

# THE PORTAL



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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

## Movers Doing Good

### How IAM Members Support Causes, Charities, and Communities



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## Supporting Charities, Causes, and Communities

By Paul Lagasse

Doing good is part of the culture of the household goods moving industry, and it's easy to understand why. Movers recognize that they are part of the community—not just where they are based but, because their work may take them far away, part of the world at large as well. As the stories that follow show, movers bring resources and cheer to the underprivileged and the dispossessed, support people who are fighting debilitating illnesses, help clean up and steward the environment, and help improve the quality of life for people of all walks of life. The stories here reflect just a sampling of the incredible variety of ways—large and small, serious and fun—that the men and women of the moving profession do good every day. Whether they act on their own initiative or as part of a company-sponsored program, their service reflects the spirit of the profession.

### Helping the underprivileged and dispossessed

Many movers do good by providing funds and goods for families in need, whether they have been displaced by war or natural disaster, or are suffering from economic hardship. For nearly 20 years, the **A. Arnold World Class Relocation** staff have collected toys for needy families from factories in Kentucky's Hardin County area as part of the Quicksie Toy Factory, a Christmas event sponsored by the Elizabethtown, Kentucky, radio station WQXE. In 2009, nine local factories participated in the Toy Factory by donating toys that were then distributed by two local charities, Helping Hand and North Hardin Hope. For the past decade, A. Arnold's big blue truck has been the Toy Factory's official "sleigh."

A. Arnold also partners with the Carmel Financial Corporation on an annual Holiday Food Drive to benefit The Good Samaritan Network. A. Arnold's Indianapolis office donated warehouse space to store the collected foods until delivery to the Carmel Fire Department for distribution. In 2009, the food drive collected 95,650 cans of food to help feed over 13,000 families in the Hamilton County area.

"We've worked with Carmel Financial since 2004, picking up donations and storing them in our warehouse," says Mark Russell, general manager of the Indianapolis branch of A. Arnold. "The people at Carmel Financial are great to work with. Every detail is well planned and executed, and it benefits such a great cause. We're just happy we can help."

Kathleen Thomas, food drive coordinator at Carmel Financial, adds, "Our annual food drive is driven entirely by our employees—they are committed to helping needy families in our surrounding communities. We've gone from collecting 2,280 canned items in 1992 to over 95,000 items this year. Without the help of companies like A. Arnold, who are willing to donate their services, we couldn't continue to do this."

**Abels Moving Services**, an up-market moving company with operating centers across eastern England, recently helped Tibetan refugee children living in Dharamsala, in the Himalayas of northern India, to improve their educational opportunities. Abels donated export cartons to the charity Earthchild (founded by Geoffrey Dart, a former Abels customer), which supports a school for children whose families have fled Tibet.

"We were only too happy to help out in a very practical way and for such a worthwhile cause," says John Watson, Abels's managing director for UK services. Schools in Bath and Abergavenny donated around 600 books for the school, and once packed up they were flown to India in September.

"Over 17,000 children have fled Tibet to escape repression, suffering great hardship in the harsh environment of the Himalayas in the process," Dart explains. "Indeed, many fail to survive the journey. Each donated book will be given to a child to cherish." He and his wife, Alexandra, established Earthchild to, in their words, "advance the education and training of young people who are in need by reason of difficult family, financial, social, or economic circumstances."





**Books—glorious books! Elliott International driver Kleinbooi Mabena poses with the first cartons of books to be unloaded while Suzi van Es of Twenty30 shares her delight with Charnel Francis and Mel Potgieter of Elliott International.**

Books for students in need were also the focus of recent charitable work by **Asian Tigers Transpo International Limited** and **Elliott International**. Last November, Asian Tigers and Elliott delivered four cases containing 8,000 surplus used books from the International School in Bangkok to Twenty30, a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Johannesburg, South Africa, to be distributed to local underprivileged schools.

Asian Tigers, one of Asia’s largest relocation move management companies, arranged to pick up the books and ship them to the South African port of Durban, where Elliott, which employs more than 700 people in South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Tanzania, paid for the customs clearance before storing and delivering the books to Twenty30 in Johannesburg. The books will be distributed to approximately 25 schools in the Soweto and Lanseria areas around Johannesburg.

“Asian Tigers has had a long association with the International School in Bangkok,” says Paul Ware of Asian Tigers. “When they approached us for help in arranging this donation, we were more than happy to donate our services for such a worthwhile cause, knowing our African partners Elliott would be also be ready and able to assist us.”

Brad Barker, joint CEO of Elliott International, agrees. “Opportunity for a good education for all is the vital ingredient for the eradication of poverty in South Africa. When Elliott was approached by Paul Ware of Asian Tigers to join them in providing a donation of 8,000 used books to underprivileged schools around Johannesburg, we had no hesitation in confirming our commitment to this worthy cause.”



**Used boxes from The Shore Porters Society were put to good use in Morocco last year.**

Students in Morocco likewise benefited from movers doing good last year. **The Shore Porters Society**, an Aberdeen, Scotland-based removals and storage company with over 500 years’ experience with local, national, and international moves, provided used boxes for two shipments of supplies for the Helalat Village Trust, a charity that supports small schools in Helalat, an impoverished village outside Casablanca. These schools have few books and almost no access to computers.

“We are really pleased to be able to assist Helalat Village Trust and it is great to see our boxes being put to good use to help schoolchildren in a rural Moroccan community,” says Do-reen Paterson, the Shore Porters’ shipping coordinator. “Although Shore Porters is Aberdeen-based, our deliveries for customers take us all over the world and it is nice to be able to help a worthy cause overseas.”

Stephanie Richards, a teacher from Aberdeen who runs the Helalat Village Trust, adds, “Everyone involved in the charity is absolutely delighted with the help Shore Porters has offered us. Even simple things like donating boxes and cartons for us to use when shipping donated items is such a huge help to us, and allows us to concentrate on filling the boxes. We would like to thank The Shore Porters Society for their generous donation, it is hugely appreciated, not only by us but by all the underprivileged children that will benefit.”

Over the holiday season, The Borenstein Group, a Northern Virginia-based advertising, marketing, and public relations firm, teamed up with **JK Moving & Storage** to donate much-needed supplies of a different kind to Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit, nondenominational Christian ministry that builds homes for underprivileged families across the United States. Borenstein donated a sizable collection of surplus desks, chairs, bookshelves, tables, and light fixtures following the company's recent move to a new location. JK Moving & Storage, which has assisted Habitat for Humanity on several occasions in the past, contributed the materials and labor to deliver the donation.

"We could not have accomplished this donation at all without the support of JK Moving & Storage, a stand-up local company that has demonstrated their community spirit for years," says Gal Borenstein, the founder and CEO of The Borenstein Group. "We try to do something for the community around the holidays each year and it feels great to know that while giving back this year, we were also able recycle perfectly good furniture, which is more environmentally sound than sending it all to the dump."

Philippines-based **Goetz Moving & Storage** believes in sharing the benefits of a quarter-century in business with the local community through outreach activities and partnering with nonprofit and religious organizations to provide emergency relief and serve impoverished Filipinos. For example, in response to the damage and displacement caused by Typhoons Ketsana and Parma late last year, Goetz worked with the government and UNICEF to deliver food, medicines, supplies, and healthcare services to areas devastated by massive flooding and landslides.

Goetz also sponsors the education, health, and housing programs of the Couples For Christ Foundation's Work With the Poor Ministry (CFC WWP), which cares for families living in impoverished communities. Goetz helped fund the construction of a community center at the Mary Mediatrix Restoration Village and delivered Christmas presents to the 220 families who currently live there; they also sponsored the construction of a family home in the St. Paul Restoration Village.

Along with volunteers from the nearby Parish of the Resurrection, Goetz staff help care for the elderly residents of Mary Mother of Mercy Home of the Elderly and the Abandoned—spending time with them, feeding them, bringing them presents,



**Goetz's managing director, Benilda C. Munoz, helps care for the residents at a home for the elderly.**

and offering financial assistance. The company's annual day-long outreach program for underprivileged children features games, prizes, food, dancing, prayer, and a chance to see the popular Jollibee mascot—the Philippines' counterpart to Ronald McDonald in the United States.



**Underprivileged children enjoy an all-day party hosted by Goetz Moving & Storage in the Philippines.**



**Goetz Moving & Storage helped fund the construction of a community at the Mary Mediatrix Restoration Village (shown in photos above)**





**What a relief:** Above, a thirsty koala gets a drink of water after huge bushfires displaced more than a million animals in Australia. At right, a dog injured in one of the fires receives first aid. Ron Wilson Removals and Storage helped to rescue many of the animals that survived the blazes.

It's not just humans who are dispossessed by natural disasters. Animals, too, suffer the loss of their homes and natural habitats when disaster strikes—as it did on February 7, 2009, which will be forever remembered as Black Saturday in Australia. That day, 400 bushfires engulfed 78 townships in the Australian state of Victoria, destroying over 2,000 homes and 3,500 other structures, displacing over 7,500 people, and claiming the lives of 173 people. But the biggest catastrophe that day was the death of over a million animals—koalas, kangaroos, cockatoos, wombats, and more. Amid the devastation, however, the staff at **Ron Wilson Removals and Storage** worked to rescue many of the animals that survived on that horrific day.

Debbie Jenkins, international manager at Ron Wilson Removals, responded to an urgent call from Australian Animal Rescue, Inc., that Saturday night to provide urgently needed assistance at Wittlesea, the base of operations for the fire and rescue efforts. Debbie and Shane Wilson, the son of the firm's owner, Kevin Wilson, delivered beds for burned kangaroos as well as food and water for the domestic and wild animals that were beginning to arrive. "One koala was seen leaning over a private swimming pool, at full stretch, in an effort to secure a much needed drink," Debbie recalls.

People phoned the rescue station to advise about the location of animals injured and burned in the fire, and brought animals of all sizes for aid. At one point, over 60 kangaroos, koalas, wombats, and birds were being cared for in the shed that Debbie and her fellow volunteers had converted into a makeshift ICU,



supplemented by a mobile veterinary hospital from the organization Care for Wildlife.

From the day of the fire and into March—peak season for Australia's movers—Debbie coordinated the movement of over 300 tons of donated supplies in addition to the firm's regular eight-hour-a-day workload of national and international shipments. Meanwhile, Shane's family farm—which had experienced fires only feet from the house's front door—became a base for receiving, sorting, and delivering goods for the region. Following the fires, Shane and his family traveled out every weekend and evening to deliver hay, blankets, food, birdseed, cages, and even leads to families and shelters in the affected areas.

Debbie organized a fleet of 34 trucks donated by Linfox Transport as well as the Ron Wilson fleet, whose drivers volunteered to work after hours. "What an amazing group of truckies they were," says Debbie, "from loading hay onto the flat decks, to load after load of 25-kilogram bags of horse and cattle feed. Remember, these guys were also doing their deliveries as well in between."

Debbie says that life in Victoria is slowly returning to something approximating normal, and currently Australian Animal Rescue is raising funds to build a special koala hospital in Devon Meadows to treat the survivors of Black Saturday and other injured animals.

## Helping people fight illness

The onset of a terminal illness can be as disruptive as any natural or manmade disaster to those who are affected by it. Many movers support charities that help patients and their families try to maintain some semblance of normal lives amid extended hospital stays, debilitating medical procedures, and the stress of uncertainty. Last October in Atlanta, Georgia, the staff of the office of **Graebel Relocation Services Worldwide** and the service center of **Graebel Atlanta Movers**, both of the Graebel Companies, Inc., raised almost US\$11,700 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society® through special awareness events and raffles—surpassing their original goal of US\$2,500. “We far exceeded our goal and are very proud of our joint accomplishments,” says Debbie Maupin, vice president of operations for Graebel Relocation Services Worldwide in Atlanta.

Graebel staff were also among the over 7,000 people who participated in the society’s annual Light the Night Walk® fundraiser in Atlanta’s famous Centennial Olympic Park, during which people walked to raise awareness and support for people who are battling blood cancers.

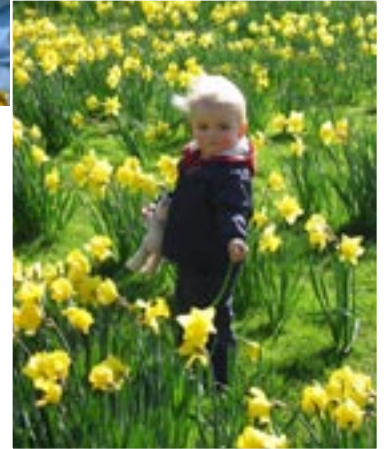
“Graebel prides itself on community involvement and supporting the effort to find a cure for leukemia and lymphoma,” says Tom Theisen, general manager of Graebel Atlanta’s moving service center. “We are very proud of the efforts of our employees who participated in this important event.”

Physical activity of a different kind—a rugby sevens tournament between local and touring teams from all across the UK—marks **Interdean International Relocation**’s annual efforts to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care, which provides free hospice and at-home nursing care to patients with cancer and other terminal illnesses. Last August, Interdean held its second all-day tournament at the training ground of the London Wasps, during which teams squared against each other in 40 games, from qualifying matches through to a final contest in the afternoon at which the Gilbert Pups Academy defeated the Imperial Medicals for the Interdean Cup.

Contributing to the festive atmosphere at the tournament were bouncy castles for the kids, a contest to guess the number of balloons in a car, food vendors, a fire engine, a barbecue, a bar, and a raffle for choice prizes such as a weeklong holiday in Egypt, a case of Dom Perignon, and even a plasma TV. The entire event was managed by a staff of volunteers from Interdean, led by Jenny Mathieson, Andrew Elliman, and James Gill. Interdean Chairman Paul Evans opened the festivities by saying, “Our intention is to make this a great day for rugby and raise as much



**Above, at right, and below:** In the Garden of Hope at Marie Curie Cancer Care, where daffodil memorials are erected to honor those who have died of cancer.



**Interdean’s second all-day rugby tournament to benefit Marie Curie Cancer Care was a great success despite an injury or two.**



**Chairman Paul Evans awards the Interdean cup to the Gilbert Pups.**



**Rugby players pause for a photo op at the tournament to benefit Marie Curie Cancer Care.**

money for Marie Curie Cancer Care as possible in the process. We've made this year even bigger than last, with much more for players and spectators."

In addition to the annual rugby tournament, Interdean staff have been raising funds for Marie Curie since 2005 in many other ways, including one brave Interdean employee who climbed Mera Peak in the Himalayas to raise a four-figure sum for the organization. Interdean also provides free transportation for several Marie Curie events throughout the year.

Speaking at the rugby tournament, Nardia Crowther of Marie Curie Cancer Care says, "Marie Curie's objective is to double the amount of in-home nursing care to 35,000 patients per year. To achieve this we need to raise an additional £10 million; therefore, the efforts of Interdean and Wasps today is vital. The support that everyone has shown today is incredible." As a result of Interdean's support, Marie Curie has been able to build two more Gardens of Hope, in which daffodil memorials are erected to those who have died of cancer and where friends and family can reflect on their memories.



Back row from left to right: Willem van Vliet, Matthieu Odijk, and René Postma. Foreground: Anton van Winden. Together, they raised more than €10,000 for the Ven2-4Cancer Foundation.

For many cyclists, climbing Mount Ventoux in southern France represents the achievement of a lifetime; for the Ven2-4Cancer Foundation, the mountain represents the accomplishment of life itself. Last September, four employees of the Netherlands-based movers **Voerman International** joined 71 other cyclists from across Europe to ride the long, winding road up the 1,912-meter-high Mount Ventoux. The goal is not only to raise money for Ven2-4Cancer (pronounced “Ventoux for Cancer”), but also to symbolize the spirit of those fighting uphill battles against the disease.

The Voerman cyclists—Ren Postma, Anton van Winden, Matthieu Odijk, and Willem van Vliet—collectively raised more than €10,000 for the foundation. One of the riders made it up and down Mount Ventoux three times. Why were they so driven? “I suffered an early loss of one of my relatives [to cancer] and I regularly see children on TV with cancer or leukemia,” says Ren. “Being a parent myself, that is very hard to accept and asks for heavy investments in research and increasing possibilities to detect and treat cancer in an early stage.”

Several colleagues from Voerman were on hand to cheer their team. Based on the experience, they declared their intention to form a second team to participate in the 2010 climb.

**Santa Fe Relocation Services**, known for its annual Breast Cancer Research 5k Charity Run & Walk held at IAM’s Annual Meetings, has found another way to apply the “sweat equity” of staff to support breast cancer research and treatment: For every commercial and residential move the company handles, Santa Fe contributes US\$10 to the Johns Hopkins Singapore Research Fund, of which Santa Fe is a founding member. Since 2002, Santa Fe has raised over US\$1 million for the fund this way. Moreover, an additional US\$63,000 from the events at IAM’s Annual Meetings.

“Cancer affects millions of women around the world,” says Jamie Wong, GMS, general manager of Santa Fe Relocation Services—Korea. “Santa Fe’s corporate mission includes a key element of good citizenship, and the support of this research contributes significantly to the welfare of the global and local communities in which we operate.”



The Voerman team cycled to the summit of Mount Ventoux to raise money to fight cancer.



Runners head for the finish line at a 5k Charity Run. Santa Fe Relocation Services organizes the run at IAM’s Annual Meeting each year, with proceeds supporting breast cancer research. Below: celebrating another successful race.



Athleticism isn't the only way to raise funds for cancer patient care, however. When the Sri Lanka Cancer Society contacted **Trans World Movers (Pte) Ltd.** of Colombo last Christmas asking if they would be willing to donate baskets of dry rations to cancer patients, the management and staff responded immediately and with enthusiasm. The company decided to forgo its usual Christmas party and use the money that would have been spent on it to buy sugar, lentils, milk, food, and biscuits for the patients.

"Due to the wholehearted and generous contributions of our management and staff at all levels, we were able to contribute generously toward this very worthy cause," says Trevor J. Jayesurria, Trans World Movers's manager for administration. "This exercise gave all of us a tremendous boost during the season of goodwill to all mankind, and we eagerly look forward to being a part of such campaigns during 2010 as well."

The story of an avoidable medical tragedy spurred **Istanbul Ekspres International Movers** of Turkey to act to help spare children at risk of succumbing to their illnesses. In early 2009, a two-year-old girl from a rural village in southeast Turkey died from complications from pneumonia because none of the 20 hospitals nearby had an infant ventilator. In fact, she died while being airlifted to a hospital that was hurriedly converting an adult ventilator for her use. The girl's bereaved father told a reporter, "We have the latest technology helicopters, but we do not have infant ventilators."

After reading that story, the owners of Istanbul Ekspres decided to remedy the situation, and identified several hospitals that urgently needed equipment for infant medical care. Istanbul Ekspres donated infant ventilators and anesthesia machines worth US\$40,000 to the children's oncology clinic at Tepecik Hospital in Izmir and the oncology clinic at Dr. Abdurrahman Yurtaslan Hospital in Ankara. The company has also allocated approximately US\$45,000 for donations to other hospitals in 2010.

### **Cleaning up the environment and protecting wildlife**

Movers also do good by being conscientious and responsible stewards of the environment. For example, on a bright, warm Saturday late last September the family-owned and -operated worldwide movers **Arpin Group, Inc.**, of West Warwick, Rhode Island, and electronic waste recycler Cartridge World RI held the first annual E-Waste Fest, encouraging people to bring their old electronic gear for recycling and their waste paper for shredding.



Used computer equipment awaits disposal after the E-Waste Fest.



A youngster displays her love of nature at Arpin's E-Waste Fest. Below: A truck collects boxes and papers for shredding.



The day-long event also featured musical acts, entertainment, educational programs, and a range of family activities.

The event collected nearly 24,000 pounds of computers, printers, monitors, and other electronic items for safe disposal, thus keeping them from ending up in local landfills, where they could contaminate the environment. Document disposal firm Affordable Shredding participated in E-Waste Fest 2009 as well, shredding 4,200 pounds of paper. Arpin says that the event raised US\$3,200 for Save the Bay, a local environmental group that is working to protect and restore Narragansett Bay. The event was even covered live on television, and during the broadcast a TV station presented Arpin Group, Inc., with its first Green Conscious Company of the Year Award.

Arpin says that the company hopes to collect even more e-waste in 2010, at the next E-Waste Fest as well as at other e-waste recycling events that it cosponsors annually with Cartridge World. "We were very pleased with the turnout at E-Waste Fest 2009," says Peter Arpin, a partner at Arpin Group, Inc. "It shows that we were successful at drawing attention to the ever-growing need for members of our community to engage in environmentally smart practices."



**Volunteers turn out in force for clean-up day on the River Wandle.**

Julie Knapton, international manager for **Bishop's Move**, a family-owned removals and shipping specialist with over 25 branches throughout the United Kingdom, Spain, and Gibraltar, demonstrates environmental smarts of a different kind by regularly volunteering with a local environmental charity, The Wandle Trust. This grassroots community charity works with sponsors to restore and preserve the River Wandle and its watershed, a tributary of the Thames in South London. The river is one of the world's great chalk streams—a mineral-rich watercourse in which the water has been naturally filtered to a high level of clarity by flowing down chalk hills—and is known as a popular spot for fly fishing.

Along with 20 to 50 other volunteers, Julie participates in monthly cleanups that cover different sections of the river each time. Volunteers divide into two groups: one dredges debris out of the river, and the other works along the shoreline, picking up trash and moving items pulled out of the river to a collection point for disposal.

Dredging the river is not easy work. Near housing estates they typically find sofas, mattresses, bikes, and carpets. In the more remote areas, they often find industrial waste such as brick rubble, paint tins, and tires that have been discarded by firms seeking to avoid paying commercial dumping fees.

“We cannot reach into the water for anything unless we can see it; instead, it must be dug up with your foot alone,” Julie explains. “Balancing on one leg in fast flowing water is really difficult, and I for one have been known to topple over on occasion.”

The health of the river is steadily improving, thanks to the support of local sponsors and the hard work of volunteers like Julie. “Many people can't understand why I would willingly give up my Sundays to pick up other people's litter and haul mud-covered old mattresses up from the bottom of a river,” she says. “I do it because I'm passionate about wildlife and want others to



**So much junk ... so little time. Julie Knapton (right) of Bishop's Move works with a charity trying to restore and preserve the River Wandle, a tributary of the Thames.**



**Cleaning up the River Wandle.**

see the beauty that is there underneath the rubbish. Besides, it's great making friends with like-minded people, and a pint of beer at the local pub afterwards always proves a great incentive!”



**Asian Tigers contributes a portion of the proceeds from every move it handles to the Tigers Action Fund.**

In the Chinese calendar, 2010 is the Year of the Tiger. So it's entirely appropriate that **Asian Tigers** (also mentioned on page 12) has decided to contribute a portion of the proceeds from every move that it handles to the company's Tigers Action Fund, which benefits efforts to preserve wild tigers around the world. Wild tigers face extinction due to widespread poaching in India, Russia, the Himalayas, and southeast Asia, as well as to the loss of natural habitat and food supply. Fewer than 4,000 tigers are left in the wild, and one subspecies, the South China tiger, is believed to be extinct in the wild.

The fund, administered by the nonprofit organizations Save China's Tigers and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), is used to improve anti-poaching law enforcement and consumer education, wildlife refuges, and breeding programs. Grace Ge Gabriel, IFAW's Asia Regional Director, says, "IFAW would not be able to [engage in tiger conservation] without the support of corporations like Asian Tigers. Their continued support means a lot to us, and to wild tigers."

### **Improving quality of life**

Good deeds often start small. For example, **Aim International Moving** of Dublin, Ireland, sponsored a youth soccer team in nearby Drogheda called Grove Rangers, and purchased brand



**Dublin-based Aim International sponsored a soccer team and purchased uniforms and gear for all the players.**



**Before and after: Tom Griffin of Aim International lost 45 pounds to benefit a cancer charity.**



new gear for all of the players. "One thing led to another," recalls Aim Director Tom Griffin, "and I ending up becoming the coach—and we won our division!" Last January, Tom decided to participate in a charity weight loss to lose 45 pounds by May without the help of a gym or a personal trainer. "I hit the target with a few days to spare and raised US\$1,500 for a charity called Arc Cancer Support," he says. Tom chose that charity because his wife works for Avon Cosmetics, which has a global breast cancer awareness crusade that works with Dublin-based Arc Cancer Support.

**Brytor International Moving** of Toronto, Canada, has found an ingenious way for staff to show their support for charities they have nominated—by using a vending machine. The company purchased the vending machine for the office and Jay Ryan, Brytor's vice president of operations, contributes the money to keep the machine filled. All the profits from purchased snacks go to the charities. The office also maintains a penny jar, into which the office's 30 staff members drop in their spare change. "You may not think it's much, but I dare you to put all your pennies in a jar for an entire year," says Brytor's Christina McCarte. "Now, multiply that by 30 people. It adds up!"

The fun-loving Brytor office also raises funds by holding regular Tooney Fridays—casual-dress days where participants chip in a \$2 coin (called a tooney) for the privilege, often accompanied by doughnuts from Tim Hortons, a nearby coffee shop. Charities that the staff support include the Canadian Cancer Society (which delivers fresh daffodils to the office each spring in exchange for donations) and Interim Place, a shelter for abused women and children, to which Brytor donates used furniture, appliances, and other goods, as well as nonperishable food, clothing, health supplements, personal care products, office and school supplies, gift certificates, and toys at year's end. The management of Brytor matches all staff donations.

Through Plan Canada, the staff also sponsors an impoverished child overseas with food, clothing, shelter, and an education. "Sometimes we receive letters from her letting us know our small contribution has made a world of difference," says Christina. "It's a life-changing experience for us as well."



**Daycos employees receive paid time off for volunteer and charitable activities. They also participate in the Relay For Life to raise money for cancer research.**

**Daycos**, a third-party invoicing and post-audit firm based in Norfolk, Nebraska, encourages its employees to give back to their community, including offering paid time off for volunteer and charitable activities such as fundraisers, food bank collections, and toys-for-tots bins, but the focal point of the organization's giving is the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life. In 1996, the cofounder of Daycos, Connie Day, helped organize the first Relay For Life event in the company's hometown to celebrate and remember those who have fought cancer and won—and lost. In Connie's case, she eventually lost her own courageous battle, but her spirit lives on 15 years later. Where the first Norfolk Area Relay For Life raised \$25,000, the last one collected \$228,600 for cancer research, making it the top-ranked fundraiser in per capita contributions in the central United States, and the sixth highest in the entire country. In addition to being a corporate sponsor of the relay, employees volunteer to plan, organize, and raise funds for the event. Last year, the Daycos team raised just under US\$13,000.

"Several people's lives have been touched by cancer at Daycos," says Tami Pick, the company's director of customer relations. "It continues to be very important and very personal for us. We want to do what we can to help, to give back, and, on some level, to give hope."



**Humboldt employees buy and wrap gifts for women and children at a local battered women's shelter in the Boston area.**

Making spirits bright for the holidays is a traditional activity for many moving companies. For the past several years, for example, **Humboldt Storage and Moving/Humboldt International** of Boston, Massachusetts, has bought and wrapped gifts for women and children at a local battered women's shelter. In 2009, the team was able to supply Christmas gifts for 18 families. "It really is a great sight each year as the conference room goes from being a place where we do business to a place that truly helps people in their time of need," says Dan Komm, Humboldt's brand manager. "It really exudes the Christmas spirit in there."

Humboldt employees also support the March of Dimes by coordinating Walks for Babies across the state, drive trucks for Special Olympics events, and speak to middle school students about geography and history as part of the Discover America program. "We take pride in doing our part," says Dan. "It enriches the experience our employees have as a team member of Humboldt."



**Community service is part of the corporate culture at Interstate Worldwide Relocation Services in Northern Virginia.**

For the past 19 years, **Interstate Worldwide Relocation Services** of Springfield, Virginia, has delivered toys to the Barry Farm community in Washington, D.C., on Christmas Eve as part of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve’s Toys for Tots campaign. This past year, Interstate volunteers enthusiastically delivered more than 2,500 toys and gifts to over 186 families and 800 children in Barry Farm. Interstate had collected toys throughout December at all three of its D.C.-area facilities, and also provided trailers to other collection points for storing toys delivered there.

Interstate President Bud Morrissette says, “We look forward to this event every year. It’s an opportunity for us to support our local community and to be grateful for the success we have achieved over the years. It is wonderful to see people continuing to give generously to this effort, despite the down economy. There is nothing more gratifying than to see a child’s face light up when receiving a gift at Christmas time. That is truly what the season is all about.”

The experiences of Bud, Dan, and the many other volunteers profiled here represent just a small sample of the range of community support that movers provide to their local and worldwide communities, doing their part to help make things better for someone else—and by extension for them and their children too. They are stories of inspirational activities by inspirational people. At your company, you’re bound to find lots of similar stories all around you—stories of ordinary people who just happened to notice that something needed to be done, and then did it. Imagine what would happen if more people did the same.

*Paul Lagasse is a freelance writer and editor in the Washington, D.C., metro area.*



**At right and above: Delivering the goods at Christmas time.**



**Interstate’s Santa spreads a little Christmas cheer.**

## Doing Good at IAM Headquarters

The spirit of movers doing good in their communities is also reflected in the staff of IAM's headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. Leading the way is IAM President **Terry R. Head**, who for the past 17 years has donned a white beard and red suit to play Santa Claus for local children—riding in on top of a fire truck from the local fire department and escorted by a convoy of emergency vehicles with lights and sirens going full blast.

"I can hear the kids start screaming once I come over the hill and they get first sight of me," says Terry, who has a ready answer for kids who ask how come he didn't arrive in a sleigh pulled by eight tiny reindeer: "I tell the kids that the sleigh and reindeer are 'magical' and can only fly one special day of the year, so I call on the fire department to help me get around to visit the kids."

Like any good actor, Terry prepares extensively for his role as jolly old Saint Nick. "I always make a point of looking at toy catalogs and touring the toy stores each year to keep up with what the kids might be wanting or to what they might be referring. I will never forget the horror in one child's eyes on my first year when it was obvious to him that I didn't know what a Power Ranger was—I never made that mistake again!"

Not all the requests he gets are for the latest hot toy, though. "Some kids lovingly ask that their parents would get along better, and even for world peace," says Terry. "I had one young boy just ask for a friend this year." Some well-prepared kids bring pictures of their desired gifts cut out of catalogs or printed off the Web, to ensure that Santa gets it right. "I always make sure to take those with me and get them back to the parents," he confides.



**Santa Claus (aka IAM President Terry Head) chats with a youngster about her Christmas requests.**

Terry says that he was asked to assume the role of Santa, which he describes as an honor to be able to perform, only in part because he wanted to get involved. "I must have seemed to be the perfect candidate since I didn't have any kids, and wouldn't be missed if I didn't show up at the annual holiday party!" Each year, about 35-40 children visit Santa, ranging in age from infants—"they always cry," he says—all the way to teenagers who play along so as not to spoil the surprise for the younger ones.

"I think everyone wants the 'magic' to last as long as possible," he says. "What's fun is that some of the kids who grew up and moved away now bring their own kids back to see the



**IAM President Terry Head coaches the Lorton-Gunston Hoyas, a basketball team made up of youngsters from his community. Ranging in age from 9 to 14, the players are at 1-2 for the season—but they had only played three games as *The Portal* went to press.**

same Santa they saw at that age." Thanks to Terry, the Santa Claus tradition continues across generations.

**Charles (Chuck) White**, IAM's director of government and military relations, has been volunteering in his community through his church, St. Paul United Methodist Church in Woodbridge, Virginia, for over 30 years. Chuck serves food at the local homeless shelter once a month, volunteers at his church food pantry, and volunteers in an international inter-denominational prison ministry program called KAIROS.

"I was introduced to KAIROS by my father," Chuck explains. "A group of men will go into a maximum security prison and spend almost every waking moment with a group of prisoners for four days. Then we commit to come back one Saturday a month for a year as follow up to the original four-day experience. It is a wonderful program that works wonders on the hearts of both sets of men."

Chuck says that he loves volunteering because it gives him back much more than he can give, and it helps to change lives in tangible ways. "It so important for people that have been given much to give back to people, especially those in their own communities who have so much less," he explains. Over the past 30-plus years, Chuck has seen—and demonstrated—how volunteering can change lives, by showing people in need that they genuinely deserve the consideration and support of people whom they may never have even met before.

Also working through his church is **Belvian W. Carrington**, IAM's general manager. Bel makes good use of his financial and accounting knowledge by helping seniors do their income tax returns. In many cases, those who need his advice are the surviving spouses who once handled the yearly tax returns. It's a good bet that the people he helps are reassured by Bel's calm and genial manner as much as by his expertise.

**Jean R. Mathis**, IAM's manager for member services, helps families in need in her community of Bowie, Maryland. She and her friends collect donations, money, clothes, and other goods, as well as raise money through bake sales, yard sales, and events where neighbors can come by and drop off goods that she then prepares for pickup by the charity. "We have movie nights, pizza nights, anything to raise money for the needy," Jean says.

Jean also supports the disaster relief missions of the American Red Cross. "The community has donated to the crisis in Haiti through our neighborhood's Red Cross representative," she explains. "We're asking a lot of our neighbors to donate directly through the Red Cross website, or directly to a charity that's active there. I enjoy working with the community group to organize different events for the families in need. I have found that it really truly helps."

Considering that **Janet Cave Seely**'s first job was with United Way, a coalition of 1,300 organizations in the United States that raises funds and provides programs and services in local communities, it's not surprising that IAM's director of communications and member engagement has been giving to charities for over 25 years. Before coming to IAM, Janet also worked for another charitable organization that raises money for U.S.-based international charities and for the local Washington, D.C., fundraising campaign for federal government employees.

Janet also understands firsthand the value of charitable deeds. In 1989, she volunteered for a trip to rural South Carolina to repair homes damaged by hurricane Hugo. "I learned a fair amount about the good that just a few dollars can do, and how much satisfaction comes from nailing new shingles onto a leaky roof or building a ramp for someone who can't climb the steps into his or her home," she says.

This past December, however, Janet did something that she had been thinking about doing for a long time—sponsoring a woman from a war-ravaged country through a charity called Women for Women International. As part of the sponsorship, for one year Janet's "sister"—Immaculee Kaambo Kambale, a mother who lives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—will attend a year-long program of vocational and technical skills training, rights awareness, and leadership education, tools that will help her rebuild the life that violence stripped away.

"According to Women for Women, a portion of my US\$27 a month will go directly to my sister, to help her obtain basic necessities for her family—food, clean water, and medicine—help send her kids to school, and perhaps use some of the money she receives to start a small, in-home business," Janet explains. "In addition to the monthly donation, I also write letters to my sister. Civil war has raged there for five years and claimed millions of lives, from fighting but also from disease and starvation. To put it gently, women have faced unique brutality in the DRC, and I'm not sure what to expect in her letters."

It will take a while for Janet to find out; communications will be slow because of the need to translate the messages between the two women into their respective languages and then deliver them. "It will be a while before I know whether this 'doing good' is good for her," she says. "But I am very hopeful about it, and I hope she feels that way, too."

In 2006 and 2007, **Brian Limperopulos**, IAM's programs manager, was a volunteer for AmeriCorps in Washington, D.C., an experience he credits with "setting a foundation for my continued public service and civic awareness." AmeriCorps members serve communities through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups to tutor and mentor disadvantaged youth, fight illiteracy, improve health services, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, manage or operate after-school programs, help communities respond to disasters, and build organizational capacity.

"In Washington, we worked with Heads Up DC, which is an organization that works to provide children and youth from low-income neighborhoods with the academic skills and learning opportunities they need to succeed and to give college students the chance to promote their development as effective social change leaders," says Brian. "My specific role was to teach a sixth-grade class from LaSalle Elementary School during their summer program. In addition, I was responsible for administering an after-school program for this sixth grade class as well."

"Although it is difficult, teaching has been one of my most rewarding experiences because of the relationships I formed with my kids and the progress that I saw them make during my time there." As a bonus, Brian was able to become involved in his adopted community of Washington, D.C. "Although I had lived there for three years, I felt no connection to the city. Through AmeriCorps and Heads Up, I was able to become better acquainted with both the city and its residents."

Since then, Brian has combined doing community work with his love of sports. In 2009, he ran two marathons on behalf of Team-In-Training (TNT), which is a fundraising arm of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. "At first, I saw it as an opportunity to get in shape and boost my fitness, and if I could get in shape while raising money for valuable public service, all the better." As soon as he started training with his fellow TNTers, though, it all began to change.

"I started to recognize the pain and loss that these diseases cause," says Brian. "Fortunately for me, I have not experienced a tragic loss, consoled a family member who was suffering, or persevered through chemotherapy. However, I was heartened by the weekly celebration of life that our training sessions became and saw the strength and determination people possess in their struggle to overcome obstacles. In this environment, you recognize that having the ability to run—even to walk—is a gift. In addition, training for anything requiring endurance is considerably easier when you are surrounded by a supportive community like TNT and you are running for such a worthy cause."

When she's not editing *The Portal*, **Joyce Dexter** puts her writing and information management skills to work for her community. Joyce maintains several e-mail directories for community residents, dog owners, and users of Dora Kelley Nature Park, the largest nature park in Alexandria, Virginia. Every spring and fall, Joyce and her husband organize clean-up days in the park with the help of naturalists at their local nature center. The clean-up effort involves making signs, sending out e-mails, and securing city-supplied garbage bags, gloves, and other equipment.

"Typically we get about 40 volunteers, who work for three or four hours on a Saturday morning to clear the trash from stream beds and forested areas," Joyce explains. "We encourage participants to bring their children, who not only love to help but get a hands-on lesson in citizenship and responsible stewardship of our natural resources. Also, for the last few cleanups we've invited our volunteers to bring canned goods, which are then donated to a local food bank."

The e-mail directories that Joyce maintains are used to keep residents informed of developments in the community such as crime, interruptions to city services because of holidays, and progress on the construction of a new military facility nearby. "Through our lists, we organize and cook meals for neighbors with serious illness and their families," says Joyce. "Often someone asks me to forward information on worthy projects, such as sending Christmas packages to U.S. troops overseas, or on a pet that has been lost or found, or to ask for recommendations of roofing companies, or handyman services. We keep a running list of such services that have been highly recommended by neighbors."

**Jamila Kenney**, an administrative assistant at IAM, and her husband, Vincent, volunteer as a team mom and coach, respectively, for their son's recreation football league. In the county where the Kenneys live, there are no school-sponsored team sports until ninth grade; to make sure their 12-year-old son and the other neighborhood kids have the opportunities for the fun and learning that sports provide, the Kenneys and two other families volunteer to coordinate the players.

Operating as a crackerjack logistics team, the three coaches and three moms are responsible for the safe transport of the children to Saturday games and three practices a week—a feat that alone takes six vehicles every time. They coach the players and teach them to be good sports, provide mid-game and post-game snack breaks, and even keep a stash of granola bars for those who haven't had breakfast. "Those boys can't play on an empty stomach, and I can tell who didn't have breakfast when they get into the truck," says Jamila. Snacks used to be sugary treats, but Jamila and the other moms have introduced healthy munchies to the team members, who range in age from 9 to 12.

"Now we have oranges at half time instead of Skittles and jelly beans," she says. And a cooler with water and Gatorade is always nearby when the players need a break.

At the end of the season, the families host a "coaches' dinner" for the volunteer parents, at which the coaches as well as the players receive trophies. When asked what the moms get, Jamila says, "We get to cook the coaches dinner! And then we get a break—until next season."