

engaGE where you are...

“Bloom where you are planted” is an interesting quote living in Geneva. With so many people ‘just passing through’ many of us do not really take the effort of engaging with the city and the people, or do we?

Well, that is changing as engaGE Geneva is a movement of volunteers engaging with Geneva by serving its people in practical ways. During the second week of July 2007, we overwhelmed Geneva with kindness and service.

EngaGE is about:

- engaging the people in greater Geneva with each other.
- demonstrating that each human being is a masterpiece intended for love, care and respect.
- catalyzing existing non-profit associations who are working every day to care for people by offering these associations the help of many volunteers.
- believing that each of us can make a difference in our world.

Kick-off party @ Mr. Pickwick

The week of engaGE started with a party @ the Mr. Pickwick pub. The excitement of about 100 people was palpable! New friendships were made, 20 projects were introduced, and the bigger picture became clear! EngaGE was really going to happen and it had only been six weeks since the idea was first brought to the table. What a difference six weeks can make!

Each morning the volunteers of the day met at the Cornavin Starbucks for a little free of charge “courage” (coffee or tea) for the day and to hear the great stories of the day before. Starbucks also became the place for new volunteers to show up with friends who also wanted to participate in engaGE. Everyday, new volunteers would show up unexpectedly. Indeed, a ripple effect in the making.

The Villa

Carrefour Rue is an organization for formerly “houseless people” to re-integrate in society. Most of these houses need fixing up. EngaGE worked on one of these houses, or as we called it, the Villa! It is always a thrill to be part of a transformation.

“The Villa” suffered substantial water damage and even though the leakage had been repaired the damage was not. As becomes clear from the

photos to the right there was a lot of repair work to be done next to the very necessary cleaning. 40 people spent a total of 400 hours of work on the villa. A group of 25 youth worked in the garden of the villa and turned a yard full of weeds into multi-level garden full of flowers. Both Carrefour Rue and all the volunteers were really happy with the results. And yes, we can make a difference in this world!

Golf clinics

One thing was clear: these kids had never seen a golf course before. The sand trap was initially thought to be a sand pit, the putting green a nice place to race, and the balls... well lets just say you can throw them a long way;)

However, after an afternoon of golf, the golf pros from the Geneva Country Club were so enthusiastic they committed to run free golf clinics for these underprivileged kids through the entire summer. Some of these kids have real Tiger Woods potential and because of engaGE, they may get the chance to discover it for themselves!

Women shelter “Au Coeur des Grottes”

During the engaGE week several people went to the women shelter Au Coeur des Grottes to help with DIY needs. Later in the week we had a fun afternoon picnic with games and a real water balloon fight! Lots of smiles and laughter. Have you noticed how we forget our worries for a moment when we are laughing?

engaGEd Continuously...

We know people by their needs. What if we knew them by name? What a difference that would make! This is what engaGE is all about. EngaGE joins up with existing organizations serving Geneva to catalyze their efforts with additional “hands and feet.”

EngaGE Geneva started as a week of service to connect the people living in Geneva. More than half of the 170-some volunteers indicated wanting to continue to serve during the rest of the year. As a result engaGE is now continuing on a regular basis.

We started a weekly children club on Wednesday afternoons in Au Coeur des Grottes that include arts & crafts, group activities, and simple reflections for

life. We also provide free of charge English courses and golf clinics for kids.

From 6 to 13 July 2008 there will also be another engaGE week in order to again flood the city with kindness and service.

We are looking forward to working together with you, thank you for your help! Just engaGE!

For more information please email us at info@engage-geneva.com and/or check our website (www.engage-geneva.com) for more details.