



Photos by Dana Towns The Paper

Above left: Evelyn Brannon measures and cuts fabric that will be used to make a T-shirt dress. **Above right:** Betty Eddins prepares the sewing machine so she can work on her dresses.

Addressing their mission

Church members sew dresses for Ugandan children

BY DANA TOWNS
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Members of Flat Creek Baptist Church give back by creating T-shirt dresses for children in Uganda.

The group of women named, the "So and Sew Group," by their pastor Mike Taylor started sewing dresses for children in need in March.

The idea started when Betty Eddins, one of the members of the sewing group, went to Florida on vacation and saw people making T-shirt dresses. "I said, we can do that."

They began production of the dresses in Eddins' dining room, and soon had 63 dresses to send to Uganda in April. They sent 80 dresses to Uganda in May.

"Our ladies have pumped out over 200 nice looking dresses," said Taylor.

Kelsi Jones, a high school student and member of Flat Creek Baptist Church, took 18 dresses with her to the Bahamas in June. The missionaries carry the dresses in their backpacks, explained Jones, to give to children in need.

The Sew and So's are now creating more dresses to send to Uganda in October; they have already sewn more than 50.

The women all work together, some sewing while others gather materials for embellishments, to produce each dress. Most of the members have previous experience sewing, some having sewn wedding dresses and clothes in the past and others learning from their mothers.

"One of the things that I loved about this group, from the first day that I came to help," said Foy Walled, "was that they were so precise about getting the embellishments done ... and the colors just had to be exactly right. ... I was just really impressed," she said. "I have a feeling this is just the start of something big."

Kim Smith, the short-term mission coordinator with Helping Hands in Flowery Branch, helps Flat Creek Baptist Church by taking the dresses to Uganda when she leaves for mission trips.

"Their eyes light up and the biggest smile comes across their faces," said Smith of the young girls who receive the dresses. "They take your hand and do formal curtsies until their knees touch the ground. It brings tears to your eyes every time."

Smith, who is currently in Uganda, has been to Africa three times since April.

"I saw a little girl wearing one of our Flat Creek dresses, just walking down the road. She was so cute," said Smith.

Flat Creek Baptist Church encourages people inside and outside of the church to get involved with the project. "Our hope is that people will hear about what we are doing and then start it up themselves," said sewing member Beverly Causey. "That way it's not just us sending these dresses over."

Loren Hildebrant, the former pastor of Flat Creek, who is now the director of discipleship for Helping Hands, said that the condition of the children's clothes in Uganda is "incredible." While on a mission in the country, Hildebrant and his team did a shirt swap giving children new shirts in exchange for their old ones. "We brought the old dirty shirts back to the U.S. so that we could show people just how filthy these children live."

Hildebrant said some of the children in Uganda may have never received anything new in their lives. "I have seen these little girls become so excited about receiving a new dress that they would put it on and then take it off and put their filthy clothes back on because they wanted to save their new dress for special occasions."



Above: From left to right: Beverly Causey, Evelyn Brannon, Lida Haney and Betty Eddins, hold their favorite T-shirt dresses to be taken by local missionary organization, Helping Hands, to Uganda.

Left: Kelsi Jones, high school senior and member of Flat Creek Baptist Church, holds a T-shirt like those she passed out in the Bahamas mid-June.

'If we could, at least, send 500 ... I don't think that's beyond us ... We hope the project continues until we dress all of Africa.'

Evelyn Brannon

Sewing ministry member Lida Haney would like to produce a dress for every girl in the community.

"If we could, at least, send 500 ... I don't think that's beyond us," she said. "We hope the project continues until we dress all of Africa," said Evelyn Brannon, another sewing member.

"Those ladies at Flat Creek Baptist Church work so hard sewing every dress with love. Yet, I get the blessing of seeing the faces when they are given out," said Smith. "You are talking about some dedicated ladies and men who love the Lord and want to serve in whatever way they can."

Schools fulfill odyssey, place in world finals

BY LISA LASKEY
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C.W. Davis Middle School and World Language Academy students have completed quite the odyssey, placing among the top in the world at the Odyssey of the Mind 2013 World Finals in Michigan in May.

Competing against 825 teams from around the globe, Davis Middle and WLA are now ranked second and third, in their respective divisions.

The purpose of Odyssey of the Mind is to provide creative problem-solving op-

portunities that foster original and divergent thinking; problems often have more than one solution.

"Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem solving experience that helps students develop their academic and social skills," explained David Moody, WLA principal. "They have to work collaboratively as a team to solve a problem and present it within the performance," he said. "It certainly offers an exceptional match to the identified key 21st century skills needed for the future."

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Photos for The Paper

Above: The World Language Academy's Odyssey of the Mind team's project included a working waterwheel that visually represented the transmission of an email through various channels. **Left:** C.W. Davis Middle School's Odyssey of the Mind team's balsa wood dragon's hundreds of scales were hand-carved and attached by the students, netting them the competition's coveted creativity award.