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Cars2ndChance donates reconditioned minivan to Putnam Clubhouse

Submitted by T.F. Black



Posing with the 2001 Ford Windstar that Cars2ndChance donated to Putnam Clubhouse, from left: Larry Hutchings, member of Clayton Valley Concord Rotary; Tamara Hunter, executive director of Putnam Clubhouse; Jim Davis, Moraga resident and member of Putnam board of directors, Dave Kemnitz, owner of D&H Enterprises auto repair shop who is intimately involved with Cars2ndChance campaign; and Paula Boyd, member of Putnam board. Both Davis and Kemnitz belong to Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Photo provided

Just as Dave Kemnitz was about to place an ad for a used Ford minivan he accepted as a donation, he received a phone call from a friend - and fellow Rotarian - Jim Davis, who "just happened" to be looking for a used van.

Background: The Kemnitz family owns D&H Enterprises, an auto repair shop in Concord. Dave and his wife, Mary Kemnitz, lead an initiative to keep second-hand vehicles in the food chain. Davis sits on the board of directors of Putnam Clubhouse, a nonprofit, also in Concord, that provides mental-health services to adults. Not incidentally, both are members of Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.

Davis, in serious tire-kicking mode, asked Dave Kemnitz if perhaps he knew of a used vehicle that Putnam might add to its scant, one-vehicle "fleet" of vans. Sure enough, replied Kemnitz, gazing at a 2001 Ford Windstar people mover that had just been donated to Cars2ndChance. This is a separate nonprofit that the Kemnitzes formed a dozen years ago when he was a member of Clayton Valley Concord Rotary, which remains an active program partner. Kemnitz has since transferred membership to Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.

Because the van had been given to Cars2ndChance, it was declared a "benevolence" vehicle, meaning a donation to another 501(c)3.

Donors have the option of designating Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano as beneficiary of vehicle proceeds. For decades Food Bank has distributed donated packaged comestibles to countless thousands of community residents. Given the coronavirus-caused crisis, the need is more acute than ever.

Had Kemnitz instead put the Windstar on the block, as he had planned, it would have stickered at \$3,995, a bona fide bargain. Instead, once the title-transfer paperwork was completed, Kemnitz handed the keys to Davis, who together with a few Putnam staff members, came to the D&H lot on Monument Boulevard to take delivery of the new wheels.

The initiative will continue "until the cows come home," said Kemnitz. Anyone with a candidate vehicle is asked to contact Cars2ndChance, visit www.cars2ndchance.org or phone D&H at (925) 360-5260. "We accept any vehicle - auto, truck, boat, motorcycle - with a valid title, even if it is not in running order. All donations are tax deductible as provided by law."

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