

## Innovation & Job News

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### Local Rotary club leads campaign to buy water filters made by Cascade Engineering for earthquake Haiti

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By Sharon Hanks

In partnership with a Grand Rapids company, the local Rotary International District 6290 is leading an international Rotarian effort to buy water filters for Haitians devastated by the January 12 earthquake.

The campaign called [Thirsting to Serve](#) seeks donations from fellow Rotarians and friends from around the world to purchase HydrAid BioSand Water Filters in Grand Rapids for Haitian victims in desperate need of clean, safe drinking water.

The eight-pound water filter is manufactured by [Cascade Engineering, Inc.](#) of Grand Rapids, and distributed by Triple Quest of Grand Rapids. The unit reduces the leading causes of death and disease in the developing world by removing parasites, bacteria and viruses found in contaminated water. One filter is designed to deliver safe water for a family -- up to 75 gallons a day -- for more than 10 years.

A donation of about \$100, which can be made at Thirsting to Serve's [website](#), ensures the purchase, shipping and installation of the water filter system, says Jim Van Dyke of Grand Haven, president of Rotary 6290, a club comprising of members living in West Michigan and parts of Canada whose world service committee is dedicated to improving water.

"We've already delivered several hundred to Haiti in cooperation with the U.S. Navy," Van Dyke says. "Our goal is to place 1,000 filters in Haiti. Potable water is the foundation of good health. Without it, people die."

About two years ago, [International Aid](#) of Spring Lake started distributing the innovative, gravity-powered filter to third-world countries in partnership with Cascade Engineering. But when International Aid fell into financial straits about a year later, it suspended operations.

Efforts to make and distribute the unit were reignited with donations by the Windquest Group of Grand Rapids and Amway Corp. of Ada.

To further advance its commitment to clean water, Rotary International District 6290 will sponsor its [2010 Clean Water Conference](#) from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, March 27 at Calvin College's Prince Conference Center in Grand Rapids.

The water filter campaign and conference are in celebration of World Water Day 2010, designated by the United Nations as March 22. Rotary International is the world's first service club organization, with more than 1.2 million members in 33,000 clubs worldwide. There are 60 Rotary clubs in the U.S. and Canada.

Sources: Jim Van Dyke of Grand Haven, president of Rotary 6290; Michael Zalewski of Seyferth & Associates, Inc. of Grand Rapids; Thirsting to Serve website; HydrAid BioSand Water Filter website.

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