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Shipshape Using Yacht for Aid

By SHELLY BANJO

For Georgia Gosnell, even the most indulgent of luxuries can be tapped to help others.

The widow of late Rochester publisher Thomas Gosnell has turned her husband's 146-foot yacht, the *Timoneer*, into a charity vessel to carry thousands of dollars worth of needed supplies to hard-to-reach places.



drawn by Hai Knafo
GEORGIA GOSNELL

This month the yacht travelled to Easter Island, the secluded Polynesian island in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, where it delivered school supplies to a school. Previous trips included deliveries to communities in Panama's San Blas Islands, Ecuador's Galapagos Islands and Antigua Island in the Caribbean.

The *Timoneer* is one of 15 to 20 yachts that carry and deliver supplies every year for Yacht Aid Global, a nonprofit that works with luxury vessels to deliver humanitarian development and conservation aid to isolated communities around the world.

"When you're sailing to these places, you're using their shore and walking their sand. What we're doing is an easy way of giving something back," says Mrs. Gosnell, who met her husband after World War II when he returned from the Navy to find her working on his father's boat.

After her husband died last year at 89 years old, she says she wanted to continue sailing and working with Yacht Aid.

"We enjoy going to far off places and some of what you see makes you feel it's your responsibility to help the people in these communities," she says, recounting a recent trip to the San Blas Islands.

"Even the smallest things like a frying pan can make such a difference," she says.

Started in 2006 by Mark Drewelow, the charity grew out of his day-to-day business at C2C, a yacht services agency that provides port facilities and concierge services for vessels, crews and owners.

"It's a way for these families to give back to the communities they often just stop in to buy fuel and leave their garbage behind," Mr. Drewelow says. "It also opens the doors to cultural experiences that are otherwise unreachable to owners, captains and crews."

For Yacht Aid Global, the goal is to "change the world without changing course," he says.

That means coordinating with recipient communities, port agents and yacht captains to make the delivery of aid seamless to the course of the yacht owners. Typically, Yacht Aid loads \$1,000 in aid supplies at a time onto a yacht, working with the captains and crew to deliver the containers of aid along their course.

"In these areas, \$1,000 goes a very long way," Mr. Drewelow says.

What's more, yacht owners could be eligible for certain tax deductions for part of their operational expenses as part of a humanitarian effort, he says.

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