Despite uncertainty about refugees entering the U.S., the Refugee Resettlement Coalition of Lane County hasn’t stopped caring about refugee families. Conditions in refugee camps are even more difficult because of the uncertainty and hopelessness refugees face regarding the future.

What can one person do? A lot! You can bring help and hope to a refugee family by making a relief kit. Relief kits remind refugee families that someone cares. A relief kit supplies the most basic items needed by families in refugee camps, including:

- 4 bath towels (medium weight, dark or bright colors)
- 4 adult size toothbrushes
- 4 large bars bath soap
- 2 wide-tooth combs (6-8 inches)
- 1 box bandaids (minimum 40 count, assorted sizes)
- 1 fingernail clipper (good quality)
- 1 package sanitary pads (18-24 count, thin maxi)
- 1 bottle shampoo (13-24 oz; placed in resealable plastic bag)
- 4 large bars laundry soap (Fels Naptha, Sunlight, or Zote brands)

Kit contents should be new items, and placed in a plastic garbage bag for easy transport. When the kits reach Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) headquarters, kit contents will be placed in a 5-gallon plastic bucket for the family to use.

RRCLC is working through MCC, who partners with Caritas (the worldwide relief agency of the Catholic Church). MCC will ship more than 12,000 relief kits to the Middle East this year, many to families in Syrian refugee camps. MCC will charge no shipping fees to RRCLC (although donations for shipping costs are always welcomed). RRCLC will collect all kits and transport them to a collection site outside of Portland.

A relief kit costs approximately $30 to complete. Individuals, families, youth and other groups, and churches are encouraged to work together to make kits. Kit supplies and financial donations are also appreciated. Checks should be made to Catholic Community Services, with “for relief kits” on the memo line. Receipts for tax-deductible donations (both material and monetary) are available.

- Kits and donations may be dropped off at two locations between now and the end of June:
  - Windermere Real Estate (1600 Oak St in Eugene; parking behind the building) Mon-Fri, 8:30-5:00
  - Catholic Community Services (1025 G St in Springfield) Mon-Fri, 9:30-4:30

As we invite refugee families to join our community, let’s also remember the thousands of uprooted families whose lives have been disrupted, who have faced trauma, and who are waiting for the chance to begin their lives anew.

For more information, contact Becky Schenck (beckyschenck@yahoo.com or 541-600-5421)