



Willow Creek Elementary students raise money to benefit elementary school children in Rwanda

Willow Creek Elementary students recently waged a Coin War in which each class earned points for the change they collected. The school's goal was to raise \$1,500 to buy a dairy cow for the 900 children at New Life Academy in Kayonza, Rwanda.

Students learned that many Kayonza families live in mud or banana leaf huts and struggle to find work. Africa New Life opened New Life

From left, Willow Creek 3rd graders Kate Yarbrough, Brandon Schnitz, and Tanner Monk enjoyed watching the coin jars fill with "loose change."

Academy in 2003 to give poor children who otherwise could not afford school the same opportunity as wealthy children of Rwanda. Africa New Life also operates six children's homes on the property, as well as the recently-opened New Life High School.

After learning the school had several empty stalls for livestock but couldn't afford to purchase cows to fill them, Willow Creek students set out to help. "American children may take for granted that a quick trip through the lunch line can get them a carton of milk," said WCE Principal Nancy Pinkerton. "Providing milk for school lunches, called 'amata' in Kayonza, is something Willow Creek children can empathize with."

After a two week push, Willow Creek's Coin War was such a success that the students were able to help purchase two dairy cows for Africa New Life, filling two of those previously empty stalls. This philanthropy project served to teach Willow Creek students that it doesn't take much to make a difference in the lives of others, whether nearby or on the other side of the world.

Africa New Life staffer Natalie Green said her organization is grateful for Willow Creek's generosity. "Thank you to everyone at Willow Creek Elementary in Kingwood, Texas," Green said. "Your generous donation purchased two cows for New Life Academy and New Life High School. We are so grateful! My prayer is that little hearts in Texas might one day find themselves working in the field (near or far) with impoverished children because of this coin drive at your school. Never underestimate the love and faith of little children!"

Pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters...that's all it took for Willow Creek Elementary to make a difference in the lives of children on the other side of the world.

For more information about Africa New Life, visit www.africanewlife.org.

