

VFW POST 10249 PROJECT CRUTCH



Project Crutch moves to Udon



Several decades ago while sitting in his back yard bird's nest Forest Williams, conjured up an idea to make walking aides out of bamboo. It was too easy just to make a simple walking stick so he played around and he soon had a design for canes, walkers and crutches. He realized that there were a lot of people in need of these items and he was soon giving them away to anyone who needed one.

One day his adventures landed him at the Khon Kaen Center for Disabled Children. While there, he was introduced to many children that could not walk. Determined to improve the quality of life for these children, Forest started a one man crusade and set out to design a wheelchair. Constructing them out of bamboo proved itself to be too much of a challenge so he started to use PVC water pipe. The design of the chair was simple but what to

use for wheels and how to attach them to PVC was a whole new adventure. One day while shopping at the BIG-C department store and he noticed that there was a large quantity of shopping carts that was headed for the recycle bin. After talking to the store manager Forest got permission to salvage the front casters.

After several months of trial and error designs, he was able to take the first PVC wheelchair to the Khon Kaen Center for Disabled Children. The staff was so impressed with the design and quality they asked if it was possible to get more.

Forest rented a shop house filled it with PVC and that was the beginning of Project Crutch. As word of Forest's Project Crutch program spread, he was soon delivering his walking aides to Udon Thani and other surrounding towns and villages.

Over the years Forest has delivered hundreds upon hundreds of canes, crutches, walkers and wheelchairs. He provided them free of charge to anyone who wanted them. Although some financial assistance was provided by the TLC Brotherhood, VFW Post 10249 and the Church of the Latter Day Saints most of the funding came from Forest himself.

This month Forest decided to close his shop house. He moved everything back to his back yard bird's nest and asked if we could help him use up the remainder of his supplies. This past weekend several volunteers started to build wheelchairs. We have been in contact with one of the local temples who will help us distribute the walking aides.

We only hope that we can emulate Forest's noteworthy accomplishment and keep his legacy alive.

BACK IN ACTION IN UDONTHANI

