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Birthday wish lists usually include things like basketballs, LEGOs, and maybe a video game or two. But anti-malaria bed nets? That's exactly what 10-year-old Cooper Smith of Lafayette wanted when he decided to raise money for the nets at his recent "Buzzkill Birthday Basketball Bash" April 23 - two days before World Malaria Day.

"I wanted to do my birthday party in a different way than I normally do because I heard about [Golden State Warrior Stephen Curry's] contribution to something called Nothing But Nets," Smith said. "So I looked it up on the web, and found out what a great foundation it was."

Nothing But Nets is a global, grassroots campaign to raise awareness and funding to fight malaria, a leading cause of death among children in Africa. Each \$10 donation purchases an anti-malaria bed net that can stop mosquitoes from biting during the night and spreading the disease. An insecticide on the net kills the mosquitoes when they land on it, stopping them from flying on to find their next victim. According to the World Health Organization, greater availability and use of malaria prevention tools and treatment over the past decade has saved more than 1

ZCooper Smith, center Photo provided

million lives.

Smith was excited to help. "Just 10 dollars to save a life!" he said. Since his birthday was coming up, he decided to devote his party to the cause. "So that's what I did," he said. In addition to raising money, all of Smith's friends wrote cards of hope to kids in Tanzania.

Vinnie Bianchina wrote: "I hope all your wishes come true and that you are safe and have a healthy family. I know you will have a bright future and I am trying to help you as much as I can." And Jake Myers said: "I hope you're safe in your new net."

Additional well-wishes came from the 11 other party guests. And together, they raised more than \$2,200. The boys hope to pull together a bigger fundraiser in July to raise even more money and have more cards for Curry and ESPN's Rick Reilly to take on their trip to Tanzania July 30.

"I am so happy that we could raise money for Nothing But Nets and the kids in Tanzania," Smith said. For more information about Nothing But Nets, visit www.nothingbutnets.net. J. Wake

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