

## A Memory for Life

As a foreign exchange student you want to experience as much as you can during your year abroad. My dear counselor, Barbara Clemmons, offered me one day to go with her and her husband to L.A., California, to see and work on the big Rose Parade. My answer was, of course, yes. I couldn't miss this for the world.

Three days after Christmas me Barbara, her husband Charlie and their grand daughter Melanie left Houston and took a flight to Los Angeles.

The weather wasn't as we expected it to be. It was rainy and cold instead of sunny and warm. The next day we all went together to the big tent, where we were going to decorate the Rotary International Float. I haven't seen so many people as I did when I walked into that tent. So many people working and helping each other to get all the floats ready for the parade. Melanie and me were helped by Mr. Bill Held, a Rotarian from CA. He told us what we could do to help and I got the mission to decorate one of the dogs. To be more exact, the dog which was sleeping. Everyone was very nice and helpful, especially when someone was in need. Then at least four people came to help and no one complained. Laughing was something else we did together. To be in this unit was an amazing experience. I can barely describe the feeling I got when I was able to participate and help decorating this big and amazing float. We were like a big family and that was exactly what the theme, for this year's parade, was. Melanie and me had the opportunity to be working at the float three days in a row, so we saw how the process proceeded and the progress for each day that passed. It was neat to see and compare day one to day three.

On New Year's Day I was one of all the millions of people sitting in the audience. It was with excitement I was sitting there and watching the parade. Something that I had been a part of making. I have never seen a prettier or more amazing parade as this one. This will be a memory for life and one I will have in my backpack when I go back to Sweden. Thank you Barbara and Charlie for inviting me to this trip and for giving me an experience I will never forget



Me and Melanie are working on our sleeping dog.

Written by Linnea Hallberg, a foreign exchange student from Sweden 04/05