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This was the first year he's made Valentines, and so far it's been

holiday for David and herself.

a hit, Laurie Williams said. The first time was Thursday when they made the greetings at the YMCA's day care, she said. Later that night, she said he was still excited and wanted to make more.

"He's definitely into it," Williams said.

He was also into a chocolate cupcake with red frosting, which ended up all over his face. Several young children from the YMCA's Child Development Center sat down with staff, YMCA patrons or SilverSneakers members to make Valentines.

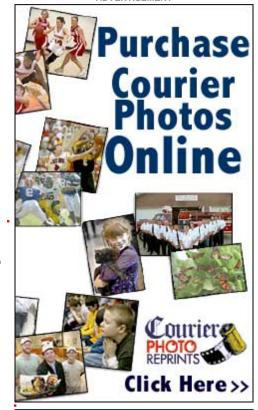
The SilverSneakers program has 2,500 participants nationwide, said Rebecca Geffers, a representative of the national SilverSneakers program. About 30 people participate in the program at the YMCA.

The idea for the Valentine's came from a Web site, www. anysoldier.com, where people can contact soldiers serving in their area who are serving on active duty. The three soldiers who will receive the Valentines will then distribute them to the roughly 90 men they oversee, Geffers said.

Sasha Courbat, YMCA wellness director, said the Valentines also fall neatly into the organization's history, which has a strong history of supporting the troops since World War I.

Contact Josh Nelson at (319) 291-1565 or josh. nelson@wcfcourier.com.

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