

WORLD ARK

Ending Hunger · Saving the Earth

Winter 2002

Words of Wisdom

Walter Cronkite
on U.S. aid and Heifer

Cooperation to Help
Coffee Farmers





FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

The world used to think that our planet was blessed with limitless air and water—so much so that if one place were spoiled its occupants could just move on to another place, and that things like the earth's oceans and atmosphere were so vast as to be impervious to human activity. Today we know better. We are aware just how fragile an ecosystem we live in. And around the world steps are being taken to change our most environmentally destructive practices.

At the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992, world leaders gathered to discuss the fate of our beautiful but environmentally endangered planet, and this year, a decade later, another significant summit, this time in Johannesburg, has focused attention on sustainable development.

Heifer, of course, has long promoted environmentally sound agricultural practices and sustainability—the idea that ending hunger and preserving the environment go hand in hand. I represented Heifer at the Rio summit, and though I couldn't attend the Johannesburg summit, Heifer International was well represented, both as learners and educators at this important gathering.

Delegates at the World Summit in South Africa agreed on a plan that representatives hope will reduce the number of people living in abject poverty while protecting and preserving our natural resources. The wide-ranging plan sets many targets, among them cutting by half the number of people lacking access to clean water by the year 2015 and reducing the number of endangered animals and plants by the year 2010.

But here, right now, we're preparing for the holidays and the new year. For many of us, that means making lists, lists of what food to buy for our holiday feasts and what gifts to buy for our loved ones. It can be a joyful time as we gather together with family and friends.

For others, however, the season is often more stressful than joyful. Stress over decorating our houses just so. Stress over preparing the perfect meal. Stress over choosing just the right gift. Stress because famous homemaking mavens say the gift must be wrapped in just the right way.

And major stress because we've spent more than we can afford on events we don't have time to enjoy. It doesn't have to be this way. Many of us have more things than we'll ever use, while many more around the world have almost nothing. Listen to the words of one Laotian, An, who received help from Heifer just last year: "When I received my four goats I was happy for the first time in my life." An's wife, Pasong, adds, "For our children the goats will become not only their assets but their legacy."

We—you—can begin fashioning a new holiday legacy, one that requires no wrapping paper, no fretting over whether our gift will make the recipient happy. And we don't have to wait until 2015 or 2010 to see results from our efforts.

The simple gift of an animal—or bees or trees—in the name of someone you love can bring joy that spreads like ripples in a pond. Joy to you, to your friend or loved one and, most importantly, joy to someone who has never known it. Joy in the form of enough to eat, in earning power, in self-respect. Joy that passes down through generations.

Banish stress. Give joy. And save the wrapping paper.

Sincerely,

Jo Luck
President and CEO



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Cover: Legendary newsman Walter Cronkite with Meg the sheep in New York recently.

Photos: Hillevi Loven

Heifer International publishes World Ark quarterly for donors and friends. Heifer has helped more than 4.5 million impoverished families worldwide become more self-reliant through the gift of livestock and training in their care. A nonprofit

organization rooted in the Christian tradition, Heifer works for the dignity and well-being of all people. Heifer is a member of InterAction. Federal employees may designate gifts to the Combined Federal Campaign by writing in #0315. Heifer International

is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization and gifts to Heifer are tax deductible and are used as designated until current needs of those projects are met. Further gifts are applied to similar projects so that gifts begin helping people immediately.

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Walter Cronkite with a Rhode Island Red laying hen chick.

*By Ray White
Communications Director*

Walter Cronkite, network television's elder statesman, the former managing editor and anchor of the "CBS Evening News," the person who is most often described as "the most trusted man in America," says he is greatly impressed by the work of Heifer International.

"It is unique in its program to directly aid people around the world," he said, speaking of Heifer before posing recently in New York City with animals like the ones Heifer has used to help more than 4.5 million families around the world.

"With so much of the aid that goes to people ... the givers are lost in the miasma of all the protocol, the delivery process and so forth. With this project you get a much greater sense of a person-to-person relationship, which is very important."

Cronkite said he supports Heifer's work around the world, and that more work like Heifer's could help to build bridges between people. "Besides the need to know that we are helping these people, there is a need for them to know that we are helping. While that sounds like a selfish objective, perhaps, this mutual understanding helps bring people together."

"If we're hoping to succeed in this world, and to have an ever-more peaceful world, and not a more violent world, we're going to have to learn to understand each other and to appreciate what we can do for each other."

Cronkite retired from CBS in 1981

Legendary newsman suggests U.S. model Marshall Plan, says Heifer builds bridges

but has maintained a busy schedule of writing, television appearances and public speaking. His autobiography, "A Reporter's Life," became a bestseller in 1996.

He sees Heifer as part of a global solution to world strife, he said.

Helping the underprivileged become sustainable for food and income will lessen world tension, he said. With all the resources at the disposal of the developed world it should be possible to solve the problem of world hunger, Cronkite said.

"I think that many of our problems today—and goodness knows we have very severe ones around the world—are very importantly based on our riches

and riches—it just isn't likely to commend us to the friendship of the rest of the world that we need, and want to live in. We want to live in a world in which people like us, and understand that we have helped them lift themselves by their own bootstraps."

"What I've said is the basis for my belief in what you're doing—the necessity for it. I don't see how we can avoid living in a revolutionary world as long as our television sets are broadcasting for the rest of the world the riches with which we're endowed and the luxury in which we live and the waste in which we indulge, the people who are starving to death, and not expect them to be exceedingly jealous."

successful effort to rebuild Germany and Japan after World War II, he said, and it wouldn't require great sacrifice.

"Sacrifice on our part is an almost meaningless word. We can take so much off the top of our riches to pass around to these poor, hungry, starving people in the world and scarcely miss it. You can't imagine how deep we'd have to go into our budget before it becomes sacrificial. I think our example today should be the Marshall Plan after World War II, in which we ... helped rebuild the nations destroyed by the war, including our archenemies."

Today, Germany and Japan are

"If we're hoping to succeed in this world, and to have an ever-more peaceful world, and not a more violent world, we're going to have to learn to understand each other and to appreciate what we can do for each other."

and their poverty. And if we are to bring an understanding to the world and give us all a chance for a long-term future, there's going to have to be a clearer attempt ... to level the economic playing field as much as we possibly can.

"But around the world you see these great depths of depression, in which half the world lives most of the time, and our peaks of success

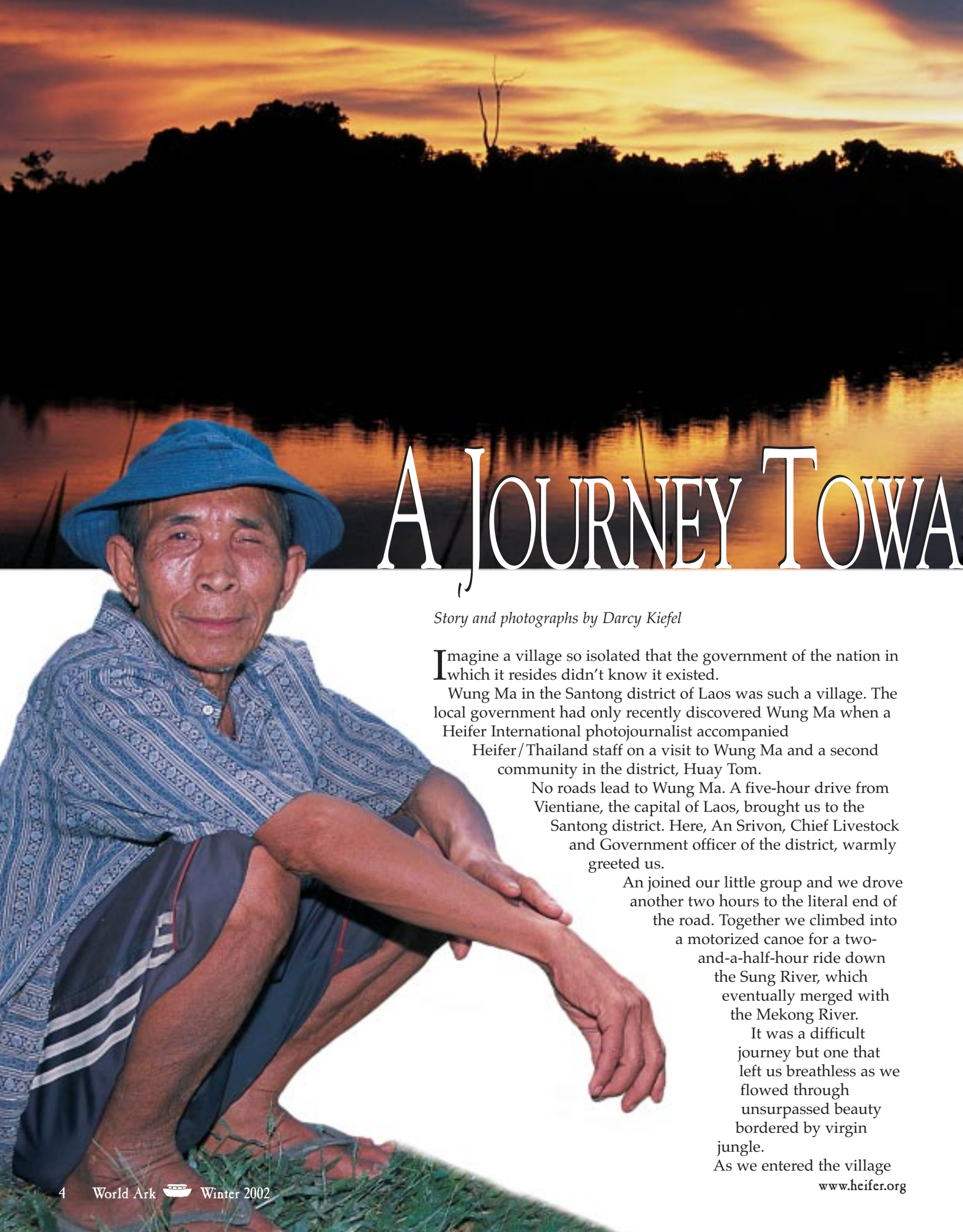
But Americans may not clearly understand how things stand, he said.

"I think we have a surface feeling and an understanding about it, but I don't think it gets to the point where they understand the necessity for us to actively work on this problem, particularly if it gets to sacrifice on our part."

We should follow the model of the

important allies and contributors to the world's wealth.

"If we had left them in the tatters in which the war left them, they would not have recovered to this day, and goodness knows what trouble their discontent might have bred. Now they're major contributors in the effort to feed the world's impoverished millions." 🐾



A JOURNEY TOWA

Story and photographs by Darcy Kiefel

Imagine a village so isolated that the government of the nation in which it resides didn't know it existed.

Wung Ma in the Santong district of Laos was such a village. The local government had only recently discovered Wung Ma when a Heifer International photojournalist accompanied

Heifer/Thailand staff on a visit to Wung Ma and a second community in the district, Huay Tom.

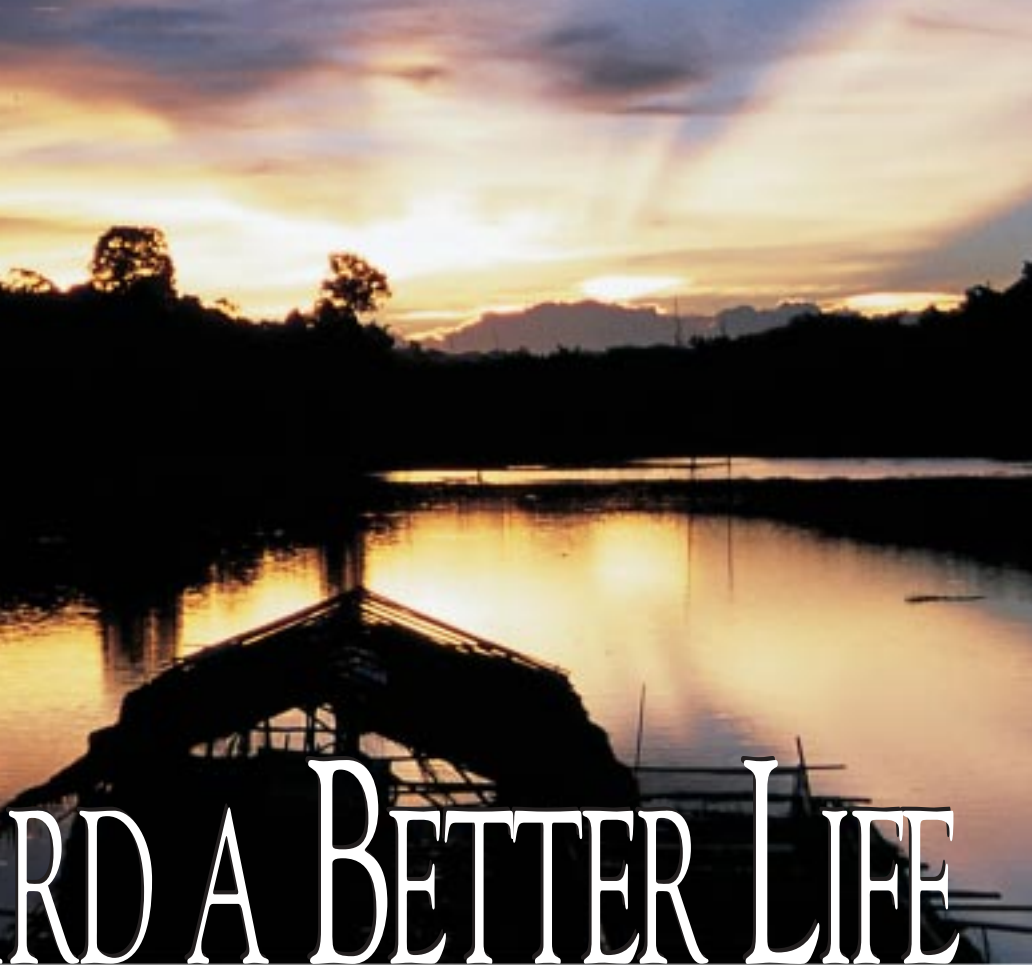
No roads lead to Wung Ma. A five-hour drive from Vientiane, the capital of Laos, brought us to the Santong district. Here, An Srivon, Chief Livestock and Government officer of the district, warmly greeted us.

An joined our little group and we drove another two hours to the literal end of the road. Together we climbed into a motorized canoe for a two-and-a-half-hour ride down the Sung River, which eventually merged with the Mekong River.

It was a difficult journey but one that left us breathless as we flowed through unsurpassed beauty bordered by virgin jungle.

As we entered the village

www.heifer.org



TOWARD A BETTER LIFE

compound of Wung Ma, curious children cautiously appeared to stare at their foreign visitors. It was a peaceful place where the village leader, Sompun, welcomed us with a smile and motioned us to sit in the shade and comfort of a bamboo hut.

"We are a very poor village with 53 households and 258 inhabitants," Sompun said. "Our people plant rice and grow vegetables on very small plots of land to provide for their families. Some will carry the vegetables to market in other villages, but it is difficult travel and the distance is far. And so our families remain poor with no source of income and very little produce to feed their children.

"We were established as one of the last villages in the district because no one knew we existed," Sompun said. "I asked for support several times from the local government, but until Heifer International came along we remained without assistance.

"Now, I feel comfort as though I am sitting near a big fire. We have been recognized and assisted warmly by Heifer International and our local

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government."

An Srivon has seen enormous changes since Heifer arrived in the district.

"Most villages far from Vientiane remain without assistance and support of NGOs [non-governmental organizations] because of the difficult roads and long distances," An said.

"The people are so poor in these areas and cannot receive loans because they have no credit. Their main source of income comes from rice sales, but this is not enough to feed their families. They survive by labor or illegally cutting trees.

"Their cultivating land is a two-hour walk from the village and there are no roads or access. Land and crops are limited and the little production is essential for their own survival," An said. "Because income is so low in this district most families are too poor to buy animals.

"When Heifer International arrived and began working with the local government to help the farmers, a mutual respect was quickly established. We call it the

friendship project. Cornerstone training has also been accepted with enthusiasm, and the passing of the gift makes our people even more grateful.

"Our government has never known an organization or project like Heifer International," An said. "In the past, farmers have felt ignored by organizations that come and leave just as quickly. Heifer brings staff and visitors monthly and we never feel abandoned or forgotten. We are looking forward to additional changes and a brighter future because Heifer International is always there for us."

As we continued to speak with the village leader, Heifer recipient Kamporn and his wife, An, prepared a meal in honor of our visit. Kamporn received his cow in July 2001.

"I always dreamed of having cows but knew that on my own I couldn't afford them," he said. "My only source of income has been from rice. This cow is the best thing I have ever received in my life."

"We are still very poor but this will help our family and the future of my children. These cows will help all the people in my village. In the near future, I will be given the chance to share my wealth with the passing of the gift to another needy family," Kamporn said. "I do not know how to express my gratitude. This is the highest point of my life."

These days in the village happy, healthy children play among the bamboo homes while cows graze in surrounding enclosures. Wung Ma has been discovered.

Cooperation is key

Wung Ma is merely one of the latest success stories coming out of Laos.

Since 1996, Heifer International/Thailand has been working in collaboration with the Lao government. Together they established the first project in the district of Thapabat near Vientiane. The initial project began with nine families receiving cows, pigs and chickens.

The program's success can partially be measured by the development of a strong group of leaders who are still passing on the gift.

As part of this first project, 26 families in five villages of two districts have now received Heifer's help. Today, additional projects focus on training in community development and effective land use.

Heifer and the local government provide farm materials and domestic animals to participating farmers in two different ecosystems to increase farm production without destruction of natural resources, as well as to earn family income.

In July 1998 the Laotian Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry created the National Program for Shifting Cultivation Stabilization (NPSCS) as a special task force. Most of the upland population in Laos have depended on slash-and-burn cultivation methods over the past several generations, moving when the soil is no longer fertile.

National forest areas have drastically decreased each year as mountain dwellers, struggling for subsistence, grow crops in the steep hillside fields. Their expansion into these fragile ecosystems results from poverty and population pressure from other parts of Laos. The government is moving to eliminate forest destruction by helping village farmers learn alternative farming practices without relocating them.

Heifer International/Thailand works closely with the government as part of its initiative, mentoring programs in Laos. Heifer/Thailand staff visit the project sites two or three times yearly to review the progress and offer technical assistance.

Aryuwath Pratumsa, Heifer/Thailand's program coordinator, was born only two hours from the border in northeastern Thailand and has been working closely with the local government and village leaders.

"In the areas bordering Thailand and Laos, people speak Lao and practice Lao culture," Pratumsa said. "We never felt any differences between the two countries, only a border. Laos is one of the poorest countries in the world."

"Illiteracy, poor health and poor conditions are common.

Transportation is limited and natural disasters frequent," Pratumsa said. "Animals are most important, and locals see their future through their livestock. If Heifer continues to help the local governments and villages move toward self-reliance, Lao people will be given a better life."

A road runs through it

The village of Huay Tom is celebrating these days. Three months ago a red dust road finally reached the village, opening up a new world to its inhabitants. In the past, the lack of access had made it impossible for residents to sell their produce to outside markets.

Local and international organizations perceived the remote area as inaccessible and left the community without support. No one paid much attention to Huay Tom. Few people even knew it existed.

Wieng Samai, the village group leader, explained, "This village lies in one of the most underdeveloped areas of Laos, where man's activity relies on nature. Our main source of income relies on livestock. A small number of our 298 inhabitants own land for growing rice and even fewer have financial means to purchase an animal.

"Heifer International is the first organization to come to our village," Wieng said. "No other NGO has come this distance. At first we did not believe someone from so far away would come to help us. However, when Heifer arrived we knew we could trust them because they coordinated with the local government and listened to our people.

"Our government informed us to prepare as a community, and then we were trained in goat management and veterinarian skills," Wieng said.

"Before Heifer International, our farmers had no education about animals and depended only on nature. Now we have the knowledge and skills to treat basic diseases"

All the recipients agree the project has unified the village and strengthened relations with their neighbors. They're also confident that the goats received in July 2001 will bring income and a future for their children.



Wung Ma village leader Sompun (left) with An Srivon.

An, a Heifer International recipient, said, "I am very proud to be a Heifer recipient. I take the best care of my goats, as I have never owned an animal in my life.

"Before, I had only a small plot of land for growing rice, but it was not enough to feed my family with five growing children. I also had a small piece of land for cash crops and sold bananas to a buyer and made about 100 baht [\$2.50] a month. It was never enough for my family.

"When I received my four goats I was happy for the first time in my life," An said. "We hope more help will come to other needy families in our village. We thank Heifer International with all our heart."

An's wife, Pasong, added with a smile, "These goats will be the finest funding source for our family and enable us to save money to build a new house. For our children the goats will become not only their assets but their legacy."

The people of Laos, as do we all, will always depend on nature, but with continued support from Heifer International, they will have a better life. 🐐



Heifer and Green Mountain Coffee Roasters partner for a purpose

By Jan Cottingham
World Ark Editor

It's something many of us do every day. We wake up, head for the kitchen, brew some coffee and pour ourselves a cup or two. For some, it's a happy ritual—java and the morning paper. For others, it's the little boost that starts the day.

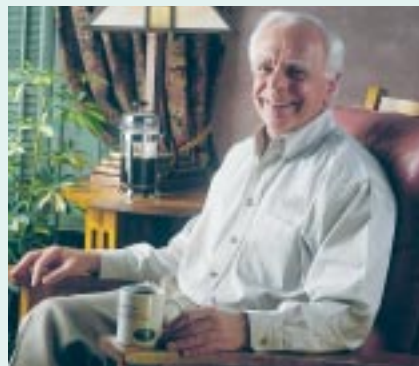
Most of us think little about what goes into getting that coffee into our cup. But coffee, the largest agricultural commodity in the world (and the second most traded commodity behind oil), is the product of a complex and interrelated economic and environmental system that, ultimately, affects the entire earth.

Because of a glut of lower-quality coffee beans, coffee prices have plunged. Coffee farmers, most of them in developing nations, are in crisis, one of the worst in the industry's long history. Some have abandoned their land and moved to urban centers, only to find a different kind of poverty. Heifer International works in many of the coffee-growing

countries around the world.

Jim Hoey, director of Heifer's Caribbean and Latin America program, has seen the plight of Latin American coffee growers firsthand. He noted that experts have estimated that 25 million growers worldwide face financial ruin. In Honduras, Heifer has helped coffee-growing families diversify their sources of income, giving animals that provide extra money when coffee prices are low.

The environmental sustainability of coffee production also has become an issue as forests continue to be razed



Robert Stiller, founder of Green Mountain Coffee.

to create "sun coffee" plantations. These farms plant hybrid coffee trees that are higher-yielding but require large amounts of pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

But some growers, roasters and consumers have another vision. And specialty coffee companies—that stress quality and the coffee experience over quantity—are leading the way. Certified organic and Fair Trade coffees are terms that can and do have different meanings, but they often come down to the same thing—sustainable coffee grown in sustainable communities.

Heifer International has begun what it sees as a long-term relationship with a business that shares many of its goals and values. Green Mountain Coffee Roasters of Waterbury, Vt., one of the leading specialty coffee companies in the United States, has a recognized commitment to the environment and to social responsibility.

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, headed by founder Robert Stiller, introduced its first certified organic coffee in 1990. In 1992, Green



Green Mountain Coffee supports Coffee Kids, an international nonprofit that works to improve the quality of life for children like these in Guatemala, and families in coffee-growing communities.

Mountain Coffee launched a line of "Stewardship"™ coffees, which, the company said, "are grown and harvested with proper care and respect for the land and the workers."

The company has worked to earn Fair Trade certification for its organic coffees. Fair Trade means that a coffee co-op is guaranteed a minimum price, one that allows it to make profits even during times of low prices.

Under the new partnership, Green Mountain Coffee and Heifer will work together in coffee-growing communities. Coffee farmers who receive, for example, a Heifer goat and training will have another source of income when prices fall below what they need to make a living. The goat will also provide organic fertilizer.

Green Mountain Coffee, which buys coffees in several of the countries in which Heifer works, will support farmers who grow coffee in a sustainable way, one that protects the fragile ecosystems of many of these regions while producing the superior arabica beans the company requires.

And together, Heifer International and Green Mountain Coffee Roasters will seek to educate consumers about the importance of buying sustainable coffees.

Stiller is enthusiastic about the

partnership. "We're looking to do as much as we can in a lot of these coffee-growing areas, and we realize that there are a number of people doing things there, and if we all could work together we would be able to do them more effectively," he said



in an interview in the company's Waterbury offices.

As manager of corporate relations for Heifer International, Cynthia Hester seeks to find businesses that share Heifer's values to work with the organization in its efforts to end poverty and promote sustainable living.

Heifer and Green Mountain Coffee are seeking to make it possible for coffee farmers to improve the quality of their coffee and the quality of life in their communities.

Stiller said he was first exposed to Heifer through its "innovative" catalog, "which I really feel is very effective in helping people understand what is needed and what you're doing. I think that is a much more effective way of raising money. When people understand where their money is going, it gets them involved."

The more Stiller learned about Heifer, the more excited he became. "I

felt it was a great fit," he said. "You do so many great things within your organization that I think there are many things we can learn from you and, hopefully, you from us."

Stiller is considered a visionary among business executives. Fortune Small Business magazine this year ranked Green Mountain Coffee among the top 20 on its list of the 100 "Fastest-Growing Small Companies" in the United States, as it had last year. For two years running, Forbes magazine has honored the company as one of the "200 Best Small Companies in America." In October 2001, the magazine named Stiller its Entrepreneur of the Year.

Green Mountain Coffee (www.GreenMountainCoffee.com) is primarily a wholesaler whose customers include grocery stores, gourmet shops, convenience stores, restaurants and offices. It also sells its coffee directly to consumers through its website and catalog. One mark of the esteem in which connoisseurs hold Green Mountain's coffee is its position as supplier to the Culinary Institute of America.

Asked about his—and his company's—values, Stiller said, laughing and a little embarrassed, "It sounds a little corny—I think I really enjoy making the world a better place, helping people realize their potential."

"We'd like the company to be as successful as it can be in bringing more sustainability to the world, both from an environmental and social point of view," he said.

Green Mountain Coffee supports Coffee Kids, an international nonprofit that works to improve the quality of life for children and families in coffee-growing communities. And it was one of the founders of Grounds for Health, which offers health care to coffee-growing communities. Grounds for Health currently operates in Mexico and has targeted Guatemala for its next project. One of its goals is the early detection of cervical cancer, the leading cause of death among women

in Mexico, and a highly treatable disease when caught early.

The company states that it's committed to helping coffee farmers "by supporting projects that foster self-sufficiency and individual empowerment." Green Mountain Coffee believes that such programs work to the company's benefit by helping ensure that it will have reliable sources of quality coffee.

The company is particularly proud of the work done by the farmers of La Voz, Guatemala. The farmers are members of the Cooperative Agrícola Integral La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto ("The Voice That Cries Out in the Wilderness"). The co-op's 112 members, from the Maya Tzutujil culture, grow Green Mountain Coffee's La Esperanza dark-roasted coffee. The firm gave the community a grant to construct new concrete drying patios. The co-op's frugal members used the money so carefully that they had enough funds to also build a warehouse.

The company, headquartered in the gently beautiful Green Mountains of Vermont, walks its talk. Steve Sabol, the vice president representing Green Mountain Coffee in its work with Heifer, took visiting Heifer employees on a tour of the company's facilities. It recycles what it can, seeks to use environmentally friendly packaging where possible and even generates its own electricity for the huge roasters that, guided by the expertise of the company's highly trained staff, produce a wide variety of blends, each with its own distinctive taste.

Green Mountain Coffee employees, many of whom have been with the company for years, echoed their boss in a discussion of the company and its values.

Mike Pelchar, of the service department, praised the company's relationship with Coffee Kids, "which has gone beyond just giving money to children or milk. It's really gotten to the point where they're doing sustainable things." He cites the non-profit's effort to help coffee farmers diversify their sources of income.

The company sends employees to visit coffee farms with which it does

business to give them an understanding of the hardships and the culture. Sherry Dudley, who works in distribution, traveled to



Green Mountain Coffee was one of the founders of Grounds for Health, which offers health care to coffee-growing communities. One of its goals is the early detection of cervical cancer, the leading cause of death among women in Mexico, and a highly treatable disease when caught early.

Costa Rica. "To see how very hard people work to get coffee to us—that was very moving," she said.

Steve Morrison, a production employee, also visited Costa Rica. Describing the disparity he witnessed between the rich and the poor, Morrison said, "I was just dumbfounded. I still am." Discussing the plight of some of the children, the deep-voiced, broad-shouldered man tenderly mentioned his own 3-year-old son and then grew too emotional to continue.

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters said its goal of company profitability wasn't incompatible with its caring for the small farmers who produce the coffee. "Certainly we're in the coffee business and we need good coffee and we're not going to have good coffee unless the soil and the

people in those communities that produce coffee are flourishing," Stiller said.


"I'd love to be the most effective company providing the coffee experience to the consumer, educating them about the impact of the product on Third World countries and how we can maybe change the world through coffee," Stiller said.

Together, Heifer International, a nonprofit, charitable organization, and Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, a publicly traded company, are seeking to create a new model of cooperation, one that benefits every participant.

The main goal of the partnership is "to make a difference in these communities," Stiller said. But "I think it's a great opportunity for us to communicate what you're doing to our consumers so they understand what the conditions are where coffee is grown. The more people understand about coffee and those environments, the more they can appreciate the product."

"This is another dimension where we can help educate our consumers and help you educate your people about how coffee can make the difference in the lives of these communities," Stiller said.

Jim Hoey, Heifer's Latin America chief, said of the partnership:

"We're hooked up with a socially and environmentally responsible corporation; it's vital that we as non-profits find new ways of doing things. One of those is trying to support socially and environmentally aware corporations. Those companies need to be encouraged. I think it's a win-win situation for both of us." 

TO FIND OUT MORE

If you're interested in becoming more involved in the issue of Fair Trade coffee, you can log on to the following websites:

**Oxfam International, www.oxfam.org
TransFairUSA, www.transfairusa.org
The Specialty Coffee Association of America, www.scaa.org**

Voters see hunger as political issue



By Linda Jucovy

Voters in this country are deeply concerned about hunger both here and in developing nations, they have strong opinions about how to address the issue, and they are more likely to vote for politicians who share their concerns and are willing to act.

Those were among the findings from a telephone survey of a random sample of 1,000 people, conducted in July 2002, that was commissioned by the Alliance to End Hunger. The non-partisan Alliance is a recently formed group of 26 organizations that includes religious institutions, charities that assist poor and hungry people, businesses, labor unions, foundations, universities and civil rights organizations. Heifer International is a member of the Alliance.

Marco Grimaldo, the organizer for the Alliance, described it as "a catalyst for bringing diverse organizations and institutions to the table to make real progress against hunger." He said the survey was "an important first step" toward making that progress. "We want to apply our learning from the survey to help political candidates do a better job of addressing the issue of hunger, especially during the next presidential election."

Bread for the World, a grassroots Christian organization, was a major force behind the development of the Alliance. Rev. David Beckmann, the president of Bread for the World, said he was "surprised how strongly Americans support action to reduce hunger in the U.S. and around the world."

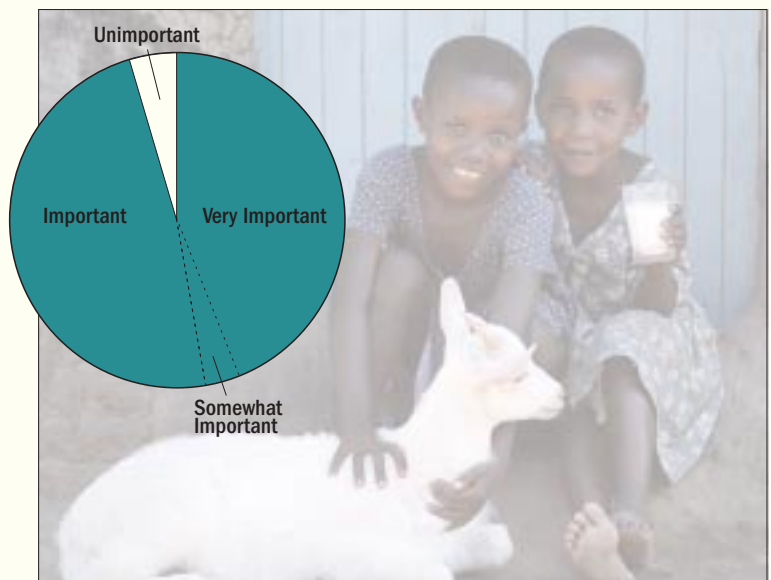
Ninety-three percent of those polled said that "fighting the hunger problem" was an important issue when they decided how to cast their vote for members of the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. And 4 percent—one of every 25 potential voters—said that it was the single most important issue in determining their vote. The survey, which has a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points, also found that Republicans and Democrats hold similar

views about the importance of reducing hunger and the best approaches for doing so.

One experience that contributed to the survey's strong findings was last year's terrorist attack on the United States. Seventy percent of respondents said the attack made them "more likely to want to reduce world hunger," while 68 percent said it made them "more interested in helping people in need in this country." The majority (59 percent) also said they wanted to fight hunger because it was "the moral thing to do," not because they believed it would help reduce the threat of terrorism or aid the U.S. economy.

"Because of September 11, a lot of people have re-evaluated life a bit and they want to do what's right," Beckmann said. "The religious and moral arguments are what really move people. Everybody knows what it feels like to be hungry, and so they can empathize. They know it leads very quickly to dizziness and tiredness and grumpiness. They can see very quickly what happens to a family that's trapped in hunger."

How Important Is Fighting World Hunger?



To ensure that the survey would not have a partisan slant, the Alliance brought together three men who most often find themselves on opposite sides of the political fence to do the polling and report on the results. One, Jim McLaughlin, worked for presidential candidate Bob Dole and is a pollster for the National Republican Campaign Committee. The others, Bill Knapp and Tom Freedman, are Democrats. Knapp was a consultant to the presidential campaigns of Bill Clinton in 1996 and Al Gore in 2000. Freedman served as a senior adviser to President Clinton.

Freedman said the survey “is part of the process of telling politicians what the American people want done.” Its findings suggested that “we haven’t done a good enough job of solving the problem of hunger, that the political system should have a more effective approach,” Freedman said.

Some progress has been made in the fight against hunger during the past 25 years, as the proportion of undernourished people in developing countries has dropped from about one-third to about one-fifth of the population. But hunger continues to be widespread and deadly.

According to the most recent United Nations data, nearly 790 million people in the developing world are undernourished. The problem is most severe in Africa, where more than a third of the population does not have adequate food. And worldwide, more than 15,000 children die each day from hunger-related causes, including the effects of common diseases like diarrhea and malaria that destroy young people already weakened by a chronic lack of food.

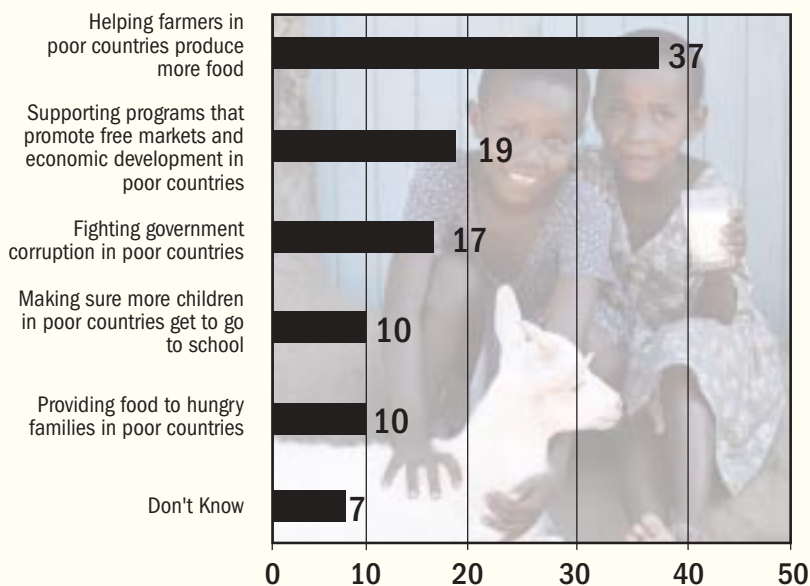
While hunger in the United States is less widespread and deadly, the problem is still significant, affecting one of every 10 households in this country. About 33 million people, including 13 million children, experience hunger or the risk of hunger.

Of those, nearly 8.5 million, including 2.9 million children, frequently skip meals or eat too little, and sometimes go without food for an entire day. The others live in households that are “food insecure,” a term the government uses to describe households that are struggling to put food on the table and are uncertain about whether they will have enough food.

One major effect of undernutrition is on children’s performance in school. As a study conducted by the Center on Hunger and Poverty at Brandeis University suggests, a lack of adequate food stunts the ability of children to learn and develop to their full potential.

Beckmann is convinced that it is feasible to dramatically reduce hunger in the immediate future. He is not alone in that belief. The 1996 World Food Summit, held in Rome, set the goal of halving hunger in the world by 2015. “All of the organizations who are participating in the Alliance consider the goal to be realistic,” Beckmann said. “They

Most Effective Means of Fighting World Hunger



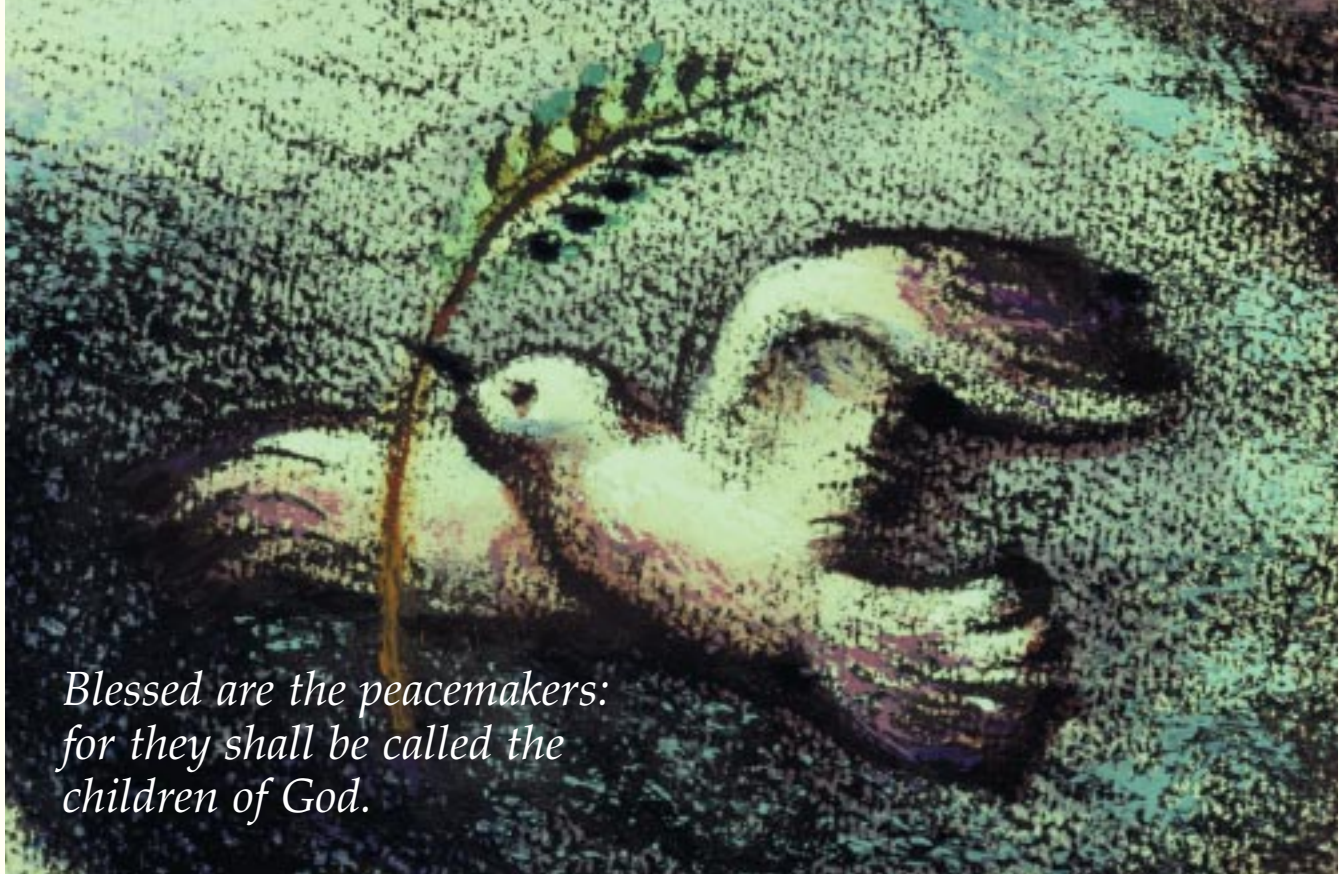
are also of one mind that U.S. leadership is pivotal. We’re trying to move the hunger issue from church basements to the White House.”

Although fewer than half the people surveyed (49 percent) agreed with the statement that “hunger in the U.S. and throughout the world can be cut in half by 2015,” they were more positive about what approaches to ending hunger would be most effective. Their responses reflect the proverb: “Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime.” More than 70 percent said that fighting hunger should include helping people who were chronically hungry obtain food and then helping them become self-reliant so they could buy or produce their own food.

And when respondents were asked more specifically “When it comes to fighting world hunger, which [approach] do you think is most effective?,” the most frequent response (37 percent) was “helping farmers in poor countries produce more food.”

The survey also asked people who should take the lead in fighting hunger—government or charities—and they were evenly split in their response, at 46 percent for each. “People have a sophisticated knowledge that you need to combine the best” of the public and private sectors, Beckmann said, “and they understand that the best way to reduce hunger is to help people provide for themselves. The survey shows a lot of good sense among the American public about what’s going to work.” 🐾

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Linda Jucovy is a writer living in Philadelphia. For more information on the Alliance to End Hunger, visit the Bread for the World website at www.bread.org. To order free copies of the Alliance report call 1-800-822-7323.



*Blessed are the peacemakers:
for they shall be called the
children of God.*

Making Peace

By Madeleine L'Engle

This essay is an excerpt from "The Irrational Season" by award-winning writer Madeleine L'Engle. "The Irrational Season" is a series of essays tracing one woman's journey from Advent to Advent. It's the third in a series of autobiographical works called "The Crosswicks Journals" after L'Engle's family's farmhouse in Connecticut. Although it was published in 1977, the book, as this excerpt shows, remains timely.

L'Engle, born in 1918, is the author of dozens of critically acclaimed and popular books, including "A Wrinkle in Time," published in 1962 and winner of the John Newbery Medal, awarded annually for "the most distinguished contribution to children's literature."

In addition to her brilliant writing career, L'Engle has been the librarian of New York's Episcopal Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine for more than 30 years. The widow of actor Hugh Franklin, L'Engle is a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

From "The Irrational Season" by Madeleine L'Engle © 1977 by Crosswicks, Ltd. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers Inc.

Never have we needed peacemakers more. There is a peculiar horror in turning on radio or TV for the news and hearing about Christians fighting Moslems, or Catholics fighting Protestants, or Jews fighting Arabs.

If I continue to struggle to think of the Beatitudes as a description of Jesus, it is bound to affect my understanding of peace, because Jesus, the peacemaker, the Son of God, said that he came not to bring peace, but a sword. And the Hebrew word *shalom*—peace—is not a passive word like the Greek *eirēnē*, a primarily negative word denoting the absence of war, but a positive word, *shalom*, the peace which comes after the last battle.

Do we have to think about war before we

continued on page 21



The Most Important Gift Catalog in the World





For a World Without Hunger

Dear Friends,

You now hold in your hands The Most Important Gift Catalog in the World and with it the means to give struggling families around the world and in the U.S. the gift of a better life—self-reliance, income, education for their children, and many other benefits that result when people have the means to take care of themselves. A new future filled with hope and promise.

This has been the promise of Heifer International from its inception in 1944—to give people the means to lift themselves and their communities up to self-reliance through gifts of livestock—dairy cows, goats, sheep, llamas, chicks and ducks, rabbits and water buffalo, as well as bees and trees that increase crop production and help to protect the environment ... fulfilling our mission of ending hunger and saving the earth.

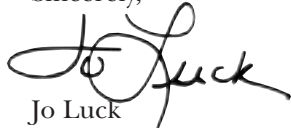
Now, you have the opportunity to make this season of giving even more meaningful, a true celebration of the holiday spirit, by sharing your gifts with others.

As you turn the pages and see the many healthy, smiling faces of people with their animals, think how fortunate we are to be able to help less fortunate families all around the world.

And the wonderful thing about giving a gift from this catalog is that you will know that the recipients will pass on offspring of their animals to others, spreading the benefits in a growing circle of life and hope.

So for people on your list who say "surprise me," how about a water buffalo?

Sincerely,


Jo Luck
President and CEO
Heifer International

Make This a Meaningful Holiday



Why not start a holiday tradition by giving gifts that help those in need?

Here's how:

1. Instead of material gifts, choose gifts from this catalog to honor your friends, family or business associates—gifts that will help struggling families lift themselves out of poverty. You can also use the catalog to make a charitable gift.
2. Use one of the easy ordering options below.
3. Present your honoree with one of our attractive holiday gift cards that explains Heifer's mission and how the gift you made in their honor will make a difference to a family in need.

What Your Honoree Receives...



This year, instead of sending commercial gifts to your friends and family, send them this delightful gift card to let them know that, in their name, you've given the gift of self-reliance to a struggling family.

Gift Card Delivery Options

Fastest: Order online at www.heifer.org, then select and print one of the cards provided or send an e-mail honor card electronically to your honoree.

Fast: (telephone orders only): For \$12, we'll ship your cards to you 2nd Day Air; for \$18 we'll ship Next Day Air.

Standard: Order before December 1, and receive delivery in about two weeks via U.S. Postal Service.

Four Easy Ways to Give

Call toll free (800) 698-2511

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Credit card orders only, please.
Fill out the Order Form
next to page 14 for your record.

Fax (501) 907-2902

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Fax the completed Order Form next to
page 14; keep for your record.
Include credit card information.

Order on-line: www.heifer.org

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Print out a Gift Card;
keep a Gift Receipt for your record.

**Mail the completed Order Form with
your check to:**

Heifer International
P. O. Box 1692
Merrifield, VA 22116-1692

**To involve your family in helping hungry people and caring for the earth,
visit Heifer International's education centers in
Perryville, Arkansas; Ceres, California; or Rutland, Massachusetts.**

The prices in this catalog represent the complete livestock gift of a quality animal, technical assistance and training. Each "purchase" is symbolic and represents a contribution to the entire mission of Heifer International. Donations will be used where needed most to help struggling people.



Heifers for the Holidays

Growing up, you took fresh milk for granted—good for you and delicious! But some children never get milk to drink. They don't grow as they should, and they're often sick.

Back in 1944, Heifer International realized there was an alternative to endless hunger and poverty. Why not give families the means to become self-reliant through a food- and income-producing farm animal? Dairy cows can give as much as four or more gallons of milk a day—enough for a family to drink, make into yogurt or cheese and sell.

Plus, as each family passes on its gift animal's first female offspring to another family in need, the whole community benefits. Do things differently this year. Honor someone special with the gift of a heifer given in their honor to help a struggling family.



Gift of a Heifer: \$500
Share: \$50

Goats...the Perfect Gift



Underestimated for years, goats have been called the poor person's cow. Did you know that more people rely on them for milk than cows? They're a great alternative for families who live in rocky, mountainous areas or own little land. They can give about four quarts of milk a day—just the right amount if you don't own a refrigerator. Goat manure makes a fantastic fertilizer for increasing vegetable

crops and, often giving birth to two kids a year, they provide a steady source of income.

Heifer International goats help families look forward to a better life. When you honor a friend or family member with the gift of a goat sent in their name, you're choosing a simpler, more meaningful way to celebrate the season—and that's a better life!



Gift of a Goat: \$120
Share: \$10



Call Toll Free (800) 698-2511



Sheep: A Sure Thing

It feels good to pull on a wool sweater when the weather's chilly. In cold climates, many indigenous people rely on the warm clothes and blankets they can make from sheep's thick wool. And subsistence farmers depend on sheep for income. Heifer International participants learn how to care for their sheep so they will improve fragile grassland with their droppings and not over-graze it. Heifer International quality sheep give three times as much wool as local ones. And with one or two offspring a year, a flock soon grows and a steady income is ensured.

Honor your friends or family members who always wear natural fibers; send the gift of a sheep to a family in need. It's a warm-hearted choice!



Gift of a Sheep: \$120
Share: \$10

Trees Are a Holiday Treasure!

There is an alternative to eroded hillsides, vanishing farmland and forests, polluted water and urban sprawl. Maybe not one big solution, but lots of little ones.

Trees are essential to life on Earth. They breathe out oxygen and breathe in carbon dioxide. They hold water in the soil and moisture in the air. They reduce global warming. They provide food and medicines for birds, animals and people. That's why planting fast-growing trees that put nitrogen back into the soil, serve as wind-breaks and provide animal feed, fencing and firewood is often the first step in any Heifer project.

Exercise your option for a greener future: honor friends who love the outdoors with gifts of trees sent in their name to families who will truly treasure the difference they make.



Gift of Trees: \$60
Seedlings: \$10

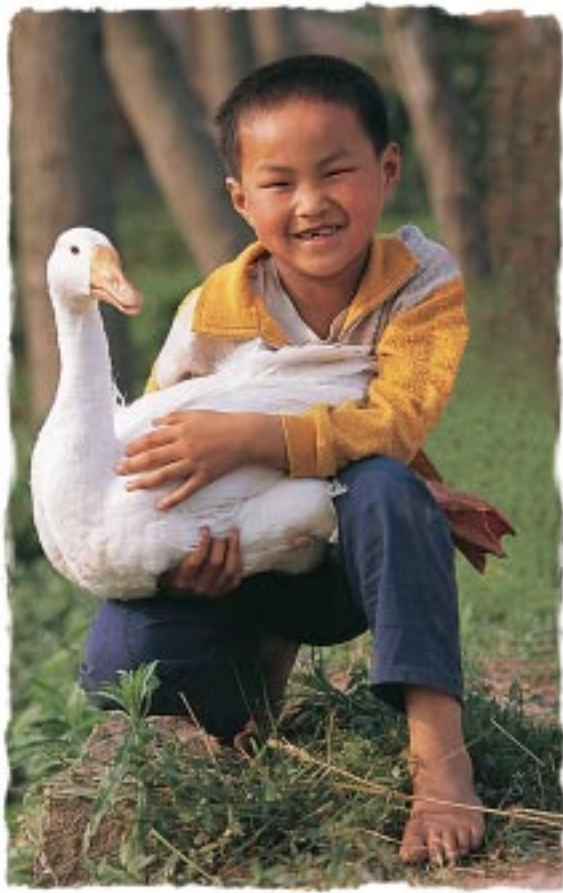


A Honey of a Gift

The way bees work together is a lesson for us all. They produce food, care for the young, recycle waste and create an effective, efficient community. They pollinate fruits, flowers and vegetables in the process—a benefit for us all. Bees can as much as double some fruit and vegetable yields. A package of Heifer International bees and a hive give a family better crops, candle wax, pollen for medicine and honey to eat and sell. Honoring a friend or family member with bees sent in their name is a honey of a gift that shows you cherish both people and the environment.



Gift of Bees: \$30



Ducks & Geese Are Sure to Please

Europeans and Asians have known it for centuries. Ducks and geese are among the most versatile and useful domestic animals.

They're easy to raise; they don't require much shelter and can adapt to hot, wet or cold weather.

They find a good portion of their food by themselves, and they efficiently dispose of weed seeds as well as gobbling up insects, slugs and snails.

Best of all, they're highly efficient producers of animal protein.

That's why Heifer International partners want ducks and geese.

They know ducks can lay 300 large eggs a year. And with geese, not only do you get eggs or meat plus feathers and down—you get vigilant "watchdogs," too!



Gift of Ducks & Geese: \$20

Chicks: The Gift of Self-Reliance

Chickens are a real value. Starting at six months, they can lay up to 200 eggs a year—a reliable source of protein for children who otherwise subsist mostly on starches. Extra eggs can be sold to pay for school, clothes and medicine. And in the vegetable garden, chickens peck at bugs and weeds, scratch up the soil and enrich it with droppings.

Chicks are an elegant solution to improving a family's crops and their diet—and to the dilemma of what to give your socially aware friends this season.



Gift of Chicks: \$20

Call Toll Free (800) 698-2511



Pigs for Progress

Pigs are among the world's most popular farm animals. The reason? They're prolific! With up to 20 piglets a year that can reach market weight of 200 pounds in six months, families with Heifer International pigs often double their income. And there are plenty of offspring to pass on to others in need, as Heifer International requires.

Heifer International teaches families to house their valuable "piggy banks" in clean, shady pens and feed them carefully. Pigs eat a lot, but they don't need to compete with humans for food—they can even consume crop by-products and vegetable waste. In return, they produce manure to enrich the garden, body-building protein to supplement a starchy diet and money for necessities like school, clothes and housing.

No wonder families smile over their Heifer International pigs. Your friends and family members will smile, too, when you send a gift of pigs in their name to a family in need of a boost in nutrition and income.



Gift of a Pig: \$120
Share: \$10

Ring in the Holidays with Rabbits

A gift of rabbits to a family with little land and few resources yields remarkable results. From Chicago to Haiti to North Korea, families with Heifer International rabbits are raising them on the back porch—or even in the house. So long as they are warm and dry, rabbits thrive, and they love to eat leftover vegetables. In turn, families get nitrogen-rich manure to use on gardens or to sell as fertilizer. And since rabbits have up to 40 offspring a year, they provide families with steady sources of protein and income.

Tired of spending a lot for gifts that don't mean much to the recipient? Think about a gift of Heifer International rabbits. You'll be making a statement that will help a struggling family and capture the imagination of your friends and family.



Gift of a Rabbit Trio: \$60
Share: \$10

Visit www.heifer.org



Fa-La-La-La Llamas

Domesticated by the Incas 6,000 years ago and selectively bred for their gentle nature and fine fiber, llamas appear intelligent and serene. They play a pivotal role in the cultural life of indigenous communities on the high plains of Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.

Women weave their llamas' fleece into warm clothing to wear or sell. They load them up with goods for market and trek with them across rugged slopes at high altitudes. As they travel, llamas' padded feet don't damage the fragile terrain and their selective browsing doesn't destroy sparse vegetation.

Heifer International llamas can make your holiday gift-giving more intelligent and serene, as well. You'll be strengthening the recipient's income and their cultural traditions—and starting a tradition of your own. Honor your friends and family with a gift of llamas sent in their name to an indigenous Latin American family.



Gift of a Llama: \$120
Share: \$10

Lightening the Load

Nothing's more satisfying than finding exactly the right solution to a problem. That's the good feeling you get when you give a subsistence farmer a water buffalo. These powerful yet gentle creatures can plow through mud that would stall a tractor in minutes. They take narrow terraces on steep mountains in stride. They feed on crop residue and produce milk for consumption and manure to increase crop yields. Plus, they pull cartloads of crops to market with ease. A gift of a water buffalo can lighten the load of a struggling family in countries like Nepal, Cambodia or the Philippines. A gift of a water buffalo can lighten the load of decisions about what to give everyone on your gift list as well.



Gift of a Water Buffalo: \$120
Share: \$10

Call Toll Free (800) 698 · 2511



Take the Challenge

Wouldn't you really rather give a camel? Or some donkeys or guinea pigs or oxen? With Heifer International's Gift Ark, you don't have to choose because with a gift of \$5,000 you get a whole ark full of animals that help promote self-reliance to as many as 30 families around the world. Challenge your company, civic club or congregation to get on board.

Gift Ark animals may include:



2 FLOCKS OF CHICKS can help Honduran families improve nutrition and replenish their land.



2 SHEEP can help United States families produce wool.



2 TRIOS OF RABBITS can provide food and income to families in Uganda.



2 BEEHIVES can help families in Mexico earn money through the sale of honey and beeswax.



2 TRIOS OF GUINEA PIGS can help Peruvian families add protein to their diets and earn income.



2 LLAMAS can improve livestock bloodlines and produce wool for Bolivian families.



2 CAMELS can help families in Tanzania earn income by transporting agricultural and industrial materials.



2 DONKEYS can supply animal draft power for farmers in Zimbabwe.



2 GOATS can help two Romanian families provide milk for their children and earn extra income.



2 OXEN can pull plows and carts in Cameroon.



2 PIGS can enable families in Thailand to attain greater self-reliance.



2 TRIOS OF DUCKS can help families in Ecuador generate income through the sale of eggs and birds.



2 WATER BUFFALO can help Filipino families increase rice production through animal draft power.




2 FLOCKS OF GEESE can help two families in China improve their nutrition and income through the production of protein in eggs.



2 COWS can bring milk and income to a village in India.

The price of a Gift Ark includes the purchase/transport of quality animals and the training/support Heifer International gives recipients. Contributions to the Gift Ark program are symbolic and represent a contribution to the entire mission of Heifer. Donations will be used where needed most to help struggling families.



continued from page 12

can think about being peacemakers? A teenager wrote to me about one of my books and then added, "We've been studying the Crusades in school. Can there be such a thing as a holy war? Can a Christian kill?"

It was not an easy letter to answer, nor did I answer it to my satisfaction. Offensive war, never. That's easy. But defensive? Could we, in conscience, Christian conscience, have refused to enter World War II? Could we have stood by and let Hitler take over our friends and neighbors and accomplish his mission of exterminating all Jews? We couldn't, my generation, or at least so it seemed to us. And we had to take on our American selves some of the responsibility for all that caused Hitler and his rise to power. We felt deep in our hearts that the only way to be peacemakers was to fight the Nazis and then cry, Shalom!

Several young men who were close to me were killed in that war, and if we had learned enough to know that there is no such thing as a war to end war, at least they died believing their cause was just, and something in me will not let me say that they died in vain.

But I have to look directly at the fact that the Hitler Jugend believed in the justness of their cause, too. They were saving the world. It's confusing, this trying to think about war, and it makes me understand with deep pain that, despite the bite of that apple, a great deal of the time we do not know what is good and what is evil. We cannot tell our left hand from our right.

I was sorting these thoughts out one morning, and began outlining them to my friend Tallis.

He looked down his nose at me.

"Don't be so cosmic."

"Am I being cosmic?"

"Yes. Don't be."

When I tend to go cosmic it is often because it is easier to be cosmic than to be particular. The small,

overlooked particulars which are symbols of such things as being peacemakers are usually to be found in our everyday lives. Of course we'd rather have something more dramatic and spectacular, so we tend not to see the peacemakers in our own path, or the opportunities for peacemaking which are presented us each day.

When I need to think particularly rather than cosmically, I turn as always to my family, this time once again to the little boy whose sister hurried to the judo studio the day he had been punished for something she had done.

The judo lessons came about not because of the dangers of living on

with a friend. As he was walking the long block between Broadway and West End Avenue, three boys came up to him and demanded his money. All he had was his bus fare, which he handed over. He then went on to his friend's, and in the late afternoon borrowed the bus fare to come home.

He told us about it at dinner, and Hugh said, "Why didn't you use your judo on them?"

"For fifteen cents, Daddy? I might have hurt them."

He was, and is, a peacemaker.

So are many of the people I pass each day on the rough streets of the Upper West Side. I remember one time when we were setting off for Crosswicks for the first weekend in

*"We've been studying the Crusades in school.
Can there be such a thing as a holy war?
Can a Christian kill?"*

the Upper West Side of Manhattan, but because of the school bus in our small New England village. When Bion was in first grade the school bus stopped at the bottom of the hill, nearly a mile from our house. The two other boys who got off at the same stop were both older and bigger, and when there was nothing better to do, they jumped on the little first-grader and roughed him up.

Hugh asked, "Why don't you fight them back?"

Bion answered reasonably, "There are two of them, Daddy, and they're bigger than I am."

So when we moved to New York in the middle of the next school year, he had judo lessons. He enjoyed judo, and he was good at it.

One Saturday he took the bus down Broadway to spend the day

the spring, and Hugh went to the liquor store to see if he could have a carton in which to pack some things. But the cartons had just been picked up, so the proprietor of the liquor store went next door to the pharmacy to see if there was a box there. There wasn't, but the pharmacist went to the Laundromat to see if there was one there. ... Peacemaking. Peacemaking on Upper Broadway, illumined by this quick generosity of all the shopkeepers on the block knocking themselves out to find an empty carton.

It's there for me to see, as long as I recognize it. And I must recognize, too, the opportunities for being a peacemaker which are daily offered me. Nothing dramatic or spectacular, but lots of little things, and the smallness does not make them less

The way of peacemaking given us may be something so small that it seems hardly worth doing . . .



opportunities.

Just on the walk between our apartment and the Cathedral library, for instance; it's a crowded time of day, when I take off in the morning a little after eight o'clock, with mobs of people going to work, sleepy, unready for the damp cold in winter, the humid heat in summer. Each morning I walk past a large supermarket. Across the sidewalk is a metal slide, sloping from a huge delivery truck to a side entrance of the market. There is a small gap in the slide, just large enough to let one person pass through at a time. A man in the truck sends heavy cartons down the slide, and they are lifted over the gap by another man who stands trying to do his job of getting the truck unloaded while people coming from both directions are trying to get through the gap. My dog and I are among them. The man struggles to get the cartons across the gap and onto the lower section of the slide under conditions which are, to put it mildly, frustrating.

One winter the man with this thankless job was large and strong looking, but older than a man ought to be who has to lift heavy cartons. His skin, which had once been coffee-

with-cream, was tinged with grey. His expression was dour, and who can blame him? Most people, hurrying to jobs which are no more than drudgery, thought only of getting through the bottleneck which was impeding their way, a reaction which is no more than natural. But my job is real work, and real work is play, not drudgery. I walk through the dirty and crowded streets to a place of trees and grass and beauty, and within this place is a gracious, book-filled room where I am free to write, and this is joy.

So, one morning as the dog and I slid through the bottleneck, I smiled and said, "Good morning."

I got no response. Naturally. The sour look did not soften. Why should it? It was stubbornness which made me persist in saying "Good morning," or "Thank you," day after day.

One day he smiled back.

One day he smiled first.

Not much in the way of peacemaking, is it? But it is what is offered me each morning. And, as my grandmother was fond of reminding me, little drops of water and little grains of sand make the mighty ocean and the pleasant land.

The way of peacemaking given us

may be something so small that it seems hardly worth doing, but it is these small offerings which build our reflexes for the larger ones. The ways of peacemaking given middle-class Americans like me are far less spectacular than—for instance—those given the group of Protestant and Roman Catholic women in Northern Ireland who daily risk their lives to cross the battle lines and pray with each other, but the grace to brave such danger has been built on the foundation of small responses—even things as small as not wanting to hurt the boys who took your bus fare, or everybody on the block trying to find a carton, or smiling at the dour man who now smiles, too—it may not seem like much; it is not much; but it is what is given at the present moment, and it is what ultimately provides the grace for the greater tests.

When we are given the grace to be peacemakers even in these little, unimpressive ways, then we are children of God, children by adoption and grace, but children nevertheless, who are bold to call him Father, Abba. So we children are helped to become peacemakers, and one day we will truly be able to cry, Shalom! 🕊️

LETTERS

The excerpt from Barbara Kingsolver's "Small World" and "What You Pass On" by Stephen King drew much reaction from World Ark readers, some positive, some not. Following are just a few of the letters and e-mails we received.

Dear Editor,

We wonder what your meeting was like when you were trying to decide whether to print the excerpt from "Small Wonder"? Here's how we picture it ... a guy standing up with outstretched arms, hands palms up, moving them up and down like he is comparing the weight of two imaginary objects. Out loud he repeats several times, "Risk losing the support of some of our readers, push our social and political agenda."

We know which one weighed more.

To add insult, in the same issue you printed a letter from Stephen King, an author whose books glorify evil and have made him a millionaire. Who knows what harm they have done? Please remove us from your mailing list.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Roe
Costa Mesa, Calif.

Dear Editor,

My wife and I have just read the Fall 2002 World Ark.

Thank you for a set of compelling articles, chiefly Barbara Kingsolver's and Stephen King's.

May I have permission to reprint Stephen King's article in our church newsletter? Along with the usual copyright notice I will give a brief description of Heifer International's mission.

Thank you for your help.

J.S. Maas
Christ Lutheran Church
Salem, Ore.

Dear Editor,

I am Jeff Marx, the pastor at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Collierville, Tenn. (outside Memphis). Last year we raised \$20,000 for Heifer and we will again be raising money this year. My hope is more! I just read Stephen King's "Reflection" on page 28 of the Fall 2002 magazine. Can I have permission to reprint and distribute it to my parishioners as part of a mailing next month in our yearly pledge drive? Thanks.

Jeff Marx
Collierville, Tenn.

Dear Editor,

We would like permission to reprint the article "What You Pass On" written by Stephen King which was published in the Fall 2002 World Ark. The article is very timely since we are in our annual stewardship campaign, and would like to make copies of it available to our congregation. We would like to reprint it in our monthly newsletter, with the proper credit being given.

Thank you for your consideration.
Rev. Stephen J. Tisinger, Pastor
Christ Our Anchor Presbyterian Church
Annapolis, Md.

(Editor's note: Stephen King kindly gave permission for his essay to be reprinted as long as he was credited. Heifer also appreciates acknowledgement that Mr. King's piece appeared in World Ark.)

Dear Editor,

I was rather disappointed to read the excerpt from "Small Wonder" in your last World Ark—this despite agreeing with much of what is in it! The strength of Heifer International is that it does not push a political position, but a purely human one. Christian, Jew, Atheist, Fundamentalist of any sort—just

about everyone can see how giving self-sufficiency one family at a time is a good thing.

When you print articles that speak to a political agenda, you drive away people who should be helping you. Yes, Americans should do more to see politics is used to help, not harm, but your mission is helping people one at a time, and bringing together many points of view who may agree on little else.

Stephen King's letter was right on the money. We need to do more; we do not need political speeches.

Please do not take the partisan route so many truly fine charities have done over the years. It weakens you. Thanks for your time and good work.

Eleanor C. Ray
Iowa City, Iowa

Dear Editor,

Your publication arrived today. The article by Barbara Kingsolver should be required reading for everyone in the country. I've already passed it on to others. Please keep up the good work. And thank you.

Julia Smith

Dear Editor,

I wanted to let you know how pleased I was to see an excerpt from Barbara Kingsolver's new book in your recent publication. Bravo! This strongly reaffirms my commitment to Heifer International and the work you are doing to change the world. Thank you for giving her the opportunity to express her ideas in this forum. I am very proud to be in the company of Ms. Kingsolver as a Heifer supporter.

Sincerely,
Penny Hummel
Portland, Ore.

Heifer International reserves the right to edit letters to World Ark for clarity, grammatical errors, spelling and space. World Ark welcomes comment from readers. We ask that letter writers include a telephone number or e-mail address so that we can confirm the identity of the writer.



A R O U N D

Heifer Goes to the Summit

The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, sometimes referred to as "Rio+10," received worldwide attention, and four delegates represented Heifer International.

The summit was an opportunity to evaluate the status of AGENDA 21, the official document approved at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

The consensus seemed to be that we still have a long way to go to accomplish the goals set a decade ago in Rio. The primary challenge this time was to adopt an action plan and timetable—concrete goals and targets for ending poverty, protecting the environment and improving living conditions around the world.

The summit focused on five areas

affecting the environment—water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity. Delegates also discussed human rights, social justice, gender equity, democracy and ending poverty.

Heifer International was one of hundreds of organizations attending. Heifer's delegation was there to promote its Agroecology Initiative, intentionally emphasizing the importance of caring for the earth in all our work, at home and around the world.

The Heifer message and mission were shared with a large international audience. Our grassroots programs, based on Heifer's Cornerstones Model for Sustainable Development, coincides with the broad goals of the summit. Heifer received much reinforcement that it's on the right track.

— By Rex Enoch
Global Education Director

Nutrition for Animals, Food for the Spirit

Feeding animals well is the hardest thing Heifer has to do in the villages where we work. When we teach farmers the importance of a balance of energy feed, protein, minerals and vitamins, as well as the necessity of



providing enough water for the animals, well-being and production soar.

And it's another way that farmers can become self-reliant.

To further these ends, Heifer Thailand representatives, in concert with our local non-governmental organization partners, hold a two-day

feed formulation workshop for farmers several times yearly. In September, about 35 villagers from the Chiang Kham community in northern Thailand attended our workshop.

The ACT Center, an organization that works discreetly with families who suffer from HIV and AIDS, organized September's meeting.

Those attending the workshop, mostly young to middle-aged women, looked little different from previous workshop participants. Each participant, however, either was a carrier of the virus that causes AIDS, was actively suffering from the disease or had a family member who

was infected or had died from the illness.

But as I was passing out class certificates of participation at the end of the workshop, one woman in particular brought home to me the reality of their suffering. As the participants came forward, I shook their hands, extended the formal *wai*

(hands folded together and raised in a prayer-like salute) and then gave them their certificates. As I took the hand of this particular woman, I felt like I was shaking a handful of sticks. Emaciated, she wore a hat pulled low over her ears and a long-sleeved shirt and trousers. Her clothes hung alarmingly loosely. Subsurface hemorrhages mottled her skin.

Heifer's work with the ACT Center families includes providing cattle and training to manage them. In almost every case, the animal is the only sign that someone cares for them and offers hope in what seems like a hopeless situation.

The smiling faces and animated conversation of these farmers demonstrate their excitement and appreciation. Yes, there will be income from the sale of a calf and there will be milk for the table. But much greater is the change in spirit that comes from families knowing that they're not alone in their distress.

— By Terry S. Wollen
Coordinator of Animal Health



Televised Eyes on Heifer

A radiant Beatrice Biira, the young Ugandan girl whose life was changed with the gift of a goat from Heifer International, hugs world-famous talk show host Oprah Winfrey after appearing on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" Sept. 18. Beatrice was a surprise guest on the show, which featured actresses Susan Sarandon and Goldie Hawn.

Oprah discussed Susan's humanitarian efforts, including her support of Heifer, and showed a film clip about Beatrice and the difference that one goat had made in her life and that of her entire family. Oprah, also a Heifer supporter, then called

for Beatrice to come out on stage.

A visibly moved Susan hugged Beatrice, who has gone from being a poor 9-year-old who longed to be able to afford to attend school to a beautiful, articulate and poised woman of 18 who will soon graduate from high school. More hugs were exchanged all around and the tears flowed.

Beatrice read a letter to Susan thanking her "for all you have done for Heifer International and for me. You have worked so hard to raise money for Heifer and make the world aware of how the simple gift of a farm animal can transform a life. The gift you have given is priceless."

Beatrice went on to thank Oprah, who arranged for Beatrice to appear on her show, "just not for me or my village, but for all the children around the world whose lives have been changed."

Oprah announced, to the delight of Beatrice and everyone who saw the show, that "The Oprah Winfrey Show" was donating 50 goats to Beatrice's village and other villages in Uganda.

Beatrice's appearance on the influential "Oprah Winfrey Show" touched those who saw it and greatly increased interest in Heifer—a stellar example of "passing on the gift."



HEIFER

HAPPENINGS



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/Phyllis Brandon

At left, Jo Luck displays her Vision Award as Arkansas Lt. Gov. Win Rockefeller looks on. Above, former Sen. Dale Bumpers shares a happy moment with Jo Luck.

A Vision for Ending Hunger

Heifer International president and CEO Jo Luck has received the 2002 Vision Award from Lions World Services for the Blind for her record of service in fighting poverty and hunger.

The award honors citizens who have shown their vision by bringing together business, community and charitable enterprises to move society forward.

"Jo Luck's vision of peace and opportunity for all peoples is evident through Heifer's work and through her dedication to Heifer's growth," said Ramona Sangalli in announcing the award.

The award was presented Oct. 16, World Food Day, in Little Rock. Former Arkansas Sen. Dale Bumpers was the master of ceremonies, and Arkansas's lieutenant governor, Win

Rockefeller, presented the award to Jo Luck. More than 400 local business and civic leaders attended the event. Former President Bill Clinton, in a video shown at the award ceremony, praised Jo Luck for her leadership.

Founded in Little Rock in 1947, Lions World Services for the Blind is the world's largest and most comprehensive training center for blind and visually impaired adults. More than 8,200 clients from across the United States and from 56 foreign nations have come to Little Rock for vocational and other training that allows them to live full, independent and productive lives.

Fun and Games

At Northway Christian Church in Dallas, they've made giving a game. The church's children in grades three through twelve created a Heifer game that they gave to anyone in the congregation donating \$50 to Heifer International.

The game, called "Fill the Ark," is an educational game that includes Heifer animals. As Paul Schmidt, a sponsor of the group, said: "A world map provides a playing board with spaces which have animal-related scriptures, etc. It has really turned out to be a successful venture. We are about \$400 short of filling an Ark and plan to come up with the remaining money by having a 'pig-kissing' contest."

"About ten people in our congregation have volunteered to have their names and pictures put on buckets into which others can donate money. The person whose bucket has the largest sum of money will be the one who will have to kiss a pig!"

Schmidt provided Heifer one of the games, which includes cards with instructions such as "Cattle stampede, lose one turn to find them" and "Goat has twins, move 5 spaces."

Heifer thinks they're all winners at Northway.

Editors Note: At World Ark we wish that we could include every letter and photograph about the generous fundraising projects for Heifer throughout the world, particularly those held by children. Lack of space prevents that, but we appreciate each letter, photo and handmade coloring book, game and card we receive. We want donors to know that though their submissions might not make it into the pages of World Ark, they are seen by many Heifer employees. They're a form of "passing on the gift" that touches and motivates us all. Thank you.



This third grade Sunday school class raised some dough for Heifer with a bake sale.

A Whole Lot of Baking Going On

The third grade Sunday School class at Neffsville Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., have put their knowledge about Heifer International founder Dan West to generous use. The students learned about West during a Sunday School lesson.

What they learned prompted them to raise money for Heifer. As teacher

Lisa Clark and the students write, they decided to hold a doughnut and muffin sale on Mother's Day this year. A lot of baked goods must have been sold because the students raised \$1,119.

"We think that Heifer is a wonderful project," the students wrote. The proof was in the muffins.

"L" Stands for Llama

The members of Grace United Methodist Church in Des Moines, Iowa, don't lack for imagination, and now eight families in Latin America will benefit from their creativity—and their love.

Each year the mission project of the church's Vacation Bible School chooses a Heifer International project. The average donation has been about \$300, which has gone for a variety of animals, wrote Martha Squire, the project coordinator. This year the project set its sights higher, deciding on a fund-raising goal of \$450, enough to buy three llamas.

Three cardboard llamas stood in the church one Sunday morning while two young boys from the church explained to the children and adults attending Vacation Bible School what their goal was. The three llamas were named Libby, Lillie and Lucy.

The children received "Ark banks" to take home to collect money for the project. During the week, suspense

built. Quoting from "Three Cardboard Llamas," the charming children's book written by Squire describing the effort: "... the children drew and painted pictures that told stories about llamas—told about what llamas were like, about where and how llamas were used and about how the children could help make three cardboard llamas become real."

A little more than a week later, not only had Libby, Lillie and Lucy become real, but the children had raised enough money for llamas Lucky, Lewie and Larry.

More were to come. Through the continued efforts of Grace United Methodist Church and its members, Love and, later, Licorice joined the herd. The llamas became real "because of the love of God's children and the Church family at Grace. A love that needed to be shared with others," the book says.

"Three cardboard llamas have turned into eight real llamas," Squire writes. As love begets love, it also apparently can beget llamas.

2002-2003 GLOBAL EDUCATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CERES CENTER, CALIFORNIA 2003

February-April Service Learning

Fight hunger through service with a four- to five-day Alternative Spring Break for youth or adult groups.

April 25-26

Heifer Hunger Happening

UMC-sponsored event including hands-on activities with animals and gardening for junior/senior high youth to learn about Heifer's program to overcome world hunger and save the earth.

June-July

Summer Day Camp

Hands-on program for youth ages 6-12 will include farm-type service as well as cottage industries such as candle making.

Year-Round

Global Village

Get a feel for the real world with this overnight experience.

Meeting Facility

Have your meeting "down on the farm" and learn about Heifer's mission to overcome world hunger and poverty.

HEIFER RANCH, ARKANSAS 2003

February 20-23

Heifer University at the Ranch

This unique experience is focused on helping you help Heifer International in your community and region. Get the tools you need to promote Heifer's mission and learn more about us.

February-April Service Learning

Fight hunger through service with these weeklong Alternative Spring Breaks for youth or adult groups.

Global Explorers

Become a global citizen in this two-day residential program for middle-school groups.

February 23-28

Cottage Industry Elderhostel

Learn appropriate technology from around the world in Arkansas. Classes feature cheese making, spinning and more.

March 21-23

Women's Lambing Weekend

Share in the lambing experience, learn more about Heifer and the challenges women face relating to hunger.

March 24-28

Women's Lambing Week

Includes both the lambing experience and more hands-on activities and chores with our ranch staff.



April 17-20

Heifer University at the Ranch

This unique experience is focused on helping you help Heifer International in your community and region. Get the tools you need to promote Heifer and learn more about us.

April 20-25

Service Elderhostel

A wonderful service and learning opportunity exclusively for the 55-plus crowd. Be a part of the solution by working in our Global Village, organic gardens or with the livestock.

May 4-9

Outdoor Watercolor Elderhostel

Painters aged 55 and over of all skill levels have the chance to hone their craft among the beautiful Ouachita Mountains at the greenest time of year.

June-August

Service Learning

Weeklong "mission trips" for youth that include both service to the ranch and learning opportunities for the group.

Year-Round

Global Village

Get a taste of the real world with this overnight experience.

Challenge Course

Learn the ropes about hunger in the low and high elements.

Cottage Industry

Attend workshops that turn animal products into marketable items.

Conference and Retreat Facilities

Reflect on your place in the world using our modern lodges, meeting rooms, dining hall and international gift shop.

OVERLOOK FARM, MASSACHUSETTS 2002

December 14-15

Living Nativity

A live nativity presented hourly, plus international gift shop, sleigh rides, hot cider and more.

2003

February 2-7 and 9-14

Peace and Justice Home School Camp

A residential camp for home-schooled youth, ages 12-18.

February 22

Heifer University II

A full day of training for volunteers on Overlook Farm's educational activities.

March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29

Pancake Breakfasts

Saturdays in March from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Observe the maple-sugaring operation, tour the farm and enjoy a hearty pancake feed served with our own pork sausage. Reservations required.

April 27-May 2

Participatory Development Home School Camp

A residential camp for home-schooled youth, ages 12-18.

May 2-4

Women's Lambing Weekend

Share in the lambing experience and learn more about Heifer and the challenges women face relating to hunger.

May 11-16

Participatory Development Home School Camp

A residential camp for home-schooled youth, ages 12-18.

June 28-29

International Fair

Featuring the Global Village, including seven international sites with entertainment and fresh, farm-grown food. It's great family fun.

Year-Round

Day Education Programs

Full- and half-day education programs for groups ages 10 and up. Includes a video and tour that may include a peasant meal in the Global Village, a hunger education session, a farm work experience and a horse-drawn hayride.

Multi-Day Service Learning Program

Two- to five-day stays where groups enjoy farm work and hunger/sustainable agriculture education sessions. Global Village overnight included. Get a taste of the realities of life around the world.

For more information contact:

Ceres Center, Ceres, California
Sandy Groll (877) 841-7182
or cerescenter@heifer.org

Heifer Ranch, Perryville, Arkansas
Victoria Jackson (501) 889-5124 or
victoria.jackson@heifer.org

Overlook Farm, Rutland, Massachusetts
(508) 886-2221 or
overlook.farm@heifer.org

All locations are open year-round for drop-in visitors or schedule a field trip for your group.

Travel with a Purpose

Are you ready for adventure travel that really is an adventure? Do you want to see places millions of tourists haven't already seen? Do you want to learn about other cultures, maybe even make a difference in the world while doing it?

Then join us on a Heifer International Study Tour. Travel to Heifer's projects around the world and see how the gift of a cow or goat can transform the life of a whole family. See how entire villages are moved to self-



reliance and hope.

You'll visit cultural sites in exotic places. But you may also travel dusty rutted roads, and your accommodations may not be what you're used to.

You'll see poverty and hardship. But then you'll hear stories of joy from people who have prevailed over incredible odds.

Warning: You may come back changed forever.

Linda Rich, who visited Tanzania: "People keep asking me, 'How was Africa?' They are unprepared for the lecture on Heifer International that follows; however, they listen fairly politely and always

seem to comment that I seem really enthusiastic or inspired.

"What an understatement! I am eagerly awaiting my pictures so I can show them that I have not been exaggerating the beauty of the land and the people!"

Are you ready?



2003 TOURS

Ghana February 12-26

Leader: Dr. Barry Colley, Program Director
Africa
studytours@heifer.org
Dianne Colley (501) 803-4419

China— excluding Beijing/Great Wall Mid-May

Leader: Jan West Schrock
jan.schrock@heifer.org
(207) 892-4236

Poland Mid-May

Leader: Dr. Rex Enoch
rex.enoch@heifer.org
(501) 889-5124

Alabama Mid-May

studytours@heifer.org

Ukraine Mid-May

Leader: Kris Booden
msboo@meganet.net
(413) 245-9088

China—including Beijing/Great Wall Mid-June

Leader: Mark Schnarr
mark.schnarr@heifer.org
(501) 889-5124

Viet Nam June

Leader: Lesli Hoey
leslihoey@hotmail.com

Uganda/Rwanda Third and fourth weeks of July

Leader: Libby Frith
libby.frith@heifer.org
(501) 907-4936
Leader: Hilary Smith
hilary.smith@heifer.org
(501) 907-2973

Russia Late August

Leader: Priscilla Thompson
priscilla.thompson@heifer.org
(501) 907-2688

Honduras September 17-27

Leader: Michelle Izaguirre
michelle.izaguirre@heifer.org

United States One-day Seminars

During 2003 we will post the dates of seminars, available in various locations. These are held to increase understanding of Heifer's work in North America.
studytours@heifer.org

Other trips under discussion Kenya/Tanzania

Because of the work of our country staff with project partners, the 2003 trips to Peru/Bolivia/Ecuador/East India and Ireland/Cameroon will be postponed until 2004. Current information on tours that are postponed or added will be on our website and in the next issue of World Ark.

If you are interested in one of the trips, send your request to studytours@heifer.org. We will give you more information as it becomes available. Basic information on trips will be posted on our website including time frame for the trip, estimated cost including international air fare, lodging, transportation, meals and sightseeing. Tour leaders and their contacts will also be posted.

Due to the uniqueness of our Study Tours, detailed day-by-day itineraries are not always available when tours are first announced. Our travel is determined by the projects to be visited.

Please check our website for the most up-to-date information and a complete list of trips: www.heifer.org
Once a Study Tour leader has been posted we urge you to get in touch as soon as possible as Study Tours fill up fast.

Security in a Time of Need

Gift Annuities Provide Reliable Income, While Helping Families Help Themselves

All of us are concerned that we are prepared for whatever circumstance in which we may find ourselves. Whether you are the displaced child who finds herself in a refugee camp due to political or social crisis, or whether you are planning for sources of income in retirement for yourself and your loved ones, you need to feel secure. Wouldn't it be great if you could provide for yourself and the displaced child half a world away?

A gift annuity from Heifer International Foundation can provide a source of income in retirement that can withstand the test of time and can provide income for you for the rest of your life. In addition, hungry families around the world will receive animals and training that will afford them the security of income and self-reliance. In these times of lower interest rates and uncertain market fluctuations, a charitable gift annuity can provide you with the security you need, while giving a hungry child the security he or she needs.

Gift annuities are a simple and convenient way to make a gift. Under the terms of a gift annuity, you make a gift of cash or other appropriate assets in a way that allows you to retain payments for the remainder of your lifetime. You can also provide payments that continue for the life of one other person if desired, or direct



Stan and Helen George (left) rely on the security of their gift annuities that will in turn secure income for Romeo (right) and his family in the form of a carabao.



that the payments be made to one or two others you name.

How much are the payments?

Gift annuities payments vary according to the age of the annuitant (person who receives payment) at the time the annuity is funded. The older you are when you fund your gift annuity, the higher your payments will be. To calculate your gift options online, go to <http://www.heiferfoundation.org/waystogive/annuities/calc.html>.

What stands behind the payments?

Under state law, all the available assets of the charitable recipient serve to back the annuity payments.

Enjoy tax savings

A generous charitable income tax deduction is allowed for the year your gift annuity is funded. Capital gains tax that would be due on the sale of assets used to fund an annuity will be partially deferred with the remainder typically reported over the donor/annuitant's life expectancy.

Under the terms of recently enacted

federal tax legislation, it will be a number of years before many estates are exempted from estate tax. A gift annuity can be an excellent way to enjoy income tax savings today while assuring that the amounts used to fund the annuity will never be subject to estate tax.

Understanding Your Tax Savings

- A portion of the amount contributed for a gift annuity is deductible for federal income tax purposes.
- A portion of the annuity payments is tax-free.
- There can be additional income tax savings depending on your state of residence.
- Capital gains tax can be deferred when property that has increased in value is used to fund a gift annuity.
- Gift annuity payments can be taxed more favorably than many other sources of income.
- Assets used to fund gift annuities are typically removed from your taxable estate.

- Gift or capital gains tax considerations may arise in some cases where a gift annuity is created for someone other than a spouse.

Increase Income Over Time

The amount of your gift annuity payments will never change. But the rate for each new annuity will be higher at later ages. For this reason, some choose to create a new gift annuity each year as part of their retirement planning. In this way, they make meaningful gifts over time while enjoying increasingly higher amounts of steady income.

What Can I Give?

To receive maximum benefits from a gift annuity, it is important to think carefully about the property used to make your gift. Consider the following assets as you decide what might offer the greatest opportunity for you:

- Cash
- Proceeds from bonds
- Certificates of deposits
- Stocks or mutual funds
- Withdrawals from retirement plans you may be required to make.

How Do Gift Annuities Turn Into Goats?

The principal gift ultimately becomes part of the endowment that goes to support Heifer's programs around the world. With each new gift annuity, the endowment grows to produce more income that can be used to provide animals and training to hundreds of needy families who will be able to support themselves because of your gift.

Our Director of Gift Planning, Lori Jones, will be pleased to talk with you and your advisors as you consider which asset might be best for you to use to fund a gift annuity. For more information, call Heifer International Foundation at (888) 422-1161; e-mail foundation@heifer.org; or visit us online at www.heiferfoundation.org to calculate your gift options and download your form.

Change in Special Occasion Endowments

The American Council on Gift Annuities has announced that effective Jan. 1, 2003, charitable gift annuity rates will drop. Also, the applicable federal rate has dropped to a historic low. Each month the IRS surveys hundreds of interest rates for various financial instruments and publishes the rate that applies to charitable deductions. Sadly, because of this news, we will no longer be able to offer Birthday and Special Occasion Annuities. Because of the children's ages the annuities will not pass the IRS test for charitable gifts. We will of course continue to service our remaining 750 special occasion annuities for the children's lifetimes. However, we still offer Special Occasion Endowments for a gift of \$1,000 (or more). Special Occasion Endowments send a Heifer International animal to a struggling family each year in honor of a special person. The special person will receive a greeting card stating that in honor of him or her, and as an expression of your love, a family is receiving a living gift from Heifer International so it can produce food for itself.

(Please complete and return this reply form.)

Dear Friends at Heifer International Foundation:

- ☐ Please send me a complimentary gift annuity kit.
- ☐ Enclosed is a gift for membership in the \$100 Million Club.
- ☐ I have already provided for Heifer in my will.
- ☐ Please send me a complimentary will kit.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

www.heiferfoundation.org
(888) 422-1161



Mail this form to:

Heifer International Foundation
P. O. Box 727
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203

Please cut along dashed line





by Darcy Kiefel

A Small Bag of Rice

I stood in the rear of the bus clinging to my computer with my cameras strategically strapped to my back. The other hand was anything but free as I tried to maintain my balance and hang onto my son, Sergei, at the same time.

The night before we had visited the last of 16 projects in China, Thailand and Laos for the summer. After leaving the project village of Wung Ma in Laos, I felt at peace. It had been a difficult but successful summer covering Heifer International projects in Asia.

I had imagined we were home free, returning to Vientiane, the capital of Laos, in time for a good night's sleep and an early morning flight to Bangkok.

On returning to the Santong district, the news of the Mekong floods shattered my tranquility. We wouldn't be able to leave tonight for Vientiane, and maybe not tomorrow either.

I stood there in disbelief. I was exhausted, dirty, sweaty, hungry. I wanted to go home. A boat was going to be too dangerous, an SUV not high enough off the ground. Perhaps we could hitch a ride on a larger truck transporting rice to Vientiane.

We were politely informed that someone would wake us early in the morning if they found a solution. At 5:30 a.m. we heard a knock on our door. My son and I had five minutes to pack and catch the local bus. Rain was pouring down, and I was trying desperately to protect my computer and cameras. We climbed onto the bus and chugged down the dirt road toward Vientiane.

The run-down old bus suddenly stopped. Passengers started chattering and looked out the windows. Floodwaters covered the road, and area residents were crossing by boat. The driver hopped off to assess the

situation, crawling under the beast of a bus to make adjustments and possibly assure the passengers that the vehicle could actually make it.

The doors of the bus remained open, and as we slowly moved forward, water began to creep up the entrance step, poured over the second stair and proceeded to flood the floor of the vehicle. The water swelled to our knees and all possessions were drenched by the Mekong floods.

Residents who had struggled to save enough rice to sell at the market would now have to consume the soggy grains within a few days or sacrifice it completely. I drifted deep into thought. Who was I? A person whose life didn't depend on the whims of nature (at least in the near term); nor did it depend on a small bag of rice.

We crossed 20 more flooded roads before reaching Vientiane. I had my good night's sleep, and I took a shower. But those small burlap bags of rice carried by my fellow bus passengers would not provide the money desperately needed to feed their families.

I loosened the tight grip on my computer and cameras and thought about the struggles the people of Laos endure every day. For them, this was normal. There weren't any complaints or tears or even expressions of frustration. Life would go on and they prayed that Mother Nature would be kind to their families.

Today I pray that Mother Nature is kind to all of us, and in return we will be kind to Mother Nature and each other. And though Laos was my last project for the summer, it will come first in my memory.

Darcy Kiefel is a Heifer International photojournalist who lives in Boulder, Colo., with her 9-year-old son, Sergei.



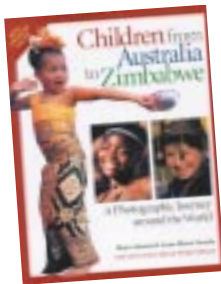
Zoey says ...choose a gift that changes a life.

Are you searching for the perfect holiday gift? How about one that can actually change a life? This year honor friends and loved ones with a gift from The Most Important Gift Catalog in the World, and make a life-saving difference for families in need. When you give a Heifer gift in someone's honor, you give the

gift of a life-sustaining farm animal that produces food and income for a family in need. Give a gift online at www.heifer.org and choose from more than a dozen eye-catching honor cards to send to your gift recipient. Give with purpose and check out www.heifer.org.

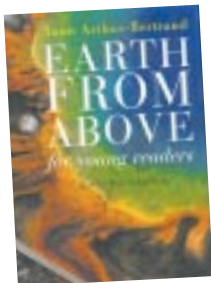


Winter is a great time to read with your children or grandchildren. The following are just a few "Heifer Picks" from a database of books compiled for Heifer's Read to Feed® program. If you're looking for a special book that will teach, amaze and delight a young reader, check these out. (Prices are from the Barnes & Noble Booksellers website, bn.com.)



In **"Children From Australia to Zimbabwe: A Photographic Journey Around the World,"** Maya Ajmera offers a wealth of information about 26 countries on six continents. **Ages 9-12**, Charlesbridge Publishing, 2001, 64 pages, **\$18.95**

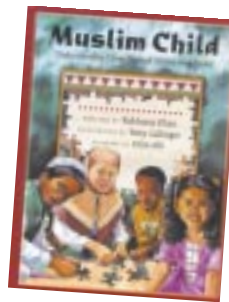
In an encyclopedic picture book called **"People,"** Peter Spier celebrates humankind in all its diversity, explaining how we are similar and how we are different in what we wear, eat, play and how we worship. **Ages 3-12**, Doubleday & Company, 1980, 40 pages, **\$14.36**



"Earth From Above for Young Readers" provides aerial shots by photographer Yan Arthus-Bertrand of nomads and camels, carpet merchants and scarlet ibis, tiny villages in Morocco and geysers in Yellowstone, and other unforgettable images from more than 40 places. Text by Robert Burleigh reveals the fascinating story behind each photograph. **Ages 9-12**, Harry N. Abrams, 2002, 77 pages, **\$12.95**



In **"One Child,"** Christopher W. Cheng shows kids what they can do to save the earth. The text is supported by beautiful pictures by illustrator Steve Woolman. **Ages 5-6**, Interlink Publishing Group, 1999, 32 pages, **\$14.95**



"Muslim Child: Understanding Islam Through Stories and Poems" by Rukhsana Khan presents eight stories about Muslim life in such places as the United States, Pakistan, Canada and Nigeria. Readers will learn about the five pillars of Islam through stories like "Lost at Hajj," featuring a black child from New York City who is making the pilgrimage to Mecca with his parents. **Ages 8-12**, Albert Whitman, 2002, 104 pages, **\$11.96**



"It's Okay to Be Different" by Todd Parr gives kids permission to be themselves. The eye-popping colors of the childlike figures that accompany the text add excitement to this celebration of diversity. **Ages 4-8**, Little Brown & Co., 2001, 32 pages, **\$10.47**



"One Grain of Rice" by Demi tells the story of a raja who lived in India long ago. He believed that he was wise and fair, but every year he kept nearly all the people's rice for himself. Then a village girl named Rani tricked him, using the surprising power of doubling to win more than one billion grains of rice. **Ages 5-8**, Scholastic, Inc., 1997, 40 pages, **\$15.96**

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