

THE MOST IMPORTANT  
GIFT CATALOG P.29

HOLIDAY 2014 || HEIFER.ORG

# worldark

## HEIFER RWANDA

### Growing **Stronger**

12

#### FROM PERU, WITH LOVE

Alpaca artisans craft a promising future

24

#### PULL OF THE PAST

Transylvanian villages pass on buffalo pride

54

#### COWBOYS AT CHRISTMAS

Memories of holidays away from home

## PLUS

### FOR THE RECORD

Goat milk boosts nutrition for AIDS patients



**HEIFER**<sup>®</sup>  
INTERNATIONAL



PHOTO BY LACEY WEST

President and CEO Pierre Ferrari visits with members of a women's group in the El Pinal and Bella Vista communities in La Tinta, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala.

## Dear Fellow Activists,

Whether you are 7 years old and reading *World Ark* for the first time, or 70 like Heifer International turned this year, or even many years wiser, I hope you will keep the world's smallholder farmers in mind this holiday season. No, I don't mean you should put them on the shopping list you take to the mall. But, as you will see in this issue of *World Ark*, supporting Heifer International is a great way to support the farmers with the tools and training they need to feed the world.

Very exciting for this year's holiday season is the opportunity to support Heifer's women artisans from Peru. These women are a stellar example of what can happen when we help connect farmers to markets using technology. Through computer training, Facebook pages and a website, they are researching their industry, improving the quality of their products and reaching customers in ways they never thought possible. You can check out and even buy their products—such as scarves, gloves, hats and bags—by visiting [shop.heifer.org](http://shop.heifer.org).

Throughout my travels in 2014, I have observed that our

work with women farmers is most successful when we focus on improving their leadership skills, not solely on helping them to be better farmers. Empowering women to lead groups, cooperatives and federations is key to strengthening families, communities and food systems. This is as true in Peru and Guatemala as it is in Nepal.

As we wrap up the United Nations' International Year of Family Farming and Heifer International's 70th anniversary year, I implore you to help us keep the momentum going. We have not yet ended world hunger and poverty. But it is within our power to do so.

I hope you enjoy this holiday edition of *World Ark* and that you consider giving a life-changing alternative gift from the enclosed catalog to your friends, family and co-workers.

Yours for a better world,

Pierre U. Ferrari



# features



## COVER

Children drink milk from the goats of Charlotte Musabyimana in Rugaragara, Rwanda. Musabyimana welcomes all children from her community to join her for the regular treat to improve their nutrition.

Cover photo by Olivier Asselin  
Top photo by Susan Williamson

**12**

### From Peru, With Love

**BY AUSTIN BAILEY**

Alpaca farmers and artisans in the Andes join the global marketplace to share their unique gifts with the rest of the world.



**24**

### Pull of the Past

**BY KATYA CENGEL**

Travel to Transylvania, where water buffalo have a history of providing nutritious milk and draft power.



**42**

### Emerging from the Shadows

**BY FALGUNI VYAS**

A partnership between Heifer Rwanda and Partners in Health joins the forces of health care and nutrition to help HIV and AIDS patients build thriving and surviving families and communities.





***Thank you to our Facebook friends who chimed in with their favorite Heifer memories and stories. Here are a few of our favorites:***

I remember 18-20 years ago my church raised money to buy a cow. I don't know how many years in a row they did it. I was 8-10 at the time, and I remember thinking it was the coolest and greatest thing I have ever heard of. A cow! For a family on a whole other continent! My parents explained to me how life-changing one animal could be. I couldn't wait till I was grown up and could do the same for other people. It's funny, I was worried by the time I got old enough Heifer may not still be around. But I'm so glad you are!

**JENNIFER GOOD**

Favorite memory: Donating a flock of chickens in my mother's memory. My mother was a farm wife who raised chickens every year until she retired to town.

**ALLISON HALL**

My church threw a "Fill the Ark" dinner, and we had all kinds of different foods from all over the

world, and at each table we had different missionaries talk about where they went. It was a wonderful evening and we opened a lot of people's minds on the beauty of the world. We also raised enough money for a Gift Ark.

**MAGGIE BARBER**

For me, it was the day I received my first Heifer gift catalog. I learned about an amazing organization and how education and compassion can beat global hunger!

**MARY A. FANELLI-DOVE**

Helping to establish the Midwest Regional Center in Goshen, Indiana. As a kid I spent a lot of hours licking stamps, folding letters, sealing envelopes and then helping to move from the rented space to the permanent office. From there I spent time mowing grass, painting the barn, mending fences and one special trip to help transport animals to Heifer Ranch in Arkansas. And it was a very special day when the addition to the office was named in honor of my dad, Marvin Burger, after he died, thus honoring him for all his time and energy donated to Heifer throughout his lifetime.

**GRETA BURGER**

Love love love supporting Heifer International and enjoyed meeting a yak at a Heifer farm once.

**LESLIE JOY ICKOWITZ**

Favorite memory: Taking my Girl Scout troop to Heifer Ranch in 2008. We had supported Heifer for several years by donating some of our troop funds to buy animals, and we were excited to have the opportunity to spend a week at the Ranch. When we got home, the girls used what they learned at the Ranch to lead a Global Village-themed event for other Girl Scouts in our community. They also used the work they did at the Ranch garden as inspiration for their Silver Award projects.

**HOLLY TAYLOR**

My 4-year-old daughter and her sidekick, my 1-year-old son, collected \$62 in bottles to help her school raise money for a goat. In Connecticut where we live you earn 5 cents a bottle. Together the school raised more than \$600.

**COLLEEN FLANNERY CACERES**



**LIKE HEIFER INTERNATIONAL ON FACEBOOK AND ADD YOUR FAVORITE STORIES.**

***We want to hear from you!***

*Please send your comments to [worlddark@list.heifer.org](mailto:worlddark@list.heifer.org). Include your name, city and a telephone number or email address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published online as well as in print. Because of the volume of mail we receive, we cannot respond to all letters.*

**Q&A HOLIDAY**

Is it important to preserve artisanal traditions like the knitting and weaving in high Andean communities that's featured on Page 12 of this issue? If so, why?



# worldark



## departments

### 02 LETTERS

Readers respond

### 04 FOR THE RECORD

The modern day plague: HIV/AIDS  
Who wins the cheese Olympics?

### 06 THE GOOD LIFE

Heifer Ranch's curry chicken  
Living Gift Markets

### 08 ASKED & ANSWERED

Cattle rancher  
Alejandro Carrillo

### 50 MIXED MEDIA

Teach a Woman to Fish

### 52 HEIFER BULLETIN

New water system helps  
Haitian farmers

### 54 HEIFER SPIRIT

Delivering hope at Christmas

### 60 FIRST PERSON

High spirits

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Follow World Ark blog on RSS and find Heifer on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and Vimeo.



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Since 1944, Heifer has helped 20.7 million families, directly and indirectly, in more than 125 countries move toward greater self-reliance through the gift of livestock and training in environmentally sound agriculture.

Heifer International is a member of InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based international development and humanitarian non-governmental organizations,

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# No Matter How You Dice It ...

**O**rganically grown crops contain significantly more antioxidants than traditionally grown crops, according to a study by researchers at Newcastle University. Organic fruit, vegetables and grains also contain lower levels of toxic metals and pesticides, researchers found.

This is the latest in the great debate about organic produce. But does it matter?

Critics of the push for organics, which are usually more expensive than conventionally grown products, point out that antioxidants' benefits have yet to be quantified, and that pesticide levels are always regulated for safety, even on conventional crops.

As scientists, foodies and farmers hash this out, the best thing to do is eat your veggies. No matter on which side of the debate they fall, most experts agree that eating fruits and vegetables is the most important thing, no matter the pedigree.



ISTOCK.COM

## Better With Age

**The average American eats 32.6 pounds of cheese per year.** But why be average? Cheese is full of protein and calcium, and there are 2,000 types to choose from.

Greeks win the cheese Olympics, consuming 68.5 pounds per person per year. The French come in second, at 57.5 pounds.

Most cheese comes from cow, sheep, goat or buffalo milk, although cheeses made from camel and donkey milk are increasingly popular. And cheese made from moose milk is considered a delicacy in Sweden.

Go to [www.heifer.org/makingcheese](http://www.heifer.org/makingcheese)



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## Another Reason to Hate Mosquitoes

**Chikungunya is here, and by all accounts, it's going to hurt.**

The mosquito-borne pathogen crept into the United States this summer. The first cases in people who hadn't left the country recently came out of Florida, and some experts expect the illness will climb northward.

Chikungunya's name comes from a Makonde word from Tanzania and Mozambique that means "that which bends up." People infected with the virus report fever, joint pain and muscle aches so severe that their bodies sometimes contort. No vaccine or treatment currently exists.

If you're traveling to areas where chikungunya is prevalent this winter, use insect repellent, wear long sleeves and stay in places with window screens.



Sub-Saharan Africa remains most severely affected, **WITH NEARLY 1 IN EVERY 20 ADULTS** living with HIV and accounting for **71%** of the people living with HIV worldwide.<sup>1</sup>

# - AIDS: THE MODERN DAY - PLAGUE

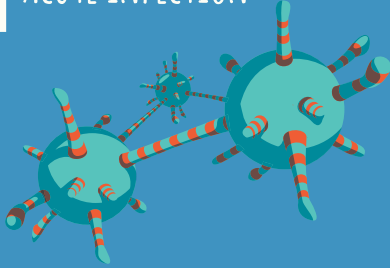
**1.7 MILLION** people die from AIDS around the world every year.<sup>2</sup>



**1 IN 12 RWANDAN WOMEN** living in Kigali has HIV/AIDS.<sup>3</sup>

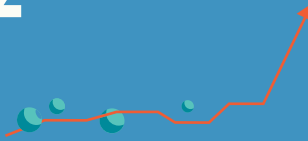
## THE STAGES OF HIV INFECTION<sup>2</sup>

### 1 ACUTE INFECTION



Large amounts of the virus are being produced in the body; many people develop flu-like symptoms, often described as the "worst flu ever."

### 2 CLINICAL LATENCY



At this stage, HIV is present in very low levels, though it is still active. Many people do not exhibit symptoms during this stage and, with proper treatment, can live in clinical latency for several decades. However, if treatment is not received, clinical latency progresses in 10 years or faster.

### 3 AIDS



Without treatment, the disease progresses into AIDS. The typical survival rate is three years.

## ANTI-RETROVIRAL THERAPY

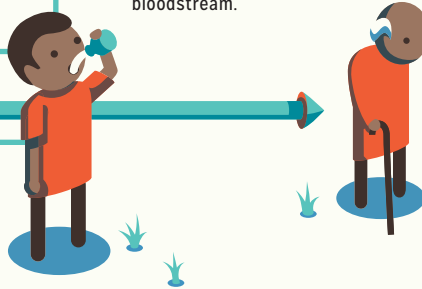
Through **anti-retroviral therapy (ART)**, more and more people are living longer lives.



There are more than **7.5 MILLION PEOPLE RECEIVING ANTI-RETROVIRAL THERAPY (ART)** in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>3</sup>



It's important that **PATIENTS ON ART RECEIVE ADEQUATE NUTRITION**, as food can change the rate at which medications are absorbed into the bloodstream.



The average life expectancy in Rwanda is on the rise; it's now

**55**

By comparison, the average U.S. life expectancy is 79



**Selenium**, a trace mineral essential to good health, creates antioxidant enzymes called selenoproteins that prevent free radicals from damaging cells. Selenium levels are often depleted in people living with HIV/AIDS.

**GOAT MILK PROVIDES THE NECESSARY NUTRITION THAT HIV/AIDS PATIENTS REQUIRE.**

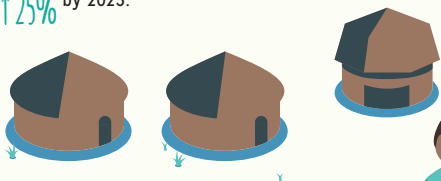
Goat milk contains high amounts of medium-chain triglycerides, or unique fats, that are absorbed intact and directly used for energy.



cholesterol levels.

## DAIRY CONSUMPTION

A recent FAO report forecasts that dairy consumption in developing countries will grow by **↑25%** by 2025.



Building demand for goat milk took some time because people of low social status traditionally consumed it, and it carried a stigma.

AT LAST COUNT, RWANDA HAD **2,672,571 GOATS**, COMPARED TO **1,135,141 CATTLE**.<sup>5</sup>



Due to the increasing cost of cow's milk, goat's milk has had a recent rise in popularity.

HOW DOES GOAT'S MILK COMPARE TO COW'S MILK?

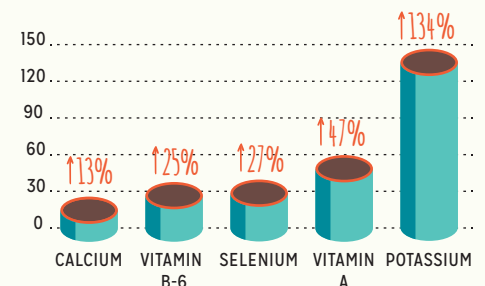




PHOTO BY JASON BROMWELL

## So Many Easy Ways to Shop!

Online shopping is the quickest and simplest way to provide a family in need with a goat, chicken or other resource to help them get a leg up, but sometimes you want to peruse the wares in person, right? Living Gift Markets give shoppers a chance to learn about Heifer's mission and even get some cuddle time with the gift animals.

Church, school and community groups around the country put on their own Living Gift Markets to benefit Heifer each year. Some of them, like the Hot Springs Village Volunteer Group in Arkansas, host big, boisterous affairs, complete with live animals. Others are quieter, with simple table displays manned by one or two people.

Want to put on a Living Gift Market of your own? Call 800.422.0474 or visit [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org) for a step-by-step guide.

You're also invited to stop by one of the markets at Heifer's learning centers in Massachusetts and Arkansas.

### LIVING GIFT MARKETS

**HEIFER FARM**  
216 Wachusett St.  
Rutland, MA  
855.343.4337

**December 6, 7, 13, 14**  
**11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**HEIFER VILLAGE**  
1 World Ave.  
Little Rock, AR  
855.343.4337

**December 6**  
**10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**HEIFER RANCH**  
55 Heifer Rd.  
Perryville, AR  
501.889.5124

**December 13**  
**5 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**December 14**  
**3 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

## Feast from the East

### Nothing rings in the holidays like ... chicken curry?

At least that holds true at Heifer Ranch, where staff and volunteers chilled from the outdoor chores of caring for animals and fields will line up early for Ranch chef Bobbie Hawkins' rib-sticking feast.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HEIFER RANCH

### Singapore Curry

¼ cup margarine  
1 ¼ cup flour  
¼ chopped onion  
5 cups chicken stock  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 cube chicken bouillon  
⅓ teaspoon white pepper  
2-3 tablespoons curry powder  
3 ½ pounds cooked chicken, cut into ¾-inch pieces



Melt margarine, sauté onion, add flour and cook until smooth, about 5 minutes. Add stock gradually, stirring constantly with wire whisk. Cook until thickened. Mix in remaining ingredients except the chicken. Add chicken and stir gently to prevent breaking of chicken pieces. Season to taste as you go along. The dish should be quite yellow and have a distinct curry flavor.

Serves 10-12. Serve over rice.

Toppings are what make this dish great! Try these:

- French fried onion rings
- Fresh sliced tomatoes
- Bananas, cut in thick slices or chunks
- Pineapple chunks
- Coconut, shredded or flaked
- Salted peanuts
- Chutney



# Green (and Easy) Holiday Decorating



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH JOSEPH

*The people at Heifer Farm in Overlook, Mass., really know how to do it up during the holidays. As a gift to you, gardening expert and Heifer staffer Elizabeth Joseph shares her pro tips for harvesting, assembling and displaying natural decorations.*

DIY decorating is the perfect way to add some style to your holidays while keeping things simple and sustainable. Follow these instructions to make wreaths, garlands and swags, and remember to compost the greens once the season is over to keep things green from start to finish.

Begin by identifying foliage available in your region, ideally a diversity of evergreens to supply a contrast of shape, texture and color. Look for thick stands where thinning saplings will not damage the forest. You can also cut the

lower boughs from grown trees. In New England, our go-to species are white pine, hemlock and mountain laurel.

For wreaths, garlands and swags alike, follow these steps:

- 1 Gather floral wire**, ribbon, twine and pruning shears. For wreaths, add clamp wreath rings and a jig.
- 2 Trim branches** from the saplings into smaller greens with 4- to 6-inch stems.
- 3 Gather the greens** into handful-sized bunches, mixing the species as you go.
- 4 Make bows** from the ribbon, or have purchased bows at the ready.

Now it's assembly time:

**Wreaths:** Place one bunch of greens in the wire form and clamp to hold in place with the jig, adding bunches in turn until the circle is complete. If you don't have a jig, you

can round a template from young, flexible tree branches and secure the bunches with floral wire.

**Garlands:** Cut the twine to a desired length, for example to cover the perimeter of a door frame, adding extra yardage if the garland will wind or drape. Tie the greens together with floral wire at their stems, and then fasten them to the twine. Overlap the bunches until you reach the end of the twine.

**Swags:** Assemble two bunches of stems so the greens flare in opposite directions like a bowtie, and fasten together with floral wire. Alternatively, tie larger boughs together with wire so the greens hang down.

Finally, embellish with bows and ribbons, bells, dried berries, acorns or pinecones, and step back to enjoy your beautiful homemade decorations!





# In Mexico, Cattle Part

Interview by Judith D. Schwartz, *World Ark* contributor



A dry riverbed (above) shows erosion near Alejandro Carrillo's ranch. Carrillo (right) confers with holistic management consultant Elco Blanco-Madrid.



PHOTOS BY TONY EPRIE

Grassland ecosystems—savanna, steppes, pampas, North American prairie—have co-evolved with native grazers like bison and antelope. Due to several factors, including the mismanagement of livestock, many of these landscapes have degraded. One such place is the Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands, where poor grazing practices and intensive farming are threatening people's livelihoods and a cherished way of life. Rancher Alejandro Carrillo, part of the Savory Institute's Chihuahua Hub, shares how restorative grazing can regenerate grasslands, support more and healthier cattle and bring hope to impoverished communities.

## **WORLD ARK: How did Chihuahua become "cowboy country"?**

**ALEJANDRO CARRILLO:** Our cowboy culture goes back 300 years with the arrival of the Spanish *vaqueros* in what's known as the Chihuahuan Desert, which encompasses parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas and the Mexican states of Chihuahua and Coahuila. It was the perfect place to raise cattle, thanks to a sea of native grasslands and plenty of

water from year-round springs. The success of cattle ranching brought investment in other industries, like forestry, cement and banking. In the early 1900s, the use of deep-water wells and barbed-wire fencing made ranching possible in the arid areas.

## **Why is ranching there under threat?**

These technologies came with a high price tag: now cattle remained in one place until they ran out of grass rather than following



# of the Solution

water and vegetation patterns. Under continuous grazing, grasslands have become bare ground with just a few woody plants, like mesquite. Today most ranches are for sale, abandoned, or have been sold to farmers who practice intensive agriculture. This aggravates the region's water problems, especially as agrochemicals have affected reservoirs and other water sources. Plus, there are thought to be natural gas reserves in the area, and Mexican law is being updated to allow for U.S. companies to use fracking.

## **What has land degradation meant for poverty and hunger in the area?**

We lost our organic matter in the soil and became poor. With no grass growing, cattle ranchers are now forced to buy costly inputs such as hay, minerals, protein blocks and so on. This means less money in people's pockets. Because of the lack of soil organic matter, whatever rain that falls does not infiltrate and nourish the land. This creates yet more erosion and a spiral of droughts every year.

## **Who suffers?**

Most of the land in this area are the *ejidos*, communal properties given to people for agricultural use as part of land reforms after the Mexican Revolution. People from the *ejidos* are migrating to the cities, because the land has desertified. Many end up working in U.S. manufacturing plants in Chihuahua City at minimum wage.

A few *ejidatarios* are able to get seasonal jobs at nearby Mennonite farms.

## **Your ranch has been described as “an island of grass.” What are you doing differently?**

A few of us ranchers are practicing holistic management as a means of turning degraded land into grasslands, and it is working. Animals are moved from paddock to paddock according to a plan. There's a blueprint, but one that's continually amended according to evolving conditions, like temperature, rainfall and other variables. Healthy grassland is all about the movement

of the animals, just as herds of bison and pronghorn antelope kept moving when this land was wild.

The key is to ensure that every part of the ranch receives sufficient rest as well as optimal animal impact.

## **But many say that animals ruined the land in the first place.**

Grasslands without animals die. Cows fertilize the soil with their manure and the litter they press in with their hooves. This waste in turn feeds the microorganisms that help plants access nutrition from the soil. Removing cattle from land takes away this



Bulls browse and graze at Alejandro Carrillo's Las Damas Ranch. Healthy grassland, where there is no bare soil, is all about the movement of the animals, Carrillo said.



PHOTO BY TONY EPRILE

Ranch foreman Manuel Gutierrez, a Rarámuri Indian, moves cattle. In healthy grasslands, the soil is covered with no bare spots.

unique fertilizer machine provided by nature. Too much impact is also bad, as when cattle remain in one place and graze plants down to the roots, eventually killing the grasses. On many properties in our area we have both problems simultaneously.

What's important is to keep water on the land, which means more stable soil and more forage. The more organic matter in the soil, the more water is retained. In our desert grasslands, most of the organic matter comes from the grass's roots. Each time a cow grazes, part of the root system is sloughed off to become organic matter. This dynamic explains why arid zones benefit from grazing animals.

We're seeing the land rebound so that there is plenty of grass for cattle, our cattle are healthy, and we're able to tap into the growing market for grass-fed beef. Others, including our neighbors, complain that there's not enough rain. But those of us who manage holistically somehow seem to have plenty of rain.

### **So you are able to make a living as a rancher while other operations fail?**

This type of management works for both the commodity and the grass-fed market, as the cost of producing a pound of beef is much less than with traditional ranching. This is because we focus on working in sync with nature: building organic matter; calving in August, when there's tall, green grass to protect the young and feed the mother; and working on genetics so our stock are adapted to their environment, instead of creating a more expensive artificial environment for cattle.

### **Speaking of nature, I understand that conservation organizations see in holistically managed ranches new hope for endangered species.**

Yes, we are working with international organizations, such as the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and American Bird Conservancy, as well as Pronatura in Mexico, to create a



biological corridor for migratory grassland birds. Such birds, including certain sparrows once common in the Great Plains, have dropped in numbers. In some species that spent the winter in the Chihuahuan Desert we've lost more than 80 percent. The birds need grass and seeds, and we have that. The ranch is like a magnet for birds. The researchers saw that what's good forage for cattle is good habitat for birds.

### **How might restorative grazing alleviate poverty in the area?**

Our soil has been mined for several generations now, and there's little left to harvest. As a result, we're losing our young people. We can change that. We can rebuild our ranching communities to be sustainable, profitable and fun for us and for those who follow. It all comes down to the fertility of the soil. If my ranch has great cows on poor soil, I'll surely lose money. With average cows on good soil I'd likely make a good living. Our desert is very delicate. But if you do the right things it responds, beautifully.

### **It sounds like what's good for nature is also good for people.**

Each and every living organism on our land is important. The more the better. We've decided to help protect the migratory birds as they are a good indicator of the health of our grasslands. Diverse, deep-rooted grasses are not merely good for animal health—they enhance the water cycle, which means resilience to floods and droughts as well as protection against soil erosion. Also, birds are pollinators, and certain plants depend on birds to transport or break open seeds with their beaks. Everything is connected and works together. If we listen and are observant, nature will teach us how to best manage our land. ■

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**JUDITH D. SCHWARTZ** is the author of *Cows Save the Planet: And Other Improbable Ways of Restoring Soil to Heal the Earth*. Read her World Ark interview here: [www.heifer.org/soilhealth](http://www.heifer.org/soilhealth)

## **HEIFER CEO, DIRECTORS WEIGH A SAVORY SOLUTION TO DESERTIFICATION**

**H**eifer International leaders and biologist and holistic rancher Allan Savory met in September to discuss potential soil and water solutions in Africa's semi-arid Sahel region.

Savory's eponymous institute and his Africa Centre for Holistic Management in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, promote large-scale restoration of grasslands through holistic management. Their pioneering livestock management methods are restoring degraded watersheds and croplands to health around the globe, including in Mexico's Chihuahua grasslands.

Heifer's President and CEO Pierre Ferrari, West Africa Regional Director Rashid Sesay and Senegal Director Abdoul Gueye visited Savory at his ranch in Zimbabwe to explore potential innovations to protect vulnerable habitats in the Sahel, where climate change and poor herd management are causing desertification.

"It's difficult to find an approach in the Sahel that can be replicated at scale that has not already been tried and failed," Ferrari said. "The Savory model is about soil health, soil fertility and grassland restoration, which leads to growth of nourishing livestock forage all year long which for families leads to better livelihoods: better nutrition, better income from sale of animals all year around."

Ferrari said that one of the criticisms of Savory's approach, which involves moving livestock frequently for the best mix of waste and trampling from the herds to improve soil in arid or semi-arid climates, concerns implementation.

"How can it be done in a community as opposed to a single land-holding situation? That's what we hope to experiment with in one of our projects in the Sahel, most likely in Senegal," Ferrari said.

Sesay said of the visit to Savory's ranch, "We witnessed an incredible demonstration of holistic soil management, which in my view is worth delving into deeper, especially as it relates to Heifer's work in dry land and infertile soils."

Watch Savory's TED talk at [www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com) to learn more about his holistic management model.

For a full feature on Savory and his work by Cows Save the Planet author Judith Schwartz, go to [www.heifer.org/worldark](http://www.heifer.org/worldark) or download our free World Ark tablet app. Schwartz's feature will also be published in the Spring 2015 print edition of World Ark magazine in February.



*Eufemia Esperilla Leon, president of the artisan group Tres Alpaquitas, holds up an example of the traditional handicrafts the women make from scratch.*

BY AUSTIN BAILEY, WORLD ARK SENIOR EDITOR | PHOTOS BY LILY PIEL

# FROM PERU, WITH LOVE



ALPACA FARMERS AND ARTISANS IN THE ANDES JOIN THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE TO SHARE THEIR UNIQUE GIFTS WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD AND TO MAKE THEIR LIVES IN THE MOUNTAINS A LITTLE BIT EASIER.





*Alpacas in the Peruvian Andes stay warm thanks to their fluffy fleece, which is shorn each summer. At right, Julia Monroy Rojas displays handwoven blankets at a local fair.*



Should you ever visit Julia Monroy Rojas of Lacco, Peru, the journey will be grueling, but worth your while. Monroy lives high in the Altiplano, on a rocky band that sits below the snowcaps but far above the tree line. The region is vast but not lonely; herds of llamas and alpacas cling to the brittle mountainsides, and sheep and horses stubbornly clog dirt roads. A sparse but steady stream of foot traffic connects the high communities with the district seat of Marcapata, nearly 3,000 feet below.

All paved roads in these parts end at the town of Marcapata, a few mountains away from Monroy's perch. She can tackle the steep and winding climb from town back home in four hours or so, despite her flimsy sandals and a fully-packed *qeperina* sack slung over her shoulders. But flatlanders unaccustomed to rigorous hiking in thin air shouldn't try to keep up. Monroy's house sits up a bit higher than



Sabina Huillca Monroy,  
secretary of Tres  
Alpaquitas, displays  
the felt bags that are the  
group's specialty. Photo  
by Susan Williamson.





*Alpacas sun themselves. At right, Julia Monroy Rojas demonstrates the magical skill of spinning wool by hand.*

14,000 feet, nearly three times as high as Denver, the Mile High City. So unless you tackled Mount Everest recently, you'll need a truck, a fearless driver and quite possibly an oxygen tank. The equator is only a dozen degrees away, but the altitude in Lacco demands warm sweaters and above-average lung capacity.

Monroy has those things, but not much else. Broad-chested and under 5 feet tall, her strong but slight build that's ubiquitous among indigenous Andean peoples is ideal on steep slopes. And her growing flocks of alpaca and sheep allow her to keep her family bundled in thick blankets and clothing made from wool she sheared, spun, and weaved or knit herself.

Like the other members of Tres Alpaquitas, a cooperative of alpaca farmers and artisans in the Marcapata district, Monroy learned to knit and weave in the distinctive Andean style from parents and neighbors. These skills, combined with the know-how to cultivate potatoes and other high-altitude

crops, have helped families eke out a bare-bones existence in the remote Peruvian highlands for centuries.

Today, though, life on the mountain is changing. The Interoceanic Highway, a ribbon of blacktop that rolls from the Peruvian coast through the Brazilian Amazon, was finished in 2011. A section of it slithers through the Marcapata District, beckoning the outside world closer and bearing hints of easier, more comfortable lives lived elsewhere. Like many of the young people raised in high Andean communities, Monroy's four oldest children left home in search of education and jobs. They wanted money, Monroy said. And on the mountain, there is none.

"They told me, 'We don't want to stay here and eat alpaca bones,'" she said.

So as manpower trickles out of these communities on the backs of young people, and as climate change makes raising crops and animals on the mountains even more challenging, Heifer is stepping in to help with intensive values-based



*A boy herds alpacas and llamas during the annual fiber festival in Lacco, Peru. Caring for the herds is a family affair.*

training that builds community unity. By increasing the size and quality of alpaca herds, providing improved equipment to process alpaca fiber and connecting uniquely talented Peruvian artisans to strong markets for their products, Heifer aims to help highland communities stoke the economic momentum they need to not just survive, but live well.

## **A DAY'S WORK**

For people living without electricity and other modern conveniences, schedules are dictated largely by weather and the sun. Monroy is usually the first to wake at her house, a thatch-roofed rock and mud structure about a half-hour climb from the village proper. She rises at 4 a.m. each day, not really so early considering the pitch darkness chases her to bed by 7 p.m. most nights.

Some of Monroy's days are devoted to tending her potato patch, others to cooking and weaving. Her son Alberto, not yet 3, toddles along to help tend the family's nine laying hens, gifts from Heifer International. Once a week or so she hikes

out to harvest trout from a pond stocked with fingerlings from Heifer. The chicken eggs and trout significantly improve the family's diet, which was limited before largely to potatoes and an occasional meal of alpaca meat. As their fortunes improved, the family built a greenhouse so they can eat and sell fresh vegetables.

"Before we had the trout and chickens it was definitely harder," she said in Quechua, an indigenous language that's still the most prominent tongue in highland communities.

The most promising benefit from Heifer, however, is still in the works. In 2011, Heifer started a project to help 4,333 alpaca-raising families throughout the Peruvian Andes. In the districts of Marcapata, Ocongate and Pitumarca, Heifer aims to improve the alpaca gene pool to produce softer, finer fiber of consistent color that has the potential to command significantly higher prices. Heifer is also supporting the artisan group Tres Alpaquitas and others with equipment and training so they can improve the yarn and handicrafts they produce and get them out to buyers who will pay good prices.

*Julia Monroy Rojas tests the strength of a thread she spun from an alpaca fleece from her own herd.*





*Artisans in Pitumarca, Peru, learn to use spinning machines to make more yarn, more quickly. Photo by Bryan Clifton*

Building this new income source is particularly important as life in the Andes becomes less predictable, said Oscar Aragon, head of Heifer Peru's Cusco office. "We're struggling with how to face climate change," he said. "It's causing lack of water in the mountains, desertification, higher temperatures in the summer, lower temperatures that kill animals in the winter. In the last year there was not enough rain, and cold snaps were more frequent."

Heavy rains fell during harvest season, an anomaly that caused potato crops to rot, he said. While many people are leaving the highlands to look for work in the city, Aragon hopes to help those who stay find ways to cope. Andean people offer skills and goods no one else can, and those unique resources, especially the alpaca, will be the crux of development in the region. "They can feel proud because it's a resource to the world that is so big and precious," Aragon said.

Monroy devotes lots of time to caring for the dozens of alpacas that live in a large pen spreading up the slope behind her house. She gives all her animals names like Spot and Pink Ears, and she feeds them oats and other fodder to supplement what the alpacas munch when they roam free from 6 a.m. to around 4 p.m. each day.

All of that attention is starting to pay off. The youngest alpacas have better fleece after two seasons of strategic breeding and improved fodder, Monroy said, softer and not as thick. Aragon is far from satisfied though, and suspects it will take a few years to achieve the results he wants. Luckily, highland alpaca breeders are getting help from other places, too. The national and local governments are planning to fund a center for alpaca crafts and breeding to help Monroy and other artisans improve the fiber their animals yield at their annual shearings. The center will also help artisans

polish their skills to better craft blankets, clothing and other woollens with the quality and appeal to sell overseas.

After serving a typical lunch of golf ball-sized, skin-on boiled potatoes piled high, Monroy put on an impromptu fashion show of the products she made on a loom fashioned from three sticks poked into the ground. With no electricity, no windows and only a tiny door, the interior of her house is dim even at midday. Still, the high-contrast patterns of her weavings stand out. Shy at first, Monroy gained confidence as she went along, eventually modeling a poncho made of brightly colored sheep's wool, tightly woven to be water resistant. "This would be good to go to a party in the rain," she said, practicing her already charming salesmanship.

Her charm goes on display again later in the day, as a judge inspects a selection of her handicrafts at the annual livestock festival in Lacco. Monroy shakes his hand and won't let go, dazzling him with small talk. A few minutes later, though, while demonstrating the seemingly magical skill of spinning yarn from fleece using only a handheld spindle, Monroy breaks her strand and has to repair it. "I am a bad woman," she says, deflated.

Part of Heifer's work in Lacco and other highland communities is to boost women's leadership skills and self-confidence to help them succeed in the marketplace. Extreme modesty handicaps women like Monroy, who seem genuinely unaware of their talents and contributions.

## A HIVE OF INDUSTRY

Roxanne Gonzalez Mamani is dewy and out of breath when she trips into the workshop of Tres Alpaquitas a few minutes after 9 a.m. She left her home in the highland community of Huayllapata at 4 a.m. to make the now familiar commute. Gonzalez is a master at classifying alpaca fibers, and her expertise is in high demand. She makes the five-hour trek to the workshop on the outskirts of Marcapata twice a week.

The cramped but sunny room Tres Alpaquitas rents for workshop space is on the second floor of a building owned by the municipal government of Marcapata. Scales, spinning machines and other equipment bump against each other inside, but when the weather is good Gonzalez and the other artisans spill out to the cement courtyard. Gonzalez picks a shady corner to spread out a mountain of brown alpaca fiber

and separate it by grade.

There are six different grades of alpaca fiber. The softest is "royal," and it comes from the very first shearing of a baby alpaca. Alpaca graded "baby" is the next softest. With good breeding and care, even adult alpacas can produce fibers fine and soft enough to earn "baby" status. From there the grades become more coarse and scratchy. Soft fiber is best for clothes, while coarse fiber works well for blankets and rugs, Gonzalez explained.

Once separated by grade and hand-washed in large buckets, Tres Alpaquitas members consider the color. Often they choose to capitalize on alpacas' natural color variants to produce white, cream, brown, gray and black yarn. Other times, they use natural dyes to produce brightly colored yarn and felt. Berries from the indigo plant yield blue dye; insects called cochineal are used for red. Yellow dye comes from chilka, a flowering plant that grows wild in the region.

A carding machine is the next step, to brush the fibers in one direction and untangle it for spinning. Carding machines are expensive, so Tres Alpaquitas members pay to use one that belongs to someone else. They're saving money to buy their own, and hope to also be able to build their own workshop in which to house it. They hope someday to have more room to work and display their finished products. For now, Tres Alpaquitas members do much of their weaving and knitting at home. They use the workshop for meetings and to spin yarn or make the felted wool bags and jewelry that are their specialty. Workshop hours also provide the women a rare chance to leave their isolated homesteads and spend time together.

Helena Sanga Condemayta, a farmer and mother of four, practiced a lot before she mastered the spinning machines that line the walls of the workshop. "The machine is a great help. It's much faster and makes much better yarn," she said, demonstrating how quickly she can spin both fine threads and thicker ones. Sanga is happiest when she's working with Tres Alpaquitas, and hopes that sales will pick up enough that she can give up farming for full-time fiber work. "I want to do this, I want to work and improve and be able to sell," she said.

## MOUNTAINS LEFT TO CLIMB

The members of Tres Alpaquitas know they have some


obstacles to tackle to make their business successful. Only one of the women speaks Spanish in addition to the local Quechua, so communicating with people from outside the Andes region is difficult. It's challenging, living in an isolated region, to know what styles will sell in larger cities and overseas. Sometimes buyers reject their products, and they don't know what to do differently to make them more marketable.

A tiny shop Tres Alpaquitas runs in Marcapata's town square gets little foot traffic, and sales to this point have been slow, Amanda Guerra Macedo said. "I'm frustrated because I have made these things and haven't sold them," she said, pulling a heap of knitted hats from a bag. Patterned with cables and bobbles, the hats are soft and all one of a kind. Many of the women in the cooperative can't read, and the patterns aren't written down anywhere, anyway, so every piece is unique. How do the women end up with symmetrical designs and a good fit with no charts or measurements to go by? "I just look at it and I do it," Guerra explained with a shrug.

Eufemia Esperilla Leon, a 29-year-old mother of one and president of Tres Alpaquitas, said she's confident the group will

eventually work out the kinks and succeed. Because Internet access is extremely spotty in Marcapata, Esperilla travels to Cusco at least once a month to check email and update the website and Facebook page for Tres Alpaquitas. She and other members traveled to Lima for Peru Moda, the country's annual fashion exhibit, and plan to go again each year. In five years or so they may even take to the catwalk to put on a show of their own.

Sales will pick up soon because the women of Tres Alpaquitas are eager to put in the hours and sweat it takes to succeed, Esperilla said. The quality of fiber and workmanship continues to improve as cooperative members improve the care and breeding of their animals and come to trainings to polish their needlework skills. Importers from France, England, Switzerland and the United States are showing interest in selling their work, which is giving the artisans a shot of hope, confidence and renewed determination. The only piece missing is the point of sale.

"We will go forward because I will go everywhere," Esperilla said. "Whatever the association needs, I do." 

## High Tech

The women artisans Heifer partners with in the Peruvian Andes need more than looms and knitting needles to get their work out to the rest of the world. Cameras, computers and a good Internet connection are proving to be equally as important.

Heifer provides training and equipment to help women's groups improve how they market their goods. Artisans can promote their work online and also surf the web to pick up new techniques and designs.

Two of the cooperatives, Tres Alpaquitas and Natural Pacha, have Facebook pages to showcase their work. Members of Tres Alpaquitas also post videos, photos, product information and artist bios to their website, [www.heifer.org/tresalpaquitas](http://www.heifer.org/tresalpaquitas). They hope to be able to sell their products online soon.

You can help the alpaca breeders and artisans in Peru make the most of their resources by buying their products or donating to Heifer International.



# SHOP NOW

## EMPOWER PERUVIAN ARTISANS

When you buy these one-of-a-kind items, you'll be supporting Heifer International alpaca farmers and artisans in the Peruvian Andes.

The artisans of Tres Alpaquitas craft their products by hand, using fiber from alpacas they raise and shear themselves.

Quantities are limited, so order early.



SCARVES  
**\$57**



HATS  
**\$27-\$36**



GLOVES  
**\$30**

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*All of the items above are rated "baby" alpaca fiber qualities, which is a very high grade.  
| No chemical color dyes were used, only the natural color from each bred-with-care  
Heifer alpaca. | Original washing of fibers is only from Marcapata hot springs water.*

To support more women artisans in Peru and Bolivia,  
browse Pages 29-41 to buy a llama or alpaca, invest  
in a business startup, or empower women.

# BUFEA



# LO BENEFITS



Water buffalo calves adorned in wreaths wait for the festivities to begin in Aschileu, Romania. They were celebrated guests of honor in the community's Passing on the Gift ceremony.

**Water buffalo have a history in rural Transylvanian villages, where they provide nutritious milk and draft power.**

By **KATYA CENGEL**, *World Ark* contributor

Photos by **GEOFF OLIVER BUGBEE**



**SCHILEU, Romania**—Ioan and Felicia Giloan, parents of nine children, had a difficult choice to make the Christmas of 2009. With no ready cash, the couple sold their only water buffalo so they could buy Christmas presents.

Luckily the following year they received a water buffalo through Heifer Romania. The gift was part of a project covering the Romanian region of Aschileu, where they live, and the nearby Hungarian village of Mera. The area is notable for its strong faith and deep poverty. Here in rural Transylvania, religious icons decorate most homes and yards. Indoor toilets and central heating are rare, and children wanting education beyond elementary school must travel to the nearest city of Cluj-Napoca.

The main room of the Giloan home in Aschileu features worn rugs and purple walls. The windows are cracked and covered with tape, and the only heat comes from a wood stove with a pipe going out of the wall. The third oldest of 10 children, Ioan stopped school in the equivalent of fourth grade to help support his family. He would like his children to finish high school, but his oldest two daughters went no further than he did. Bianca, who is 17, made it to eighth grade. But there is no high school in their village and the family doesn't have the money to pay for her to stay in Cluj-Napoca while attending school. Bianca spent four months last summer picking mushrooms. She gave most of the \$300 she earned to her mother.

Ioan (in hat) and Felicia Giloan (in headscarf) and their children and grandchild pose with their water buffalo, Florida, at their home in Aschileu, Romania. The family's nutrition has improved from the milk and dairy products Florida produces.





The Passing on the Gift ceremony in Aschileu, Romania, featured speeches (at left), and cultural dancing (above).



(At left) Water buffalo farmers Ioan Sârbu and wife Daniela Sârbu pass on to a new family in the community. Calves (at right) travel home with their new families after the ceremony.



"I'd like to go abroad to work because the money here is without value and the work is very, very hard," she said.

Although Romania joined the European Union in 2007, it is still playing catch-up with its western neighbors, especially in the rural areas that account for half the country, said Heifer Romania Country Director Ovidiu Spinu.

Many do go abroad for work. Many of those who remain make their living in agriculture. Ioan is a herdsman, earning \$2,500 from April to September looking after his neighbors' cows and water buffalo. During winter, the family's only income comes from the little that Ioan makes chopping wood and the \$12 a month the state provides for each child, a benefit extended to all families. If it weren't for the milk from their water buffalo, the family's diet would consist mainly of the potatoes and vegetables they grow.

Water buffalo have long been a feature in Transylvanian villages, one of the few places in Europe where they have a history, Spinu said. Their advantages over cows are many: they live

longer, are not so particular about what they eat and are more resistant to disease. The milk they produce is rich and low in cholesterol. They also provide draft power.

But the animals fell out of favor in the region after the fall of communism, when farmers received better subsidies from cow milk. Romania's entry into the EU in 2007 saw more favorable subsidies and flexible quantity and quota regulations for water buffalo milk. Heifer Romania seized on the opportunity and began the water buffalo revitalization program with World Vision Romania in 2010. The program split the two deliveries of 36 water buffalo it made in 2010 and 2011 between Mera and Aschileu. Both regions have a tradition of working with water buffalo. But Mera is a Hungarian village with a different language and culture than the Aschileu region, which is primarily Romanian.

"If you are different and isolated you could hate each other," Spinu said. "But if you are working together, if you are celebrating together, you start to respect each other."



Emil Ioan Oifalean, his wife, Marinela, and their son Emanuel, age 11, received their buffalo from Heifer Romania in 2010. They passed on a gift of a calf at the ceremony.

Farkas Doroghi is one of the few Hungarians who lives in Aschileu. Before the Heifer project the two groups did not fight, but they also did not mix, he said. A veterinarian assistant, Doroghi regularly holds informative meetings in his home on subjects relating to the care of water buffalo. When Heifer provided alfalfa seeds for the water buffalo, Doroghi taught Hungarian and Romanian recipients where to plant the alfalfa and how to use it as fodder.

"Now we have a subject in common, and I think we communicate more," he said of the two groups.

Several Mera residents were spotted at the program's first Pass on the Gift ceremony in Aschileu last year. The cold weather, with a mix of rain and snow, dictated mud boots and heavy sweaters for the men and headscarves for the women. Someone strung wreaths of fake red flowers around the necks of the six water buffalo calves. Schoolchildren braved the cold to receive a goody bag from the mayor. When it was all over, the recipients tied their calves to the backs of their horse-drawn carts and rode away.

Emil Ioan Oifalean left with one less water buffalo, having passed on his calf as a gift to another family in need. He used to work with the Hungarian residents of Mera, and he admires their skill in making sour cream and raising water buffalo, something they are more experienced at than those like himself who live in Aschileu.

"With this water buffalo thing we could say that Mera could become our big brother because they have a better tradition in water buffalo," he said.

A familial relationship is exactly what Spinu hopes for in these villages and the other villages where Heifer is present. He believes that now that the farmers are working for themselves and not for an anonymous state, like under communism, they work harder. As their situations continue to improve, their generosity through Heifer's Passing on the Gift practice serves as a model for other families and villages.

"So we are creating some islands," Spinu said. "But our islands of normal life are growing and growing. And I hope one day these islands will be united in the happy world." ■

Special 2014  
Holiday Edition

# THE MOST IMPORTANT GIFT CATALOG IN THE WORLD



**HEIFER**<sup>®</sup>  
INTERNATIONAL



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### Table of Contents

Honor Cards.....	31
Heifers.....	32
Goats.....	32
Chicks .....	33
Flock of Hope .....	33
Llamas .....	34
Sheep.....	34
Knitter's Gift Basket.....	34
Tree Seedlings.....	35
Honeybees.....	35
Water Buffalo.....	36
Biogas Stoves .....	36
Pigs.....	37
Irrigation Pumps.....	37
Clean Water .....	37
Rabbits.....	38
Hope Basket.....	38
Ducks and Geese .....	38
Gift Ark.....	39
Women's Empowerment.....	40
Joy to the World Basket .....	40
Send a Girl to School .....	40
3 Schools of Fish.....	41
Beehives .....	41

Catalog photos by Olivier Asselin, Geoff Oliver Bugbee, Amy Davenport, Jake Lyell, Russell Powell, Dero Sanford and Don Chambers. Images and stories in this catalog represent the work of Heifer International since 2000 to present.

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As a generous supporter of Heifer International, you already know how good it feels to give someone a gift that will forever change their life.



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# Say Happy Holidays *with a Heifer*

There are so many wonderful reasons to give a heifer and training in its care this holiday season! Daily milk can quickly nurse a malnourished child back to health.

Income from milk sales provides necessities like food, clothes, school fees and medicine.

Plus, it will feel so good to show someone special just how much you care by giving them the gift of a heifer this holiday season.

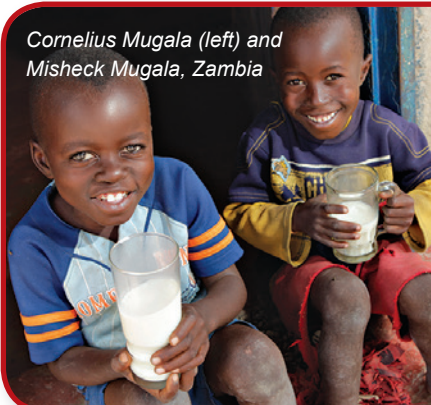
## Gift of a Heifer \$500 Share of a Heifer \$50

Double your gift. Visit [www.heifer.org/matching](http://www.heifer.org/matching) to find out if your company will match your original Heifer donation.



Mossamat, from Bangladesh, is so grateful for the heifer she received from supporters like you and can't wait to Pass on the Gift of a calf to another family in need.

Cornelius Mugala (left) and  
Misheck Mugala, Zambia



The gift of a Milk Menagerie represents a quality-breed heifer, two goats and a water buffalo—four milk-producing animals that provide hardworking families with the startup capital to provide a better life for their children.

Each animal in this Menagerie will produce gallon after gallon of wonderful, life-sustaining milk that can be sold or turned into cheese and yogurt for additional income. Plus, each animal's offspring will multiply your impact even further through Passing on the Gift.

**Milk  
Menagerie  
\$1,000**

**Share of a Milk  
Menagerie \$100**

## Gifts of Goats *Bring Hope*

The gift of dairy goats from Heifer International will be at the top of so many holiday wish lists this year—and for good reason!

By providing up to a gallon of rich, nutritious milk each day, a good dairy goat boosts both income and nutrition. Plus, families can use goat manure to fertilize their fields and improve their harvests.

With so many life-changing benefits, it's easy to see why the gift of a goat is a gift of hope.

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



Tanazios Manuel Tobias, from Malawi, has so many reasons to smile ever since his family received their goat from a Heifer supporter.





*In Bangladesh, Rokomuzzaman Tuhin no longer faces a lifetime of hunger thanks to the starter flock of 10 chicks his aunt received from Heifer supporters like you.*

## Chicks Bring *Holiday Cheers*

Every egg is a nutritious gift for a hungry child. Plus, egg sales can quickly translate into clothing, medicine, home improvements, drinking wells and school fees.

And since a good hen can lay more than 200 eggs a year, the gift of a starter flock of 10 to 50 chicks and training in their care is an especially meaningful way to celebrate the giving spirit of the holiday season.

Show someone special how much you care this holiday season by giving the gift of chicks from Heifer International.



**Flock of  
Chicks \$20**



*In Armenia, Marietta's egg business is thriving thanks to a helping hand from Heifer supporters. "At some point she became the most reliable supplier of eggs, so all the neighbors started buying from her," says Marietta's grandmother proudly.*

**Flock of Hope  
\$60**



*Heifer offers resources for faith communities to deepen their understanding of giving to those in need. Find out more at [www.heifer.org/faith](http://www.heifer.org/faith).*

# Llamas make an *Especially Uplifting Gift*

What better way to share your warmest holiday wishes with those you love than with a llama!

Heifer International provides llamas and their kin, the alpaca, to families living at high altitudes in the Andes Mountains of South America where few animals can withstand the harsh conditions.

Their wool is dense, warm and more soft than sheep wool—making it possible for our project families to earn a steady living by either selling the wool or making clothes and blankets.

That's why the gift of llamas is such an uplifting way to celebrate the holidays!

**Gift of a Llama \$150**  
**Share of a Llama \$20**



*Eloy Mamani, from Bolivia, seems to have a permanent smile ever since he received the gift of llamas from Heifer International supporters.*

## Gifts of Sheep are a *Shear Delight*

In addition to keeping your loved ones warm this winter with a new wool sweater, mittens or scarf, we invite you to warm their hearts with the gift of sheep from Heifer International.

Sheep provide families with high-quality wool, and their milk is wonderfully rich and nutritious. Plus, because of Passing on the Gift, your impact will grow and grow.

That's why the gift of sheep is such a meaningful way to celebrate the holiday season.



*The income her family earns from selling wool will give Suori Erzuo, in China, an opportunity to achieve her full potential.*

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



Over the years, mom has knitted everything from warm wool sweaters to stylish mittens and scarves. Now you'd like to give her something just as meaningful in return.

**Our Knitter's Basket is just what you've been looking for!**

It includes four of our fuzzy friends that provide families with ample wool and endless opportunity to build better lives: a llama, an alpaca, a sheep and an angora rabbit.

**Knitter's Gift Basket**  
**\$480**

**Share of Knitter's Basket \$48**

# The Gift of Trees is a *Holiday Tradition That's Taking Root*

The gift of trees is a gift you and your loved ones can share with the entire planet.

That's because a family with a small orchard or grove can supply their own fodder or firewood, sell fruit or nuts and begin saving to build a new house or pay for a child's education. Plus, tree roots hold together topsoil and lock in moisture and nutrients.

So help a meaningful holiday tradition take root this year by giving the gift of trees from Heifer.

## **Gift of Tree Seedlings \$60** **Share of Tree Seedlings \$10**

*Double your gift.*

Visit [www.heifer.org/matching](http://www.heifer.org/matching) to find out if your company will match your original Heifer donation.



Thanks to the gift of papaya trees from Heifer supporters like you, Mira Sunwar's family in Nepal can now earn income to provide her with basic necessities.



Beekeeper families sell honey to provide children like little Jose Deras, from Honduras, with a better future.

## *Sweeten your Holidays with Honeybees*

Here's a holiday gift that's getting a lot of buzz this year: the gift of honeybees from Heifer International.

Your gift will help provide bees, a box and hive, plus training in beekeeping to a struggling family.

By pollinating crops, a healthy beehive can double fruit and vegetable yields. And income from the sale of honey, wax and pollen can be put toward food, clothing, medicine and education.

That's why the gift of honeybees from Heifer will make your holiday season even sweeter.

## **Gift of Honeybees \$30**



For most families in the places where Heifer works, cooking usually requires gathering firewood by hand, and often leads to soil depletion and deforestation. Smoke inhalation in poorly ventilated homes can cause chronic respiratory and eye diseases.

But a biogas stove burns methane gas captured from animal waste. It burns cleanly, reliably, efficiently and is healthier for both people and our planet.



*Ashu Gaga, from China, shows off her biogas stove that allows her to cook for her family without using firewood or filling her home with smoke. The methane gas from animal dung burns cleanly, reliably and efficiently.*

**Biogas Stoves  
for a Village  
\$1,000**

**Gift of Biogas  
Stove \$50**



*The Porjai children, Sunee, Suchart and Daaprasuk, enjoy caring for the water buffalo their family received thanks to generous Heifer supporters.*

## Make a Big Splash with the *Gift of a Water Buffalo*

If you're looking for a gift that will make a BIG splash this holiday season, look no further than these gentle giants.

Water buffalo provide rich, nutritious milk for families to drink, sell or make into cheese. And farmers with water buffalo can plant four times more rice with a water buffalo than by hand—generating more income to use for clothing, medicine, school and home improvements.

That's why water buffalo will be at the top of so many wish lists this holiday season!



**Gift of a  
Water Buffalo \$250**

**Share of a  
Water Buffalo \$25**

*Double your gift. Visit [www.heifer.org/matching](http://www.heifer.org/matching) to find out if your company will match your original Heifer donation.*

# Pigs make the *Perfect Presents*

The gift of pigs will leave your loved ones squealing with delight!

Pigs are a great fit for smallholder farmers worldwide because they don't need a lot of land and can thrive on a family's extra food scraps and garden byproducts.

In turn, pigs provide a steady supply of organic manure to fertilize their crops in a sustainable way. And because a sow can produce up to 16 piglets a year, entire communities can be transformed through Passing on the Gift.

So this holiday season, give a gift that friends, family or co-workers will go hog-wild over!

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



*With his family's future now secure, Teerawat Pitakprasi, from Thailand, decided to use his profits from selling pigs to start a school for at-risk youth. "Now that my life has improved, I want to encourage young people to improve their life," said Teerawat.*



In the impoverished communities where Heifer works, many of the homes lack running water and some families do not have a well nearby. Instead, they must spend each day carrying water. This is often a chore left to the children—especially girls—leaving no time for school. This is one burden we can easily lift by helping families and communities install irrigation pumps.

**Irrigation Pumps \$150**

*With the pump they received from Heifer, Felix Mwava and his sister Shaebyna can water their crops on their farm in Zambia even if the rains don't come.*



Millions of people around the world still lack access to clean drinking water.

Heifer helps many families install treadle pumps, practice water conservation and use organic fertilizers to protect drinking water to improve their health.

**Gift of Clean Water \$300**

# Say “Hoppy” Holidays with a *Gift of Rabbits*

Giving the gift of rabbits is a surefire way to put a hop in the step of someone special!

Rabbits are easy to raise and their manure can be applied directly to gardens without composting so they begin making an impact the day they arrive.

And because rabbits quickly multiply, so too will the impact of your gift as families Pass on the Gift.

**Trio of Rabbits \$60**  
**Share of Rabbits \$10**



*Enithe Luxius, from Haiti, is counting on her Heifer rabbits to help her family recover from a devastating flood that wiped out all their livestock.*

The Hope Basket, with **chickens** and **rabbits**, offers just that to Heifer's project participants. Rabbits are easy to care for and reproduce quickly, allowing their owners to sell the offspring for extra income once they've fulfilled Heifer's Passing on the Gift promise. Chickens lay eggs and provide manure for vegetable gardens. Which is why this gift of hope goes on and on, lasting much longer and helping more families than the usual gift basket ever could.



*Peng Zongyin, from China, now has hope for her future thanks to the rabbits she received from Heifer supporters like you.*

**Hope  
Basket \$50**



*Thanks to a helping hand from Heifer supporters, Son Sinath, has increased her family's income and knows her children have a bright future. "I can afford to send them to school," she says proudly.*

## Honk if you Love this Gift Idea: *Ducks and Geese*

Because millions of children around the world rely on eggs from ducks and geese instead of chickens for protein, these fine-feathered friends make an especially meaningful holiday gift.

And before long, families can sell extra eggs and offspring to purchase food, clothes, medicine and pay for school fees.

That's why so many people will be flocking to give the gift of ducks and geese this holiday season.

**Flock of Ducks  
and Geese \$20**



# Changing the World *Two by Two*

The Heifer Gift Ark goes around the world—Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Wherever we find hunger, poverty and hopelessness, we answer with Heifer animals and training.

What does this generous gift mean? It means ... oxen, donkeys and water buffalo ... cows, sheep and goats ... even bees, chicks and rabbits and more ... healthy, hardy livestock that will go forth and multiply, improving lives for countless families and children, and passing on your spirit of faith and charity over and over again to places in the world where your generosity, kindness and vision are needed most.

The Heifer Gift Ark is a great challenge for your company, civic group, club or congregation. To find out more about giving a gift to Heifer International during this holiday season, please call **877.4HUNGER (877.448.6437)** ... and say, *“I want to help change the world.”*



**Gift of an Ark**  
**\$5,000**



## **2 Cows**

To bring milk and income to a village in Armenia.



## **2 Sheep**

To help families in China produce wool.



## **2 Oxen**

To pull plows and carts in Uganda.



## **2 Water Buffalo**

To help families in the Philippines increase rice production through animal draft power.



## **2 Pigs**

To enable families in Vietnam to attain greater self-reliance.



## **2 Beehives**

To help families in Guatemala earn money through the sale of honey and beeswax.



## **2 Goats**

To help families in Nicaragua provide milk for their children and earn extra income.



## **2 Donkeys**

To supply animal draft power for farmers in Kenya.



## **2 Trios of Ducks**

To help families in Bangladesh generate income through the sale of eggs and birds.



## **2 Trios of Rabbits**

To provide food and income for families in Ghana.



## **2 Trios of Guinea Pigs**

To help families in Ecuador add protein to their diets and increase income.



## **2 Flocks of Geese**

To help families in Georgia better their nutrition and income through the production of eggs and meat.



## **2 Flocks of Chicks**

To help families in Honduras improve nutrition and generate income through the sale of eggs.



## **2 Llamas**

To improve Peruvian families' livestock bloodlines and produce wool and income.



## **2 Schools of Fish**

To help families in Haiti earn income and improve nutrition through fish farming.

To help the greatest number of families move toward self-reliance, Heifer does not use its limited resources to track individual animals from donation to distribution to specific families. Instead, your gift supports the entire Heifer mission. We use your gift where it can do the most good by combining it with the gifts of others to help transform entire communities. Heifer's unique community development model has assisted 20.7 million families directly and indirectly since 1944—105.1 million men, women and children. In fiscal year 2013, a total of 2.1 million families were assisted within the four program areas in which Heifer operates. Heifer International is a 501(c)(3) organization.

# The Gift of Women's Empowerment



*Nsangou Rachidatou, from Cameroon, is quite the businesswoman. Her heifer has been giving her between two and four gallons of milk each day, which her family drinks and turns into yogurt to sell for income.*

**Gift of Women's Empowerment**  
**\$10,000**

**Share of Women's Empowerment \$100**



## Change a Woman's Life and She Will Transform Her Entire Community

Women farmers are the backbone of smallholder agriculture. They make up around 43 percent of the agricultural labor force in developing countries, but they don't have the same access to farming resources as men. Closing this gender gap could mean a reduction in the number of hungry people by as much as 17 percent.

Heifer knows we cannot end extreme global poverty and hunger without unleashing the potential of the world's women.

Your gift of Women's Empowerment will help provide women who have few resources and little self-esteem with the opportunity to become self-reliant leaders. With your help, mothers will be able to afford to send their children to school, pay medical bills and lift their families out of hunger and poverty.

**This is a gift for women worldwide!**

## Joy to the World Gift Basket \$1,500

**Share of Joy to the World Gift Basket \$150**

This gift includes two sheep, four goats, one heifer and two llamas.



*Pooja Kumri, from Shitalpur, India, is the first girl in her family to be able to go to school.*

This gift will provide a family with training and livestock so they can earn the income needed to pay for their daughter's school fees and supplies.

**Send a Girl to School \$275**





## Fishing for the Perfect Gift?

Celebrate the holidays this year with the gift of fish and give new meaning to the old saying, *“Teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime.”*

With well-stocked ponds of fingerlings and training in fish farming techniques, families can quickly increase their daily nutrition and earn income by selling fish.

Plus, as Heifer fish farmers Pass on the Gift of fingerlings to others in their community, the impact of your giving will grow for years to come!



*“We have more money to improve our house and send our children to school,” Pham Thi Nguyen from Vietnam says. “Our children will have a better life.”*

**3 Schools of Fish \$300**  
**Share of Fish \$30**

**DOUBLE YOUR GIFT!**

## Give a Gift With Twice the Impact...*Beehives!*



Thanks to a matching gift opportunity, you can **DOUBLE** the **IMPACT** of your gift this holiday season, up to \$4.4 million, by supporting a Heifer International project in the Americas.

This very special gift offers the unique opportunity to empower smallholder coffee farmers to earn year-round income. With your support, we will help families in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua increase their crop productivity and connect them to markets so they can increase their income. We will also help families diversify their diet, nutrition and revenue by adding livestock such as honeybees to their farms—so they can earn dependable income in the non-coffee selling “thin months.”

**Plus, your gift will ensure that as you sit down to drink your morning coffee, you’re supporting farmers who are getting a fair wage.**

If project requirements change or we raise more than the \$4.4 million in matching funds needed for this project, then gifts will be used wherever most needed.

**Gift of 500 Beehives across the Americas \$15,000**

*(to be matched to help provide 1,000 hives) – a great challenge for your corporation, congregation or civic group.*

**Gift of Four Beehives for a Village \$120**

*(to be matched to help provide 8 hives)*

*A bequest—a gift to Heifer Foundation specified in your will—will give you peace of mind knowing that your support of Heifer’s work of ending hunger and poverty will continue for many years after your lifetime. Providing a gift to Heifer in your will is a way to leave a legacy of helping others and it can also have certain tax benefits for your estate and heirs. Visit [www.heiferfoundation.org](http://www.heiferfoundation.org) for more details.*

# EMERGING FROM THE SHADOWS

For years, Dalia Mukandagijimama, like many others in Rwanda's Eastern Province, lived life in recovery, bearing the scars of unthinkable hardship. A partnership between Heifer Rwanda and Partners in Health joins the forces of health care and nutrition to help Dalia and others like her build thriving and surviving families and communities.



By **FALGUNI VYAS**, *World Ark* contributor  
Photos by **OLIVIER ASSELIN**

Dalia Mukandagijimana, 40, is HIV-positive and uses her bicycle to get to and from doctor's appointments. She and her husband also use their bike to take other patients in their village to the hospital for treatment.

It is estimated that 3.1 percent of the adult population in Rwanda suffers from HIV/AIDS. In the Eastern Province of Rwanda, where Dalia and her family live, prevalence of the disease is 2.5 percent.

**K**ABEZA VILLAGE, Kayonza District, Rwanda—As a storm rolls in, Dalia Mukandagijimama, 40, sits in her quickly darkening living room with her husband, Claudien Mvuyekure, 47, at her side. Their girls, Siveta, 8, and Cynthia, age 3, idly play at their feet.

There is strength in Dalia's warm and smiling eyes. Her voice is weary with the grit of a person who has seen more than one lifetime should allow.

Dalia is the eldest daughter of a Tutsi mother and a Hutu father. Early in the spring of 1994, she was just 20 years old, engaged to Claudien and busy planning an April wedding.

Her father, who had since passed away, left behind three Hutu wives, and her Tutsi mother. Dalia's mother was her father's first wife and the source of much jealousy among the other women. The women fought constantly, mostly because Dalia's stepmothers did not approve of her mother's standing in the family hierarchy. And it was Dalia who had to deal with the brunt of the resentment. Tensions came to a boil when the wedding planning was in full swing. Her stepmothers, along with her stepsiblings, decided to take revenge against Dalia and her mother by ruining her upcoming nuptials. Together, they plotted, and a horrific idea was born.

That March, they hired a group of men to rape her.

Unbeknownst to Dalia, the men were HIV-positive. Dalia didn't have a chance to tell Claudien or really anybody about what had happened to her because not long after her rape, on April 6, 1994, a plane carrying Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, was shot down, commencing one of the bloodiest genocides in recent human history.

Over the course of 100 days, while the world looked away, Hutu extremists committed the systematic slaughter of 800,000 Tutsi men, women, children and moderate Hutus.



The use of rape as a weapon during the 1994 genocide is thought to have played a major role in the spread of the disease and carried a stigma even before the genocide. Victims of rape are often ostracized and seen as unfit to marry. In Rwandan society, a woman's virginity is of utmost importance. It's what differentiates the girls from the women and is very closely guarded. A girl can only become a woman within the confines of marriage. It's how Rwandan women connect themselves to womanhood; many of Rwanda's sexual crimes survivors often believe they have lost their right to an identity.

As the war progressed, Dalia became more and more reluctant to tell Claudien about the men who raped her, not for fear of retaliation or because she thought he would be angry with her, but because she was afraid he would no longer wish to marry her. "Who would marry a raped woman? They are not marriageable," Dalia said. Her voice grew soft as she relived the painful memory from 20 years ago.

Despite her fear of rejection, on April 28th, she found her courage. "I said to him, 'find another bride when the war is over.'" Claudien quickly dismissed the idea and took her away from her home and to his village, where they still live today.



Dalia and her husband, Claudien Mvuyekure, look at old family photographs in their living room.



Once the fighting ended, people all over Rwanda attempted to resume life as usual, including Dalia and Claudien. They decided the best way to begin anew was to start a family.

"I lost four babies all before the age of one," Dalia said. "During my fourth pregnancy, I began noticing strange symptoms."

That was in 2004, 10 years after she was gang raped. She began noticing extreme weakness, purple marks on her arms and general malaise—more so than during her previous pregnancies. The couple decided to make the trip to the local hospital, though they barely had money for the bus fare. The doctors administered multiple rounds of tests, which cost them a total of \$6, a small fortune. Dalia's test results came back and showed that she was HIV-positive. The results also indicated that her CD4 cell count was dangerously low—a normal CD4 cell count is between 500 to 1,000. Hers was somewhere in the double digits.

CD4 cells help determine your body's ability to fight off an infection. The lower your cell count, the more susceptible you are to disease. CD4 cells are the key indicator of HIV and AIDS. Once a person's cell count goes below 200 cells/mm3

in an HIV-positive individual, it means that the disease has progressed to AIDS.

Dalia had AIDS. Further testing proved she had transmitted the disease to Claudien. His CD4 cell count was at 400 cells/mm3, making him HIV-positive.

Dalia was immediately hospitalized. For three weeks, she was under constant (and costly) medical care. "They tried to save my baby from HIV and gave me a tablet that was meant to keep the baby from getting sick," Dalia recalled, "but it was too late and the child was already with the disease." When the baby was born, he weighed 6.6 pounds, but he lost weight and strength each day. He was dying, and there was nothing anyone could do. Dalia and Claudien ran out of money, and the hospital staff asked them to leave. Dalia begged bus fare from strangers off the streets of Kigali and went back to Kayonza District with her baby. He died within three months.

"I gave up; I knew my sickness was my death sentence," Dalia said. They had spent all their money on hospital bills and had nothing left for food, let alone medications. Both Dalia and Claudien were too weak to work, resigning themselves to their fate.



Dalia and Claudien with their two daughters, Siveta and Cynthia.

## 'THIS WAS BAD'

Soon after, Dalia began coughing up blood and Claudien rushed her to Kigali, where they discovered a Catholic-run hospital that provided free care to people living with HIV/AIDS. She had contracted tuberculosis and had to stay at the hospital for two months. Claudien had a little land in his name that he sold off to pay for transportation costs. There, she began antiretroviral therapy. "I was 30 years old and weighed 62 pounds. I used to dress smart and was always thin but this was bad and made me very sad," Dalia said.

Dalia stayed at the hospital in Kigali for two years, returning to Kayonza District in 2006. During her stay in Kigali, she had the chance to meet former President Bill Clinton, who was visiting Rwanda with the Clinton Global Initiative. He was there on a mission to open hospitals in rural Rwanda, specifically to provide care to HIV/AIDS patients. She was the sickest she had ever been during his visit. "I shook his hand and begged him to help us."

Help came by the name of Partners in Health (PIH) in April 2005, when the organization

co-founded by Dr. Paul Farmer launched an ambitious new health program in southeastern rural Rwanda. Modeled after the organization's work in Haiti, the goal of this project, *Inshuti Mu Buzima* (meaning Partners in Health in the local language, Kinyarwanda), is to serve as a standard for providing rural comprehensive health and HIV care in Rwanda. PIH started Dalia on antiretroviral therapy.

A year later, in 2006, the medication was working well and Dalia felt healthy enough to try for another child. "We learned that it was possible to have a child born without HIV," she said. Dalia approached PIH and told them, "I have a life again but no children to share it with." PIH agreed to help and provided her with powdered milk during her pregnancy. "Because the milk was so expensive, they said that they could only help me have one child."

Siveta was born later that year, a picture of health, free from the virus that plagues her parents. After Dalia gave birth, her cell count was 370 and she weighed a healthy 132 pounds. Dalia recalled how she felt at that time. "I came back to life. My cell count increased. I started planting crops. I finally believed I wasn't going to die."

Rwanda is one of the first Sub-Saharan African countries to eliminate HIV transmission from mother to child, as 98 percent of expecting mothers are tested at their prenatal visits.

## NUTRITION, INCOME KEY

But medication is often not enough. The majority of Rwanda's HIV/AIDS patients are food and income insecure. Both nutrition and income play a vital role in a well-rounded treatment plan. Patients need enough nutrition in order to better absorb the medicine and counteract a common side effect of it: increased appetite. Income is essential to securing an adequate food supply, but many HIV and AIDS patients don't have the strength for most available jobs in rural Rwanda. Their daily nutritional needs are also high, and they need jobs that are less labor intensive yet still yield a sizable income.

Heifer Rwanda began working in the area in late 2008. In partnership with Partners in Health, Heifer Rwanda's project, *Eastern Province Comprehensive Nutrition & Livelihood Project for Families Impacted by HIV/AIDS*, works to improve nutrition and overall net income to HIV and AIDS patients through the provision of goats, training and access to health care.

Dairy goats are easier to keep and care for than cows and are an economical and practical choice to feed and nourish a moderate-sized family. As a bonus, goat milk has the necessary nutrition to meet the demands of those living with HIV/AIDS.

The milk is a good source of selenium—an essential trace mineral. While a common mineral deficiency in most people, it can mean life or death for those whose selenium stores are depleted. It's a necessary ingredient for a properly functioning immune system. Selenium deficiency has been linked to viral diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Adequate selenium stores work to improve T-cell function, preventing viruses from replicating.

"This partnership has helped to move 2,091 families from lives of desperation to lives filled with ambition," said Heifer Rwanda Country Director Charles Kayumba. "Life beyond sickness and hunger allows these families to start fresh, from a place of strength, where they can plan their futures, start businesses and lead wholly peaceful lives with a sense of self-confidence."



Both Dalia and Claudien's health has improved tremendously since receiving a goat from Heifer.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

**PROJECT DURATION:** 2009-2014

**PROJECT AREA:** Southern Kayanza, Kirehe and Ngoma districts in the Eastern province of Rwanda, located about 125 miles southeast of Kigali

**FARMER FAMILIES SERVED:** More than 1,000

**GOATS PLACED:** 1,091 dairy goats and 33 breeding bucks

Each original family received one dairy goat with 33 dairy-breeding bucks placed in convenient locations across the project area.

As part of the project, Heifer Rwanda trains project participants on improved livestock management, 12 Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development, pasture establishment and management, use of manure as organic fertilizer and vegetable gardening.

## 'WE ROSE FROM NOTHING'

"When my friends learned I was sick, they left me. I only had Claudien, his family and my mother for support. Everyone else was scared of me," Dalia said. Her appearance had significantly changed in the few years since her diagnosis: "My nails were ragged and my hair was a mess, people would run away from me. I felt like an animal."

Whenever she and Claudien had a few coins to buy food from the market, she was always turned away. "They would throw away any food I touched; people thought I would infect them." It wasn't until Heifer Rwanda's work in the Eastern Province led to a partnership with the local Red Cross that things began to change. The Red Cross led HIV/AIDS workshops and sensitivity trainings that helped teach the community that people living with HIV and AIDS are not to be feared and can lead healthy and productive lives.

Dalia and Claudien began working with Heifer Rwanda in 2010 when they received a goat. Dalia and Claudien's self-esteem grew, and they began to partake in small income generation projects. "Through Heifer, we began to hope."

The goat they received in January of 2010 was pregnant and had a kid three months later. Her goat went on to have three bucks, which they subsequently sold. The money they received from the third buck was used to purchase a doe, which they passed on in the Heifer tradition.

Their goat produces more than three quarts of milk a day, half of it in the morning and half in the evening. The milk is used for home consumption only.

But the goat represented more than milk; she gave them a chance at another child. In 2011, Dalia had another daughter, Cynthia. "Just because we are ill does not mean we do not deserve a decent life." And, with that sentiment in mind, Dalia and Claudien decided to finally make things official; they got married on September 7, 2012.

## BUILDING A BUSINESS

With community acceptance and improved health, Dalia and Claudien expanded their crop production and diversified their business into selling goat manure to area farmers. In three months, they sold four tons of manure. It's an easy sell for them because their family farm is home to



**Dalia and Claudien on their wedding day.**



**The goat is milked twice daily and provides plenty for the whole family to enjoy.**

some of the highest yielding crops in the village, with enough produce left over to sell at their farmer's market. And others in the community want the same success.

HIV/AIDS was once a death sentence in Rwanda. People living with HIV and AIDS were essentially left to fend for themselves, pariahs of their community. Now, with this initiative between Heifer and PIH, these same formerly disenfranchised individuals live lives never thought possible.



## CD4 CELLS AND HIV/AIDS

CD4 cells, which stand for cluster of differentiation 4, are glycoproteins found on the surface of immune cells like T-cells. They are our bodies sounding alarm, alerting the body whenever an infection is present. The higher the CD4 cell count, the healthier you are. It's strength in numbers. The more T-cells you have, the easier it is for you to fight off an infection.

There are many different types of T-cells. CD4 cells have a receptor site called the CD4 receptor site. The HIV infection uses this receptor site to latch onto.

It is widely recommended that if your CD4 cell count is below 200 you must immediately begin taking antiretroviral medication, which works to boost and maintain cell count. CD4 levels this low not only indicate the disease's progression but also a high risk for serious illnesses and opportunistic infections, like tuberculosis.



**The couple has been using manure on their crops, which has boosted their yield.**

Today, Dalia is a wife, mother and business-woman. She owns her own livestock and cares for neighborhood children. Her cell count is an impressive 600 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> and she maintains a healthy weight of 127 pounds. Claudien, weighing in at 130 pounds, has a lower cell count, at 370 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, but he feels well and does much of the family's crop harvesting. Once a month the couple rides their bike to the nearest district hospital to take their medication. The voyage, round trip, takes them two hours.

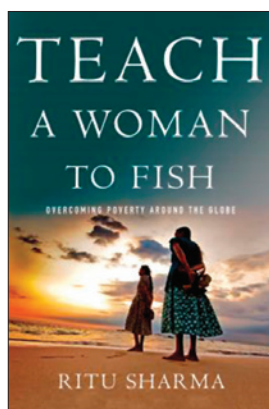
Like other Heifer project participants in Rwanda, Dalia and Claudien take the initiative to help others living in similar situations within their community. They offer bike passage to those who are too weak to travel to the hospital for their treatment.

Dalia is a genocide survivor and a person living with HIV/AIDS. But she is more than the things she has overcome. She is a woman who lives with dignity and without fear, a survivor in the truest sense of the word. ■



# A Firsthand Account

Review by Janet Jones, *World Ark* contributor



***Teach a Woman to Fish:***  
***Overcoming Poverty***  
***Around the Globe***  
**By Ritu Sharma**  
**Palgrave Macmillan**  
**Trade, 2014**  
**Hardcover, 288 pages, \$26**

**“W**hen I feel like I’ve had a bad day, I ask myself, ‘So how was Mariam’s day today?’... In much of the world, a farmer is not a guy in overalls with a pitchfork, but a woman with a baby on her back.”

Ritu Sharma’s new book, *Teach a Woman to Fish*, is not what I expected. I’m not sure exactly what I expected, but what I got is much like sitting down for an afternoon visit with a favorite long-lost cousin, asking her what she’s been doing for the last 10 years, and the next thing you know, it’s midnight.

Sharma is the co-founder and president of the advocacy program Women Thrive Worldwide. In conversational and specific prose, she gives us not only the stories of women and their families in Burkina Faso, Honduras, Nicaragua and Sri Lanka, but also behind-the-curtain insights as to how gender policy is created (or not) and enacted (or not), locally, nationally and globally. In doing so, she shares her passion for advancing women’s safety, status and self-sufficiency. She highlights the broader systems that prevent women from leaving poverty behind. Even better, Sharma spotlights courageous, creative

women’s self-organized groups that are making positive change happen, despite all the odds.

Beginning with the 2004 tsunami, Sharma brings us back to Sri Lanka where devastation was beyond overwhelming. She takes us to the “maid trade,” explaining how young women are recruited into domestic service that often includes much more than housekeeping. We visit camps for IDPs—Internally Displaced Persons. Sewing—as a home-based “invisible economy” and as a corporate enterprise, creating garments for people across an ocean—is revealed as a complex organism.

Among the most poignant stories was that of Mariam, a subsistence farmer with four sons and three daughters, living in Burkina Faso and earning a meager living by collecting shea nuts and selling the pulp. She heads a women’s group that slowly saved enough to purchase a tiny plot of land where they grow vegetables in the dry season, carrying water by hand. They practice organic farming because they cannot afford to farm any other way. Their deepest desire? To have a donkey, so they can plow more efficiently. (And yes, thanks to the kindness of strangers, they have one now.)

A visit to a local women’s farmer association in Honduras was to be fairly routine for Sharma. Upon arrival she learned that there was a recent change in leadership—a coup, really—because of mismanagement. The women stood solid (and slept on the floor of their coffee processing plant to protect it), reclaimed their hard work and felt successful. Sharma says: “Before the association, these peasant women lived in straw huts with banana-leaf roofs and worked small bits of land to coax out corn and beans for their families. Fifteen years after the association’s birth, they have three thriving businesses: fair trade organic coffee for export, natural aloe products



## READ TO FEED

*“I read *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss. My favorite part of Read to Feed was that I raised enough money, and I’m glad that people have enough to eat now. I was really surprised we raised \$10,000.”*

**MADDOX WALKER, 1ST GRADE**  
*Prairie Ridge Elementary, Shawnee, Kansas*

LEARN MORE AT [WWW.READTOFEED.ORG](http://WWW.READTOFEED.ORG).

for the local market, and a mountaintop retreat center that caters to the growing business community in Honduras. Theirs is a story of taking nothing and turning it into something remarkable, a feat that is hard to pull off for highly educated people."

Wherever she goes, Sharma shares an immersion experience with low-resource women, shadowing—performing when allowed—their work, laughing with their children, cooking (she thought rolling tortillas would be fun and easy; surprise, she was wrong) and eating what they eat. It's Sharma's personal "survive on a dollar a day" commitment. Each time she does so, she realizes anew how really, really difficult that is. How limited the menu options are. How hungry "hungry" feels. All of which make her even more determined to push forward with work that will help impoverished families everywhere.

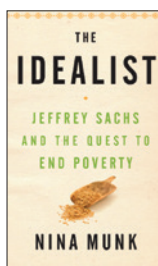
*Teach a Woman to Fish* shows us the problems, describes the governmental processes that hinder and help, brings us along on the rocky journey to group empowerment. And then, Sharma, a self-professed policy geek with 25 years' experience in women's advocacy, gives us concrete steps for helping. For helping Sri Lanka. For helping Nicaragua and Honduras. For helping Burkina Faso. For helping women, men, children.

"Mariam, and all the women in these pages," says Sharma, "are the portrait of those living in poverty. Brave beyond imagination. Smart beyond expectation. Strong beyond reason. Dedicated beyond belief. They seek a friend, not a patron, and a witness to their achievements, not an assessor of their worth. Within them and through them a new and better world is being born for all of us."

Choices. Power. "Things stay the same because people do not have the power to make things change. ... It doesn't have to be this way," Sharma says. ■

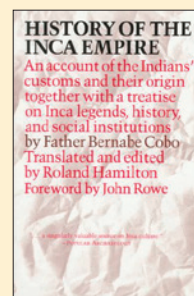
## NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

**The Idealist: Jeffrey Sachs  
and the Quest to End Poverty**  
By Nina Munk



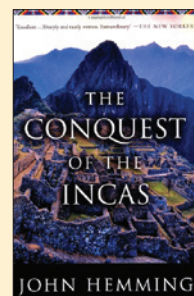
## THREE FAVORITES ON: THE INCAN EMPIRE

Although the Incan Empire fell to smallpox and other weapons of Spanish conquest in the 1500s, the ruins, traditions and stories that remain confirm the Incan civilization was one of brawn, innovation and beauty. Catch a glimpse of the Incan tradition of alpaca farming on Page 12, and explore Incan history in the books below.

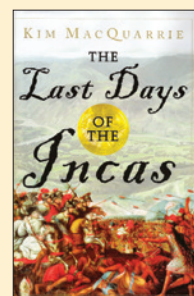


**History of the Inca Empire:  
An Account of the Indians'  
Customs and Their Origin,  
Together with a Treatise on  
Inca Legends, History, and  
Social Institutions**

**By Father Bernabe Cobo,  
translated by Roland  
Hamilton**



**The Conquest of the Incas**  
**By John Hemming**



**The Last Days of the Incas**  
**By Kim MacQuarrie**



# Water Project Transforms

Story and photos by Pamela Nyaga, Heifer Haiti

**T**he Northwest region of Haiti is dry, dusty, rocky and hot. The vegetation covering the hillsides is mostly cactus and thorny plants. Deforestation in the area is immeasurable. Every few miles you'll find charcoal for sale on the roadside, the main contributor to deforestation. Climate change is already evident, causing high mean temperatures and altered rainfall patterns. Resulting long dry spells, drought and lack of potable water and water for irrigation means life here is harsh.

Baie de Henne municipality is one of the driest and rockiest landscapes in the region. Most homes lack clean drinking water. The nearest water source for the community is a spring in Jondefe, nearly two miles away, a two-hour round-trip walk over hilly and rocky terrain. The daily duty of fetching water is relegated to women and children, especially girls. As a result there are many with bent backs from carrying large cans of water.

Heifer Haiti, through our Rural Entrepreneurs for Agricultural Cooperation in Haiti (REACH) project, has been working to build climate change resilience among farmers, including reforestation, training on wood energy alternatives, adoption of new crop varieties and livestock management practices, among others. To help rural communities adapt to limited water, Heifer Haiti promotes integrated water resource management, with a focus on providing quality drinking water and sufficient irrigation. Methods include building water cisterns to collect rain, drilling wells and installing water pumps.

In 2013, Heifer Haiti began working in Baie de Henne, training farmers in Heifer's 12 Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development, sustainable agriculture, and livestock production and management. In addition, goats, poultry and seeds were distributed to project participants. Unfortunately, lack of rain for nearly 10 months slowed the success of these efforts.

In April 2014, Heifer aligned with Haiti's national water company, Direction National de l'Eau Potable et de l'Assainissement (DINEPA), and engaged communities to start piping water from the above-mentioned spring in Jondefe for drinking water, irrigation and livestock. This effort will develop long-term and sustainable solutions in the communities, improving the health conditions of families and preventing the loss of livestock and crops during the dry season.

The construction of six water points has been completed in the communities of Jondefe, Tranquille, Mapou and two in Terre Blanche, and the laying of three miles of piping is still underway. The construction of a water point at Mapou national primary school is now complete, which will provide quality drinking water for the students and for the village market nearby. Additionally, a more than 10,000-gallon drinking water collection and storage tank has been constructed in the community of Tranquille.

These efforts will directly benefit 800 families, for an estimated total of 4,000 people. Heifer provided \$23,774 in funding, while community



Marie Lucette washes her laundry at the Tranquille water point. She used to have to walk two hours to access water.

members contributed their labor and local construction materials. For less than \$6 per person, this combined-use water system will provide years of safe access to clean water.

In the past, water projects initiated by the government in the Northwest have been unsuccessful. Lack of ongoing accountability, particularly for maintenance, is the classic reason for water system failure in communities such as these. To safeguard against this and per the requirements of DINEPA for all rural water projects, Heifer helped form a six-person committee, with one person responsible for each water point (five points in total) and reporting to a committee president, who in turn reports back to Heifer and DINEPA. During the construction, Heifer trained community members in minor repairs, and DINEPA will be responsible for maintenance needed beyond these capabilities. Heifer is currently examining options for creating a water system maintenance fund, including a small annual fee for use (\$0.55 to \$1.10 per family).

There is plentiful water in the spring, and Heifer additionally established a



# Haitian Communities



Community members started using the water point at Jondefe (above) in May. Heifer participants pitched in to help dig the water pipelines. All who use the system will be trained in water conservation and the prevention of water source contamination.

system to control the use of water at the water points to avoid waste, making it available two times a day, in the morning and evening. The leaders in charge of the water points are trained in water management to ensure the area is protected and free of contamination. Group members have also started to plant trees around the spring to provide a future water catchment system.

Community members are invested in this important project, not only because of the benefits they will reap, but also because they contributed their own labor to the construction. They walked long distances to procure construction materials, like sand and rocks, and they did most of the digging to place the pipes. So far, 292 people have participated

in Heifer's Cornerstones training, and the plan is to train all community members over time. Training in water conservation and the importance of preventing water source contamination will be conducted in the coming months. Since they have suffered so long from the lack of available water, they have a true appreciation for the accessibility of quality of water and how it translates into thriving agriculture and livestock production, improved health and enterprising business ventures.

Marie Lucette, age 67, who lives near the new water point in Tranquille, moved to the village 30 years ago. She and her three children would walk every day to fetch water from Jondefe. "I walked for almost two hours each day to fetch just 10

liters of water. When I arrived back home, I was extremely tired and hungry, and most times I had no food to eat. This left me with very little time to work my farm and sell my produce in the market. Over the years I have developed back pains, because sometimes I carried the water can on my back. Now Heifer has turned a fading dream into a reality. There is water right outside my door," Lucette said.

Many communities in the Northwest are dealing with the same dry conditions. Heifer's goal, through REACH and strategic water-related alliances, is to work with those communities to ensure they have access to both potable and irrigation water so they may eventually increase their crop yields and livestock production. ■



# Cowboys at Christmas

By Peggy Reiff Miller, World Ark contributor



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAROLD CULLAR

Willard Bontrager's crew on the Morgantown Victory delivered 750 horses to Yugoslavia in December 1946.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLARENCE REESER

The crew of the SS Mexican relaxes on the deck in December 1945.

*Thirty-two cowboys back at sea,  
Getting homesick as they could be,  
Spent Christmas Day out on the deep,  
And dreamt of home while fast asleep.*

So wrote 23-year-old Willard Bontrager in "An Ode to 32 Cowboys," a poem he presented to his crew at their Christmas program on the SS Morgantown Victory on Dec. 25, 1946. How did these men come to be at sea on Christmas?

Heifer International's predecessor, the Heifer Project, was a program of the Brethren Service Committee of the Church of the Brethren. At the end of World War II, the Brethren Service

Committee entered into an agreement with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to recruit all of the cattle attendants needed for 360 livestock shipments to help devastated countries rebuild. In return, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration agreed to ship Heifer Project animals free of charge.

About 7,000 men of all ages, religions, colors and walks of life responded to the call for "seagoing cowboys" in 1945 and 1946. A number of these cowboys found themselves away from home over the holidays, many for the first time. As Bontrager's ode suggests, this affected some more than others.

Cowboy Al Guyer of the SS Mexican had already been to Poland in 1945. There he had seen and smelled the rubble of war and experienced the hospitality of grateful Heifer Project recipients in the village of Suchy Dab.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAROLD CULLAR

Cowboys sing carols on the Attleboro Victory after delivering mules to Crete in 1946.



That Christmas Eve found him on his way home off the coast of Norway, where the SS Mexican was sitting out a storm. "I hunkered down on the side of the ship where the wind was not blowing, and I was so homesick," Guyer said. "I could look out and see that shore of rocks and waves, imagining being thrown on the rocks."

But the storm didn't stop the festivities Christmas Day. Guyer's shipmate Calvert Petre noted in his journal, "[J]ust when they had the tables set for the feast they sent word down to watch the tables. No one took them serious enough and when the storm hit us broadside, what a roll!!!! It slid oranges, apples, candy, plates, and boys all on a pile. ..." They reset the tables and soon were digging into a duck dinner with all the trimmings.

Some cowboys were not able to enjoy their special Christmas meals, though. SS Santiago Iglesias cowboy Milt Lohr said in his diary,

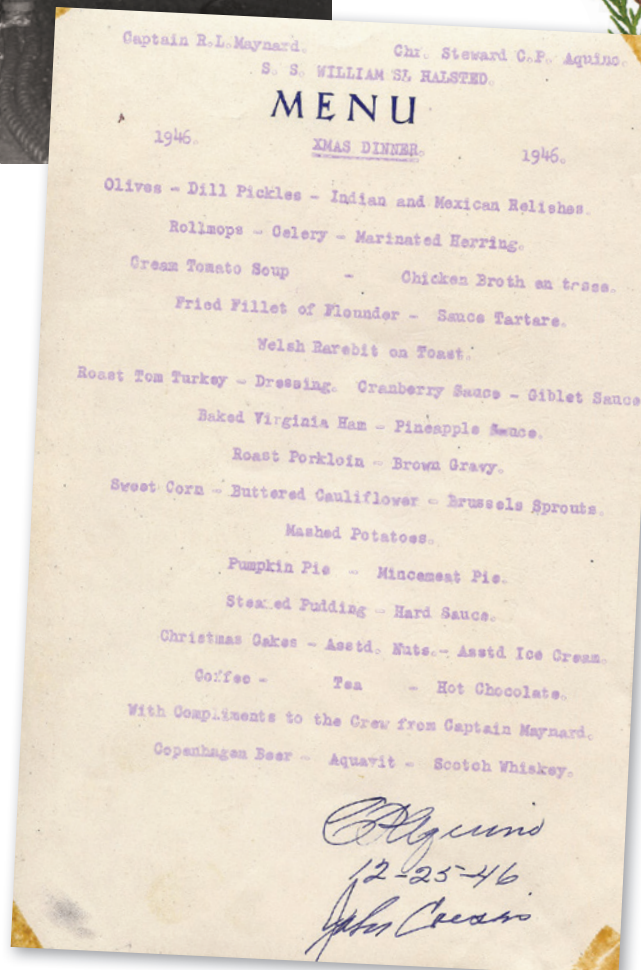




PHOTO COURTESY OF HUGH EHRLMAN

Left to right, Morgantown Victory cowboys Hugh Ehrman, Sanford Sommers, Ellis Friedline and Ray Keim spend Christmas Day 1945 in Nowy Port, Poland.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WALTER HOCHSTEDLER

Crew members of the Morgantown Victory tour the ruins of Gdansk, Poland, in December 1945.

"Nearly everyone off feed (seasick)." His ship got caught in the same storm as the SS Mexican.

Festivities in the cowboys' quarters didn't stop with food. On the return trip of the SS Rockland Victory in 1945, cowboy Carly Geisler noted, "We had brought a tree along from Poland and celebrated a very blessed Christmas in mid-Atlantic," complete with a Christmas Eve program and a Christmas Day party with a gift exchange they had planned before leaving Poland.

Some crews got creative in their gift giving. Glenn Stauffer, of the 1946 crew of the William S. Halsted, recorded in his diary that "John took Bohn's pajamas this p.m. & wrapped them up for him. Jake's & Ray's hats were wrapped up for them. Ted got a package with old razor blades, a spike, etc, etc."

Most of the cowboy crews had special Christmas services or programs of some sort. On the SS Carroll Victory, in early December 1946, Charlie Lord organized a glee club. "We figured nine carols tonight that we can do," he wrote his wife. "We have no pitch pipe, let alone piano. I used a harmonica for a pitch pipe tonight. The rehearsal was quite successful, I thought." And the Christmas Eve program was, too, complete with sheep bell accompaniment on "Jingle Bells." Having just crossed the equator on their way back to Greece from South Africa, sweat rolled off the choir in their uniforms of white T-shirts and white shorts as they sang their finale, "White

Christmas." Cowboy Paul Beard, one of several photographers in this crew, showed slides on the wall of snowy roads, woods and glistening treetops as the choir sang to their enthusiastic audience of cowboys and a half-dozen of the ship's crew. Caroling outside the captain's stateroom followed, making a memorable Christmas for all.

For the crews who weren't at sea on Christmas, the holiday could be a day of contrasts. The SS Morgantown Victory pulled into Nowy Port, Poland, Christmas Eve afternoon 1945 to find a town in ruins. Christmas morning, four cowboys attended a Catholic Christmas Mass, entering a crowded church, its doors and walls decorated with bullet holes. They later happened upon the home of a photographer and had their picture taken. The family invited them in to see their tree, served them orange cake, sold them some of their china, and told them, "It is just like God coming into our home."

Ray Keim, one of these four cowboys, recalled that two others in their crew gave up their Christmas dinner of turkey and veal and all the trimmings so two Polish children could come on board and eat. "They were so overwhelmed by the sight and smells of the food that they hardly ate anything," Keim said.

In the afternoon, the foursome went into Gdansk (formerly Danzig). "Lots of people covered up because of being in cellar when



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAY ZOOK

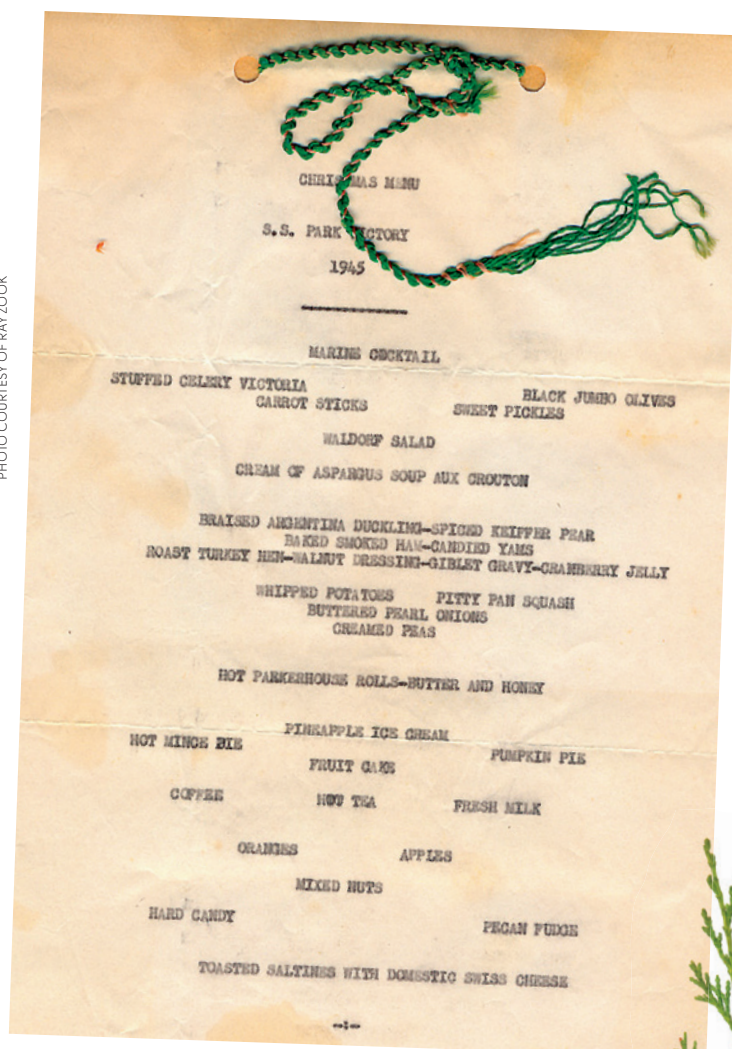
Two heifers arrive at the Villa Skaut orphanage in Konstancin, Poland.

home blown up," Hugh Ehrman jotted in his diary that night, a sobering thought after returning to the ship for supper and singing songs in one of their rooms to end their holiday.

The following December, the SS William Halsted delivered its livestock shipment to that same port. The heifers were distributed to orphanages and individuals near Warsaw and in the former East Prussian district of Mazury. The Brethren Service Committee had sent along food, clothing, medicine and books to be distributed, as well. The committee had made arrangements for cowboy supervisor L.W. Shultz and three of his crew to stay in Poland for several weeks to do some follow-up work. The Halsted's captain insisted they return with the ship Dec. 11, but a determined Shultz and his men went AWOL, staying the night before the ship was to leave with an old cobbler they had met. They returned to the pier the next morning to wave to the departing cowboys, who knew they were staying behind.

Shultz and his men spent a memorable Christmas at the orphanage of Villa Skaut in Konstancin outside of Warsaw. A heifer named "Hope," donated by the Coventry Church of the Brethren in Pennsylvania, her calf, and another heifer went to this orphanage. "What a welcome the children gave these cows!" Shultz reported.

The cowboys took along gifts of school supplies and personal items for the children. "It was a



never-to-be-forgotten Christmas time," Shultz wrote. "Christmas Eve, presenting gifts with St. Mikolaj (St. Nicholas). Christmas services on Dec. 25 in the morning, and the singing of Polish and English carols and songs in the evening until late at night. ... 'Hope' is really a lifeline for these children," he concluded. "To all American Christians who have remembered them with food (even some chicken), clothing, and now 'Hope' they say 'Dziekuje' (Thank you)." ■

Peggy Reiff Miller is a writer and historian currently working on a book about seagoing cowboys and the early days of Heifer International. You can learn more about her work at [peggyreiffmiller.com](http://peggyreiffmiller.com).





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*"Today, I'm going to be happy.  
I am well qualified for this life."*

Julia Monroy Rojas, alpaca farmer, artisan and mother of seven



Julia Monroy Rojas' three youngest children still live with her in the mountaintop community of Lacco, Peru. Her four oldest children, though, left to find education and paying work. As a member of the Tres Alpaquitas cooperative, Monroy is preserving the priceless traditions of high Andes communities by cultivating fine alpaca fiber and crafting it into unique woven and knitted goods. The women of Tres Alpaquitas hope to sell their products overseas so they can share their art with the world while supporting their unique way of life.



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