

# Solon TIMES

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## Nestle execs show students basics of good nutrition, fun

By SUE REID

For one day last week, Nestle executives in Solon traded suits, ties and business attire for T-shirts that read “1 day, 150 events, 1,000+ employees” for the company’s largest single day of volunteering nationwide.

In honor of Nestle USA’s 150th anniversary, about 40 Solon employees partnered with Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland for a “gold medal” themed Fitness Competition held Aug. 4 at the Global Center for Health Innovation in downtown Cleveland.

Employees engaged nearly 200 youth from 15 local clubs in activities like Yoga,

Zumba, pushups, corn hole, a 20-yard sprint and more. They also shared the message with the youth in attendance about the importance of staying active and eating healthy.

“This is part of our national day of service,” explained Solon resident Sarah Factor, manager of corporate and brand affairs for Nestle USA. “We have employees all over the country doing community service.”

“Today is a great day to be active,” added.

Nestle partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland for the “gold medal” themed Fitness Competition held Aug. 4 at the Global Center for Health Innovation in downtown Cleveland.

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## Civil trial for Prasser and city continues



By SUE REID

A civil trial involving former Solon Center for the Arts director Karen Prasser and the City of Solon began Aug. 1 in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court and continued this week.

Prasser

Litigation between the two parties has been ongoing for more than three years.

Ms. Prasser, 64, who resigned from her position at the art center in September of 2012 after nearly a decade, is being represented by Solon attorney Caryn Groedel. Attorney Barry Y. Freeman, of the Cleveland law firm of Buckingham, Doolittle and Burrows, is serving as special counsel for the city.

The current case before Judge Michael E. Jackson involves counterclaims by the city against Ms. Prasser for compensatory damages and is being heard by a 10-member all-female jury.

The matter dates back to February of 2013, when Ms. Prasser, a resident of Aurora, filed a lawsuit against Solon Mayor Susan A. Drucker and the City of Solon

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Grace Nagano, 4, and her sister Melanie, 6, enjoy a snack at Solon’s National Night Out. Melanie will be entering first grade at Roxbury Elementary School this year.

By SUE REID

Seeing police officers and the canine officer were the highlights of the evening for Jeremiah Conway. “They’re really cool!” the 10-year-old Solon boy said.

Jeremiah joined more than 200 who attended the fifth annual National Night Out at the Solon Community Center in Solon last week. The crime prevention-themed event featured safety demonstrations, equipment, activities, games and more. National Night Out is held annually the same night nationwide.

“We want to have a better partnership with the community,” Lt. William Vajdich said. “If they get to know us and feel more comfortable, it makes our job easier. We don’t want people to be scared of police. It’s an old-fashioned concept that doesn’t work anymore.”

Solon resident Jill Wallenstein attended because she said she constantly tries to familiarize her 3-year-old son Casey with law enforcement.

“I want him to feel comfortable and go to a police officer if he is ever lost,” she said.

This is the third year in a row Solon resident

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National Night Out is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and has been held annually in the United States and Canada since 1984. Solon has held the event at the Solon Community Center for the last five years featuring safety demonstrations, activities and games to increase awareness of police programs in the community.



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In 2015, they began a three-year partnership with Boys and Girls Clubs that included sponsorship of the twice yearly National Fitness Competition. The goal is to inspire kids and teens to achieve tangible short-term fitness goals.

**“I think Boys and Girls Club is a wonderful organization that does so many things for kids from all walks of life,” Ms. Factor said.**

Nestle employees said they hope they can impact the youth with the variety of healthy Nestle products available.

Nestle is invested in healthy lifestyles, which is a core program of the Boys and Girls Club, said Samantha Shahid, programs and outcome coordinator for the Boys and Girls Club. Other core programs of the club include academic success and development of character and citizenship.

“A day like today is an opportunity for us to share with our kids a wonderful sponsor like Nestle,” Ms. Shahid said.

In addition to health and wellness events, the children were given the opportunity to have a fun activity outside of school, topped with a balanced meal, Ms. Shahid said.

Often eating healthy meals poses a challenge to low-income families, Ms. Shahid continued.

“Their families struggle with no healthy food available and more junk food that is economically feasible and convenient,” she said.



Photo by Geoff Powers

**Nestle volunteer Kira Kabo of Solon jazzercises with Brian Canty of the Broadway Boys and Girls Club on Aug. 4 at the Global Center for Health Innovation in downtown Cleveland. That was the time when the company held its largest single day of volunteering nationwide.**

Nestle’s message is that there is more out there.

“We do have options,” Ms. Shahid said. This is the second year of partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland and Nestle.

“Ultimately, we want to make sure the next generation is making healthy choices,” Ms. Factor added.

Kids at the event, ages 6-13, were sharing their challenges.

“I eat a lot of junk food because it’s there,” 12-year-old Jakayla Douglas of Cleveland said. “There are a lot of fast food restaurants around, and sometimes we don’t want to waste gas to go to a grocery store.”

Rahim Stubblefield, 12, of Cleveland said

he knows it is important to eat healthy and has been making choices like salads and carrots.

Jakayla said junk food is not the right choice.

Nestle employees said they got great satisfaction from spending their afternoon with the children.

“It’s so nice to give back to the community,” said Solon resident Mike DiCarro, manager of processes for Nestle. The sooner children can be taught the importance of health and good nutrition, the better, he added.

Solon resident Kira Kabo, head of facilities and security for Nestle, enjoyed stretching with a group of the children. The mother of two said she finds great satisfaction in helping the community.

“Volunteering is a joy for me,” Ms. Kabo said. “To see the kids exercising, smiling and having fun” is wonderful. “My kids had the opportunity to enjoy things, and I want to give some attention to other children.”

“Our vision is to become the biggest health and nutrition company in the world,” added John Carmichael, president of the Nestle Pizza and Snacking. “And we are about making a difference, especially at a young age.

“We have a strong connection with the Boys and Girls Club,” said Mr. Carmichael, who sits on the board.

“Nestle has been an amazing partner,” added Ron Soeder, Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland president and chief executive officer. “Everything we do at our clubs is designed to help create great futures for our kids.

“Healthy lifestyles are critical to that kind of success, and Nestle’s commitment to programs like this has made a real difference.”

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