



Livingston

County News

GENESE, NY OCTOBER 10, 2013



Michael Johnson / The Livingston County News

Genesee Country Christian School students from Mrs. Flickner's 5-6 grade class and Mrs. Palmer's 7-8 grade class carry water jugs back to the school during Monday's "Walk for Water" lesson that was part of the school's Uganda Water Project learning initiative.

WALK FOR WATER

Christian School assists Uganda water project

March 28, 2013 by Howard W. Appell

Like **ShShShShMo** 2 Students in every grade level at the Genesee Country Christian School participate each

year in a focus study of a scientific or social studies topic.

The school is participating in the Uganda Water Project for the 2012-13 school year, reflecting the study project's theme of "Health & Wellness." The mission is to give persons in the African nation of Uganda greatly needed access to drinking water.

The director for the Uganda Water Project visited the school to explain and demonstrate how money raised supports the purchase of a roof-mounted rain water collection and storage system. A community building of significant size and with a good roof — typically a church or school — is selected for the

system. Money is collected in the United States, but the tanks and other system parts and materials are fabricated in Uganda. Up to 2,500 gallons of water can be collected and stored — enough to provide drinking water for 400 people.

Students in grades 7-8 created their own brochure describing and promoting the project, and copies were given to every student in the school to assist their individual fundraising efforts.

Classes have read “The Long Walk to Water,” a Newberry Award-winning book by Linda Sue Park of Rochester. The book tells the story of a child whose daily routine necessarily includes long treks for water.

On Monday, 20 children in grades 5-8 learned what it must be like for persons their own

age to fetch water from a distant source. The students took a 1.5 mile walk from the school uphill along a private road to a point on an adjacent property where jugs of water had been collected. Each student then carried two of the jugs back to the school.

For most, it wasn't an easy job.

“Some stopped part way to the school, set the jugs down and wiggled their fingers,” observed Principal Sue Teitsworth.

Before undertaking the walk back, the students discussed, “What happens when you don't have clean water; when you have to spend four or five hours a day doing this chore.”

In Uganda, the water obtained from ground sources is anything but pure. Once brought back home, it still has to be boiled over a wood fire.

Students in the school have collected \$2,175 to date towards a \$3,500 system which will be installed at a Ugandan school. The balance of necessary funds are being supplied by an anonymous benefactor.

The money is being raised through several methods.

First, children's offerings at the school's Friday chapel service during the month of March will go towards the project.

Second, there is a “Blue Envelope Project.” Envelopes numbered 1 through 50 are attached to a bulletin board, each number also being the number of dollars to be pledged. Persons and students passing by take down one of the envelopes with a number of dollars they deem themselves capable of raising and make that amount their personal pledge objective. The sum of 50 envelopes adds up to \$1,250, but many persons are “rounding up” their amounts and giving additional money.

How the child or staff member decides to raise the amount on their blue envelope is entirely up to them.

“They can do extra chores; they can ask for donations,” suggested Principal Teitsworth. “A first grader stood up in his church, explained the project, and asked people for their pocket change. Children have

sold candy bars. They have made bracelets and other crafts and sold them.”

Thirdly, money for the water project is being raised through school recycling. Cans and bottled are collected from students and sent to the recycling center.

The concept of the focus study project has received recognition from the Association of Christian Schools as an exemplary school program.

Previous topics at Genesee Country Christian School have included the ocean, flight, Italy, and China.