

Work in Africa, recreation in Norway and other locations

LAMORINDA YOUTH VOLUNTEER IN ZIMBABWE — As the bus lurched to a stop in front of the Mother of Peace Orphanage, throngs of African children crowded around the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church contingent like bees around a hive.

"The initial welcome at the orphanage made me



NANCY BROWN
WHAT A TRIP

tear up," reflects Walnut Creek's Libby Lowell, 18. "We were greeted with a whole swarm of

dancing, chanting, clapping and singing (kids). The people at Mother of Peace helped teach me a love of human kind and zest for life."

Youth and adults from the Lafayette church had journeyed to Zimbabwe in August, armed with suitcases filled with clothing and school supplies, to build relationships far from Contra Costa County. The team established six preschools under the leadership of Dr. Dan Robbins' J.F. Kapnek Trust, built a grain storage and threshing facility by mixing cement by hand and by laying brick, refurbished 134 grave sites (primarily of children who had died of AIDS) and painted a home for approximately 20 of the 180 children cared for by Mother of Peace.

"We have seen children dancing and singing and smiling when, if we were in their situation, all we could do is complain, notes Grace Hilty, 16, of Orinda. "I feel that collectively we have learned to be truly happy without material goods."

Authentic Norway on the Hurtigruten

While casinos, Broadway entertainment and spas have their place on megacruise ships, the way to experience authentic Norway is on the Hurtigruten — English translation, "fast passage." Hurtigruten provides year-round coastal voyages where



BECKY SPENCER

Staff and children from Mother of Peace Orphanage in Zimbabwe greet a bus carrying members of Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church in August. The Lamorinda contingent was there to help build relationships, as well as preschools.

nature is the star attraction.

"The Geringer to Molde fjord and weather were spectacular," said Oakland's Carol Cantor. "It's what you come to Norway for."

Cantor references one of many excursions offered to passengers on Hurtigruten. Germans and Norwegians are the majority, yet I encountered several Bay Area residents during my cruise. Highlights included a visit to the art nouveau town of Alesund, riding a fjord horse in Bergen, seeing a Viking ship, learning Sami culture in Finnmark and the Vigeland Sculpture Garden in Oslo, Norway.

As I can't possibly describe my experiences and shore excursions in 600 words, I have written about authentic Norway on my blog, www.NancydBrown.com and created multiple videos at www.youtube.com/user/NancydBrown

Sport fishing in Haida Gwaii, Canada

Vancouver's Winter Olympics have come and gone, yet it has piqued our interest for Canada's outdoor offerings. I was recently in Haida Gwaii on Langara Island, experiencing some of the best sport salmon fishing.

No longer a boys club, The West Coast Fishing

ONLINE RESOURCES

Cathedral Mountain Lodge — www.cathedral-mountain.com

Hurtigruten — <http://www.hurtigruten.us>

Moraine Lake Lodge — www.morainelake.com

Timberline Tours — www.timberlinetours.ca

Visit Norway — www.visitnorway.com/us

Mother of Peace Orphanage — www.motherofpeace.co.uk

West Coast Fishing Club — www.westcoastfishing-club.com

Club has it all, from gourmet dining to top-rate fishing gear and Boston Whaler boats. As I landed a coho, a killer whale with two babies arched from the water. Eagles watched from the trees, while I reached for my camera.

I have been to fishing lodges that I would not recommend for the non-fishing companion, yet West Coast Fishing Club has two hot tubs, a small spa and culinary cooking class series. The 2010 season has ended; visit the online resources for 2011 rates.

See **BROWN**, Page 6

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