Mark Owens  
Collegian Staff Writer

Last Saturday members of Gifts for Kids and Behrend's chapter of Alpha Phi Omega braved the cold to march in Marine Bank's 125th anniversary parade.

The 40 members of Alpha Phi Omega built a float featuring Christmas trees, toys and a North Pole sign for Gifts for Kids.

"We got involved," said Larry Laporte, vice president of Service for the group, "because we thought it would be a good way to serve the community."

Shelly Atkinson, marketing coordinator for Gifts for Kids, said everything went well. "The parade was good, even though it was pretty cold and windy."

She added "the Alpha Phi Omega group was really super to

work with and behind the project 100 percent."

Gifts for Kids is an organization started in 1985 by two Pennsylvania State troopers who wanted to provide toys and clothing for deserving children. Over the years the program has grown to six warehouses across the state, stretching as far as Harrisburgh.

"We don't distribute the toys and clothing ourselves," said Atkinson, "what happens is various service organizations, like the Kiwanas Club or Social Services, select the children then contact us with their needs."

Alpha Phi Omega, a national service fraternity with open membership to both male and female college students, spent over three weeks building the float for the 77 unit parade.



photo by Lee Wygant

Chilly smiles - Memers of Behrend's Alpha Phi Omega fraternity huddle of the float they made as a service project for Gifts for Kids

## Adopt-A-School program looks for clubs to sponsor two Diehl grade levels

by Greg Farrell  
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The Adopt-a-School program, which relates Behrend and the Diehl Elementary School, is rolling into its second year. The program is led from Behrend by Mari Trenkle, who would like to see more club participation.

Currently, several on-campus clubs "provide Diehl with academic enrichment activities such as school-wide programs and special workshops," according to Trenkle. "Some student clubs and organizations have adopted specific grades and do special activities, tutor, and also provide role models."

Based on the number of low income families in the district, Diehl qualifies as a Chapter 1 school. At any given time, approximately 1 Diehl student in 5 is at risk of failing due to poor attendance, poor achievement test scores, and substandard grades. According to Trenkle, "Our students can make a difference to these kids in particular."

Currently ABC, the Psychology Club, the Honors Program, the Commuter Council, and Jennifer Warren have taken the commitment seriously and are spending the most time with the kids," said Trenkle. She is still in search of a supportive group to adopt pre-school and first grade, saying, "these classes need attention too!"

The clubs interact with the kids between once a week and once a month. Besides "the children really look up to the (Behrend) students because they

can make a difference in the kids lives," Trenkle said.

Mari Trenkle is searching for organizations to tutor, write letters, chaperon field trips, and just play games with the kids at Diehl. She says, "the Behrend students can make a difference."

### The Commuter Council

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