



YOUR SHOPPING LIST IS IN THE MAIL!

Alternative Gifts International | Alternative Gift Markets, Inc.

Alternative Gifts International

July - September 2009 Newsletter • www.alternativegifts.org • 800.842.2243

ENDS & BEGINNINGS

by: Lea McCloud, President

At the end of each fiscal year—June 30 for us—we were winding up more than winding down. We are ending and beginning at the same time. Many people think that our catalog *My Shopping List for the World* is the main focus of our work; it runs from July 1 through June 30 each year. In many ways—it is. However, the bulk (75-80%) of our donations are generated through volunteer-driven events we call Alternative Gift Markets. The same gifts and projects in the catalog are on our web site for individual donors who may or may not have attended an Alternative Gift Market.

Besides calculating the designated totals for checks to our partner agencies, we are distributing mini-grants to 20 food programs and homeless shelters that were nominated by our constituents. A list of these recipient agencies is on page 4.

As we end this year that has tried our souls emotionally and economically, I hope you will join me, looking forward with hope that AGI can accomplish our new mission: to Inspire. Specifically, the updated mission statement is:

Alternative Gifts International is a non-profit organization that inspires support for humanitarian and environmental causes. We offer donors the option to designate charitable gifts through carefully selected agencies, in the name of their relatives, friends and associates.

Among the new things that will drive our by-line 'gifts inspiring change' is a new logo, the new catalog design with more choices than ever before, improved communications, and our improved website. The board has provided a focused, new strategic plan; together with staff, we are blessed with enthusiasm and ideas for helping AGI and our shoppers to save money and time too. Speaking of saving you time and money, you can read about the people, in their own words, who make up the AGI Customer Service Team, of which I am so very proud. (Sorry we could not get them together for a photo.)

Lynette – I'm the Market Facilitator. I've been with Alternative Gifts International since November 2007. I'm married with 2 daughters. I'm very blessed to work for an organization that inspires hope and change for our world.

Magnus – I was born and raised in the Southwestern parts of Sweden. My wife, who is a Kansas native, and I met in college. After finishing up a BA degree in Political Science in the United States, I moved to England to pursue a Masters degree in International Relations. At AGI I am conducting research and writing in a combination with administrative duties. I am truly blessed with a wonderful family and a rewarding job where I am able to help others.

Quay – I am originally from North Carolina and have lived in Kansas since 2004. Before I began working at AGI (as a Program Development Specialist), I was a public and private school teacher for 8 years. I am married to Salim and we have two kids that keep us busy, broke, and entertained: Nadeerah, age 3 and Basheer, almost 1. At night, I like to read interior design and parenting blogs when everyone is asleep.

Mike – My work for AGI is oriented toward record keeping that will assure our clients that funds received are used as designated and that the Director and the Board of Directors can clearly see what costs are for administering AGI. I am semi-retired, enjoying and studying nature in the Flint Hills grassland of Kansas.

Eric – Originally from Arizona, I moved to Kansas at the age of eleven. I currently attend Wichita State University, where I am majoring in graphic design. I have worked with Alternative Gifts International for a little over one year and now serve as the Publications Coordinator and Graphic Designer. Being a part of AGI's team has been very educational and shown me how simple it can be to make an impact on someones life.

Michelle – I am a Kansas native born & raised. Currently I am a student at Wichita State University pursuing a degree in Graphic Design, but I plan on moving to Colorado shortly after I get my degree. As a graphic design intern with Alternative Gifts International, I like the idea that I am able to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate than me.

Tony – I am excited to join AGI as the Director of Operations. Now more than ever the challenges of the world make our mission very important. My goal is to ensure that AGI operations meet the needs of our customers.

Lucy – I was born and grew up in Vietnam. I've been in Kansas since 2002 and went to Wichita State University, where I got my degree in Information Technology. As a busy person, I have two part-time jobs, IT specialist and Nail technician. I enjoy both of my jobs and love to learn anything that is related.

Beginning my second full year as President, we are setting out with many new beginnings, and I hope you will join us. AGI donors tell us they believe that alternative gifts make more sense now than ever. While we all face new economic challenges, I hope we can all find some new beginnings together. —LM

If you want to know how you can help AGI with new beginnings—Start an Alternative Gift Market!

What Earth Are Millennium Goals?

The symbols on each monthly calendar represent the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UNMDG), which AGI is highlighting in our annual catalog. For more information, see www.un.org/millennium goals.



July

It's *National Make a Difference to Children Month*. Give a gift from UNMDG # 4: Reduce Child Mortality. Projects 17 or 19 would be great gifts for that special "adult child" with toddlers or teens, from their parents on July 20th—National Hug Your Kids Day. If you have Jewish relatives or friends who understand the importance of *Tisha B'av* on July 30, send them gifts to let them know that you also care about the value of mourning all our losses. If all people would take the time to mourn what we have lost over the past year, or in our lifetimes, it would help us become a healthier and more compassionate society.



August

As college students prepare to head to campus, we'd like to remind you that the AGI Young Peace Builder Fund (Project 38) is used especially for high school and college students. These gifts will fund grants to build new markets or underwrite travel scholarships to sites where AGI partner agencies work. We believe it is important to encourage future volunteer AGM coordinators, or mentor those who would consider a career in non-profit leadership.

During *Simplify Your Life Week*, the first week of the month, make your birthday and anniversary card list out for the entire year and order all the cards at once. AGI can mail them 5-10 days before that special day. You write one check or have one single charge and save all the time, gasoline and postage you would have spent if you had shopped and mailed traditional cards or gifts. AGI can be your personal secretary!



September

It's *National Hispanic Heritage Month* as well as 'back to school' time. There is no better time to focus on UNMDG # 3: Achieve Universal Primary Education. September 8 is *International Literacy Day*, which is a perfect reason to give a card to a teacher or your grandchild for a little back-to-school pepper-upper. Project 7 or 8 would be great. September 21 is *International Day of Peace* and begins *Pollution Prevention Week*.

AGI Partner Agency Wins Award

Trees, Water & People (TWP), based in Colorado and working in Central America, Haiti and the American West, has been announced as the 2008 winner of the US \$1 million *Rio Tinto Prize for Sustainability*.

Co-founder and International Director of TWP, Stuart Conway, was delighted to accept the Prize at the 2009 International Economic Forum of the Americas (Conference de Montreal) in Montreal today. "We are absolutely thankful, delighted and overwhelmed with gratitude at being announced the 2008 Prize winner. We now have the opportunity to expand our community reforestation and improved cook stove programs in Honduras, Nicaragua, and Haiti. In particular, we will look to use the Prize to leverage additional sources of funding, and increasingly share the work we are doing with other interested organizations," he said.

Trees, Water & People (TWP) is a non-profit organization founded in 1998. They develop and manage community reforestation, watershed protection, renewable energy,

environmental education, and carbon offset programs in countries including Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, and the United States.

The Rio Tinto Prize for Sustainability was designed to recognize and reward not-for-profit, civil society and non-government organizations for significant contributions to the goals of economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Rio Tinto, a leading international mining group headquartered in the UK, partners with the International

Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) to facilitate an inclusive, rigorous and transparent management process for the award of the Prize. IBLF, an independent, not-for-profit organization works to enhance the contribution that companies can make to sustainable development and engages independent sustainability experts from around the world to ensure the process and decisions are made in an objective and consistent manner. Rio Tinto does not participate in the assessment process.

We are absolutely thankful, delighted and overwhelmed with gratitude...we now have the opportunity to expand our community reforestation and improved cook stove programs.

– Stuart Conway (Co-founder & International Director, TWP)

ALTERNATIVE GIFTS INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS:

My 09-10 Shopping List for the World

We urge people who use these alternative gifts to consider *taking action!* Don't just talk about how great AGI gifts are. Look over the list and become part of the solution to global problems by restoring, teaching, protecting, uniting, equipping... these gifts are *more than things*. Tell others about AGI!

HUNGER

1. Restoring Forests, Nourishing Communities (C. America)
2. Distributing Emergency Food Support (Iraq)
3. Teaching About Healthy Food⁺ (Lebanon & Palestine)
4. Building Greenhouses to Heal TB Patients (N. Korea)
5. Farming with Natural Solutions*⁺ (Philippines)
6. Feeding Hungry Homeless (USA & Canada)

EDUCATION

7. Educating & Mobilizing Disabled Children (DR Congo)
8. Providing a Future for Nomadic & Street Children (Kenya)
9. Educating Rural Children⁺ (Nepal)

GENDER EQUALITY

10. Empowering Women through Micro-Credit* (Egypt)
11. Solving Women's Problems via the Internet (Global)
12. Learning to Read & Sew for Success (India & Mexico)
13. Rescuing Girls from Forced Prostitution (India & S. Asia)
14. Uniting Women Farmers (Sudan)
15. Equipping Women for Self-Sufficiency (USA)

CHILD MORTALITY

16. Gardening & Critter Care for Happy Families*⁺ (Bolivia)
17. Protecting Ecosystems & Family Health (DR Congo)
18. Piping Clean Water for a School & Community (India)
19. Preventing Diseases Among Orphans (Vietnam)

MATERNAL HEALTH

20. Saving Lives with Safe Motherhood Kits (Africa)
21. Saving Lives of Mothers & Infants (Guatemala)
22. Delivering Health Services to Rural Families (Haiti)



MEDICAL SERVICES

23. Building Rural Medical Clinics (Bolivia)
24. Restoring Sight (Cambodia & Tibet)
25. Training & Care for AIDS Victims (Chad)
26. Caring for Abandoned Elders (China)
27. Mobilizing for Health⁺ (Africa)

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

28. Growing Trees with the Rural Poor (Global)
29. Promoting Solutions for Safe Water (Africa)
30. Preserving EcoSystems & Vocations of the Sea (Jamaica)
31. Building Home Sweet Homes (Nicaragua)
32. Transforming Lives through Micro-Loans (Peru & Sri Lanka)
33. Equipping Tribal Families with Solar Energy (USA)

COLLABORATION

34. Converting Waste to Charcoal Power (Haiti)
35. Ending Child Servitude in Haiti (Haiti)
36. Changing Trash into Cash⁺ (Haiti)

ALTERNATIVE GIFTS INTERNATIONAL

37. National Coalition for the Environment (Haiti)
38. Teaching Our Youth to Care About Others (Global)
39. Meeting Global Needs (Global)
40. Funding AGI's Mission

*Denotes animal projects ⁺Denotes Special Children's Pricing Project
These featured gifts are available through AGI from July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2010.

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Congratulations to Jesus Ramos Tejada

of Santa Cruz, Manila, Philippines...
 the 2009 AGI Greeting Card Winner!



**"Give Our Earth a
 Chance to Grow"**



A Testimonial from a Valued Donor

"Bless you for all of your efforts with Alternative Gifts. I love the organization, love the process and how easy it is to give, and tell all my friends about it. I have nine brothers and sisters and still believe in hand written letters and birthday cards. I tell my very large family that for the price of a card, you could save the eyesight of a child!!!" —Peg

HUNGER & HOMELESS GRANTS

Check out the list of non-profits AGI has funded from 08-09 donations. Each agency received a check for more than \$4,100!

Catholic Charities Food Pantry & Harbor House Shelter	Wichita	Kansas
Crossroads Urban Center	Salt Lake City	Utah
Custer Food Pantry, Inc.	Custer	South Dakota
Emily Foodshelf	Emily	Minnesota
God's Pantry Food Bank	Lexington	Kentucky
Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Inc.	Ames	Iowa
Grand Valley Peace & Justice	Grand Junction	Colorado
Gunnison Country Food Bank	Gunnison	Colorado
InnVision	San Jose	California
Interfaith Food Center	Whittier	California
Kids Food Basket	Grand Rapids	Michigan
Kingsbridge-Riverdale-Marble Hill Food & Hunger Project, Inc.	Bronx	New York
Loaves & Fishes Food Pantries	Charlotte	North Carolina
Love Kitchen, Inc.	New York	New York
Loving Hearts Outreach	Washington	Missouri
Military Outreach Ministry Camp Pendleton	Oceanside	California
Mission House, Inc.	Jacksonville Beach	Florida
St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre	London	Ontario (Canada)
St. Matthias Episcopal Soup Hour Program	Whittier	California
First Day Coalition Shelter	Whittier	California



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PHOTO CREDITS

Poster Photo: Water for Sudan

NOTE TO OUR READERS:

If you are receiving more than one newsletter or would like to receive the electronic version only, please let us know.