

Michael Jackson fan gets gift from artist's estate



Community Haven resident James Waddell dances to a Michael Jackson video on Friday. Attorneys from Jackson's estate sent Waddell memorabilia, including a sequined glove, after learning that he was a huge fan.

STAFF PHOTO / DAN WAGNER

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SARASOTA - James Waddell wears his shiny Michael Jackson glove on his left hand on vacation, at ballgames and practically everywhere else. So of course Waddell asked for more Jackson music during a Christmas party last month that volunteers threw for him and other developmentally disabled residents at Community Haven. He got his wish with a Jackson CD.

But the gifts kept coming for Waddell after he was featured in a holiday news story that caught the attention of the attorneys who administer Jackson's estate. The Los Angeles attorneys recently sent a box of Jackson memorabilia, including a collection of concert DVDs, a Wii game and a T-shirt.

“Happy holidays and all of our best wishes for you in 2013!” said a letter written by a paralegal on behalf of attorneys John Branca and John McClain. Waddell was, of course, delighted. “He's Michael Jackson through and through,” said Kim Clark, a marketing coordinator at the Sarasota facility where Waddell, 46, has lived for 10 years. “Michael just makes him happy.”

On Friday, Waddell put on his curly black wig and a shiny red jacket that still had a No. 44 label from last year's Halloween costume contest. Waddell showed off his new presents and listened to one of the concert DVDs in his living room. Then he danced as if nobody was watching. His feet shuffled on the carpet. He pumped his arms in the air and then shook his gloved left hand. When Jackson took off his glove and flung it on the video, Waddell did the same. A few minutes later, Waddell was still dancing as he headed to his job washing dishes at the Community Haven kitchen.