



**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT FOSTERED IN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS** – Those who operate Garrett County's after-school programs try to include participants' families in various activities throughout the year, according to Sadie Liller, director of Partners After School (PAS) @ Oakland. "Our program focuses a lot on family involvement," she said. "Our activity for December was decorating gingerbread houses. The families spent quality time together decorating their houses and drinking hot chocolate." PAS @ Oakland meets at Southern Middle School, and serves students from SMS as well as third through fifth grade students from Broad Ford and Yough Glades elementary schools. Currently there are 39 students enrolled. "I like being able to do things with my kids, working with them and being able to create things," said Kim Smith, mother of two current PAS @ Oakland students. Her two older sons are also former participants. "It's fun," her daughter Carman said. "Messy, but fun." Pictured during the recent gingerbread house event are the Shaffer siblings, working with their grandmother. The two older children participate in the after-school program. Shown from left are Brayden Shaffer, Olive DeWitt, and Bryson and Brielle Shaffer. Partners After School programs are provided by the Garrett County Local Management Board (LMB), Governor's Office for Children, and United Way of Garrett County. Programs are administered by Garrett County Health Department and Garrett County Community Action Committee. For more information, persons may call the LMB at 301-334-7445 or 301-895-3111.