



WATER IS LIFE

Amman Imman

Bringing water and hope to those who have none

Amman-a-thon Planning Guide

ammanimman.org

For more information contact:

Debra Kahn, Wells of Love program director

(240) 418-1143

debbie@ammanimman.org



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- Amman-a-thon Chart
 - Example chart
- Supporting and Promoting your Event
 - Corporate Sponsor Pledge Form
 - Getting Media Attention/Sample Press Release
 - Amman Imman logo
- For your Heroes of Compassion and Their Parents
 - Why and How to Raise Funds
 - Sample Parent Letter
 - Sample Student Thank You Letter
 - Amman Imman Mini-Flyer
 - Azawak Information Sheet
 - Hero of Compassion certificate
- Preparing and Submitting your Donation
 - Event Response and Donation Submission Form



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“Water is Life”



This could not be truer than in the Azawak of Niger and Mali, West Africa. Climate change has drastically shortened the rainy season, leaving half a million people with no water for up to ten months each year. Without rain, the people and animals have no water to drink or bathe with. Living on the brink of survival, the region’s 500,000 inhabitants are constantly searching for water; these daily trips can cover 35 miles and are performed often by children. They have no access to roads, schools or health centers; few development organizations work to improve their lives.

There is hope.

Clean and sustainable sources of water exist deep underground, but are unreachable without expensive mechanical equipment. *Amman Imman: Water is Life* is drilling permanent sources of water for these resilient people, providing a chance to live without the indignity of daily thirst and fear of water-borne illness. Each well provides water for up to 25,000 people and animals, and serves as a catalyst for community development. Freely flowing water stabilizes these communities allowing them to address further needs such as schools for children and adults, reforestation and environmental protection programs, opportunities for economic development, agriculture, and food and health aid.



Wells of Love



News of the water crisis in the Azawak spread early and quickly among an international network of Montessori schools; a support system was created and the value of involving compassionate children in relief efforts was soon realized. Established in 2006, Wells of Love is the service-learning program of Amman Imman: Water is Life. Its mission is to unite and empower students as *Heroes of Compassion* - future leaders with caring, philanthropic spirits - by engaging them to help bring water and hope to the 500,000 people of the Azawak of West Africa. Students in over 50 Montessori schools around the world have participated in educational awareness activities and creative fundraisers

such as A Walk for Water. The efforts of these dedicated Heroes of Compassion culminated in the construction of a borehole well, named *Montessori Well of Love*, in the village of Kijigari in June 2010. New schools and communities around the world are joining our Wells of Love brigade to save lives in the Azawak.



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Amman-a-thon: **Building Skills while Building Boreholes**

The *Amman-a-thon* is a collaborative skill-building event through which students improve their athletic and math skills while raising funds towards a Well of Love for the people of the Azawak. This fundraising event has been specially designed for younger students.

Over the course of one or two months, students practice hopping on one leg, twirling a hula hoop, shooting baskets, jumping rope and doing jumping jacks to gain proficiency in preparation for *Amman-a-thon* Day. On that special day, they partner with a friend, listen for “Go” from the teacher, and count each hop, jump, hula and basket until the teachers shouts, “Stop”.

Prior to the event, students rally their family and friends to pledge donations of 5 to 10 cents (or more) per hop, jump, basket and hula spin that they will accomplish during a given amount of time. Classrooms of 30 students have raised as much as \$5,000.

Amman-a-thon unites athleticism and philanthropy, providing students with a first-hand experience of how practice leads to something concrete and powerful.





Steps for Organizing an Amman-a-thon

Step 1: Pick a date

Think about planning your Amman-a-thon in conjunction with United Nations Day (October 24), World Water Day (March 22nd) or Earth Day (April 22nd). Giving children something concrete to work toward will make these landmark days more meaningful. A day in the fall or spring works as well!

Step 2: Choose a setting

The Amman-a-thon can take place at a local park, a community center, or on school grounds.

Step 3: Present *Amman Imman* to the students

Use the event as a tool to teach students about how water scarcity and climate change directly affect people today. Read "[Amman Imman – A Story](#)", which tells the story of the people of the Azawak in pictures and simple words. Refer to posts on our schools' story-sharing [blog](#) to see how students like them are making it possible for the people of the Azawak to have water. Watch the videos on our [YouTube channel](#). Learn more about Amman Imman on [our website](#).

Option: Invite an Amman Imman representative to make a presentation, or even better work with your students to raise awareness in your community.

Step 4: Allow the students to connect with their compassion

Learning about people who lack water – the most basic of elements – can stir up many feelings. Give the students an opportunity to reflect on this notion. They may want to write and draw their impressions as a response to the Amman Imman story.

Step 5: Tell them how they can help

"Did you know that becoming a better athlete could actually help others?" Through the Amman-a-thon, students have an opportunity to improve the lives of the people of the Azawak by improving their own athletic abilities. They will be raising money by getting sponsors for the skills they choose to work on over the next month. On Amman-a-thon Day, they will perform to the best of their ability. The better they do, the more funds they will raise for the construction of a borehole well that will serve 25,000 people and animals.

Step 6: Choose age-appropriate activities for the students to work on

Pick fun activities that the children will enjoy practicing and improving.

- For ages 3 – 6: jumping on two legs, beanbag throw, somersaults, etc.
- For ages 6 – 9: jumping jacks, hula hoop spinning, jumping on one leg, basketball dribbling and shooting, jumping rope, etc.

Step 7: Demonstrate the different activities

Allow the children to demonstrate how to do each activity. Set the stage for them to work toward their goal: "I know there must be someone here who can do jumping jacks for at least a minute. Who wants to demonstrate?"

Step 8: Let the children decide what they will work on

After showing the options, let them each pick three activities that they will practice over the next month. Build their confidence: "Choose what you like to do; don't worry about being good at it. Practice will help you improve."



Step 9: Distribute the Amman-a-thon chart to the students

- The chart will be used to choose the activities, record each sponsor's name, and the amount pledged.
- On Amman-a-thon Day, the chart will record the number of times the student performs each skill within the given time frame.
- Draw the chart on a white board and fill it with examples for the whole class to see.
- Be sure to make a copy of the chart before sending it home.

Step 10: Turn the explanation into a math lesson

"Let's say Mom wants to donate 5 cents a jump rope. If you jump rope 30 times, how much money would you raise?" Fill in the chart with the answer. Help them understand how it can add up. "10 basketball hoops at \$1.00 from Aunt Mary, 25 cents a hoop from Uncle Tom, \$5.00 a hoop from Mom – you've raised \$62! Classes of 30 students have raised as much as \$5,000!"

Step 11: Rehearse with a partner

Use partners to practice talking about Amman Imman and asking for pledges. "I'm doing an Amman-a-thon. I'll be practicing my skills to help people in the Azawak get water. Can you help me by pledging?"

Step 12: Talk about collecting pledges

Suggest e-mailing Grandma in California, calling Uncle in Pittsburgh, or asking Aunt during a visit. Talk with friends who come to your home. Loan your chart to Mom and Dad to get pledges from their friends and co-workers.

Step 13: Register the students

A school-wide Amman-a-thon online registration via firstgiving.com is available. Contact info@ammanimman.org if you want to set that up. Smaller groups should use the Amman-a-thon chart to sign everyone up for the event.

Step 14: Engage your community and increase potential

Send home a letter explaining what the students will be working towards. Offer local businesses the opportunity to support the students by matching the funds raised. Send out a press release a week before the event. Use the documents in the enclosed Communication Kit to raise even more funds.

Tip: Set a fundraising target for your school. Think high! Find a corporate sponsor to match the funds raised by your students.

Step 15: Prepare a certificate to give to your Heroes of Compassion

Celebrate your students' accomplishments by giving them a certificate at the end of the Amman-a-thon.

Step 16: Reconcile the collected funds

Total the number of participants and reconcile the funds collected on the Participant Tally Sheet. Records the totals on the Event Response and Donation Submission form [included in this guide].

Step 17: Checks should be made payable to *Amman Imman*

Send the funds along with the Amman-a-thon Chart/Registration sheet, and Event Response and Donation Submission Form to:

Amman Imman: Water is Life
7036 Strathmore Street, Suite 111
Chevy Chase, MD 20815



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The Amman-a-thon

Prior to the event: Practice, Practice, Practice

10 minutes a day, three days a week at a designated time. Recess is a great time to practice.

Materials you will need:

- Stop watches
- Pens
- Clipboards
- Chart of students organized into groups
- Sports equipment (basketballs, jump ropes, hula hoops, etc.)

Get organized – this is most important!

Make a list of each activity with the names of the students who are doing each one. You will need this on the day of the Amman-a-thon to organize the students into small groups.

Plan your Amman-a-thon according to your needs

The event can take place over a period of several days or during one morning or afternoon session. The amount of time required will depend on the amount of supervision and groups you have. Since you will need to count and record, adult supervision will be needed for those students not engaging in the activity.

Group the students according to activity

Plan to have students perform their Amman-a-thon activities in small groups. For example, one activity per group of 6 – 8 children. Organize the students into their groups in advance to spread the activities out comfortably for them.

- For example, if 18 students choose to be in the hula hoop Amman-a-thon, one group of 6 might do their Amman-a-thon on Tuesday, the second group on Wednesday, and a third group on Thursday. If you are doing it in one morning, you will need one Count Monitor per small group.

Ready, Set, Go!

While their counting buddies keep time on a stop watch, the group of students will perform their activity for a given time period.

- Ex. Five minutes works well for the 6-9 year olds; you may want to plan on a shorter time for younger children.

Counting and recording results

Teachers can either count for each child, or partner each student up with a good counting buddy. If children do the counting, teachers will need to monitor and adjust the totals for accuracy. Students who are not engaged in the activity or counting could cheer. The teacher records the results on the Amman-a-thon chart for each student.

Multiplication of Joy

With the help of their teachers or parents, the children calculate their totals by multiplying the number of the activity by the amount pledged. They then take their results to their sponsors – “I jumped 230 jumps in 5 minutes!” – and collect the amount owed.

Collecting the funds

The children return the money to their teachers with the Amman-a-thon chart.



Wednesday, May 06, 2009

Oness-Family School Students Participate in Amman-a-Thon

Special contribution to the blog by Laurel Lundstrom from <http://wellsofloveblog.ammanimman.org/>

Students at the Oness-Family School, in Chevy Chase, Md., jumped rope, shot hoops, dribbled basketballs and did jumping jacks to raise money for some of the poorest kids in the world.

Taking its name from the organization it benefits, this "Amman-a-thon," will donate proceeds to a grassroots water project called Amman Imman. Through a partnership with the Oness-Family School and more than 40 other Montessori schools around the world hosting similar events, the organization drills borehole wells in an extremely impoverished region called the Azawak Valley of West Africa. The Azawak stretches throughout northern Niger and southern Mali and is near barren due to a prolonged drought.



Students at the Oness-Family School shoot basketballs in the Amman-a-thon.

Each jump, basket or dribble yields a pledge to the project. Students were responsible for finding donors to sponsor them to do two of the aforementioned activities.



“The kids want to save the world,” said Madhavi Ray, the first through third grade teacher at the school who created the project last year for her students and attributes the idea to the children. After brainstorming ideas with her class, the Amman-a-thon was born. More than 30 students participated in this second annual event, which is intended to promote an interest in physical education, as well as philanthropy.



Madhavi Ray, 1st-3rd grade teacher, talks with Laurel Lundstrom

The children practiced their skills for more than a month prior to the contest, said Ray.

The event is reflective of the school’s Manifestation Program, which combines community service with world outreach, said Debbie Kahn, the Oneness Family School’s associate director.

“It really enhances the mission of the school,” said Kahn.

“It was good to be helping people in a place where they have water problems,” said second-grader Elya Baker. “Here, we go to a machine or a water fountain for water, but there they (in the Azawak) have to go for a long time.”

Benjamin Keeler, another second-grader who shot baskets and did jumping jacks, says the money he raised will go to drill another borehole well for people in the Azawak.

The project drilled its first borehole -- which brings a clean, sustainable source of water to 25,000 people and their animals -- more than a year and a half ago. Drilling borehole wells is important, said Keeler, “because they might get sick and die when



they drink dirty water.”

Students jumping rope. Another student counts the number of jumps accomplished in 5 minutes.

The Amman-a-thon follows the Friendship Bracelet Exchange with children in the Azawak. The Exchange, led by Kahn, allowed students in the United States to trade hand-made bracelets, photos and cards with children in the Azawak.

“Anytime you find a way to inspire a child to help another child, you keep it,” said Ray, Baker’s teacher.

The students at the Oneness Family School will continue their efforts to bring water to the Azawak Valley, May 16, when they participate in a Walk for Water around Lake Frank, in Derwood, Md. The school hopes to surpass the \$12,000 the Walk raised last year for Amman Imman.

Elya Baker says she did not get to attend the Walk last year, but hopes to this year. “I am begging my mom to let me go.”



Jumping jacks are another activity in the Amman-a-thon.

Find out more about Amman Imman and Wells of Love by visiting our website:
<http://www.ammanimman.org/Wells/intro.html>

For more information, please contact
Debra Kahn, Wells of Love Program Director
debbie@ammanimman.org 240.418.1143