

# Bringing water to Uganda

Local women organize fundraiser for African village to buy water pump

By Frank Juliano  
Staff Writer

MILFORD — There are a lot of similarities between Milford and the Ugandan village where Jane Holler's aid agency works, but there is one main difference that moved her to take action.

"Rwesigiire is lush and green, like here," Holler said. "But they don't have clean water for cooking and bathing. What happens now is that children are assigned to fetch water from a river two miles away, a couple of gallons at a time. Then their families boil it before they can use it."

So Holler and her husband, Dan Marecki, are trying to bring fresh water to the rural village of 600 people by funding a \$30,000 solar-powered water pump and filtration system.

Uganda Farmers Inc., the non-profit agency that Holler and her husband, Dan Marecki, started four years ago, plans to complete the project this fall and is hosting a 5K race Saturday to raise funds. Run for Water for Africa will take place at 9 a.m. at the Joseph A. Foran High track and will include a 5k walk, a children's "fun run," refreshments and entertainment.

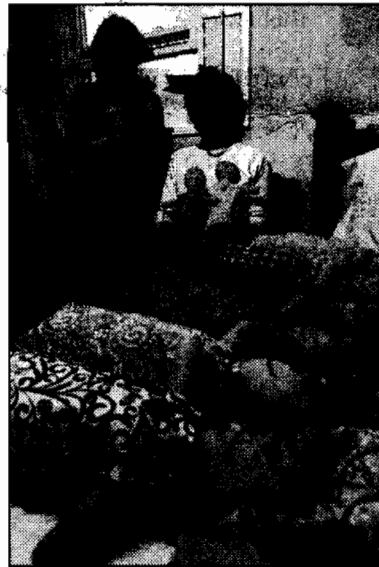
Cindy Bevan, wife of Alderman Bill Bevan, R-4, is also helping to support the Ugandan village. She has made 32 dolls and hopes to have 50 completed by the fall, when Holler and Marecki will bring them to Uganda.

"I want to make sure that every girl under 10 in the village gets a doll," Bevan said. "No two are alike and I use muslin for the bodies and quilt-



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Cynthia Bevan, left, works on constructing one of the handmade dolls she's making for little girls in a village in Uganda, while her friend, Jane Holler, looks on at Bevan's home in Milford on Thursday.



Jane Holler, left, and Cynthia Bevan hold up several of the handmade dolls made by Bevan at her home in Milford on Thursday. Holler is also heading a 5K walk/run this Saturday to raise money for clean water systems in the same village.

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ing covers for the dresses. The eyes are buttons." The dolls, which look like a cross between a Raggedy Ann and a Cabbage Patch kid, cover a bed in her guest room.

Holler and Marecki got involved in helping the Uganda village after a Ugandan priest visited their church, St. Gabriel's, in Walnut Beach. The first project was to pro-

vide a goat to families in another Ugandan village. That simple gift, a source of milk and meat, was passed on from one family to another as the original goats reproduced.

Next was providing pineapple plants to another village, creating a cash crop that grows well in the rich Ugandan soil, Holler said. Last year Ugandan Farmers provided a clean

water system to another village, helped by Dick Wilson, an owner of Heath Water Systems in Monroe.

The Rev. Emmanuel Byaruhanga, the second Ugandan priest to serve at St. Gabriel's, helped with last year's project. Byaruhanga, who heads a high school in Rwesigiire will be returning to St. Gabriel's in August to assist the Rev. Maurice Maroney, the pastor.

"I asked Father Byaruhanga about his village when I met him last August," Holler said. "He told me that it has no water and no electricity. We're trying to see if we can also provide it with electricity."

To participate or volunteer at Saturday's event, or to contribute to the project, visit [www.ugandafarmersinc.org](http://www.ugandafarmersinc.org). Reach Frank Juliano at 203-520-6986 or [fjuliano@ctpost.com](mailto:fjuliano@ctpost.com). Follow him at <http://twitter.com/FrankJuliano> or [blog.connpost.com/juliano](http://blog.connpost.com/juliano)