

# Local trivia night helps disadvantaged children thousands of miles away

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
April 26 2017 9:25 AM



**ALTON** - Teresa Cranmer started the Mustard Seed Peace Project in 2004 after visiting the poor village of Virginia, Guatemala.

A trivia night to raise funds for projects in the village, including procuring clean water and building a school, started not long after the group received its 501(c)3 status in 2005. The most recent incarnation of that trivia night, which was held at the Alton KC Hall on Friday, April 21, and it grossed \$6,000 before expenses were taken. Cranmer said that money would be used to work on a three-room schoolhouse in Virginia. She said some of that money would be set aside for future work on the building, which should have six rooms upon its completion.

"I'm amazed at the community here," Cranmer said. "It was a big effort for a lot of people, including my board and me. The community has been so supportive of us, which is why we have been able to be so successful."

Local businesses provided door prizes, gift cards for the "deal or dud" game and items set for silent auction. Those fundraisers were added to the collected entry fees of \$15 a person to create that \$6,000 sum.

To put that money into action, Cranmer said the Mustard Seed Peace Project would be taking students and staff from Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri to begin repairs. Cranmer, the students and staff will be leaving on May 25, 2017, to travel 10 hours and work for four days to make repairs on the standing schoolhouse's leaky roof.

"Part of what we do is provide opportunities for people to have an international service experience," Cranmer said in a message. "We have taken students from SIUE, SIUC, SLU and LCCC. We will be making a medical trip in July pulling together nurses and other medical people from all over the U.S."

Those service projects and local support encompass Cranmer's philosophy: "It takes a village." She said she was not sure the Mustard Seed Peace Project could have survived for so long without community support. While she did not doubt her own dedication, she said she believes a lot of the project's success comes directly from the large amount of community support she receives from the Riverbend area.