



Wallingford Holy Trinity students Leah Jacques and Jack Mirto put together first aid kits for impoverished families in Guyana. | Leigh Tauss / Record-Journal

Holy Trinity students send aid to Guyana

By Leigh Tauss
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WALLINGFORD — Tish Saia's fifth-grade class at Holy Trinity School is sending \$400 and three barrels full of supplies to families in Guyana. For Saia's classes, the donations have become part of the regular routine.

Saia and teaching aid Karen Smith began brainstorming ideas to teach students about helping others four years ago. Smith, whose sister has been a missionary in Guyana for 25 years, suggested having students participate in a project to help families in the South American country. Since then, the donations are a regular occurrence.

"Our mission in the school is to develop a faith community globally," Saia said. "I needed them to see the world beyond Wallingford."

The barrels stand almost as tall as some of the students and are filled with clothes, toys, medical supplies and food purchased or donated by students in the class.

Along with functioning as shipping containers, the barrels

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Tish Saia, fifth-grade teacher at Holy Trinity School

are also used by families in Guyana to collect rainwater.

Students are encouraged over the summer to begin raising money by doing chores at home, washing cars, or selling crafts without the help of adults.

In September, Olivia Signore and Anna Gargamelli, both 10, raised over \$200 selling lemonade.

"We only charged 50 cents a glass," Gargamelli said. "People gave very generous donations."

On Thursday, the class put together first-aid kits with instructional booklets on how to treat wounds. Leah

Jacques, 10, said it's important to help provide medical care to the children in Guyana.

"People that are poor there, they don't have the materials if they get cut," Jacques said. "We're just happy to help them."

The kits contained gloves, band-aids, sterile alcohol pads, ointments, gauze and a small booklet of medical instructions.

The barrels take up to six weeks to ship to Guyana. When the barrels are received, Smith's sister sends back photos of the barrels being opened by the local children.

"Every picture that comes back to us, the children have these huge smiling faces and you can see in the background all the poverty they are living in," Saia said.

Ten-year-old Karolina Suscal said she has enjoyed participating in the project.

"We feel very glad for them that they get what they need," Suscal said.

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