

THE SITUATION

Fourth Quarter, 1995 Killeen Mall shopper intercept surveys began showing a decrease in visits among adults ages 25-34 with families - the center's core shoppers. December, 1995 focus group research confirmed what the management team suspected; Killeen Mall was facing two public perception challenges. Shoppers perceived Killeen Mall to be "full of teens" - a perception that was keeping young families with children, the mainstay of the Killeen market, away. This perception, although one that a majority of shopping centers are now facing, was very frustrating for the Killeen Mall management team because it simply was not true! Killeen Mall was not "full of teens", in fact, the center's incidents involving teens had been significantly decreasing during 1995 and 1996. The community also did not perceive Killeen Mall as "their mall," despite the center's being the only regional mall serving the primary population base of 130,000. This was a perception that Killeen Mall could ill afford, given that the same research also showed that the shoppers wanted and expected Killeen Mall to be "their mall" and an example in the community.

In order to insure continued success, Killeen Mall needed to change the perception that the mall had a "teen problem" among it's core shoppers - young families with children - so that these shoppers would feel comfortable at the center. Killeen Mall also needed to show the community that Killeen Mall cared about families and was in fact "their mall." Rather than a "security related" plan to address teens problems that simply were not there, an integrated public relations concept that addressed the perceptions of young families, integrated the center as a caring business member of the community, and supported the goals of the center's marketing plan was needed.

OBJECTIVES

1. Influence perceptions among core shoppers (young families with children) about the shopping environment at Killeen Mall.
2. Bring young families with children back to Killeen Mall and make Killeen Mall their first choice for shopping in the center's trade area.
3. Enhance the center's position in the community and foster a feeling that Killeen Mall was truly "their mall".
4. Maintain the center's sales growth through an integrated public relations program.

PLAN OUTLINE & IMPLEMENTATION

Killeen Mall identified two methods of impacting perceptions about the center: drawing young families with children to Killeen Mall to “see for themselves” that the center offered a pleasant shopping environment and “tugging on their heartstrings” to show that Killeen Mall cared about their family.

With more than 350 babies born each month in Killeen, the center was afforded an excellent opportunity to reach young families. The “Welcome New Baby” program was designed to target new parents by offering them a “no strings attached” gift when they visited Killeen Mall. The program gave Killeen Mall the chance to form a lasting relationship with young families by celebrating the birth of a new baby!

The center’s marketing director established strong relationships with Killeen’s two local hospitals. One look at samples of the adorable gift items and the assurance that no purchase was necessary to receive them, brought enthusiastic participation - particularly from Darnell Army Community Hospital, who was thrilled to have a local business supporting military families. Participation from the hospitals allowed Killeen Mall to put a “Welcome New Baby” postcard (which featured the mall’s current campaign theme) directly in the hands of the parents of every new baby born in Killeen - at no cost to the center. By simply presenting the postcard at Killeen Mall’s Customer Service Booth, parents received adorable infant-safe bunnies, bears, or Noah’s Ark gift items packaged in matching gift bags that actually looked like a high quality baby gift instead of a promotional item. In addition, Killeen Mall merchants were tied in to the program with the opportunity to offer discounts coupons for items typically of interest to young families. In return, parents were asked to provide their name, address, and the name of their “new addition”.

Within one month of receiving their gift, each family received a brief questionnaire asking their impressions of Killeen Mall’s gift and for information about purchases made during their visit. Each questionnaire also included a stamped envelope for easy return. A data base of young families and their children was created to assist Killeen Mall with future direct marketing to young families in the form of special offers, birthday clubs, and KidsClub memberships.

EXPENSE SUMMARY

Baby Gifts & Packaging \$8,761.00

Postcard Production & Printing \$2,500.00

Direct Mail Surveys For Results \$330.00

Total Cost: \$11,591.00

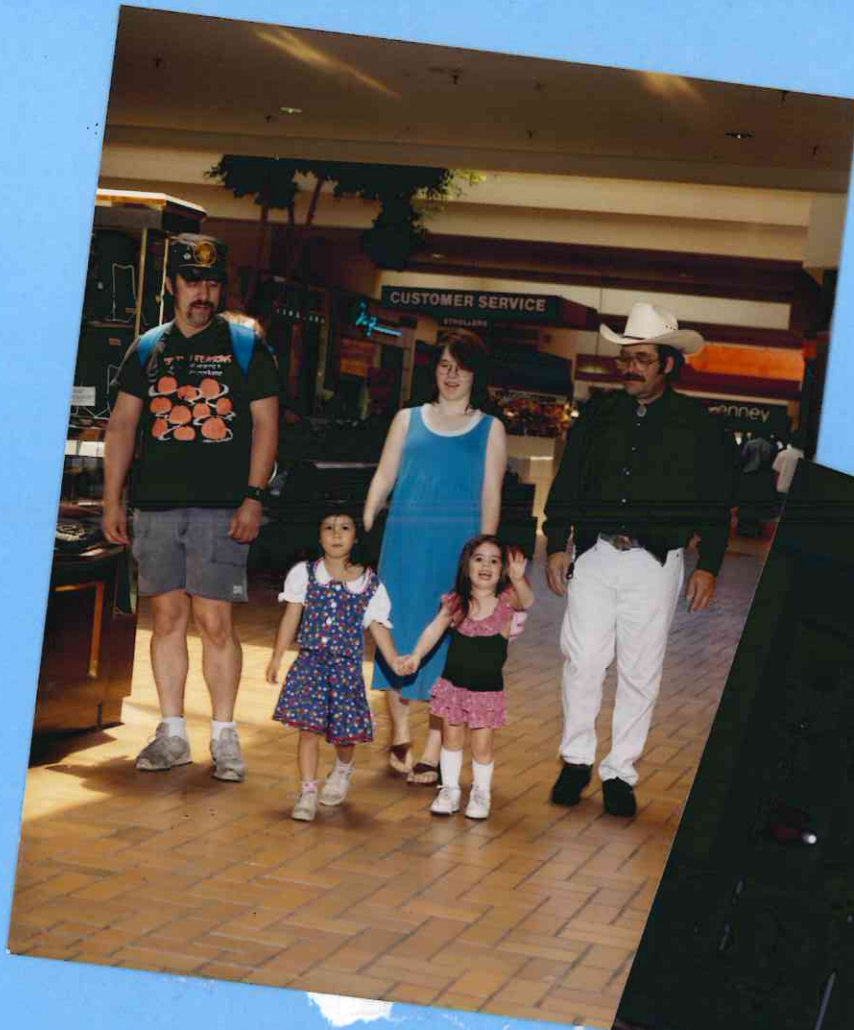
RESULTS

1. KILLEEN MALL DID CHANGE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CENTER AMONG CORE SHOPPERS! The program directly influenced more than 700 families to visit the center over a six month period. Seventy percent of those families made a special trip to the center to receive their gift. In addition, the "Welcome New Baby" program has garnered an average monthly rate of return of 26.2%.
2. KILLEEN MALL DID BRING CORE SHOPPERS BACK TO THE CENTER! Killeen Mall reversed a decline in shoppers ages 25-34. Intercept Survey results show that after a decline in shoppers ages 25-34 in First and Second Quarters, 1996, the percent of shoppers in this age group had risen 12.7% by Fourth Quarter, 1996. In addition, intercept survey results showed an increase in shopper frequency among shoppers ages 25-34 from 1.8 visits per month (Second Quarter, 1996) to 3 visits per month (Fourth Quarter, 1996).
3. KILLEEN MALL DID IMPACT PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CENTER'S POSITION IN THE COMMUNITY! An astonishing forty-three percent of families receiving a "Welcome New Baby" gift took the time to complete and return a direct mail survey about the program. As a result of the "Welcome New Baby" program, formerly wary Killeen Mall shoppers have become champions for the center. Killeen Mall has received numerous thank-you notes, photos of new babies, and hundreds of comments illustrating new and positive perceptions about Killeen Mall:

"...it's wonderful to know that your business cares enough to give a little something back in celebration of a joyous event"

"We never went to the mall that often but we went for the gift and we will be back"

"this was a wonderful surprise... we have four children and have never had this done before... I now go shopping more at this mall".
4. THE WELCOME NEW BABY PROGRAM DID IMPACT THE CENTER'S SALES GROWTH! This is evidenced by survey results showing that a staggering 65% of families that redeemed their postcard reported that the program influenced the amount of their purchase. In addition these families are spending an average of \$96.00 - a 28% increase over the center's average shopper expenditure.



Public perceptions that Killeen Mall was "full of teens" and had a "teen problem" were just that - perceptions!



Killeen Mall created a "Welcome New Baby" postcard and persuaded both local hospitals to distribute the piece to new parents.



Adorable infant-safe baby gift items were purchased from the Russ Berrie Company.

Shown: Baby Girl Bunnies Gift Bag



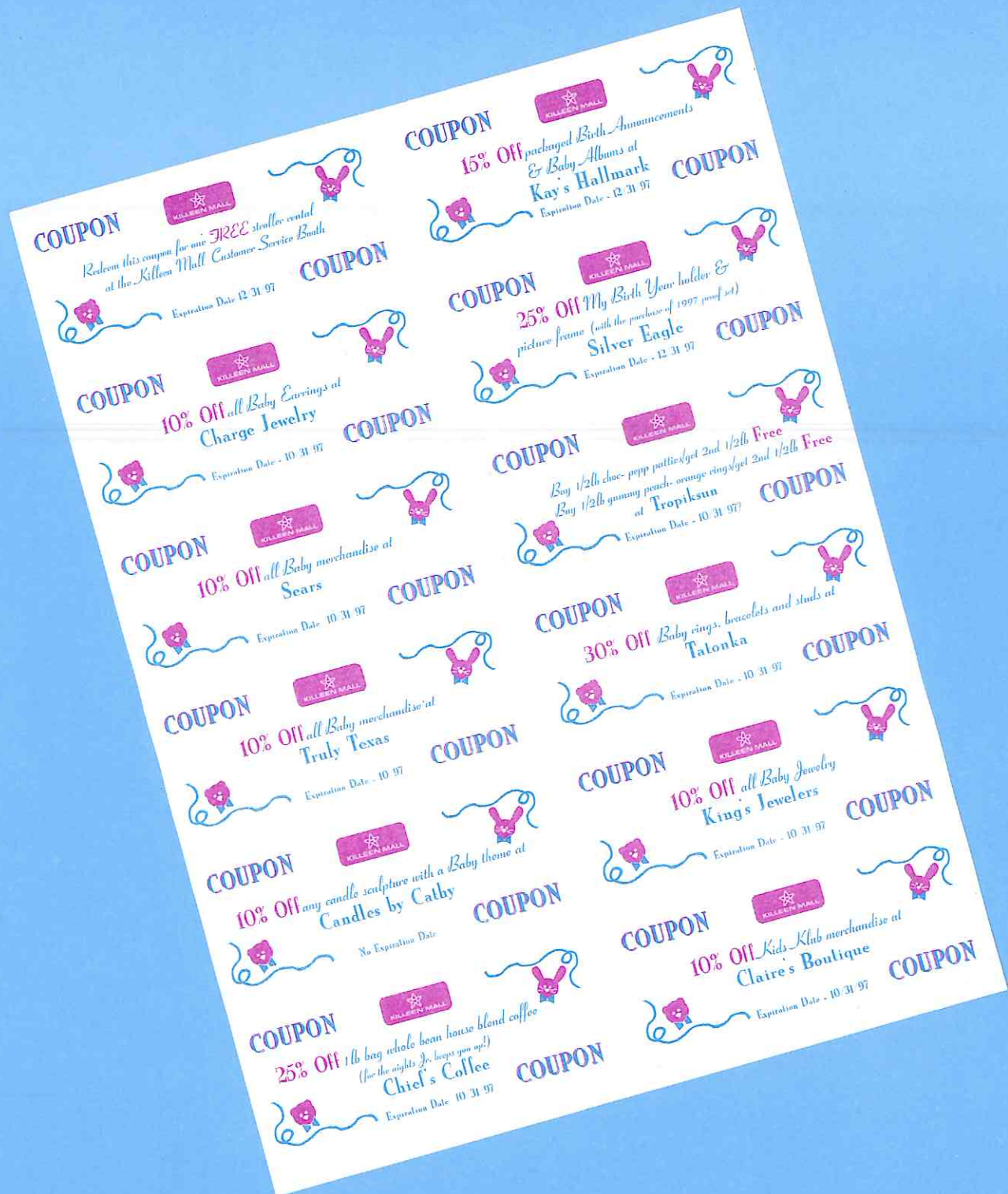
Gift bags included items designed to squeak, rattle, and enchant Killeen Mall's youngest shoppers.

Shown: Baby Boy Bears Gift Bag

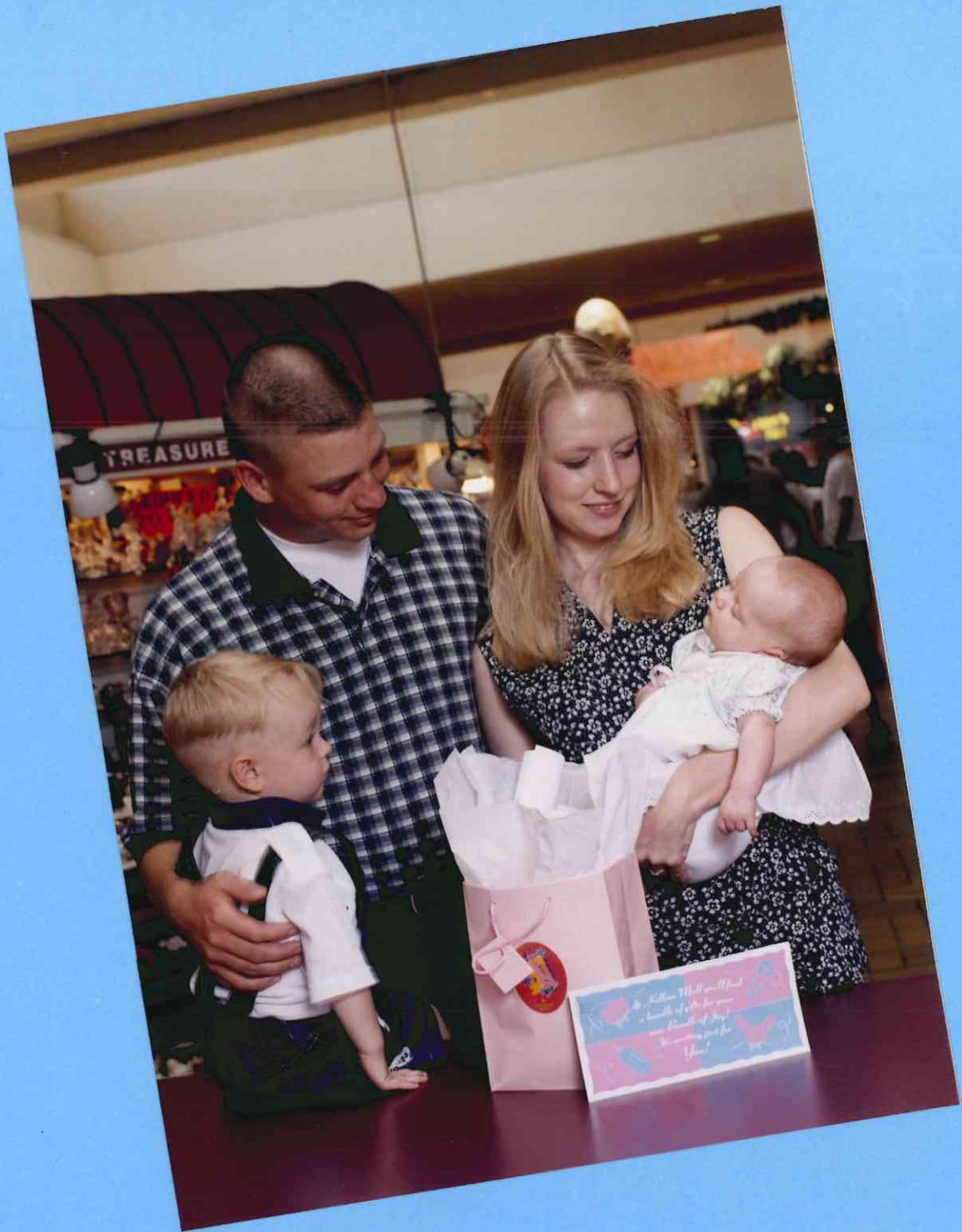


Gift items were packaged with coordinating gift bags and tissue.

Shown: Noah's Ark Gift Bag



Killeen Mall merchants were tied in to the program with the opportunity to participate in a "Welcome New Baby" coupon page.



Sixty-five percent of "Welcome New Baby" families made a special trip to Killeen Mall to receive their gift.



The "Welcome New Baby" program brought more than 700 families to Killeen Mall to "see for themselves" the pleasant shopping environment.

"Welcome New Baby" Survey

1. Did the hospital staff comment or tell you anything about the "Welcome New Baby" program or gifts? YES NO

If yes, what did they tell you?

2. How soon after your hospital stay did you redeem your "Welcome New Baby" postcard at Killeen Mall?
1 Week 2-4 Weeks 4-8 Weeks 8 Weeks Or More

3. Which gift did you receive? Girl Boy
Bunnies Bears Noah's Ark

4. Please rate your "Welcome New Baby" gift on the scale below:
1 2 3 4 5
Terrible Poor Fair Good Outstanding

5. When you came to Killeen Mall to redeem your "Welcome New Baby" postcard, how much did you spend at Killeen Mall?
Money Spent at Department Stores: \$ _____
Money Spent at Mall Stores: \$ _____

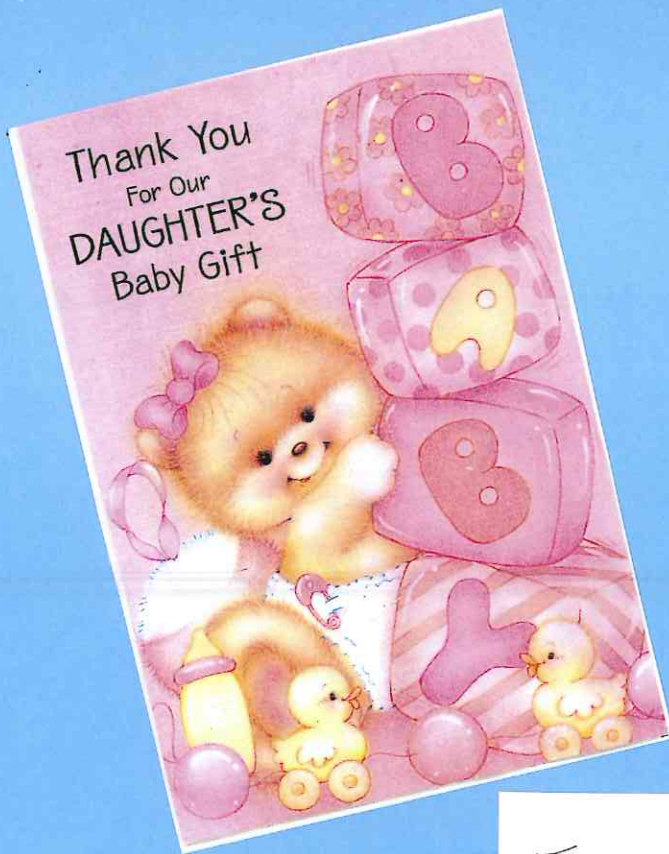
6. Did you make a special or additional trip to Killeen Mall to redeem your "Welcome New Baby" postcard? YES NO

7. Did the "Welcome New Baby" gift influence your decision to make a purchase at Killeen Mall? YES NO

8. Comments: _____

Thank you for your help!
Please use the enclosed envelope to return this survey to Killeen Mall.

Families that redeemed their "Welcome New Baby" postcard were sent a direct mail survey.



Thank you for the
stuffed bunnies/rattles
that you gave to our
daughter, Alexia Renée Miller.
It is wonderful to know
that your business cares
enough about its customers
to give "a little something"
back to them in celebration
of such a joyous event.
You are #1 on our
list! Thank you!

To the Killeen Mall,

The baby's gift was wonderful
Our warmest thanks to you-
In remembering our little one
You made us happy too!

Thanks Again!

Theodore, Nicole, + Alexia
Miller

Killeen Mall received numerous "thank you notes", photos of babies, and hundreds of positive comments about the "Welcome New Baby" program.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

" Our purchases at the mall were for the baby and we would not have even been there if not for the free gift." We've been back to make a lot more purchases and just to shop when we usually went to Austin, San Marcos, and Hillsboro. Keep up the good work."

" I rank Killeen Mall's gift among my favorite baby gifts. Thank you very much, this was a nice surprise."

" ... this is a nice thing for you to do. ...it makes you feel good to receive something free once in awhile it's nice to know that Killeen Mall isn't just out to help themself we will be back."

" It was indeed exciting to receive a baby gift from our local mall. It's nice to know that someone cares. We have told all our friends"

" It's not that often that you receive a gift such as yours with "no strings attached". That kind of old fashioned service is extremely rare to find and very noteworthy."

" We would generally go to the mall for specific reasons only, not to browse. But we really were surprised when we came to get the gift ..."

" Thanks for the baby gift - it's precious it really influenced my spending and will continue to influence my decision to come to Killeen Mall."

" Outstanding program! It really shows support of the soldiers at Fort Hood and their families. You'll receive excellent references for the program and the mall from us!"

" Thanks for the gift. We really appreciated it and it made an extra good impression about Killeen Mall. the greeter that gave us the gift was so friendly."

" While I was at the hospital, no one came to see me or gave me gifts. So when I got the postcard my heart smiled because my family lives in Florida. No one here gave me anything except you. Thank you!"

" Wonderful program! It was shocking to see how Killeen Mall cared."

" I feel that your program is very good and considerate. You don't see that kind of comfort in most areas."

" It was really nice to know that Killeen Mall cares. We moved here from Colorado and this made us feel so welcomed."

"We really appreciated the gift. We did not have a lot for our baby and this really helped! Thank you."

The "Welcome New Baby" program turned formerly wary Killeen Mall shoppers in to champions for the center.

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Welcome New Baby program welcomed by area parents



SECTION B, PAGE 8

Computer overwhelms Kasparov, beats world chess champion



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Welcome New Baby program unique project having big impact on parents

By NA M. GORDON
Staff Writer

For all newborns, Wendy Keck's baby is getting bigger by the month, but Keck's offspring is not human. Instead, call it an infant's brainchild, the Welcome New Baby program, is a community effort by the Killeen Mall, Metroplex and Darnall Army Community hospitals to offer new

comfort babies. "There is no purchase necessary and no strings attached," Keck said. Gift cards may be redeemed at the customer service booth located inside the Killeen Mall. Keck said she conceived the idea for the program after a tour of the city shortly after her arrival in Killeen. "Somebody told me there were 350 to 400 babies a month born



Courtesy Photo

"We really wanted to reach our customers at a time that was special to them."

— Wendy Keck
mall marketing director

parents a free gift of welcome for their new child. "This market has more children per household than the national median." Add to that the fact that many of the families of Fort Hood soldiers live below the poverty line, Keck said, and the program seemed to be a natural for the area. "It's so unusual to have a market like this," she said. "Most shopping malls have a customer base that is getting older. Our market is getting younger. "Killeen really looks to us as their mall," Keck said, "and what a great way to thank them for their support by offering them ours during this special time." Keck said participation in the program started at a crawl but is moving more quickly as more people participate.

birth to her second daughter, said she was surprised by the quality of the gifts. "I almost didn't go because I thought it wouldn't be much of anything," Lyons said. "I was happy and glad that I went. I don't know how much they spend on that stuff, or how they can do it, but I'm glad that they do. I think it's nice, and I'm glad I was able to receive the gift." And that's all the thanks Keck needs. "It's been such a thrill to have such an impact and make so many people happy," Keck said.

The brainchild of Wendy Keck, the Welcome New Baby program offers parents a free gift, as shown above, of welcome for their new child. The program is sponsored by Killeen Mall and Metroplex and Darnall Army Community hospitals.

"What has really been neat about it has been the response," Keck said. "We just had no idea that it would affect people the way it did, that it would make so many people so happy." Indeed, it seems to have done just that. More than 25 response forms indicated that the program was widely appreciated by new parents, most of whom said the Welcome New Baby gift was the only baby gift they received. Others expressed surprise that anyone would give something away for nothing. Linda Lyons, who recently gave

birth to her second daughter, said she was surprised by the quality of the gifts. "I almost didn't go because I thought it wouldn't be much of anything," Lyons said. "I was happy and glad that I went. I don't know how much they spend on that stuff, or how they can do it, but I'm glad that they do. I think it's nice, and I'm glad I was able to receive the gift." And that's all the thanks Keck needs. "It's been such a thrill to have such an impact and make so many people happy," Keck said.