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Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions may be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Moraga and Rossmoor Rotary Clubs Send Crutches to Africa

Submitted by Gary Irwin



Rotarians load mobility devices into a truck for eventual shipment to Kenya. From left, front row: Joy Aliadarous and sister Jill Doty; back row: Roger and wife Jan Gregory, Joe Goralka, John Rice, Igor Kapinski, Mark Roberts, and Candice Talbot of the Crutches4Africa charity. Photo David Talbot

On July 1, the Rotary Clubs of Moraga and Rossmoor completed the delivery of almost half of a shipping container full of mobility devices such as crutches, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, and rollators to Crutches4Africa, a charity that specializes in the distribution of these devices to people in Kenya and other African countries who can't otherwise afford them. This service project completed a dual club effort spearheaded by Joy Aliadarous, Rossmoor president, and Roger Gregory, now president of Moraga Rotary, and the collection efforts of the Rotarians in both clubs.

The founder of Crutches4Africa, David Talbot and his wife, Candice, arrived July 1 at the Santa Maria Church, Orinda storage site to transfer the collected mobility items from the 40-foot trailer to their large U-Haul truck for future shipment. They were assisted by Rotarians Joy Aliadarous and her sister Jill Doty, Roger Gregory and his wife Jan, and Rotarians Joe Goralka, John Rice, Igor Kapinski, and Assistant Governor Mark Roberts.

Talbot, who founded the Crutches4Africa charity in 2006, is an ex-documentary film producer. He and his wife, Candice, formed the charity with an initial shipment of 235 crutches

that went to Uganda. In addition to their work with Crutches4Africa, David and Candice Talbot worked in a kibbutz in Israel in the 1960s. David Talbot was crippled by polio as a child and he uses two crutches and has a brace on his left leg. In Kenya, Uganda and Ghana, which seem to be the most served nations by this charity, Talbot is known as "The Hat." He rolls into town and he and Candice and the local Rotary distribute the mobility aids.

To date their organization has delivered 58,000 mobility devices to 15 countries in Africa and nine other destinations. The walking aids collected in Rossmoor and Moraga will be comingled with devices from elsewhere to fill a seagoing container that will be shipped to Houston to board a ship for Kenya. Target date for arrival in Kenya is early September.

Candice Talbot says she takes dresses along for the little girls. She told about groups in the USA who make dresses from pillowcases (although, with pounding on rocks for laundry, they've had to move to sturdier fabric because the plain pillow cases wouldn't last a year.) The little girls' eyes glow when they get both a walking aid and a new dress. Most have never had a new dress before.

Willow Spring Community Church Camp Helps Families

Submitted by Kevin Ryan



Kids participate in a camp activity at Willow Spring Community Church. Photo provided

Combining a donation-only Vacation Bible School with day care afterward, Willow Spring Community Church in Moraga held a program that offered games and activities to children of all abilities while allowing parents to go about their work day. This community outreach helped parents find a fun and educational opportunity for their children. Focusing on the youth of the Lamorinda community,

Willow is building a new playground and fellowship area for their expanding church. Speaking with Pastor Eric True, his focus is on the care and development of children and youth in the community, which was visible as he and his wife, Lori, ran the obstacle course with the kids and interacted with each child during the camp experience that ended last Friday.

Lafayette Man Wins 2015 National Energy Globe Award Creates solar cookers from recycled Mylar for Afghan refugees

Submitted by Heather Randolph



Women and children from an Afghan refugee camp show the Trust in Education solar cooker that will help feed their families. Photos provided

Solar cooker innovator Jack Howell, 78, wasn't thinking about Afghanistan five years ago when he stopped to buy coffee beans at his local coffee purveyor, Peet's. That changed when he spotted a barista pouring the beans from shiny Mylar bags into a bin, a common task in coffee shops all over the country.

"Mylar is durable and expensive," Howell said. "I soon discovered those used bags were ending up in a landfill. That gave me an idea."

The retired publisher and author, whose books about solar cooking landed on the New York Times bestseller lists, asked if he could have a few of the bags to experiment. His tinkering set in motion a chain of events that eventually helped people in need over 7,000 miles away.

Working with Trust in Education, a Lafayette nonprofit that provides education, healthcare and economic assistance in Afghanistan, Jack led a TIE effort involving hundreds of volunteers, from children to seniors, that transformed discarded Mylar bags into more than 6,000 solar cookers. TIE then distributed these cookers to 19 refugee camps in and near Kabul, affecting the health and safety of more than 25,000 people.

Howell's coffee shop brainstorm that led to helping some of the world's poorest people and the planet has been honored with the 2015 Na-

tional Energy Globe Afghanistan Award. This year's competition attracted more than 1,500 entries from 177 countries. The National Energy Globe Award recognizes outstanding performance worldwide in terms of energy efficiency, renewable energy and resource conservation.

TIE's solar cookers provide many benefits to Afghans, including clean energy from Afghanistan's abundant sunshine without the cost of expensive fuels. The solar cookers also prevent the devastating effects of smoke inhalation, which annually kills more than 4 million people worldwide. In the U.S., TIE's solar cookers have diverted 50,000 Mylar bags from American landfills to serve a useful purpose.

The National Energy Globe award also recognizes Trust in Education for Howell's innovative manufacturing technique for making WAPIs (Water Pasteurization Indicator), an elegantly simple device that helps Afghans determine when liquids have reached a temperature safe enough to drink. About half the drinking water in Afghanistan is contaminated. TIE has distributed more than 6,000 WAPIs with solar cookers and trained Afghans how to use them. For information about Trust In Education, visit www.trustededucation.org. For information about the National Energy Globe award, visit <http://www.energyglobe.info/afghanistan2015?cl=en&id=132566/>.



Solar cooker inventor Jack Howell, right, explains his device's construction.



Afghan refugees show their new Trust in Education solar cookers at a training event in Kabul.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.