



Chilapanahalli, a 90-household village in Karnataka state, south India, recently was given a water filtration system.

Hamden couple, Rotary team up to bring clean water to village

HAMDEN — Clean drinking water is no longer a dream in Chilapanahalli, a 90-household village in Karnataka state, south India.

The poor village of farm workers — family income averages \$10 per month — last month was the first village where 50 families received a household drinking water filter, thanks to a program run

in the program with a donation of \$2,200.

“Our members were looking for an international water project that delivered direct benefits right to the neediest people,” said former North Haven Rotary Club President Rick Bassett. “The Adopt-A-Village project does that and more without any layers of red tape.”

The centerpiece of the Adopt-A-Village program is a donation of 50 locally made water filters to the neediest families in a village.

The program also delivers an educational course for children about basic water sanitation.

As part of the course, soap is distributed to the children, along with instructions on proper care of water

and general cleanliness.

Training a village water keeper, called a “community steward,” is another important component of the program.

The steward is paid an honorarium for one year to answer questions and troubleshoot to ensure the water filters are used and maintained properly.

On June 7, Lipman and Forsberg went to Kolar District to prepare and coordinate the delivery of 52 water filters to Chilapanahalli. The installation was the largest single-day, one-village delivery of filters since the project began, the couple said.

Village leaders responded with a gala to kick off the clean water program. Festivities included a troupe of musicians and actors who told the story of proper hygiene and water sanitation through songs and skits.

The water filter is made in the project’s Kolar factory from locally available materials of concrete and a copper spout. Fine sand and coarse gravel are used as filter media.

The filter is ideal for rural areas because it uses no electricity, has no moving parts, requires no chemicals or replaceable cartridges and has no ongoing costs, Forsberg said.

One filter provides a household of up to 15 people with clean drinking water for 25-30 years.

“The response from the users of the water filters has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Forsberg, a former Hamden Rotary president. “Users say the water tastes sweet because minerals are removed, and we have reports of less joint pain, less hair loss and better general health.”

Lipman and Forsberg returned to Connecticut and made a presentation June 26 with photos to the North Haven Rotary Club about the installation of 50 filters in



Village women get water from the new filter system.

homes throughout the village and two filters in the Chilapanahalli school and child care center.

Rotary members were so impressed they donated more money at the meeting to guarantee another 40 filters, so that every house in the village will have a filter soon, the couple said.

“Our dream of providing clean water for the people of India will get a tremendous boost from this cooperative program between our countries,” said Forsberg. “We hope to talk to more civic groups in the United States to sponsor similar programs for many other villages.”

For more information about the Adopt-A-Village program and the South Asia Pure Water Initiative, contact South Asia Pure Water Initiative, 2832 Whitney Ave., Hamden 06518, or e-mail Lipman at Mike@LipmandCPA.com or Forsberg at Cathy@LipmanCPA.com.



Village children sit on a step.

by a Hamden couple and supported by local Rotary clubs.

Mike Lipman and Cathy Forsberg, the husband and wife founders of the nonprofit South Asia Pure Water Initiative in Hamden, supervised the organization’s first Adopt-A-Village installation in Chilapanahalli, 60 miles east of Bangalore, they said.

The program matches local civic groups and churches in the United States with poor villages in south India to provide filters for clean household drinking water.

The Rotary Club of North Haven committed in May 2006 to support the first installation