Volunteering at the National Immunization Day - my experiences

Fariha Shafi

IT really was the first time in my life that I was chosen to volunteer for a cause in which I believe. It was the National Immunization Day and the whole of Bangladesh was jam-packed with posters, seminars about having your child under the age of 5 attended on the nearest vaccination centre. The vaccination centers were in vicinity everywhere; posh, remote or under developed areas. Bangladesh aims to immunize 22 million children free of cost with doses of polio, vitamin A Capsule and anathematize tablets.

The particular centre that I was volunteering for is the Cancer Research Center in Mohakhali. NIC also known as National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital and was initiated by Rotarians who believed that in order to cure cancer there should be maximum technical support to at first detect its severity. Outside the Research Centre a type of *shamiyana* was built, the place was crammed with desks where the registration process takes place and dozens of chairs were put. The immunization was carried out by an entity which was very capable: it included Rotarians who vaccinated the children and specialized nurses who lend hands to manage the scared children.

It was a wonderful experience to vaccinate the children against polio which is a deadly disease that causes paralysis. There were children of different age groups- there were toddlers, those under 2 years and some of them who were only 22 days old! Many of them were brave enough to open up their mouths without being asked to while some were very frightened and you could only put one drop in there mouth.

The continuous encouragement of Mr. Ifthekharul Alam kept us on our heels and working all the time. The scorching heat couldn't beat me and my sister and we took our adieus from Cancer Center at last when around 370 children had been immunized. I am grateful to Rotary International, Mr. Alam, Mr. Chowdhury, the sponsors, the volunteers and everyone else for making us realize that we can also make a difference. I wish for a polio-free and much safer Bangladesh.

NYC eatery grants freedom to lobster centenarian

Verena Dobnik

(Verena Dobnik is Associated Press Writer)

A 140-year-old lobster once destined for a dinner plate received the gift of life Friday from a Park Avenue seafood restaurant.

George, the 20-pound supercentenarian crustacean, was freed by City Crab and Seafood in New York City.

"We applaud the folks at City Crab and Seafood for their compassionate decision to allow this noble old-timer to live out his days in freedom and peace," said Ingrid E. Newkirk, president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

PETA spokesman Michael McGraw said the group asked City Crab to return George to the Atlantic Ocean after a diner saw him at the restaurant, where steamed Maine lobster sells for $27 per pound. George had been caught off Newfoundland, Canada and lived in the tank for about 10 days before his release.



Some scientists estimate lobsters can live to be more than 100 years old. PETA and the restaurant guessed George's age at about 140, using a rule of thumb based on the creature's weight.

He was to be released Saturday near Kennebunkport, Maine, in an area where lobster trapping is forbidden.