

Home :: Longboat Key :: Neighborhood :: Neighbors: Nora White

Neighbors: Nora White

Date: November 2, 2011

by: Mallory Gnaegy | Community Editor

Like

4203 likes. Sign Up to see what your friends like.

Jon wasn't always healthy. Before the little boy, from the Philippines, underwent surgery, his intestines were on the outside of his body. But now, every time Longboat Key resident Nora White visits the Philippines, a healthier Jon greets her.

"I am so happy to see him," says White, who donated the money to pay for Jon's surgery.

But White's donations aren't typically monetary — although, she has paid for a few surgeries in the past — she mostly donates her time. In the past 12 years, she has been on 15 medical missions working as a pre-op and post-op medical assistant and has been involved in patient relations. She has traveled to Vietnam, Cuba, Romania and the Philippines.

"I do whatever they ask me to," she says.

And she doesn't only wear an assistant's hat; in fact, her favorite "hat" is more of a rainbow-colored wig variety. "Dr. Clown," as she is called, was something that began on her first trip to the Philippines in 1999, when she happened to bring a funny wig with her.

"The kids had never seen a clown and they loved it!" she said. "They surrounded me within a minute."

When her friend, Dr. Tony Racela, and his wife, Luz, founded the Medical Missions Foundation, White helped raise money for it. She told Racela that she'd like to go on the medical missions because she loved kids, but she had no way of preparing for what she would see.

The hospitals aren't air-conditioned, and the children are malnourished. She's seen parents holding IV bags when there weren't enough poles in the Philippines and water like thick coffee from the pipes in Romania. In the Philippines, they typically fix cleft palates. In Romania, they typically deal with strabismus, burns, club feet and webbed hands.

"It isn't like vacation," she says. "You have to be emotionally prepared for it."

Romania was particularly tough. She got to know the children well after going there for six years in a row. She would take them shopping and feed them nightly, to the point that they would wait for her in front of the hotel.

"I would come back (home) and feel demolished," she says. "But it's very rewarding. You look in the mirror and feel thankful for what you have."

The people of the Philippines were so appreciative that in 2009 she was made an honorary citizen of Tagbilaran. On her most recent trip from Sept. 22 to Sept. 29, White was given a birthday tribute from Dan Neri Lim, mayor of Tagbilaran, who called her "a living saint." The Medical Missions Foundation has also recognized her service. In 2004 she was named the foundation's Humanitarian of the Year.

She says she wants to go on one more mission to the Philippines, but "I'm getting old, and it's a long way away."

Then, she smiles.

"Well, maybe I'll go on a couple more," she says.



Nora White visits students at a pre-school in Tagbilaran, Philippines. Courtesy photos.



Five Things You Didn't Know ...

- On Nora White's most recent mission trip, the medical staff saw 1,538 patients and performed 52 major surgeries.
- She has four children: Nicole, Freddie, Jason and Martin.
- She was born and raised in Eltmann, Germany.
- Her father was a physician.
- She has studied cooking in Italy and France and likes to prepare healthy dishes.

Like

Sign Up to see what your friends like.

[Email This Page](#)
SHARE [Share on Facebook](#)
[Share on Twitter](#)
[Share on Google Bookmarks](#)

Currently 0 Responses

Leave a comment

Login

Register now

Login below to post a comment or click register.

Account E-Mail

Password

[forgot password? click here](#)

Signup to receive our news in your inbox!

Submit Query

Speak Your Mind Below!

SAY IT!

YourObserver

[My Account](#)

[Create an Account](#)

Subscribe to our eNewsletters

Submit Query

[Multimedia](#)

[eEditions](#)

[Contests](#)

[Weather](#)

[Blogs](#)

[Business Directory](#)

[Mobile](#)

[Coupons](#)

[Crossword Puzzle](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Google](#)

[Download Now](#)

[Our sister sites](#)

[Gulf Coast Business Review](#)

[Palm Coast Observer](#)

[News](#)

[Longboat Key](#)

[Front Page](#)

[News](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Religion](#)

[Sports](#)

[Neighborhood](#)

[Cops Corner](#)

[Our Town](#)

[A&E](#)

[East County](#)

[Front Page](#)

[News](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Religion](#)

[Cops Corner](#)

[Our Town](#)

[Schools](#)

[Sports](#)

[A&E](#)

[Sarasota](#)

[Front Page](#)

[News](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Neighborhood](#)

[Cops Corner](#)

[Our Town](#)

[A&E](#)

[Siesta Key](#)

[Front Page](#)

[News](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Cops Corner](#)

[Neighborhood](#)

[A&E](#)

[More](#)

[Black Tie](#)

[Black Tie Calendar](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Real Estate](#)

[Other Publications](#)

[SEASON](#)

[Home & Garden](#)

[Health Matters](#)

[Summer Fun Guide](#)

[Spirit of America](#)

[Back to School](#)

[Holiday](#)

[Gift Guide](#)

[Help Center](#)

[About](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Advertise With Us](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Rack Locations](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Jobs](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

1970 Main Street, Sarasota, FL 34236 941-366-3468

Copyright 2011 The Observer Group Inc., All Rights Reserved

Site created by: atLarge, Inc.