

Mayor helping families in Haiti

By Laverne Stewart

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Mayor Brad Woodside isn't kidding around when it comes to buying a goat. He's doing it to help families in Haiti.

He will make the donation on behalf of the city as part of the Kids for Haiti campaign. It supplies goats to families in need in the central plateau of Haiti as part of the Cobocol Area Development Program.

The mayor is actually making a \$100 donation, which then buys a goat for a Haitian family.

Woodside visited Haiti on a mission trip with World Vision. While he was there, he saw various projects the organization was doing.

"One is this program about goats, which made a whole lot of sense because the goat was imported from another place but yielded more meat and more milk, which was better for the family."

The mayor saw first-hand how contributions such as these can make a significant impact on the people in the Cobocol Area Development Program when he visited the area with FreddyLink in March.

"It's a small thing and yet it makes a big difference in a lot of lives."

The new Kids for Haiti initiative focuses on donating goats, which are not only an important source of income to Haitian families, but create opportunities to learn new skills, and provide important nourishment for children, he said.

"When I was in Haiti I had an opportunity to visit with 300 children, all of them sponsored by people from the greater Fredericton area. There is a tremendous amount of support from this area that has gone to Haiti in sponsoring children and I

encourage you to donate to this amazing initiative."

On Oct. 15 Woodside will be joined by representatives from FreddyLink. It's a Fredericton-Haiti community development partnership that links caring individuals in the Fredericton area with children and families in need in villages in the central plateau region of Haiti through World Vision.

Woodside said he encourages others to take part in the effort by purchasing goats. He said he's seen the difference this can make in people's lives.

"I visited two or three goat farms while I was there and saw the positive impact it was having on a lot of people ... It might be a small thing for us to think about but it's very large in terms of a reward for the Haitian people who are having a very difficult time. It's a good investment through World Vision that looks after the program."

Woodside said anyone who wants to get involved in the effort can contact Freddylink.

Bernie Zearth, FreddyLink project co-ordinator, said if you decide to also donate \$100 to buy a goat you're giving much more than the animal.

"That goat, combined with training from community members and World Vision staff, can mean milk, meat and income for a whole family in Haiti."

"And not only that, it's a gift that keeps on giving. For each family that receives a goat, they give one baby goat back to the program to help the next family. So really, your gift provides one goat to a family in each generation," Zearth said.

For more information, go to
freddylink.com or contact Zearth at 261-
4414 or email info@freddylink.com.