

Champions for Humanity

Helen and Norm Klein Goodwill Ambassadors to Ethiopia

By Naomi Harper
Photos By Naomi Harper and Russell Harper III

Ultradistant world record holder, 82-year old Helen Klein and her husband race director Norm Klein traveled to Ethiopia this summer to organize and host the first ever **Village of Hope Run** for the children in Kersa Illala, a small village three hours south of Addis Ababa.

Coaches for the Barrett Middle School Track Team in Carmichael, California, the Kleins worked daily beneath the equatorial sun on a makeshift soccer field conducting short distant races including a wheelchair category.

As members of a medical humanitarian expedition with the Village of Hope, a non-profit organization founded

to help this village obtain sustainable, self improvement projects, Helen and Norm gave the villagers something more than the doctors and nurses could provide; age-group races just for fun!

The Kleins wanted to recognize the children's personal athletic talents and awarded each participant with colorful ribbons. During previous expeditions only the sickest of villagers receive personal contact from the medical team but

this expedition reached beyond the medical clinic to the village to offer health instruction, a health fair, and the first **Village of Hope Run**.

Ultra Marathoner Lends Her Support For Clean Well Water

Helen Klein ran in the sub-Saharan desert, completed the nine day Echo Challenge, completed over one hundred marathons and ultra-distant events, but this summer in Ethiopia, Helen walked down to the river where the women and girls from Kersa village daily draw water. She filled her jug, climbed the steep bank, and carried

the water back to the village as a symbolic gesture of hope for all families to have clean well water.



Village of Hope



50 wheelchairs provided mobility and independence for local villagers.