

Kids' penny drive exceeds goal for aid

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A push for pennies resulted in an outpouring of giving by students at New Prospect Elementary School.

Shortly after Hurricane Katrina, the Alpharetta students launched a penny drive to collect one million pennies, or \$10,000.

The students staffed lemonade stands and held bake sales, and they solicited money from their family and friends. They emptied their banks and filled plastic bags, socks and containers with coins.

"It was just the cutest thing," principal Charlia Faulkner said of the 714 students bringing in the wrapped and unwrapped coins. "As long as our drive lasted, they did not lose enthusiasm."

Jars in front of the school were used as collection bins, and each day, pennies filled the jars to capacity. As students made a deposit, they'd ring a bell.

"There was a constant dinging of the bells," said Faulkner, who jokingly challenged the kids as they neared their goal: "Don't step over

that penny in the street because it may be the penny we need to reach our goal."

Last week, the steady stream of pennies caused an overflow. The school exceeded its goal and raised \$10,051.23.

"It was very exciting," said Faulkner, who treated the students to a special hat day celebration for a job well done. "We were dinging the bells, and you could hear the kids going down the hall talking about it."

The school will donate the money to the American Red Cross.

Information: New Prospect Elementary, 770-667-2800.

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