

To Serve

A world away in Iraq, thousands of U.S. soldiers do more than try to keep the peace. Do you know that our troops in Iraq have helped start more than 1,100 building projects? Among these projects are 364 schools, 67 public clinics, 15 hospitals, 83 railroad stations, 22 oil facilities, 93 water facilities and 69 electrical facilities. Did you know that 96% of Iraqi children under the age of 5 have received the first two series of polio vaccinations?

Our troops daily show kindness amidst adversity. They strive to help others have a better life. We too, can participate with them in our prayers and moral support. However, we can also participate on a local level. We can help thousands of children and their parents who are economically struggling. As doctors, this is what America is about – helping others.

The 16th Annual ACT Health Fair is coming up on Saturday, September 30th. This is an opportunity for many of us to service wonderful youngsters from economically challenged neighborhoods. All types of free examinations are given, including physicals, dental, hearing, vision, immunizations, TB tests and even blood pressure checks for the parents. Last year, there were over 4,700 screenings were performed on over 1,000 children. Since its inception in 1991, over 18,000 children have been served. As you can see, thousands of children are given an opportunity that they never would have had without the help of our physicians.

For each of these 16 years, Medical Society doctors volunteer their time and skills for the betterment of the community and these children. Selflessly, they give a Saturday to these children and we all know how precious time is in our lives. But this program aids disadvantaged children that need these exams to enroll in schools and these doctors think that is more valuable than a Saturday off. It is a fun day for the kids as they are the center of attention. The atmosphere is conducive to making the kids “stars for the day” with balloons, stickers and treats.

We all serve in many ways and it is our roots, the American way, the reason perhaps we went into medicine – to serve. We can be proud of the hundreds of organizations our Maricopa doctors serve here at home and abroad. Countries such as, Mexico, South America and Africa are in desperate need of help and many of us “locals” are willing and able to do so. As you read this, our team will be serving in Tanzania this month.

We are making a huge contribution and like our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, few are aware of our kindness to others.

Barbara A. Berry, M.D.
President