

Carlyle Junior High students win Pay It Forward award

Their good deeds

Earn \$500

By: Wendy Folen

Union Banner

Alice Kampwerth, media specialist at Carlyle Junior High School had a big surprise on Tuesday for nine students in the Make a Difference Club. She did not tell them she had nominated them for the Fox 2 News Pay It Forward award and that they had won. They were featured on Channel 2 news.

Fox 2 News and American Equity Mortgage have partnered and every other week, they give away \$500 to an individual or group that is nominated. They call this "Pay It Forward" because it describes the concept of asking that a good turn be repaid by having it done to others instead.

The Make A Difference Club is a group of nine students at CJHS that wanted to do something in their spare time after school. They had received a farm grant from the Farm Bureau and made bath scrubs which they sold at the Farmers Market.

With the close of the Farmers Market for the season, the students wanted to know what else they could do and it was decided that they would use the proceeds from their sales over the summer to make more bath scrubs that they would give away.

Kampwerth contacted Lisa Hellman, Director of Clinton County Senior Services and the students were able to deliver and assist some of the inbound seniors at the Center with the bath scrubs and lotions they had made.

"The seniors loved it," said Hellmann. "They are so appreciative and really enjoy spending time with the kids." And the kids really

enjoyed it too, according to Kampwerth. She said they seemed to have more fun giving away their products than selling them.

The Make A Difference Club makes items once a month to give away. In addition to bath scrubs, they started making dog treats to give away, first to the Greyhound Rescue Club, introduced to them by teacher Deb Thrasher, then to local seniors who are part of the Meals on Wheels program.

The home-made dog treats would be packaged by the students and sent along with the senior's meals for delivery. According to Hellmann, this was another wonderful thing because many home-bound seniors with pets consider them like their family. If money was ever too tight to buy pet food, some give away their own food to their pets.

Kampwerth said the club wants to expand and the \$500 they won will help them with more projects to give back to the community. She said kids don't always have a lot of options to give back, and this club has made it possible because they can provide the resources and direction, and the kids can take it from there. Her biggest surprise of all, she said, is that the students are actually the ones motivating her because of their desire to help and always wanting to know what they can do next.

Tuesday afternoon in the library as the students were packing cookies they had made for the seniors, Fox 2 News anchor Elliot Weiler appeared with his camera man and presented \$500 to the Make A Difference Group. The kids were very surprised.