

## BUSINESS

# Old computers get new life

■ Dentist accepts donated machines, fixes them up and sends them to where they're needed worldwide.

By Ursula Watson  
*The Detroit News*

**LIVONIA** — James Payne has a big heart to equal his big laugh. You have to have a sense of humor to be a dentist named Payne.

"I have been teased mercilessly," Payne of Livonia said, laughing.

After 26 years as a dentist, Payne decided to branch out four years ago and started JDS Computer Donations with two of his patients, Drake Davis, a retired psychologist, and Scott Montgomery, a college student.

The nonprofit company takes used computers and fixes them and

donates them to local schools, churches and other nonprofits such as Habitat for Humanity.

Payne has sent computers to South America, India and just sent 78 computers to a school in Zambia, in Africa.

"I send them toothbrushes, too," Payne said.

Since last July, Payne has collected and sent 61 Internet-ready laptop computers to soldiers in Iraq. One laptop can be shared by 15 soldiers, he said.

"This way they can e-mail and communicate with their folks back home quickly," Payne said. "I was told that regular mail can take six weeks to two months."

Payne says the donations have come from Comcast, and the cities of Taylor and Southfield, plus other businesses.

### How to help

To donate computers, visit [www.jdscomputers.netfirms.com](http://www.jdscomputers.netfirms.com) or e-mail [JDS\\_Computers@hotmail.com](mailto:JDS_Computers@hotmail.com).

The city of Livonia agreed to give its old computers to Payne.

Being a nonprofit, everything is staffed by volunteers, and all the computers that are refurbished are done by Payne and his partners in his basement at home. Payne worked as an intern at Sky Tech Computer Plus in Lathrup Village.

While Payne said he is always grateful for computer donations, there are some that are too old for JDS Computer Donations to use. A desktop computer should be at least a 450 megahertz Pentium III or better, while laptops must at least P II



Velvet S. McNeil / *The Detroit News*

**Jim Payne, center, started a company four years ago that refurbishes donated, slightly outdated computers and laptops and donates them.**

233 megahertz.

Payne said if people don't know the processor speed then use the rule of thumb of not more than 5 years old.

Also accepted are laser printers,

scanners, other loose computer hardware and monetary donations.

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