

® THE MAGAZINE OF HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

SUMMER 2015 || HEIFER.ORG

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INTERNATIONAL



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Have you made a gift to Heifer in the past year? You could double it with the help of your employer! Thousands of companies will match their employees' gifts to Heifer ... even gifts given months ago. Many companies even match retirees' gifts.

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If you don't find your employer, please check with your human resources department. Together, we can pass on the gift and make a big difference in the lives of men, women and children all over the world.





PHOTO BY LACEY WEST

President and CEO Pierre Ferrari visits with Heifer project participants in Cambodia.

Dear Fellow Activists,

At Heifer International, we have a bold new 5-year plan, one that will challenge us all and push us to work harder than ever before.

By 2020, Heifer International will help 4 million families escape extreme hunger and poverty and secure living incomes that will make them self-reliant and financially resilient.

When we talk about escaping hunger and poverty, we are talking about families moving all the way into financial security. Specifically, by 2020, 4 million families will achieve a level of income that allows them to educate their children (including the girls), feed themselves adequately across every month of the year and have proper housing. We have always worked with families to improve their nutrition, income and general well-being. What is different now is that we are defining a level of income for each region and will no longer consider a family out of poverty until they are earning an income at or above the threshold.

I am excited about this goal because it is a bold but attainable challenge, and the ripple effects of our success will reach far and wide. We have been working toward this for years, and a great deal of work will continue to go into making

this aspiration a reality.

Our families and communities have the potential to create a great deal of value and wealth, if indeed they produce the right goods at the right time in the right quantity with the right quality for existing market demand. And we must never forget that the market should be a servant to communities and families, not the master. In that spirit, we plan to supply the markets our smallholder farmers have identified so that they can create wealth to end their own poverty.

That is the challenge in front of us. It is an exciting time, and we are ready to take this step. The commitment by our donors, our supporters and all of our Heifer family is overwhelming.

We have lots of examples all over the world from our own work that are actually happening and succeeding. You've read about them in *World Ark*, and we will continue to deliver news on our efforts.

Yours for a better world,

Pierre A. Ferrari

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COVER

Arkansas farmer Kerry Harrington moves her chickens to fresh pasture.

Top photo: Harrington, her husband, Josh Jimenez, and their baby, Trisha Rose, knock out the morning chicken chores.

Cover and top photo by Bryan Clifton.

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Bee Well BY JASON WOODS

Stingless bees, long a cultural resource in Mexico's Yucatan, were all but forgotten in recent years. A Heifer project has them buzzing again, and the results are sweet.



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Strength in Numbers BY AUSTIN BAILEY

Arkansas farmers team up to share knowledge and pool resources as part of a cooperative supported by Heifer International.



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Changing Direction BY BROOKE EDWARDS

After decades of success in southern Cameroon, Heifer sets its sights on the arid North.





HOT TOPIC

In an article about biogas digesters, I was disappointed to see Gautam Yadama dismiss solar cookers so glibly. Each technology has its uses, as well as advantages and disadvantages. Solar cookers are much less expensive than biogas digesters, can be built and put to use much faster, are more portable, and avoid the ongoing CO₂ production that burning biogas creates.

BILL BOYD
Newnan, Ga.

While I was pleased to see the recent article on efficient cooking fuels, it was disappointing since the answer to the question regarding solar stoves ignored solar cooking. Indeed, all new technologies require an educational component. Solar technology is a simple solution to a complex problem. I hope that in the future you will include solar cooking in your evaluation of efficient cooking methods.

JEAN JACKSON
Exeter, N.H.

SHOPPING FOR SOLUTIONS

Recently, I wandered into a Ten Thousand Villages gift shop while vacationing in Denver. It offered unique handmade crafts and gifts from around the world. I learned the store

is part of a global, charitable, fair-trade organization working to empower artisans in developing countries. I bought as gifts two packs of stationary with paper made from a blend of grasses and sanitized elephant dung. Talk about unusual!

Has Heifer International ever contacted the Ten Thousand Villages organization? They might offer new suggestions for objects that can be made from resources available to Heifer farmers as well as providing an outlet for the sale of those objects. The two organizations certainly have similar missions.

GLORIA GILL
Augusta, Ga.

Editor's note: *Heifer International operates its own shops featuring Earth-friendly and artisan-friendly goods. You can find our stores at Heifer Village in Little Rock, Arkansas; Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Arkansas; and Heifer Farm in Rutland, Massachusetts. Our products are also available online at shop.heifer.org.*

In response to our Holiday 2014 Q&A asking readers if they thought Heifer's efforts to preserve knitting and weaving traditions in Peru are worthwhile:

People will purchase alpaca garments if they are aware of their origin and elite quality. The fibers are natural and not dyed, and they are unique, hand-crafted works of art. Additionally, many people like to make purchases that empower women workers.

Personally, I find my alpaca shawl softer and warmer than synthetics. Its Peruvian and llama designs speak of the Andes—its people, culture and animals. Few garments make such a meaningful connection with other parts of the world.

ADELE SHAFFERMAN
Shreveport, La.

In response to our Spring Q&A asking readers for ideas about ways Heifer can help farmers make the most of the materials they've already got on hand:

How about worm composting to increase the value of their soil? The only thing I can think of that might be wrong with that is maybe they don't have enough food waste to feed the worms. It is easy in America, with all of the waste we have, but I am not sure about other countries.

I use a worm composting bin, and the soil is so rich and grows my plants so well.

ROBYN PARKER
Arnold, Mo.



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AND ADD YOUR
FAVORITE STORIES.**

We want to hear from you!

Please send your comments to worldark@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 SUMMER

What work should Heifer International do within the United States to end hunger and poverty and care for the Earth?



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World Ark is the educational, informational and outreach publication of Heifer International. Its purpose is to further Heifer's goals to end poverty and hunger while caring for the Earth and to raise awareness of the issues involved in this work throughout the world. Heifer International is qualified as a charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to Heifer International are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Since 1944, Heifer has helped 22.6 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

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Lost Voices

More than 7,000 languages exist in the world, but up to one-third of them are either endangered or dying. One linguistic expert, Dr. John H. McWhorter, says it's possible that we might only have 600 living languages on the planet by 2115. The primary reason for language extinction, according to researchers, is economic development—their study found that a country's economic success correlates with how rapidly its languages are being lost.



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PHOTO BY OLIVIER ASSELIN

Vision 2020

Over the past 71 years, Heifer International has helped more than 100 million families. Recently, Heifer has unveiled its global impact goal for the next five years: **moving 4 million families completely out of hunger and poverty by the year 2020.**

Where Do Organic Vegetables Grow?

Worldwide, about 2 million farmers (out of a total of 1.5 billion) grow organic produce, and around 80 percent of those farmers live in developing nations, according to the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM). India, Uganda and Mexico house the most certified organic producers.



PHOTO BY RUSSELL POWELL

Source: **The Christian Science Monitor**

JARGON

CAMPESINOS:

Rural producers who often don't own their own land and must rely on fellow family members for most or all of the labor. The Spanish word is a little tricky to translate to English; a common translation is "peasant," but a more accurate translation might be "family farmer."

USE HONEY FOR:



COOKING

Honey can act as a: **SWEETENER**, flavoring, humectant (adds and retains moisture) and emulsifier (binds and thickens).



MEDICINE

Ancient cultures used honey to ward off infections. We still use it to **SOOTHE COUGHS** and sore throats.

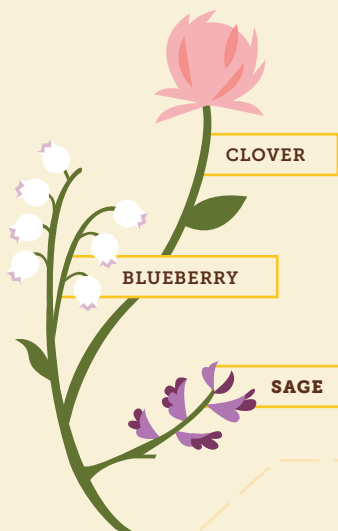


SKIN CARE

Honey can **CLEAN AND MOISTURIZE**, making it a perfect ingredient for lotions, soaps and cleansers.

SUNDRY HONEYS

MONOFLORAL HONEY comes from one type of flower. A few popular types:



CLOVER

BLUEBERRY

SAGE

The flowers from which bees gather nectar **AFFECT HONEY'S**:



TEXTURE



AROMA



TASTE



COLOR

SWEET BEGINNINGS



The earliest record of honey collecting is an **8,000-YEAR-OLD** cave painting in Spain's Arana Caves.



Honey remained the **SWEETENER OF CHOICE** in Europe until the 12th century, when sugar was introduced.



The ancient Greeks believed bees **BRIDGED THE GAP** between our world and the underworld.



Ancient Romans honored Mellona, **GODDESS OF BEES** and honey.



Ancient Egyptians used honey to **EMBALM THEIR DEAD**. They also packed pots of honey in tombs for people to carry into the afterlife.

THE BUZZ

SOME SAY THE WORD

"HONEYMOON" comes from an old tradition of giving brides and grooms a month's supply of mead in hopes that the new couple produced a child within a year.



HONEY IS THE MAIN INGREDIENT in mead, aka honey wine.



Because alcohol affects bees and humans in similar ways, researchers are studying **DRUNK BEES** to learn how chronic alcohol abuse affects humans at a molecular level.



HONEY IS EXTREMELY ACIDIC

—which means bacteria and organisms that typically cause food to spoil won't grow in it.



KEEP IT SEALED and honey can last for millenia. Expose it to humidity and it will spoil.



BEWARE THE HONEY BADGER

While it's true they raid beehives for an occasional sweet snack, honey badgers are **PRIMARYLY CARNIVORES** and are ferocious enough to overpower and eat venomous snakes. They just don't care.



Bee Proactive!

By Elizabeth Joseph, garden and education coordinator at Heifer Farm

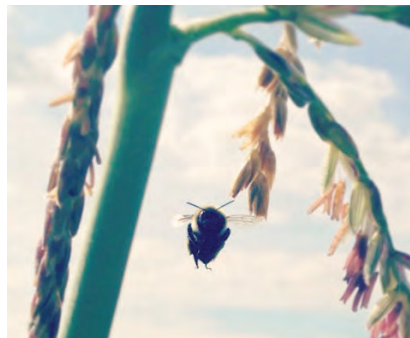
Did you know that honeybees have been around for 30 million years, that 95 percent of the colony is female and that they dance to communicate? Honeybees are also an incredibly important part of food production worldwide, and they've been in the news a lot lately. Read on to learn what's happening with honeybees and how you can help.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ELIZABETH JOSEPH

What's going on with the bees?

The United States has lost up to 50 percent of its managed honeybee colonies over the past 10 years due to colony collapse disorder, a phenomenon where the worker bees abruptly disappear from the colony. There are many theories about the cause of this disorder, including pesticides, disease, parasites and loss of habitat.



Why does it matter?

Honeybees are pollinators, which means they carry pollen from flower to flower, allowing plants to grow fruit and seed. Eighty percent of flowering plants require insect pollination, and honeybees in particular pollinate one-third of the world's food supply. That's every third bite of food we eat, including many fruits, berries, nuts, vegetables, oils, and even meat and dairy products from animals raised on alfalfa.

What can we do?

The good news is that we don't need to wait to know exactly what's wrong with the honeybees before we can do something to help. We can all take action right now.

Here are some ideas:

1) Plant a pollinator garden.

Feed the bees! It takes nectar from 2 million flowers to produce just one pound of honey ... every flower really does count!

2) Avoid using pesticides on your lawn and garden.

These products are meant to kill insects, and bees could end up being the unintended target. Try other control methods, and if all else fails, spray after dusk when the bees are inside the hive.

3) Purchase organic food whenever possible.

Buying organic food helps to support agricultural practices that won't inadvertently harm bees.



4) Try beekeeping or support local beekeepers by buying local honey.

Backyard beekeeping is a great hobby, but if you aren't up for suiting up and lighting the smoker, buy local honey to support your local beekeepers.

5) Install a birdbath.

Bees need to drink, and birdbaths make great watering holes for them.

6) Write to your lawmakers.

Let your local lawmakers know that you support any efforts to help the bees.

Whatever you do, get going. Honeybees are amazing creatures that play a hugely important role in our food supply. Spread the buzz!



Pollinator Garden Plants

Plant flowers for pollinators that provide both pollen and nectar. Here are some great choices for year-round blooms:

Phlox	Columbine
Lavender	Butterfly bush
Nasturtium	Rudbeckia
Anise hyssop	Bee balm
Echinacea	Yarrow
Yarrow	Sedum

Did you know?

Honeybees are just one type of pollinator. Other pollinators include native bees, wasps, flies, butterflies, bats, hummingbirds and the wind.



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Transforming Lives Through Technology

In Northern Uganda, former child soldiers are earning an income tagging images of Rihanna and other celebrities for Getty Images' machine-learning algorithms. This seemingly unlikely turn of events is propelled by a collection of enterprises called the Sama Group. Much of the group's focus is connecting low-income people all over the world to work done via the internet.

In Sanskrit, Sama means "equal," and it is Sama Group Founder and CEO Leila Janah's belief that all human beings have inherent worth and dignity, regardless of where they were born or their economic situation.

She also believes that talent is equally distributed across the globe, but opportunity is not. To work toward rectifying that situation, the Sama Group takes big digital projects from organizations like Getty Images, Google, Microsoft and LinkedIn and breaks them down to small units of work that can be done at internet centers—a system they call microwork.

Training is quick, and 51 percent of people who have found work through Sama Group are female, which is a huge breakthrough in a traditionally male-dominated field.

The Sama Group is made up of three social enterprises:

- Samasource, which focuses on connecting marginalized people to work via the internet in slums and rural communities in East Africa, South Asia and the Americas.
- SamaUSA, which provides digital skills and job training to create a path out of poverty for people in New



SAMAGROUP.CO

York, California and Arkansas.

- Samahope, a crowdfunding platform for medical treatments that enables life-changing treatments for women and children in need.

In December 2014 on the website Popsugar, Janah mentioned a connection between the work of Sama Group and Heifer International while promoting the gift of a goat for the holidays: "Not only is this gift unique, but it really does make a huge difference for families in underdeveloped regions around the world. Many of our Samasource workers have benefited from a Heifer goat (\$120), so I like to spread the word. Give a goat!"

For more information on Sama Group, visit www.samagroup.co.

Sources: **Sama Group, BBC News, Popsugar**



What Price Happiness?

Interview by Ariel Bleth, *World Ark* contributor

If you wonder if money can buy happiness, try asking Helena Norberg-Hodge. In 2011, she produced and co-directed the award-winning documentary "The Economics of Happiness," which explores both corporate consolidation of power through globalization and the ways in which communities around the world are creating an alternative paradigm by embracing their small-scale farmers and locally owned businesses—the economics of localization. Norberg-Hodge is a linguist, writer, activist and founder of the International Society of Ecology and Culture (ISEC).

WORLD ARK: Much of your work has been shaped through your experiences in Ladakh, India. What did you see there that informed your view of our global social, economic and environmental outlook?

HELENA NORBERG-HODGE: What I witnessed in Ladakh was a way of life that essentially provided for people's ecological well-being over hundreds of years. I came to know the happiest, most vibrant people I had ever encountered and realized that the basic principle that seemed to explain why they were so content was that they lived in a human-scale way at a human pace of life. When the outside economic system and culture were introduced, the local market was not able to compete and unemployment increased. Increased competition between people who

had lived happily side by side—Buddhists and Muslims—created divisions and even violence. This made me realize that strengthening local economies worldwide is a way of ensuring greater security—both psychologically and materially—through bringing back human-scale relationships and slowing down the pace of life.

You call the benefits of localization "the economics of happiness." What do you mean by this?

It's a fundamental recognition that we need to feel connected to one another. For example, studies compare people shopping both in big supermarket chains and in local farmers markets. In the farmers market, one study found that people have 10 times more conversations with each other than they do



2



PHOTO PROVIDED BY HELENA NORBERG-HODGE

in a large chain store. To me, this is evidence of how localization can help to rebuild those social community relationships that are so important to our well-being and happiness.

What are you and the International Society of Ecology and Culture working on now?

One huge focus is the psychological dimension of local economics. We find that not enough attention is given to the fact that rural populations have been made to feel marginalized for centuries. In places like Ladakh and Bhutan, I was able to live there at a time when that hadn't happened. The farmer was a central part of the economy. Over time, farming has

become viewed as backward and primitive and the goal for many parents is to provide an education for their children so that they can leave farming. This has contributed to high levels of unemployment and urbanization. The psychological pressures go hand in hand with structural pressures to subsidize big, global businesses, all at the cost of small business and smallholder farmers. Our conviction is that we need deeper dialogue between Global North and South and also between city and country. Even in countries like Sweden or America, farmers still suffer from this idea that what they are doing isn't important.



Norberg-Hodge points out some of the negatives of globalization during a 2008 conference.



As the global population grows, how do you see small-scale farmers adapting to feed the world?

When farmers diversify they can dramatically increase the productivity of a given piece of land; highly diversified, bio-intensive farms ideally have mixtures of trees, bushes, grain, vegetables and animals. What this requires is human labor instead of machinery. Small-scale, diversified systems are the best way to get more out of each parcel of land and each gallon of water. So on a crowded planet, we are going to need more farmers and a shift in our economic system.

Do you have any experience with livestock as savings accounts?

Yes, I have a lot of experience with this and have seen it to be a very important savings account. Animals can help with labor, give birth and provide fertilizer,

whereas the tractor breaks down, costs money to repair and pollutes. It is a wonderful savings account that also ends up being a great friend to children and adults—they are part of a living community that enriches life enormously. I was only aware in recent years as things changed in Ladakh how much I missed the animals that were part of the household where I lived for decades. Seeing new calves and lambs born every year, and also seeing the relationship between those animals, was a great gift.

How do small businesses in the developing world fit into this?

With more decentralized development, all the basic needs (clothing, shelter and food) usually can be met by small-scale businesses. Most people have multiple skills and can contribute to the meeting of these needs, including artisan work. The 5-Star Movement



in Italy is an example of how artisan work can still be valued as part of the normal economy. We promote organizations such as the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) in the U.S. We basically see a great need for anybody thinking about a new economic direction to recognize that the only thing that humans produce that every person on the planet needs every single day is food. So food and farming are fundamental to all of this.

How is it possible to see economic, social and environmental problems as interdependent without getting overwhelmed?

The current global system has grown up in an evolutionary way, in that things naturally get bigger and bigger. Our message at the International Society for Ecology and Culture is that human beings innately long for love and connection, both as children and adults. We now have a system that is perverting that need into a need to consume. Children are led to believe that the way they will get that love and recognition is by having the latest and the fanciest and by being the most clever and beautiful. All of this separates and alienates us further. In the evolutionary process, everything that grows both waxes and wanes; things grow, but they also die off in a cyclical relationship. To know there is a way forward, it is important for us to look at the social, environmental, spiritual and psychological impacts of unimpeded growth.

You have worked in Bhutan, the Himalayan kingdom that introduced the concept of Gross National Happiness (a measurement of national prosperity focusing on people's well-being rather than on economic productivity). You were also a delegate at the 2012 Bhutanese-sponsored UN conference on happiness. What are some of the indicators of Gross National Happiness?

The indicators that they are trying to use have to do, again, with social cohesion and ecological sustainability. My organization, for our economics of happiness, takes these ideas and emphasizes three key structural shifts that we need to make in the economy regarding taxes, subsidies and regulation. Shifting our taxes away

from employment onto energy, for instance, immediately stimulates businesses to employ more people and use less technology. That doesn't mean eliminating technology but instead creating a preference for human beings in the cycles of production. Employing people instead of machines, in many incidences, would increase the quality of life and dramatically reduce pollution and energy demands while increasing job opportunities. Secondly, we need to shift the subsidies so that the money that is generated is used in order to stimulate exactly those businesses and practices that we want to see. Regulations at the moment have been skewed so that we have progressively deregulated global businesses in the name of globalization, while at the same time massively increased regulation in the local and national arenas. That has given a huge unfair advantage to transnational companies over place-based, rooted businesses. Finally, how we measure our economic progress—whether or not we stick to the old, outdated measurements of gross domestic product—is another central question. Of course we can't. It is a mad indicator that basically measures the commercialization of everything that we value, much of which, previously, came in the form of gifts and community exchange.

Do you believe these indicators are essentially universal or do they vary from place to place?

Localization allows for far greater diversity, and part of what we need to remind ourselves is that the diversity of cultures and races are particular human responses to ecosystems, climates and environments. That diversity, that richness, is clearly a principle of life. The artificial, man-made global system—one global consumer culture that is imposed worldwide—is anti-life, anti-evolution. By negating this basic principle of life, diversity, we are on a suicide course. So, absolutely, I would see the development of diverse ways of approaching economic priorities. ■

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The International Society of Economics and Culture welcomes suggestions and support. Readers can contact them through their website, www.localfutures.org, or at www.facebook.com/TheEconomicsofhappiness.



Stingless bees (above) are such an important part of Mayan culture that they're depicted graphically (design at top right) in the Madrid codex, a historic documentation of Mayan rituals, calendars and daily life.



BEE WELL

Story and photos by
Jason Woods,
World Ark senior editor

A project in the Yucatan
revives the art and traditions
of stingless beekeeping to
yield prized medicines and
precious cultural memory.





M

ANI, Mexico — In Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, people say you have to talk sweetly to the bees, or they will fly away.

"The bees are very sensitive," keeper

Maria Torres Tzab explained.

"Be happy when you see them. Have a good aura," Torres' husband, Nicolas Castillo Ucam, said. "They will leave if people fight—they are sad because they understand."

Sensitivity is just one characteristic that sets this particular genus of bee, *Melipona*, apart. While honeybees of the more common *Apis* genus fiercely protect their hives with their stingers, *Melipona* bees are commonly known as stingless bees for an obvious reason—they have no stingers.



No protective equipment is needed when working with stingless bees.

"Be happy when you see them. Have a good aura. They will leave if people fight—they are sad because they understand." — Nicolas Castillo Ucam

Torres, Castillo and their daughter don't need protective clothing to tend their hives, which sit under a roof of thatched palm fronds behind their house in the village of Mani. As members of a Heifer project in this part of Mexico, the family is one of many aiming to restore these gentle stingless bees to cultural prominence and provide a source for the bees' honey, long prized for its curative powers.

The family's bees take their choice between box hives, which are the standard among *Apis* beekeepers, and hollow logs where *Meliponas* are found in nature. Or, how they used to be found. For the last 40 years or so, it has been a rare occurrence to find stingless bees in the Yucatan.

About 200 years ago, European bees, which produce much more honey than the stingless variety, were introduced to Mexico. By the 1970s, it seemed that this competition, combined with pesticides and other chemicals, deforestation and an increasingly fragile ecosystem, had all but eliminated stingless bees in the region. Or,

maybe someone did insult the bees, and they actually flew away. Regardless, about 90 percent of managed colonies disappeared on the peninsula between 1980 and 2005, according to bee science journal *Apidologie*. Today, most people in the Yucatan have never seen a bee without a stinger.

"People have vague recollections of their grandparents tending to the bees or seeing them in the tree trunks," said Atilano Ceballos Loeza, director of the U Yits Ka'an school of ecological agriculture. "The knowledge is there. The memory is in the heart of the people. How do we cultivate that memory?"

FORMING THE HIVE

Reinvigorating the cultural memory is the goal of a collaboration between Heifer International Mexico and Ceballos' U Yits Ka'an. For the project, Heifer Mexico financed training and provided families with two animal resources that are now scarce in the region—pigs bred from those first brought over by Spanish conquistadors that





Many beekeepers in the Yucatan keep *Mellipona* bees in hollow tree trunks, which the bees naturally call home.



Stingless bees tend to their hive.



Marla Torres Tzab
opens one of her hives
to check on her bees.



“People have vague recollections of their grandparents tending to the bees or seeing them in the tree trunks. The knowledge is there. The memory is in the heart of the people.”

— Atilano Ceballos Loeza, director of the U Yits Ka'an school

adapted extraordinarily well to the area, and the stingless bees known for their connection to the Mayans and their high-value honey. U Yits Ka'an provided their technical expertise and ample experience working with local communities.

In the 1990s, Ceballos and 12 other Catholic priests formed U Yits Ka'an, named for a local Mayan myth. At first, the priests weren't exactly sure what they wanted to do with the organization, but their church members guided them, and U Yits Ka'an started sponsoring agroecology workshops, analyzing local government development projects and publicizing their own analysis of poverty in the Yucatan.

After a few years of working this way, U Yits Ka'an became an agroecology school, based in Mani and free to members of the community. The organization also defends Mayan land rights and launches community supported agriculture and seed exchange programs. Today, the school is decentralized, working in five sites in the Yucatan, and four walls and a roof aren't necessarily a part of the equation.

“Two trees with some shade—that's the classroom,” Ceballos said. “A school isn't equivalent to a building.”

Nor does it require a designated teacher; participants come to U Yits Ka'an sites to share their expertise with one another. “*Campesinos* know. That's where the knowledge comes from,” Ceballos said. When it comes to Melipona bees, the knowledge is just buried a little deeper.

HARVESTING HONEY'S HISTORY

“Meliponiculture isn't new in our culture,” Ceballos said. “It's pre-Hispanic, from thousands of years ago. You can see it in the ceramics and ceremonies of the Mayans.” In the Madrid Codex—a 112-page Mayan book that documents the culture's calendars, rituals and daily life—the last 12 pages are purely glyphs about Melipona beekeeping.

The lore carried on, even as the number of stingless bees in the Yucatan dwindled. Adults



today remember being entertained as children by stories of *xunancab* (choo-naa-cap), a queen bee who takes the form of a woman and offers to prepare meals and care for the home, perhaps an allegory for how the stingless bees took care of the Mayans.

To excavate this latent cultural knowledge, Ceballos and U Yits Ka'an teamed up with Heifer to launch *Kuxan Suum* (The Thread of Life), a project named after the Mayan legend of a rope that connected Mani and other communities together. In this tradition, the project connects 13 communities through the recovery of stingless bees and pigs as well as training and Heifer's practice of Passing on the Gift. Sharing animals and training helps revive a similar ancestral tradition, where a family would ask their neighbor for animals and pay them back later with more animals.

Kuxan Suum project participants hold the same ceremonies that Mayans used for hundreds of years to bless the bees. Spirituality in this part of the Yucatan is a blend of Catholicism and Mayan beliefs, which emphasize nature—so much so that,



Melipona honey is better than a trip to the pharmacy: proponents swear by it as a cure for coughs, sore throats, childhood asthma and poor body odor.

when Catholics first came to the region, the locals refused to be inside for any religious purposes.

Mani in particular has always maintained a tradition of shamen or priests, and today four Mayan priests live in the village. When a family involved in the project harvests the honey, a local priest visits their home to perform a ceremony that is a mixture of Mayan and Catholic liturgy. The priest offers a maize-based drink to the goddess of the bees, then to the other people who are part of the ritual. At the end of the ceremony, the priest blesses the four corners of the hut housing the logs and boxes of bees, as well as everyone present, using a traditional tree resin incense called copal.

Another ceremony asks for rain to nourish bee-friendly plants and protection for the bees as they gather their nectar.

Obviously, Mayan culture has held the Melipona in high regard for a long time. Part of the reason is

the special qualities of the honey the bees produce.

"It's not for daily use," Ceballos said. "It's medicine."

A SWEET ELIXIR

A Melipona hive might only produce two pints of honey per year, compared with up to 42 pints from Apis bees. In the Yucatan, though, two pints of stingless bee honey can earn 1,000 pesos (\$74), while the same amount of Apis honey sells for about 40 pesos (\$3).

The reason for the substantial price difference is the locally renowned health benefits. Although Apis honey undoubtedly has nutritional benefits, it is primarily thought of as a sweetener. Melipona honey, on the other hand, is better than a trip to the pharmacy: proponents swear by it as a cure for coughs, sore throats, childhood asthma and body odor. The bee pollen is good for anemia and natural energy, honey-based salves relieve muscle pain



Maria Torres Tzab, Fatima Castillo Torres and Nicolas Castillo Ucam stand outside their home in Mani.

y: and cure hemorrhoids, and eye drops clean and disinfect the eyes.

Because of the low yield of Melipona hives, many families keep all the honey for their personal medicine cabinets. Other families, especially those who have had their bees longer and have been able to cultivate more hives, sell the honey—sometimes as much as a dozen pints of the pricey commodity in a year.

When people don't know where to sell their products, they bring them to U Yits Ka'an because, according to Ceballos, people are familiar with the school.

"The eye drops are always sold out because people know about them," Ceballos said.

The high demand may just be a sign that people around Mani and central Yucatan are speaking extra sweetly about the Melipona these days.

PROMOTING THE BUZZ

Maria Torres first laid her eyes on the sacred stingless bees her father had told her about a few years ago, when her daughter, Fatima Castillo Torres, brought tree trunks of stingless beehives home from U Yits Ka'an.

"My dad told me how nice they were," said Torres, her face lighting up. "It made me happy when my daughter got interested in them."

Fatima Castillo, now 26, first learned about U Yits Ka'an because both her grandmother and father worked there, and she wanted to know what they did at the school. She eventually became a U Yits Ka'an promoter, teaching local families how to use agroecological practices, and she fell for the bees because they were so easy to keep.

Now the younger Castillo works long hours at a clothing store, so Torres takes care of the bees, a skill she learned from both her daughter and her husband. Now Torres is teaching eight of her friends and neighbors how to tend to the bees, and her passion for everything Meliponaculture is contagious—from natural techniques to keep the hives healthy, to the fact that the bees, in lieu of a built-in weapon, behead would-be colony intruders, to how the bees are a thread connecting her father, herself and her daughter.

But when asked about what she likes the most about the indigenous bees, the answer isn't a hard one for Torres. "Because they don't sting! That's the most basic thing." ■



The sun rises over Kerry Harrington's Arkansas farm. A hefty load of chores means she's always up before sunrise.



Early to Bed, Early to Rise,

These Farmers Grow Chickens of Notable Size

By **AUSTIN BAILEY**, *World Ark* managing editor
Photos by **BRYAN CLIFTON**, *World Ark* contributor

**If you want to be a farmer, where do you start?
Heifer is stepping in to help farmers in Arkansas
learn the basics, secure start-up funds and build
the networks they need to thrive.**

HARRIET, Ark.—A 5 a.m. milking may seem painfully early to you, but in fact, it falls about an hour later than Ebony the cow prefers. She would rather start the day by 4, an opinion she makes clear every morning by stationing herself in front of the house around that time to wait for her still-sleeping keepers. But everyone has to make allowances with a new baby around, and surely Ebony will adjust.

The minor schedule tweak is the only apparent hardship Ebony endures in her otherwise idyllic routine. A sleek 900-pound Holstein/Jersey mix, Ebony spends most of her day roaming the farm in the Ozark foothills, nibbling on grass as her brushed-to-gloss coat glimmers in the sunshine. Her owner, chicken farmer extraordinaire Kerry Harrington, smothers Ebony with kisses and compliments at every opportunity.



Ebony loiters beside her keepers' farmhouse.



Harrington sweet-talks Ebony while her husband, Josh Jiménez, handles the morning milking.



In the "chicken hospital," birds needing extra TLC can rest and stay warm.



“I’ve never worked more in my life, but I’ve never been happier.” -Farmer Kerry Harrington

Harrington bought Ebony with the proceeds from her first batch of broiler chickens, which she raised last summer after joining a livestock cooperative organized by Heifer USA to help beginning farmers break into the business. Her chicken operation is going strong, and she has plans to soon add goats to the mix. Tending the animals on her slice of land, working full-time and raising 1-year-old Trisha Rose lands Harrington, 25, in bed by 8 p.m. each night. That’s just fine by her. “I’ve never worked more in my life, but I’ve never been happier.”

The work begins before sunup when Harrington and her husband, Josh Jimenez, sneak out the front door of their tumbledown farmhouse, careful not to wake the baby still snuggled in her crib. Ebony is usually waiting in the front yard with Bam-Bam, a wooly Pyrenees/chow that has free reign, and Brutus, the blue-eyed mastiff/wolf mix whose penchant for gobbling chickens landed him on perpetual lockup.



Wearing headlamps and wielding flashlights, the couple coaxes Ebony to the milking shed with sweet talk and plenty of rubs to snout and neck. "Did you ever think, growing up, that you'd love the smell of a sweaty cow?" Harrington muses as she nuzzles Ebony, nose to nose.

Harrington certainly didn't. Born in Arkansas but raised in a Chicago suburb from the age of 5, farming wasn't part of her childhood. Hard work was. Of the six children in the family, Kerry Harrington was the one her dad called on to help with countless home remodels. "Being a hard worker has always been glorified to me," Harrington explained.

She planned to pursue a career in medicine when she first enrolled at the University of Central Arkansas, but was put off by what she felt was too great of an emphasis on cures, rather than prevention. "I realized I didn't agree with mainstream medicine," she said. "Nutrition is the root of a lot of health problems."

Then a summer job on a farm after her sophomore year illuminated a different path. Working at Falling Sky Farms, a grass-based livestock farm in Marshall, Arkansas, got her considering a career in farming. One of her primary duties was chicken processing, a chore not for the squeamish. But farmers Cody Hopkins and Andrea Todt were such good bosses that it made up for any drawbacks. "I realized after working for Cody and Andrea, this is how animals are supposed to be raised," Harrington said. The idea of growing food naturally, selling it locally and joining a movement to improve the health of both people and economies through small-scale farming appealed to her. Also appealing was Josh Jiminez, whom she met at Falling Sky and would marry before her college graduation in May 2012.

Coming Home

The land and farmhouse Harrington and Jiminez rent, which they've dubbed The Other Side Farm, sits more than a mile off the nearest paved road, therefore meeting the couple's requirement for quiet and privacy. The move to the farm came in March of 2013, after the noise and hustle drove them from their duplex in Leslie, Arkansas, population 441.

Harrington still works full-time at Falling Sky, caring for Ebony and her pastured chickens before and after her shifts. Jiminez works full-time making wooden toys, tackling his own farm chores early in the morning, then again in the evenings. Harrington loves working at Falling Sky and wouldn't mind doing it forever, although her nascent chicken farming operation is growing and demanding more time. Harrington recently brought another cow, Lexus, onto the farm to keep Ebony company. Her daydreams of building a dedicated milking barn with room for processing and refrigeration, and even of eventually owning her own 400-



Tending the pastured chickens at The Other Side Farm is a family affair.





Harrington strains fresh milk, then refrigerates it in gallon-sized jars. Neighbors drop by each day to buy some.

The goal of Heifer's programs in Arkansas and Appalachia is to minimize barriers for people entering farming as a profession.



Harrington moves her chicken tractors twice a day so her birds are always on fresh, clean ground.

acre dairy farm, are looking like real possibilities.

For now she and Jimenez operate The Other Side Farm on a smaller scale, selling a dozen eggs a week to family members and gallons of milk in glass jars to her neighbors. Ebony and Lexus placidly submit each morning to being hooked up to a gleaming milking machine that looks like a stainless steel octopus. Harrington tucks her waist-length blonde Heidi braids into the back of her T-shirt as she strains the milk and divides it among gallon-sized jars. Jimenez keeps his long hair tucked in a baseball cap as he sterilizes the milking equipment. Customers will come in the evening to buy their farm-fresh milk, which Harrington sells for \$5 per gallon. She realizes her prices are on the low side, but Searcy County, where she lives, is a poor area, and not many people can afford to pay a lot. "I would rather have my customers be healthy than not have them as my customers," she said.

On weekends when no one is racing off to a day job, the entire family joins forces for what Jimenez calls "quality family fun time." Trisha Rose rides along uncomplaining in her backpack carrier as her dad feeds the laying hens. Strong as superheroes from their never-ending workload, Jimenez and Harrington haul leaden barrels of water and feed for the pastured birds without complaint. The broilers they're tending pass their days in "chicken

tractors," roomy screen cages with no floors where the birds enjoy fresh air, sunshine and all the bugs and grubs they can find. Harrington and Jimenez move the tractors daily by sliding them along the ground, giving the chickens access to fresh, clean patches of ground and making sure their droppings are evenly dispersed over the pasture rather than being concentrated in one spot. It takes a couple of months to raise a broiler from hatch to a weight that's marketable, and fattening the chickens as much as possible is the goal. Harrington proved herself exceptionally skilled at this from the start. Her first batch of chickens, which she took on in June 2014, set a record as the plumpest brood grown by any of the dozen co-op members. She suspects that moving her chickens to fresh patches of grass twice a day, rather than the once-daily norm, has something to do with it. As a member of the co-op, she sells her birds for \$1.50 less per pound than she could selling retail, but she saves herself the time and expense of marketing and delivering them herself.

Harrington joined the Heifer USA co-op and became a chicken farmer after learning about the project from Hopkins and Todt, who serve as mentor farmers. The goal of Heifer's programs in Arkansas and Appalachia is to minimize barriers for people entering farming as a profession, so Heifer provides capital and organizational support to farmers, who can keep their focus on raising

Having someone else handle the marketing and distribution end of farming works out well for Harrington, who prefers to stick close to home so she can focus on her family and their animals.

animals and caring for the land. The Heifer-supported co-op provides legal and accounting advice, as well as access to a revolving loan fund that allows farmers to buy fencing, feed and other necessities.

"All they have to do is take care of the animals and the farm," explained Ben Maddox, social enterprise support specialist. Heifer and the cooperative members partner with an abattoir that gives a discounted processing fee after Heifer helped offset the cost of updates and an expansion the butcher needed.

Having someone else handle the marketing and distribution end of farming works out well for Harrington, who prefers to stick close to home so she can focus on her family and their animals. She's ramping up her chicken business, from 1,200 in 2014 to 5,000 this year. She plans to be raising 12,000 chickens per year by 2018. The expansion will require an equipment upgrade. Her birds will move from chicken tractors to the much larger prairie schooners, which can house 500 birds at a time but require trucks and winches rather than just muscle power to move.

Still, the grass is the thing, and Harrington is dedicated to grass-based livestock farming no matter the scale. Grass is the source of her farm's health and success, and of her own Zen, too. "When I lived in the suburbs, I really enjoyed mowing the lawn, making straight lines,"



HEIFER AT HOME

Working with groups of farmers who work together is Heifer's strategy the world over, and Heifer's approach in Arkansas is no different. Heifer helped launch the Grass Roots Farmer's Cooperative in 2014. Kerry Harrington and nine other beginner farmers took advantage of the co-op's loans, training, mentorship and other perks in that first year to get themselves started raising chickens, turkeys, pigs and cows for profit. This inaugural class of farmers relied on the co-op for \$25,000 in loans to cover start-up costs, and depended on the co-op to handle transport, processing and marketing of their goods. With access to a comprehensive suite of services to support their work, farmers were free to focus on their animals.

The Grass Roots Farmers' Cooperative will grow to support five more farmers in 2015, and available loan funds will grow to \$160,000. Also new this year is Herds to Home, a meat delivery service expected to generate 40 percent of participating farmers' sales. To sign up for your meat share, go to www.grassrootscoop.com.





Members of the Grass Roots Farmers' Cooperative learn about pastured pigs.



CHANGING DIRECTION IN CAMEROON

*By BROOKE EDWARDS, World Ark contributor
Photos by OLIVIER ASSELIN*

How does Heifer International decide where to work? Perhaps more importantly, how do we decide when the work is done? After more than 40 years of work in Cameroon, Heifer International is looking northward to the dry, hungry Sahel.



Marthe Nombop and her daughters Supuwa Binnette, 18, (left) and Pandop Olga, 16, (right) head out to work in their cornfield.



Helper Africa Area Program Vice President Ellizabeth Bintliff dances with Helper staff and traditional dancers outside the Fon of Nseh's palace after a ceremony to mark the handover of three classrooms by a group of Helper beneficiary farmers to the community.



People gather for a Passing on the Gift ceremony to mark the handover of three classrooms by a group of Helper beneficiary farmers to the community.



Pandop Olga, 16, and her brothers Faove Ninonne, 12, (left) and Kendleng Desmond, 10 (right) do homework.

“The animals you gave them have started yielding good fruits, and the fruits will continue, for their children will not remain illiterate. We all know that education is the only legacy that no one inherits.” -His Royal Majesty the Fon of Nseh



NSEH, Cameroon: At the end of many, many miles of red clay roads peopled with women and children carrying the day's harvest of corn and cabbage to market, a large crowd gathers. The order of the day is cutting the ribbon on three newly constructed and fully furnished classrooms at the Government Technical College Nseh.

Student choirs sing as Heifer International Africa Vice President Elizabeth Bintliff, Heifer Cameroon Country Director Humphrey Taboh, other Heifer International staff, government officials and His Royal Majesty the Fon (traditional ruler) of Nseh take their places. The new classrooms, which offer space for 82 students to learn, are a gift from Heifer project participants ready to share the fruits of their success.

In Nseh, Heifer Cameroon gave sheep to farming families in 2005 in an effort to improve

nutrition and income. With the sheep and accompanying training, families increased productivity on their farms. As time went on, the families generated income from the sales of livestock and livestock products, crops and manure. Traditionally, families that receive gifts from Heifer eventually share the first female offspring from their Heifer-given livestock with another family in need. After completing this commitment, the families decided to keep giving by paying for new classrooms.

His Royal Majesty the Fon of Nseh said, “To the farmers, I thank you very much for your achievement. It is because of you that we have this mighty gift of three classrooms. Madame Vice President of Heifer, I want to assure you that Heifer here has fallen on fertile ground. The animals you gave them have started yielding good fruits, and the fruits will continue, for their children will not remain illiterate. We all know that education is the only legacy that no one inherits.”

“In 40 years we have been part of a movement of change among smallholder farming within the country.”

—Elizabeth Bintliff, vice president of Heifer’s Africa programs



Gladys Forche (middle) supervises the transplanting of saplings in her family's cypress nursery.



Marthe Nombop fills her chickens' water dispensers.



Micheline Matang checks on her pigs in their pen.

Much has changed in Cameroon since Heifer began working there in 1974. At that time, most of the eggs and poultry consumed in the country were imported. Farmers used harmful slash-and-burn practices in an effort to improve crop yields. But in recent decades Cameroon's farmers increased productivity significantly, feeding a blooming dairy industry and providing enough eggs and poultry for the entire country. In fact, Cameroon is the breadbasket of Central and Western Africa, exporting food crops to the neighboring countries of Chad, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

Driving through most of Cameroon is like driving through a lush, emerald food rainforest. Corn, cabbage, carrots and potatoes grow in large



fields, on the sides of hills and steep mountains, in tiny yards and along narrow pathways. At nearly every road toll, someone is selling the day's harvest. Go far enough north, though, and it is a different picture altogether.

At the same time Heifer decided to close the Cameroon country program office, Heifer began exploring ways to work in the Sahel, a dry, arid, poor and vulnerable zone in West Africa. The Sahel runs through northern Cameroon, which stands in stark contrast to the rest of the country in terms of poverty and hunger, lagging behind on both counts.

"In 40 years we have been part of a movement of change among smallholder farming within the country," said Bintliff, who is not only the

vice president of Heifer's Africa programs but also a native of Cameroon. "When we talk about sustainability and the idea that Heifer is closing the Cameroon country office, we really talk about what happens after the program ends. Passing on the Gift is central to that endeavor: making sure that communities and families continue the practices that were taught by the organization and carry them on in different communities and with other families. When I think about farmers like Martin Forche, who can say to us, without any reservation, that when we come back to his home in five years, he will be a millionaire—that's why I can say that Heifer's work is done. We essentially have created models farmers can replicate and take on well after we are gone."



Martin Forche and his wife Gladys Forche stand in their cypress nursery with their children (from left to right) Victory, 11, Desmon, 16, Naomi, 15, Lizette, 18, Daniel, 13, and Ezekiel, 5.

“We essentially have created models farmers can replicate and take on well after we are gone.”

—Elizabeth Bintliff, vice president of Heifer’s Africa programs

Martin Forche and his wife, Gladys Forche, began working with Heifer in 2007. Their crop yields were meager, and Martin’s carpentry work never brought in more than \$100 a month to support their eight children. The Forches received a heifer in 2009. With help from Heifer Cameroon, they built a stable for their livestock and a biogas unit.

Today, the Forche farm is thriving. Their cow has had three calves, allowing the family to meet their Passing on the Gift requirement and sell two calves. Slurry, a rich fertilizer from their biogas unit, improved the quality of the soil and increased their crop yields nearly six times over. Where they once earned \$77 from their corn harvest, they now bring in \$449. In milk sales, they earn \$135 a month. Their cow is again pregnant, and they’re hoping to add another heifer to their herd; once they’re milking two cows, Martin says he intends to buy another

plot of land on which to raise a bull.

The Forches’ plans don’t stop there, however. Behind the house are their 30 pigs. They can sell a piglet for \$48 and a sow for \$290. When the time is right, Martin Forche will cash in on these living piggy banks to purchase a taxi and hire a driver. He estimates this new business endeavor could bring in \$600 a month.

The Forche family is a clear success story, one Heifer hopes to see replicated by families throughout the region.

“If you look at Cameroon in terms of poverty and the Millennium Development Goals, the Far North is least developed,” Heifer Cameroon Country Director Humphrey Taboh said. “Our mandate is to fight poverty, so our focus logically must shift. We are more strategically leveraging our resources in the Sahel.” ■





Lizette Forche feeds the family's dairy cow.



Gladys Forche and her daughter Lizette feed the family's pigs.



The Far North province of Cameroon suffers from infertile soils, scarcity of arable land and a lack of adequate seasonable rainfall, resulting in low yields on harvests, leaving the population vulnerable to famine conditions.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HEIFER CAMEROON

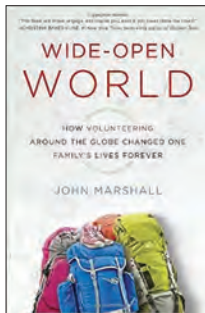
Heifer International began work in Cameroon in 1974, partnering with the Presbyterian Church to ship Jersey dairy cattle from the United States to improve the country's dairy industry. In 1981 Heifer shifted its focus to working with farmers, eventually adding goats, snails and cane rats to its list of offerings. During four decades of work, Heifer Cameroon helped more than 50,000 farming families.





A Pilgrimage to Eve

Reviewed by Ragan Sutterfield, *World Ark* contributor



Wide-Open World: How Volunteering Around the Globe Changed One Family's Lives Forever
By John Marshall
Ballantine Books, 2015
Hardcover; \$26; 352 pages

Summer reading requirements can be nuanced and awfully tough to meet. You want something that's not so light that you're embarrassed to let other people see what you're reading, but also not so heavy that it pulls a dark cloud over your beach vacation. If you're still looking for a good fit, try John Marshall's *Wide-Open World*, a globe-trotting nonfiction book with a sense of humor.

Marshall's story about his family's brazen choice to ditch suburbia for a service-centered global odyssey touches the heart at times and enlivens the mind at others. While it might make sunning with a cocktail in hand feel a bit indulgent, keep in mind that Marshall's own journey began after a trip to the beach—a yoga retreat in the Bahamas, no less.

He wasn't all that excited to go, but his wife wanted it, and he needed a vacation. They had kids in high school. Marshall was mid-career in his work as a TV producer, and his relationship with his wife, Traca, was "treading water in the deep end." Marshall describes his own attitude by saying, "I felt listless, unmotivated, going through the motions of life." But after a week of downward dogs and beach sunrises, three words worked their way into his mind, "like a non sequitur from God." Those words were: *year of service*.

Most of us would lose such a revelation by the time our tans wore off, but Marshall and his always-adventurous wife, Traca, were ready to act. So in less than two months, they rented out their house, unplugged their teenagers from their screens (his daughter was sending



READ TO FEED



"Lemony Snicket (Daniel Handler) is my favorite author because he isn't like the other authors who write happy-ending stories. He writes fantasy. These stories include unfortunate events, disappointments and villains. Lemony wrote a series that I LOVE called A Series of Unfortunate Events. I'm almost finishing the book series. When I read all those books from one to 11, it is like Mr. Snicket is telling his story. It's awesome! Reading his books makes you feel anxious in a good way, because they contain a lot of mysteries. I recommend these books for everyone to read. Reading anything (especially A Series of Unfortunate Events) will make you travel to a fictional story world."

Read to Feed inspired me to read and take action in the world. Read to Feed is a very important project to feed or care for the children and people that are in need. After the project, we bought honeybees, rabbits, sheep and a pig. We hope they will get to the children soon so the children who receive them will have all the care they need."

BEATRIZ CICI

School of the Nations, Brasilia, Brazil

LEARN MORE AT WWW.READTOFEED.ORG.

Everywhere

an average of 20 text messages every hour of the waking day) and booked volunteer stints from the Costa Rican rainforest to the Ladakh highlands of India. Then they set out for six months of rescuing injured animals, picking invasive weeds from threatened habitats, teaching orphans and living with Tibetan monks.

The book recounts each adventure, mixing history and geography with revelations that came along the way. Without being tedious, Marshall also answers the tricky questions of just how you pull off such an adventure. How does one change clothes with a teenage son and daughter all in the same room? How do you budget such a trip on the cheap? You'll find the answers here, and there's even a detailed accounting down to the cost of travel in an appendix.

When I began the book, my worry was that Marshall and his family would come off as self-congratulatory saviors, making their way around the world bestowing their beneficence. The book, thankfully, avoids this problem by emphasizing just how helpless and unhelpful they were. They mostly cleaned cages, raked leaves, pulled weeds and did laundry. When they arrive at the Siddhartha School in Ladakh, India, Marshall found that, "they didn't really need us ... once our tea glasses were empty, we just started looking around for ways to be useful."

So if Marshall and his family weren't really much help, then what value was a trip like this, six months off from the normal pace of life? Wasn't it self-indulgent, privileged, etc., etc.? Maybe. But as the book came to a close, I kept thinking of the idea of pilgrimage—a journey to some holy place in which it is the journey itself that really brings one closer to the truth of the world. That is essentially what Marshall's trip was—a pilgrimage. But instead of a shrine or some holy destination, their journey took them out of the hum-drum of suburban American life to the sacred site of the wide-open world itself. In the end it was a journey that wasn't all joy. New truths can be unsettling, and Marshall's family doesn't return unscathed. They carry back everything from monkey-bite scars to broken relationships. But like life itself, Marshall writes that it was "all just one big, painful, beautiful, unpredictable adventure." Read this book, and you will have a hard time resisting the urge to have one of your own. ■

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RAGAN SUTTERFIELD is the author of *This is My Body: From Obesity to Ironman, My Journey Into the True Meaning of Flesh, Spirit, and Deeper Faith* (Convergent/Random House 2015). You can learn more about him at ragansutterfield.com

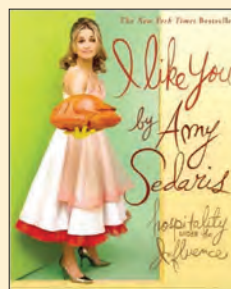
THREE FAVORITES ON: CURIOUS COOKBOOKS

These unusual takes on the classic cookbook aim to entertain as well as guide your home-cooking efforts. From hardcore vegans to a dedicated hostess to the hapless Pooh Bear, these culinary characters drill down on the essence of good food across all cultures: freshness, fellowship and the sweetness of spinning your own harvest into a meal.



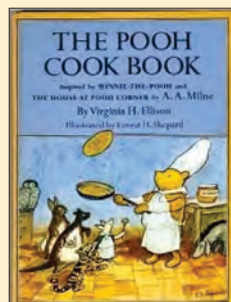
Thug Kitchen: The Official Cookbook

By Thug Kitchen



I Like You: Hospitality Under the Influence

By Amy Sedaris



The Winnie-the-Pooh Cookbook

By Virginia Ellison



INCOME Is Up For Cambodians

Story by Annie Bergman, *World Ark* contributor | Photos by Dave Anderson

PREY VILLAGE, Cambodia—Dong Sokhon's focus is intense as she guides strips of fabric through her treadle sewing machine. Her nimble fingers make slight alterations almost imperceptibly.

Dong, 28, enjoys the intricacies of making clothes. She occasionally sews for family and neighbors and accepts garments for mending and tailoring from around her village. For now, though, sewing is mostly a hobby that nets her a little bit of money.

Sokhon and her husband, Sork Sin, 30, live with their two children and her brother in Prey village in southwest Cambodia. Sork is a motorcycle mechanic, but his work, too, is spotty and dependent on neighbors knowing he can fix their bikes.

Together, the couple can expect about 30,000 *riels*, or \$7.50, a month, though the amount varies. The money is mostly spent on food, Dong said, to supplement peanuts, watermelons and chickens the couple raise on a neighbor's adjacent lot.

"The income isn't enough," Dong said in the early summer of 2014. "We have no land for farming. It's especially difficult because we do not have enough food to eat."

But the couple knows that it is only a matter of time before things change.

Heifer Cambodia launched the Improving Income and Nutrition Through Community Empowerment (INCOME) project in early 2013, and its success was immediate, with some farmers seeing a jump from \$1 a day in income to \$10-\$15 a day.

Phase two of the project launched in February 2014 and is expected to last through June of 2017. When it comes to a close, the project will have helped 20,000 families in 250 self-help groups in eight different provinces.



Dong Sokhon joined a Heifer project with high hopes that the income she'll make from raising pigs and chickens will help her start a tailoring business.

The INCOME project provides marginalized families with pigs and chickens, along with trees, vegetable seeds and forage seeds for livestock feed. The project also trains and equips community animal health workers to provide veterinary care.

So far, Heifer has helped nearly 8,000 families as part of this project.

Pigs and chickens are two of the most desired and profitable animals in Cambodia, said Keo Keang, country director for Heifer Cambodia. But with the country importing at least half of the animals from Vietnam and Thailand, Heifer



Indian Families

Cambodia saw an opportunity to develop and expand, and partially control, the local market for the animals.

Import regulations are lax, Keo said, and result in many of the animals crossing the border with diseases that can infect the local swine and poultry. The Heifer project aims to help Cambodians raise all the livestock they need in country.

"Heifer communities are working with local community authorities to control the imports of pigs and chickens," Keo said. "Our community animal health workers have the proper vaccinations that are safeguarding against the problems."

Though Doung had been to just three self-help group meetings, she said she was already seeing the benefits of her involvement. At the first group meeting, Doung said she learned the basics of finance and why she should be saving money.

She now contributes 5,000 *riels* a month, roughly \$1.25, to the group savings fund, which she'll be able to borrow from in the future.

Doung and her family will begin raising pigs and chickens once they build pens for the animals and complete classes in animal care. Doung says she's eager to learn how to get the most out of her farming efforts.

"I'm excited to be able to grow things and want to grow more. If I can get more land, I want to do more. I want to farm because they want more income. People at the market buy products, so I think it will be easy to sell," she said.

Ultimately, she said, she was excited because farming will allow them to realize a goal of starting real businesses with storefronts.

"I'm happy to receive the pigs and chickens, because through selling the animals, I can increase our income. Our family will have enough food to eat, and eventually, we will be able to create our tailoring and motorcycle repair businesses," she said. ■



Doung Sokhon and her husband, Sork Sin, (above) were in the midst of building a shelter for the pigs that would be delivered after she finished training. The family will raise pigs and chickens, two of the most desired and profitable animals in Cambodia, to help increase their income and diversify their diets.



Daughters of Vartan Are Committed to Sustaining Culture and Family

By Karen Grimaldos, *World Ark* contributor

In 1988, an earthquake devastated the country of Armenia. It killed 60,000 people and destroyed close to half a million buildings. A few years later, the country gained independence from the Soviet Union and officially became its own democracy in 1991.

Rural regions of Armenia have

never truly recovered from the economic aftershocks of these events. Today, one-third of the population lives in poverty.

The Daughters of Vartan is an organization of women who live thousands of miles away from the struggling Republic of Armenia, yet their ties to the country could

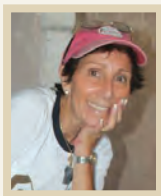
not be stronger. This dedicated group is committed to helping sustain Armenian culture and families around the world.

"We have a unity tied to heritage that not every organization has, and I think that's one of the secrets to our organization's longevity," said Lisa Kradjian,

Helping my Armenia

Sona Manuelian, an Armenian-American and member of the New Jersey chapter of the Daughters of Vartan, talks about her connection to the country from which her family came.

My first visit: I have a fear of flying, but six years ago I decided to volunteer in Armenia. I had never visited my country of origin before—now I travel there every year.



Emotional connection: "The first time I saw Mount Ararat I fell to my hands and knees and cried. To me, that mountain represents the blood, sweat and tears of those killed during the genocide. My grandparents escaped just months before the escalation."

The need: "Many people in rural Armenia have no running water, heat or electricity. They cook meals outside in the cold and live in old shipping containers that have leaking roofs and rust running down the walls."

How she helps: "I volunteer with Fuller Center for Housing to help build homes for poor Armenians. I've plastered walls, painted and even helped construct floors by carrying heavy buckets filled with stones."

Why she does it: "I consider those who are suffering in Armenia to be my brothers and sisters. We share common ancestors and they're a part of my heritage. I'll be going back to volunteer for as long as I can to help them survive."

On Heifer and the Fuller Center: "We visited a man who has a home and is successful in agriculture thanks to the work Heifer and the Fuller Center for Housing are doing together in Armenia. The shipping container this man used to live in is now used for storage. He said every time he sees it he's reminded of how grateful he is for the programs that helped him succeed."

Her hope for Armenia: "I want to be able to see the country grow and see its people happy, because my love for the Armenians and my heritage knows no bounds."

—Karen Grimaldos



e Committed d Families

grand matron of Daughters of Vartan.

Founded in Philadelphia more than 80 years ago, Daughters of Vartan provides opportunities for Armenian youth and women to grow as leaders in their communities and gives them educational, spiritual and cultural support to help them succeed. Aiding needy Armenian families is also a priority. The organization has 20 chapters in the U.S. and Canada that support local projects and efforts in their homeland of Armenia.

"The need is still tremendous in rural Armenia," Kradjian said. "There are regions where people are living in cargo containers and other makeshift housing. They suffer greatly in the wintertime because they have no heat or insulation."

To help fellow Armenians facing challenging times, the Daughters of Vartan select a short list of charities each year and encourage members to support them. Heifer International is one of those charities for 2015.

"This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, so we wanted to select charities in this commemorative year that were grassroots and literally helping Armenia rebuild, one family at a time. We feel Heifer is really doing that."

More than 10,000 Armenian farming families have been helped by Heifer to date. "The economic downturn drove a lot of men out of the country to look for jobs," Kradjian said. "In some villages, business is growing so well that husbands are coming back to reunite with their families. They now have enough work to justify their return home." ■

To learn more about Heifer's work in Armenia, visit heifer.org/armenia.



Shop Till Hunger Drops

By Bethany Ivie, World Ark contributor

Did you know that what you do online has the potential to help the causes you support? Activities that aren't traditionally charitable, like online shopping, can give back in a big way. Here are a few ways your online shopping can help Heifer.

With **eBay Giving Works**, sellers donate a percentage of each sale to a specific charity. Visit givingworks.ebay.com, type "Heifer" in the search bar and select "charities" from the dropdown menu to see the items for sale benefiting Heifer.

With **We-Care.com**, shoppers can support causes without spending extra money. Visit their site, download one of their Google Chrome, Firefox or Internet Explorer browser extensions, choose the charity you want to support, and shop away! When you buy something from a participating store, your charity receives a percentage of your purchase.

Goodshop.com harnesses the power of an extra click to fetch donations when you shop. Partnering with thousands of popular stores, your Goodshop donations don't cost you a dime. Goodshop also offers a Yahoo-based search engine called Goodsearch, which gives a penny to Heifer for every online search. Create your free account and select Heifer as your charity of choice.

Online shopping is just the tip of the easy, digital do-gooding iceberg. Discover more ways to make an impact with your computer and smartphone at Heifer.org/digital. ■



The Wisdom of Mrs. D

Guide to Read to Feed

By Molly Fincher, *World Ark* writer | Photos by Shannon Moon Photography

Elena Desjardins—known as “Mrs. D” to her students—leads the Read to Feed® charge at West Bath School, a 150-student elementary school in Maine. Last year, the school raised enough for a Heifer Ark and beyond: \$7,525. That’s 1,250 books! Here, Desjardins shares the secrets to her success.



FOLLOW THE LEADER

When fourth-grader Ethan Reno asked to help, Desjardins minted him the Read to Feed student ambassador. His duties included making posters, writing personal notes to drum up support and cajoling his peers to sign on and do their share. Ethan’s hard sell convinced 28 students to flip pages for the Read to Feed campaign.

Desjardins set a goal to raise \$500 herself, a move that helped cement the sense of cooperation at West Bath. “We felt like we were truly all in this quest together as a team to earn an Ark,” she said.



Mrs. D and her sidekick, Ethan Reno, rally students to log books for the Read to Feed fundraiser.



DO THE MATH

Desjardins crossed curriculum lines, cleverly crafting a math lesson to show how funds increase exponentially as new donors sign on.



JUST ASK

Desjardins convinced her Read-to-Feeders to ask local businesses for support, a move that brought in \$1,000.



GET CONNECTED

Heifer staff and volunteers are everywhere, and they love to help. Jane Elwell, a Heifer volunteer in Maine, came to West Bath School to share photos and stories from a trip she took to visit Heifer projects in Peru.



GEEK OUT

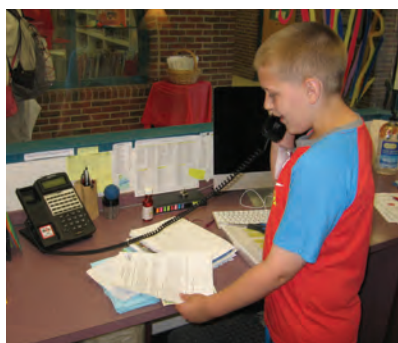
Use all the technological tools available to add some flash. Desjardins showed students YouTube clips and videos about Heifer’s work to inspire them to read more. She also took advantage of Heifer’s online fundraising platform to create a website specific to West Bath’s Read to Feed campaign. These easy-to-build websites allow people to donate online and track the campaign’s progress. You can customize a page



s. D: A Librarian's eed



At left, West Bath students and Elena Desjardins present a check to Jan West Schrock, the daughter of Heifer's founder. Below, Desjardins and Ethan Reno raise and tally donations.



by adding your own videos, images and stories, and students can even create their own fundraising pages nested within the overall campaign, personalized with their own goals and content.



BRAG

Keeping everyone posted on progress toward the goal keeps momentum going. Desjardins checked the school's Read to Feed website weekly to see how they were doing. "It was very exciting to see my students' genuine anticipation and excitement as I logged onto the website to reveal the amount of online donations for that week," she said. "It helped keep Read to Feed alive and well in our minds and hearts."



REWARD SUCCESS

The readers at West Bath School won pizza, popsicles and other prizes when they met their goal. Ethan Reno ensured the Heifer legacy at West Bath will continue when he gave his award, a stuffed animal, to a kindergartener who will be ready to log a few books for next year's campaign. ■

SHOP @heifer



END HUNGER T-SHIRT | \$15

Wear your support and help spread the message to end hunger and poverty. Black, short sleeves. Adult sizes S-XXL
NENDHNGR



HEIFER NOTECARDS | \$11

Join Heifer in celebrating over 70 years of work with these notecard sets featuring Life Changing Animals, Global Children and Women Farmers. These cards are a pictorial representation of Heifer's projects around the world. Each set contains eight beautiful photographs printed

in sets of two on 16 blank cards with 16 corresponding blank envelopes. Cards measure 5-1/2" x 4-1/4"

NNANIMALFY14 Life Changing Animals
NNCHILDRENFY14 Global Children
NNEMPOWERFY14 Women Farmers



KIDS CAN CHANGE T-SHIRT | \$17

Kids can really change the world. You just have to give them a chance. Green, short sleeves. Adult sizes S-XXL.
NKIDAD



EMBROIDERED BALL CAP | \$17 EACH

Show your Heifer spirit with one of our embroidered ball caps, perfect for a fun day out with the family. Available in maroon and green colors, one size fits all.

NCAPMAROON maroon
NCAPGREEN green

HEIFER WATER BOTTLE | \$9

Help keep trash to a minimum when you choose to carry this 16-ounce aluminum water bottle with carabiner top featuring Heifer's logo.

NWATR2010



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Missing Ewe!



Thinking of you.



Hang in there!



Wish you were here.



All "kidding" aside.
Happy Birthday.

HEIFER GREETING CARDS | \$13

Have something to say? Say it with these adorable baby Heifer animals! This set of 20 cards and 22 matching envelopes features five different animals with five encouraging messages, such as "Hang in there!" and "Missing Ewe!"

NGRTCDFY15



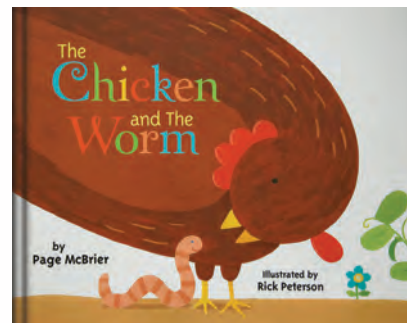
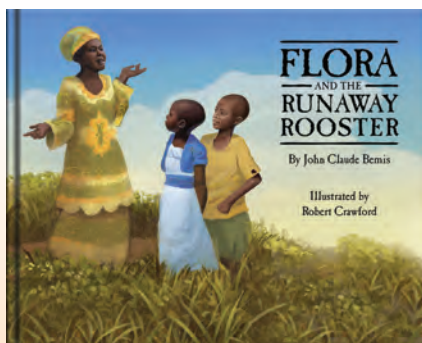
HEIFER MUGS | \$8

Keep your coffee warm and your heart warmer with these lovely ceramic mugs featuring Heifer's logo. Microwave and dishwasher safe. 14oz.

NCERMUGGRN Dark Green with Light Green Interior

NCERMUGBLU Dark Blue with Light Blue Interior

NCERMUGBLK Black with Cream Interior



FLORA AND THE RUNAWAY ROOSTER | \$10

Young Flora dreams of going to school with her brother and sister so she can play soccer. But when one of her family's roosters Kubika runs loose, he leads Flora on an adventure. Along the way she learns the value of friendship, responsibility and Passing on the Gift. Written by John Claude Bemis. Illustrated by Robert Crawford.

NBFLORAFY15 Hardcover

ONE COW AND COUNTING | \$10

A creative, quirky and humorous children's book that illuminates the wondrous benefits of cows, goats, water buffalo and more. For 3rd grade and older.

NBCOWHB Hardcover

THE CHICKEN AND THE WORM | \$10

Introduces the idea that even the smallest creatures can work together to care for the Earth. Pre-K and K.

NB07070HB Hardcover

GIVE A GOAT | \$5

The true story of how one 5th grade class was inspired by *Beatrice's Goat* and raised money to send even more animals to struggling families around the world.

NBGAGPB Paperback

FAITH THE COW | \$10

Chronicles the first shipment of Heifer cows to Puerto Rico. For ages 4 to 6.

NB0705000 Hardcover

WINTER IN SONGMING | \$10

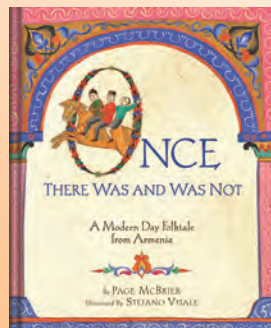
Follow a boy taking his first step into manhood while his village takes a step toward self-sufficiency. For 3rd and 4th grades.

NB07180HB Hardcover

ONCE THERE WAS AND WAS NOT: A MODERN DAY FOLKTALE FROM ARMENIA | \$10

A true story of three boys who joined a Heifer International-sponsored youth group in Armenia and learned to raise cows. For 5th and 6th grades.

NB07090HB Hardcover



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Miguel Antonio Dominguez and Lucia Navarrete Chi stand next to their son Daniel Antonio Dominguez, their daughter-in-law Ana Luisa Contrera and their 3-year-old grandson, Daniel Emmanuel Dominguez, at their home in Mani, Mexico.

"I'm lucky I found a woman who likes farming."

Miguel Antonio Dominguez, Heifer International farmer in Mani, Mexico

When Miguel Antonio Dominguez and Lucia Navarrete Chi married, they knew their future would revolve around their shared passion for farming. Today, they tend to 12 acres of fruits and other crops, as well as pigs from Heifer International Mexico.

One of their nine children, Daniel Antonio, stayed on the farm to carry on the family tradition—despite Miguel's warning that farming is a tough occupation. "It's my calling," Daniel Antonio said. He followed in his father's footsteps in another way, too—marrying a woman who loves working the land.

TAKE PART IN A LEGACY MORE THAN 70 YEARS STRONG



Seventy years ago, the Seagoing Cowboys set out on a journey across the Atlantic. It was an experiment in peace building that would deliver life-saving animals to those in need after World War II. Their efforts laid the foundation for Heifer International, an organization that would help millions out of poverty and redefine aid.

The Cowboy Endowment allows those inspired by the Cowboys' story to honor their efforts and Heifer's enduring work.*

Contact us at **888.422.1161** or visit **www.HeiferFoundation.org**



* Funds from the Heifer Foundation Cowboy Endowment are utilized by Heifer International in project areas where they are needed most.



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Heifer International needs caring supporters to join a critically important group we call Friends of Heifer®. Friends of Heifer send a regular contribution each month to help provide a steady, reliable stream of support so we can continue providing animals, training and hope to hungry families around the world.

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To join Friends of Heifer, you can also use
the envelope between pages 26 and 27.

