

Extending the community

Local group sends medical supplies abroad

By JULIE HUSS
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DERRY — There's plenty of help in this closet to lend out. Now, some of that help is headed to the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Thanks to generous donations from the community, the Community Caregivers of Greater Derry's Loaner's Closet is stocked full of medical equipment and supplies, all ready to be loaned out to people in need.

Some of those items are now headed to the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Last week, officials representing the International Foundation Humanitarian Relief Aid Rafael Subero Ocoenas stopped by the Caregivers' East Broadway office to collect canes, walkers and crutches to take along on its next relief mission.

Rafael Subero said his organization has been around for many years. He has taken several trips to his native Dominican Republic, where people are very grateful for the help.

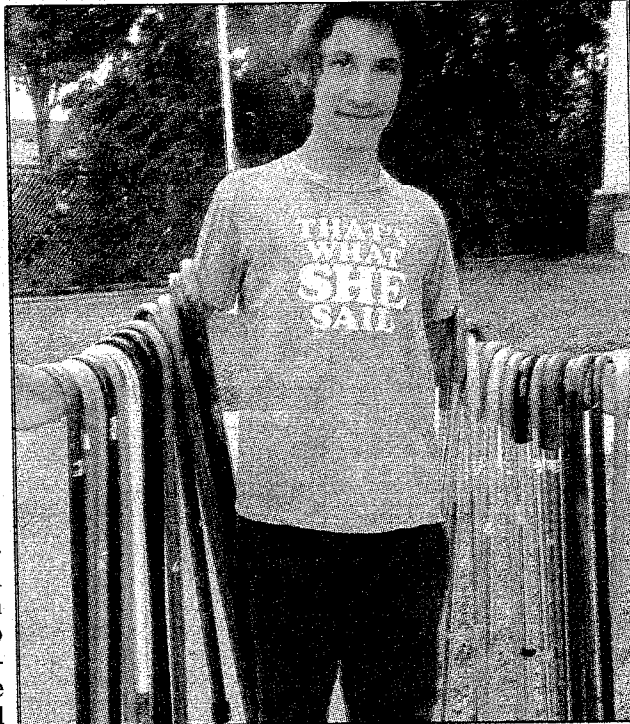
Caregivers' Loaner's Closet typically lends out its equipment to individuals and families, but has previously donated to Haitian relief missions.

Executive director Cindee Tanuma said when there are so many items in the Closet, it's good to give some to others in need.

"We are looking for places to give the excess," she said.

The Closet is usually full. Anyone needing to borrow medical equipment can find almost anything they need.

"These items can be so useful to someone," Tanuma said.



Courtesy photos

Eric Kluk, 16, helps carry out some canes from the Community Caregivers of Greater Derry office.



Community Caregivers of Greater Derry are giving many medical items to a relief effort that will send the walkers, canes, and other supplies to the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Subero said all would be used.

"Nothing will go to waste," he said as he loaded canes and walkers into his truck. "People are going to use this."

The Loaner's Closet has been a valuable part of Caregivers' mission to help the elderly and disabled stay independent in their homes.

Tanuma said they receive about four to five wheelchairs per week, along with many canes and other medical supplies, keeping the Closet well stocked.

Anyone needing anything can borrow an item, then bring it back when they are done using it.

About 25 percent of the calls that come into the Caregivers' office are for loaner items. There's often a waiting list for prime medical equipment.

The Closet is located at the Masonic temple building on East Broadway near the Caregivers' office.

Anyone who needs medical equipment can contact Caregivers at 432-0877 or visit comcaregivers.org.

The Loaner's Closet is open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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