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Recycling Efforts Pay Dividends for Local Nonprofit

Have you noticed the special recycling bins in various sites within the Clinical Center, National Library of Medicine and Children's Inn, laden not with paper or plastic but with metal can pull tabs? These represent an idea cherished by Jodyann Faber, a local resident and NIH patient who fought but succumbed to breast cancer in 2004.

Her brainchild, Pull Tabs for Charity, is a Bethesda-based, nonprofit project adopted by her mother Rovi Faber, with the goal of helping raise children's awareness of the value of giving to others. PTFC support comes from 47 states, as well as from Armed Forces members stationed worldwide.

Funds are obtained by selling the aluminum tabs to scrap operations, including Montgomery Scrap Co. in Rockville. Tabs from soda and other drink cans weigh little; it takes about 1,500 to equal a pound, or 98 cents worth of aluminum. As a result of having collected hundreds of thousands of tabs from cans, PTFC was recently able to give \$5,000 to NIH Charities.

PTFC supporters include children and parents nationwide. An elementary school student in Texas hauled in 104 pounds of the product last year. Ashburton Elementary School in Bethesda has collected more than 150 pounds of aluminum annually since 2009.

NIHers are also taking part. Perhaps the most loyal supporter is Chau Hoang, a pharmacist at the Clinical Center. "I had been searching for non-profit, local organizations that I could get involved with and came across PTFC last November," she said. "I found that collecting tabs is an effortless charity work that everyone, anytime, everywhere can get involved with."

Also concerned about the environment, she added, "I strongly believe that we should leave no trace, or the least impact, on our environment and that we should teach our children to do the right thing." Hoang has secured the support of coworkers in the pharmacy and other places around NIH.

Randy Schools, president of the NIH R&W Association, and area police and fire departments have also jumped on the bandwagon. Meanwhile, tab stations outside of NIH are swarming with donated tabs. As word spreads, the fever to collect aluminum for charity has been contagious.

"I never thought our grassroots efforts would be embraced by so many children, parents and teachers—it's been almost like magic," said PTFC executive director Rovi Faber. "We're just tickled to know that we're on our way to making the collection of pull tabs a fun household, school and work ritual. Most of all, it's heartwarming to see children so eager to experience the joy of giving to others—just like my Jodyann did."

NIHers can also donate aluminum tabs at the R&W gift shop in Bldg. 31, Rm. B1W30.—**Jan Ehrman**



Demonstrating how easy it is to support Pull Tabs for Charity are (from l) Chau Hoang, Belinda Weiss, Sila Toch, Christine Yoon, Brian L'Heureux and Sophia Lopez.

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