

# NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOE BUSINESS

Marathon is back with a goal of 3,000 for sneaker collections to benefit Ghana.



You may never have imagined that when you bought your sneakers you would be supporting more than your legs. Now your old sneaks can support an entire village. For the last three years, the Philadelphia Marathon has partnered with the Perpetual Prosperity Pumps Foundation (PPPF), which helps lift families out of poverty by increasing small-farm productivity in the poorest rural farm areas in Africa. It achieves this by collecting unwanted athletic shoes. The footwear is sold in major metro areas to vendors who, in turn, create jobs. The proceeds from the shoe sales provide a “second wind”—training and tools to the impoverished farmers. Reusing the shoes also contributes to global efforts to reuse and recycle.

In 2009, our marathon participants opened up their hearts (and soles) by donating nearly 2,000 pairs of running shoes, allowing the Marathon to officially “adopt” two families in Ghana.

Jim Riordin, Director of Perpetual Pumps Foundation, visited Ghana this summer and met with the adopted families to chart their progress. Jim captures the appreciation of some of the Marathon’s adopted families like the Nukpe family in this prized photo here. Jim plans to create an entire Philadelphia Marathon Village focusing on adopting families in one area of Ghana. A village is comprised of up to 20 families. In January, the Philadelphia Marathon will send race shirts for the residents of the village.

Once again this year, the gently-used sneakers will be collected at the Marathon’s Health & Fitness Expo on November 19 and 20, with the hope of assisting more families in need. Our goal is 3,000 sneakers and to “adopt” about 10 new families. “I am hoping we will collect over 3,000 pairs and adopt more families this year than in the last two,” said PPPF’s Riordin. “If so, we will have 10 families in one village. The Philadelphia Marathon Village will be a model of prosperity for Africa. We will document the success of these poor farmers and the impact on the community.”