

Changing his community: Palouse boy gives his pennies, nickels, dimes

By Yesenia Amaro, Daily News staff writer
March 21, 2009

Hua Ming Newman is only 8 years old, but he already knows the meaning of helping others.

Newman gathered \$9.81 in pennies, nickels and dimes and donated it to Corey Laughary, a member of the Palouse Community Center Board. He had originally saved the money to buy pop.

"I started putting money in my bag, and when I thought there was a lot of money, I decided that I should give it (as a) donation to build the Palouse Community Center," he said.

The Palouse Community Center Board is a non-profit organization in Palouse that currently is raising money to build a new community center. The goal is to raise \$380,000.

Connie Newman said the organization has raised nearly 50 percent of the money needed. Connie and her husband, Erik Newman, adopted Hua Ming from China four-and-a-half years ago,

She said Hua Ming had seen pictures of things that will be inside the new center when it's completed and decided to help out.

"He did it all by himself," she said.

Connie said that Laughary is her son's bus driver. Hua Ming wanted to give him the money when he found out that he also was involved in the Palouse Community Center, but Laughary was gone on a trip for two weeks.

"(Hua Ming) carried the money around in his backpack for two weeks," Connie said.

She said the day Laughary returned to school, Hua Ming ran to give him the Ziploc bag with his savings.

"It was a surprise when we got a call from Laughary," she said. "He called me and wanted to know if it was OK if he took Hua Ming's pop money for the community center."

She said Hua Ming did not keep any money for himself.

The Palouse Community Center has a thermometer that shows how much money the community has been able to raise. Hua Ming is always curious to see if it has gone up, Connie said.

"Every day, he wants us to drive by and see if it has gone up yet," she said.

Hua Ming said he would like it if other people could follow his example.

"It would be nice if they could," he said.

Yesenia Amaro can be reached at (208) 882-5561, ext. 237, or by e-mail at yamaro@dnews.com.

Moscow-Pullman Daily News