Easter party aids Homefront

By Brook Olster
Staff Writer

On Saturday, April 12, Alpha Phi Omega, Phi Chi Theta and Delta Sigma Pi co-sponsored an Easter celebration for the children of the Homefront Organization. “The Cavalla Room was filled with colorful Easter eggs, animal-shaped balloons, tons of candy, game, and prizes. “It was great to see the smile on the kids’ faces, they were truly happy and enjoying the afternoon,” said junior Kristen Kunath.

The three campus organizations make up the Service and Professional Greek Organizations (SPG&O). Alpha Phi Omega is the community service fraternity and Delta Sigma Pi and Phi Chi Theta are the two business fraternities.

“I think that having a big group of students that actually care about helping others allows an event to be a big success,” said Jeanine Puglisi, the service vice president for Alpha Phi Omega. “We had over 30 Rider students involved in this party and I know for a fact that the kids had a great time because of everyone.”

While this was the first time the three organizations worked together in hosting an event, this was the second time this Easter Party was held for Homefront. Last April, Alpha Phi Omega and Alpha Epsilon Pi hosted the celebration.

“All three organizations put a lot of time, money, and hard work into it and I knew it was all worth it when I saw the children’s faces light up when they walked into the room,” said Kelly Deckey, president of Phi Chi Theta. “In the past we never really did a co-sponsoring with Alpha Phi Omega or Delta Sigma Pi, but after the success from this event I know Phi Chi Theta will be more than willing to help out with future events.”

Junior Diana Walsh volunteers daily at Homefront and she arranged for the children to be transported to Rider.

“After last year’s success, we knew we wanted to do it again,” said Walsh. “The children leave happier because they had the opportunity to interact with us while enjoying an Easter party that they wouldn’t have had otherwise.”

The Rider students enjoy playing with the children and leave feeling good for brightening the day for these kids.”

Homefront is a human service organization located in Lawrenceville that relies on its volunteers to assist homeless families find housing and basic living necessities. Homefront was established in 1990 when its Executive Director was made aware of the homeless families living in welfare motels on Route 1. Homefront offers a wide variety of services, everything from career counseling to delivery of meals, intended to help homeless families become and remain independent.

“I enjoyed the experience of working with kids – in a sense, it was like we were connecting with the community and getting away from the everyday realm of student life,” said Diane Bukowczyk, president of Delta Sigma Pi.

Overall, the Rider students seemed to take pleasure in hosting this party. Many did not realize until now how much of an effect they can have on young lives.

“It was really rewarding having a party for kids who are unable to otherwise,” said Joy Merkel, sophomore. “It was a great idea to work with other organizations because this is what this school is all about. It was also so gratifying to see the kids who were so appreciative.”

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alters people’s behavior,” she said. “As one student put it on a recent survey conducted by my environmental history class, I think it’s a waste of time.” Richardson reported that last year Rider produced 270 tons of garbage, of which 51 tons were recycled, including 17 tons of cardboard, which has its own dumpster, and nine tons of paper, or 19 percent of Rider’s total solid waste stream. This is below the national recycling average of 30 percent published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and light years from New Jersey’s recycling goal of 65 percent,” she added.

In addition to the surveys, students in the class conducted a paper-waste audit of four organizations on campus, according to Hunter’s report turned positive results in a number of cases.

“Every organization that we visited discovered that many people are already working hard to save paper including The Rider News, which prints the newspaper on 50 percent recycled paper, the library, which reuses paper in printers and copiers and as scrap paper, the Student Entertainment Council (SEC), which uses recycled paper for flyers and the Office of Academic Affairs, which utilizes double-sided copying and electronic filing,” she said. However, while the reports show that many students do not recycle, Hunter writes that they do use the recycling containers anyway.

“Pop the top of any one on campus and you’ll probably find gum wrappers, napkins and other non-recyclables, as did the students in History 299. In the garbage business this is called contamination,” she wrote. “As one bad apple spoils the bunch, the entire container of recyclables must be thrown out. The presence of a Kleenex can mean the difference between the recycling center and the landfill.”

However, paper is not the only focus of the clean-up effort. Reportedly, aluminum takes twenty times more energy to create fresh than to recycle. Despite this, aluminum recycling is declining in the U.S. Hunter said that for the first time in 16 years the percentage of aluminum recycled dropped below 50 percent in 2001.

“Aluminum is the darling of the recycling business because demand cannot be unlimited,” she said. “We’ve all seen the commercial showing lowly aluminum cans reincarnated as a triumphant baseball bat, but old cans more frequently take the form of new cans and siding for your house.”

According to Hunter, the next step is the most important in the entire process: following through and buying products made from recycled material, as she quotes the people of Green Seal as saying, “You can recycle all you want, but if you’re not buying recycled products you’re only doing half the job.”

“I’d like the university to switch to buying recycled paper,” she said. “I think I’ve proved, that alongside using less paper, this can make the greatest environmental impact.”

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was,” he said. “I love my country. We’ve been here longer than anybody else. Most people think of us as the first Americans, but we are the last Americans.”

Hawk’s Blood said that there has been progress, but compared to many other minority groups, it was moving at a “snail pace.”

“I’ve made it my mission to set the story straight,” he said. “There aren’t many people telling this story. There are so few Native American speakers that we all know each other.”

One of the examples Hawk’s Blood mentioned was Christopher Columbus. According to him, Columbus was responsible for killing myriads of Native Americans. He sacrificed 13 of them every Sunday in honor of the 12 apostles, as well as issuing a proclamation that allowed his men to cut off American Indian’s hands until they produced gold.

In 1992, the U.S. government planned to celebrate 500 years after Columbus first landed at America. Hawk’s Blood and others banded together to try to stop it.

“There were 25 million of my people in 1492,” he said. “Today there are less than a hundred thousand. Columbus is the father and the founder of one of the biggest holocausts in history. You wouldn’t ask a Jewish person to celebrate an Adolf Hitler day. It’s the same thing.”

Hawk’s Blood said he hoped he was making a difference by speaking to people of the plight of his people.

“We want Americans to deal with the truth concerning the on-going genocide of Native Americans,” he said. “This is the forefront of the American Indian’s struggle.”

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