

Miles for Merry Miracles' (M4MM) 10th Annual Angel Tree run took place on December 2nd at the New Albany Amphitheater. Over 150 youth and 50 adults attended the charity's event which provides an excellent opportunity for those who want to make a difference to bring a smile to the faces of underprivileged children during the holiday season. This giving opportunity doesn't require a significant commitment of money or time, so it's an excellent choice for donors with small budgets as well as for those who are able to make a significant contribution.

Runners, some accompanied by Jolly Llamas from the 4-H Llama Club, came donned in holiday gear, including elf hats, reindeer headbands and ugly sweaters, while several competed for the organization's unique "Coldest Runner" title. This year the only difference in the coldest runner competitor event was a headband. Hunter Griffin, Floyd Central freshman and cross country member recorded a first place finish in 18:08. Individual times by category will be available on the Pacers and Racers website the week of December 11th.

14 year old Logan Stanfield, a member of the organization's youth leadership board was the winner of the coldest runner event. He noted "Many of the angels we serve don't have the warmest coats or the best shoes, like I've been blessed with my entire life. I just thought, I can do a run in 20 minutes in the cold and I'll be ok. The kids we serve are sometimes in the cold every day. It's a small sacrifice for me and helps me be more thankful for my blessings."

Floyd Central High School's National Honor Society had the largest group in attendance at the run. Nearly 90% of the students in that group were in attendance at the run and some will also be volunteering at the shopping day and dinner. They are working collectively to provide gifts to 30 angels said Melissa Neal, National Honor Society and Calculus Teacher. "We teach that everyone counts. We roll up our sleeves to lend a helping hand then we make ourselves and communities better. It's the reciprocating value of service."

The organization hosted the Second leg of their Triple Crown of Service on Saturday December 9 at the Wal-mart in New Albany. Angel Tree shoppers were given snacks and elf gear and then encouraged to participate in a video scavenger hunt and random caroling throughout the store. Angel tree shoppers welcomed special discounts and the dedicated shopping lanes that were staffed by Wal-mart volunteers.

“During this event we like to stress to our shoppers to make a budget and lovingly, not extravagantly, purchase necessities for their angels”, said Tori Floyd, the organization’s current youth leadership board president and high school junior. “It’s important to me that we provide clothes, shoes and age appropriate toys to give them and their families hope during the holiday season. I was an angel tree child at one point in my life and I have great memories of that Christmas. It’s important that I give back because the happiest people are not the ones who get more, the happiest people are the ones that give more.

Rock Creek Community Academy freshman and youth board member Parker Romney said students at his school have been raising money since school started. “I had the chance to work with Tori over the last 11 months, even traveling to Chicago with her for a chance to compete for a \$10,00 grant from the Good Starts Young program sponsored by AllState Foundation” he said. “We have a motto” See It. Learn It. Do It. Teach It. Tori sees a problem and with her strong determination she looks for solutions and then teaches”. Rock Creek is sponsoring 50 Angels and have over the last 2 years donated nearly 13,000 food items for the angel tree kids being served by M4MM.

The final and crowing jewel of the M4MM season will be a holiday celebration on December 19 in New Albany. Angels and their families get to partake of a traditional hot and professionally prepared holiday meal , the kids will be able to do crafts and have pictures taken with Santa, as well as entertainment provided by students and adults, While volunteers discreetly put gifts for kids in the parents car. Volunteers are still needed for this event. Please sign up at [www.m4mm.org/volunteer](http://www.m4mm.org/volunteer).

Miles for Merry Miracles is a community based nonprofit organization that is youth led. Started by an Eagle Scout in 2008, the organization is in it’s 10th season and will has served nearly 4500 Angel Tree kids in the Southern Indiana are since it began. For more information or to volunteer, please visit the website at [www.m4mm.org](http://www.m4mm.org) or contact Teresa Hebert at 812.923.1364.