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Archive for Tuesday, August 21, 2012

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## Challenge accepted: Participants hand out 2,400 bottles of water to thirsty community members



Photo by Melissa Treolo. [Enlarge photo.](#)

Michael Chalfie, left, and Todd Lehr fill an ice chest Aug. 11 with some of the 2,400 water bottles that were donated by Cosentino's Price Chopper for the Great Kindness Challenge. For their part of the global kindness initiative, Lucy's Kids for Peace, with the help of area families, distributed the bottles to thirsty community members.

By [Melissa Treolo](#)

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If you or someone you know was the recent recipient of a free bottle of water on a hot summer day, that small gesture may have been the result of a Shawnee group's kindness efforts.

[Lucy's Kids for Peace](#), a local chapter of the global organization Kids for Peace, took part Aug. 11 in the Great Kindness Challenge. The annual challenge tasks all chapters of Kids for Peace with taking part in simple acts of kindness on the same day.

"The goal is to reach a million people in a hundred countries," said Jill Chalfie of Shawnee, who started Lucy's Kids for Peace earlier this year.

The Shawnee chapter was inspired by 1-year-old Lucy Weber, who lost her battle with cancer in 2010. Her mother, Beverly Weber, is a co-leader of the chapter.

Lucy's Kids for Peace members reached 2,400 people through their part in the kindness challenge — that's how many water bottles were donated to them for the challenge by Cosentino's Price Chopper in Shawnee.

"We just wanted to do something that maybe wasn't a huge impact to

any one person but that would impact the most people that we could," Chalfie said about the project. "We thought, oh, it's been so hot, it's been 400 degrees all summer."

Chalfie said area families signed up to pick up at least two cases of water each and distribute the bottles to whomever they chose. The pickup event was held Aug. 11 at Listowel Park, where there were also refreshments and events for youths.

"I've just been looking for ways to help teach my kids about giving to others and thinking about other people, and so I just thought this was a great opportunity to do that," Rene Jamison, Mission, said about why she signed up. She said a friend had told her about the challenge.

Jamison, who is the mother of two children, said she and her family had plans to pass the bottles out at area construction sites or farmer's markets — wherever they saw someone in need of a drink of water. Other recipients of water bottles included the Shawnee Fire Department, parks, garage sales, neighbors and even the Hot Air Balloon Festival in Olathe.

Several families posted photos and details of their water drop-offs on the Lucy's Kids for Peace Facebook page.

"We felt so honored to be a part of this today!" said participant Dawn Ortman in a Facebook post. "We went to the Merriam Farmers Market, stopped for a neighbor watering her yard, and went to a park. ... So many people said, 'So it's like a pay it forward thing right?'"

That's exactly what the challenge was about, said Chalfie.

"Hopefully it's a conversation piece, to get the conversation going," she said. "And we're hoping that it grows exponentially; that those 2,400 people then go do something nice for 2,400 more people."

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