



staff picks from the  
**2005/2006**  
 CATALOG

- 1 Starlight Mobile  
 (#13183, pg. 54)
- 2 Snowed in Gift Basket  
 (#95512, pg. 12)
- 3 Grass Bowl  
 (#91030, pg. 13)
- 4 Noah's Ark Finger Puppets  
 (#72588, pg. 60)
- 5 Ikat Tablecloth  
 (#35606, pg. 5)
- 6 Kilim Rug  
 (#89009, pg. 19)
- 7 Capiz Nativity  
 (#74720, pg. 45)
- 8 Star Nativity Ornament  
 (#72598, pg. 52)
- 9 Embroidered Angel  
 Ornament  
 (#15006, pg. 50)
- 10 Cream Silk Jacquard  
 Shawl  
 (#65375, pg. 34)

## JEAN JOHNSON TO LEAD PRODUCT TEAM

In May, Jean Johnson joined the staff of A Greater Gift as Product Development and Merchandising Manager. Jean will work closely with our artisan partners as well as our purchasing and marketing staff to manage product development and integrate the process with other departments. "It is important to have new products to offer our supporters on a regular basis and procedures in place to better predict demand," says Johnson. "We want to maximize the income we are able to funnel to our artisan partners around the world."

After graduating from Yale University, Jean did volunteer work in Ecuador, where her interest in international development began. She returned to school to earn her MBA at the Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University and then worked for an international consulting firm in export development and marketing strategy. Most recently, Jean worked for Aid to Artisans doing consulting work in many countries subsequent to a two-year stint as their Country Director in Macedonia.

Jean moved from New York City to join us. "I feel lucky to have joined SERRV/A Greater Gift at a time when the organization is growing and changing significantly -- sales are up, the organization is expanding the services it provides to producers, and we're really starting to take advantage of new technology in our design and product development process. It's exciting to be here."



*Jean Johnson, Product Development and Merchandising Manager*

*Partnerships is the newsletter of A Greater Gift, a nonprofit program of SERRV International. It is published six times annually and distributed to our customers, donors, volunteers and the nationwide network of stores that sell our products.*



### OUR MISSION

is to promote the social and economic progress of people in developing regions of the world by marketing their handcrafts and food products in a just and direct manner.



ANONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
**SERRV**  
 INTERNATIONAL



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# Partnerships

NEWSLETTER OF A GREATER GIFT • AUGUST 2005

## THE CYCLE OF HOPE BEGINS WITH YOU

Every fall, A Greater Gift's Catalog brims with the talents of our artisan and farmer partners through gift ideas, items for your store and inspirations to host A Greater Gift Sale. Soon thousands of supporters will be picking their items and placing their orders for the fall season, keeping the cycle of hope alive that has helped artisans and farmers worldwide for 55 years.

### BASKETS FOR CHANGE

Each A Greater Gift catalog takes more than a year to prepare. For example, the two new Tanzanian baskets (pg. 14) in our 2005/2006 Catalog first reached our product team in 2004 from the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service. TCRS, one of our newest partners, works in a Burundian refugee camp in Tanzania. It assists nearly 900 artisans, mostly women, with production skills and business training so they can earn money to supplement rations given by the camp.

On a visit to TCRS in the spring of 2004, Material Handling Manager Marcia Bubel reported that food shortages had forced the camp to cut rations in half and the children were noticeably listless. "Our basket order will make a difference in the lives of the families now; income is needed and quickly," Marcia said after her visit and we immediately placed an order for a TCRS basket (that appeared in our Spring/Summer 2005 Catalog).

Our supporters loved the basket and sales were great. For our 2005/2006 Catalog, the two new Tanzanian baskets that will create even more opportunity for TCRS refugees.

The thrill of participating in programs like A Greater Gift is when you can tell people the difference that is being made around the world. Thanks to your support, we are able to increase our impact with the TCRS artisans who desperately need it.

Help continue the cycle of hope this year by hosting A Greater Gift Sale, ordering more of our handcrafts and foods for your store, church or organization or making personal purchases that spread hope and justice around the world.



You'll find the Africa icon in our 2005/2006 Catalog next to beautiful items like these Tanzanian Baskets (#85014, #85013, #85015, pg. 14).



### FOCUS ON AFRICA

In the last year, A Greater Gift has dramatically stepped up efforts to reach more people in Africa—adding new groups, increasing visits and consulting and developing new products with our partners there. Our 2005/2006 Catalog is filled with the beautiful results.

You can have an impact on poverty in Africa by purchasing fairly traded handcrafts and foods from the region. To help you find African items, we've added an icon next to their descriptions in the 2005/2006 Catalog.

Join us in supporting our African partners who are offering steady employment, HIV/AIDS education, refugee shelter and hope for future generations. Look for the Africa icon in our new catalog.

# INTRODUCING EQUO: JUST, FINE FOODS

We at A Greater Gift are pleased to introduce Equo: Just, Fine Foods in our 2005/2006 Catalog.

## JUST

The word Equo has roots in the Latin word *aequus*, meaning “even, level, equal.” The name also represents our organizational mission: to promote the social and economic progress of people in developing regions of the world.

The Equo: Just, Fine Foods brand is a tool that we will use to develop long-term and direct, fair trade relationships with farmers in developing countries to help them work their way out of poverty. Equo food products are Fair Trade Certified™ whenever possible by TransFair USA, a 3rd party, independent monitor of fair trade practices. In addition to monitoring, Fair Trade Certification™ ensures that farmers receive fair prices for their crops.

## FINE

The growing popularity of organic foods in the U.S. represents many new opportunities for farmers in developing countries. The U.S. supply of organic foods is expected to be outpaced by U.S. demand in the coming years. Also, by avoiding the use of pesticides and fertilizers in the production process, farmers ensure better health for the local environment, the farmers and their families, and for you.

## EQUO TEA

Traditionally, tea has been grown on the steep slopes of the Himalayan foothills near Darjeeling, a region in northern India near the border with Nepal. The Nepali immigrants living in Darjeeling supported their families by picking tea on large plantations. After the plantations closed in the 1950's due to mismanagement, the workers lost

## EQUO BRAZIL NUT OIL

Candela-Peru works with 273 *castañeros* (Brazil nut gatherers) and their families who live along the Madre de Dios River in the Peruvian rainforest. Brazil nut pods fall naturally from trees in the rainforest which are over 50 meters high. The *castañeros* then crack open the pods with machetes and extract the nuts, which are used



## EQUO: JUST, FINE FOODS

Earl Grey Tea (#35811, pg. 8)

Masala Tea (#35812, pg. 8)

Darjeeling Tea (#35809, pg. 8)

English Breakfast (#35813, pg. 8)

Green Tea (#35810, pg. 8)

Organic Brazil Nut Oil (#72604, pg. 10)

*Coming this fall! Check [www.agreatergift.org](http://www.agreatergift.org) for availability.*

*A farmer member of the Pashok Tea Cooperative in Darjeeling, India picks tea for our new fair trade food line: Equo: Just, Fine Foods.*

their main source of income. Attempts at subsistence farming were unsuccessful because of the high altitude and poor soil quality. Tea cultivation was what they knew. With management, marketing, and technical assistance from a group of tea promoters in Darjeeling, this persistent group of small farmers have organized themselves into the Pashok Cooperative. This fall, look for 5 Equo Teas from the 448 families of the Pashok Cooperative!

for food or oil. The *castañeros*' livelihood depends on the sound and responsible management of forest resources.

Equo Brazil Nut Oil is a healthy choice as it contains 30% omega-6 essential fatty acids and offers high sources of the mineral selenium. Equo Brazil Nut Oil is ideal for cooking, salads or dipping with your favorite breads - try blending it with balsamic vinegar!



hope and justice with every purchase  
**a greater gift**™

CUSTOMER SERVICE

P 800.423.0071

F 888.294.6376

E [ORDERS@AGREATERGIFT.ORG](mailto:ORDERS@AGREATERGIFT.ORG)

A GREATER GIFT

PO Box 365, 500 Main Street  
New Windsor, MD 21776

# CUSTOMER PROFILE: ORCHARD RIDGE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

“A Greater Gift creates pathways of love to the world— when you have a sale those pathways grow. And sales are fun!” These are the words of Dianne Stevens, one of the more than 50 volunteers who organize and run the Orchard Ridge Fair Trade Holiday Sale every year in Madison, Wisconsin.

Church member Bev Nelson started selling handcrafts from SERRV at Orchard Ridge more than 30 years ago. Over time, a table of crafts offered to church members after the Sunday service grew into an annual event that draws folks from the entire community. In recent years, sales went from \$5,000 to \$8,000 to \$12,000! The sale is always the Sunday before Thanksgiving from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## HINTS FOR SUCCESS

Orchard Ridge has accumulated a lot of knowledge on what makes a sale successful and they are eager to share their ideas.

- First, when ordering for your sale, solicit different opinions on what to order—everyone’s taste is not the same. Be sure and have different ages of people help in the selection process.

- Publicity is important. Orchard Ridge submits information about their sale to radio stations and newspapers so they have free listings on their calendars of events.

- The Sunday before the sale volunteers stand by the door and hand out fliers about the sale to everyone as they leave church and encourage them

to post them at their places of work, the local grocery store and any other community bulletin boards they know of. They also put a large wooden sign on the church lawn a week ahead.

- Avoid congestion. Orchard Ridge has their fellowship hall filled with rows of tables so people can shop along both sides, and they have at least four cashiers stationed at the exit. This eliminates congestion and people don’t have to wait in line too long.

- “Order lots of food items,” says Dianne. “Food sales increase every year as people give consumables for gifts. You can’t return food but we have found that what doesn’t sell the day of the sale will go the next Sunday to church members.”

## EVERYONE WINS

“It feels good to offer people beautiful things for their Christmas gifts and help people who struggle economically

*Dianne Stevens,  
one of the 50  
volunteers who  
organize the  
annual Orchard  
Ridge Fair Trade  
Holiday Sale  
in Madison  
Wisconsin*



at the same time,” says the volunteer force at Orchard Ridge.

“It is a wonderful way to start out the holiday season. We build fellowship, have fun and help others at the same time!”

*For more information on how you can host a sale in your community, call 1.800.423.0071 or visit [www.agreatergift.org](http://www.agreatergift.org)*

## SHARE YOUR STORY TO WIN A FREE GIFT!



*Dianne Stevens shared her A Greater Gift sale tips with us, tell us yours!*

We want to hear about your sale. Write a letter or e-mail us your story. Don’t forget photos! Whether your sale was \$300 or \$3000, it made a difference and we’d like to share it in our promotions to inspire others.

Include your name, phone number and address and we’ll send you a free gift.

*E-mail us at [marketing@agreatergift.org](mailto:marketing@agreatergift.org)*

*Write us at A Greater Gift Marketing,  
122 State Street Suite 600, Madison WI 53703*



## SOUTH AFRICAN "LONG LIFE" TEA

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

#### LABOR DAY HOURS

We will be closed from 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 2 through Monday, Sept. 5 for the holiday. Regular hours will resume on Tuesday, Sept. 6.

Customer Service 1-800-423-0071

Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. EDT

Saturday 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. EDT

#### 'LAST CHANCE' CATALOG

Don't miss our new overstock catalog, Last Chance 2005, hot off the press. We've discounted these handcrafts up to 70%. The catalog will be included in our August catalog packet for wholesale customers. Sorry, overstock products are not available on consignment. No returns.

#### WATCH FOR YOUR CATALOG

Individual supporters will receive their fall catalogs in early September.

Enjoy your 2005/2006 Catalog!

The red bush plant ("rooibos" in Afrikaans) grows only in the dry soil of the Northern Cape Province of South Africa, on the slopes of the starkly beautiful Cedarberg Mountains. The tea made from the rooibos bush is caffeine-free and rich in antioxidants which slow the aging process. This is why the Japanese refer to it as "Long Life" tea.

The indigenous Khoi people discovered the value of rooibos tea over 300 years ago, using it to calm colicky babies and treat allergies (such as hay fever) and asthma. The 157-member Wupperthal Cooperative is one of only two democratically organized small farmer fair trade rooibos producer organizations in South Africa; 98% of rooibos tea is grown on large plantations.

In the early 1800's, German Moravian missionaries founded the Wupperthal community in the mountains 200 kilometers north of Cape Town. It quickly became a safe haven for many of the descendants of the native San (Bushmen) and Khoi (Hottentot) peoples whose land had been seized earlier by white settlers from the Netherlands.

During the second half of the twentieth century, under the laws of apartheid, non-whites were not allowed to own land, so many of these small farmers were forced to work for slave wages on the large plantations. Others chose to take refuge again in one of the mission communities, like Wupperthal, where church members set aside small parcels of land for them in quiet opposition to official government policy. Many of the members of the Association now own land and are able to educate their children and afford adequate housing, food and health care with the proceeds from sales of rooibos tea.

A Greater Gift currently markets Wupperthal grown rooibos tea which is sourced through Just Us!, a Fair Trade partner based in Nova Scotia. We will begin offering Fair Trade Certified™, organic rooibos sourced directly from the Wupperthal Cooperative in late 2005 under our new Equo brand name.

### YOUR GIFT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to our development work. Your gift will help farmers like those at the Wupperthal Cooperative gain self-sufficiency and hope.

I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution for: [ ] \$100 [ ] \$50 [ ] \$25 [ ] other\_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed [ ] Credit Card: [ ] Visa [ ] MC [ ] Discover

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

CID # (last 3 digits on back of card) \_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with your contribution to:

SERRV International, 500 Main Street,  
PO Box 365, New Windsor MD 21776



*Kathy Harley,  
customer service  
manager*

## INVEST IN A MORE JUST WORLD

“The SERRV Community Investment Fund gives investors in the U.S. the opportunity to participate in the economic advancement of artisans and farmers in developing areas of the world,” says Jon Bishop, fund manager. “This is a way your dollars can do something you believe in and earn interest at the same time.”

Many of our partners need credit to buy the raw materials they need. SERRV has always met this need by making advance payments when we place our orders, often 6 to 9 months before we actually receive the products.

Now, with our own loan fund, we will be able to provide these advance payments without seeking outside sources of capital. In addition, as the fund grows, more dollars will be available for additional loans to our

partners to secure the infrastructure, training or consultation that it takes to move them toward self-sufficiency.

- The minimum investment in the fund is \$1,000 and the maximum is \$50,000.
- The money can be invested for a term of one to five years.
- The interest that is paid varies depending on the amount and length of the investment.

“Our goal is to alleviate poverty by empowering our partners. Having our own loan fund gives us a sustainable vehicle to continue the investment it takes to reach this goal,” says Bishop.

“We have already made the first producer development loan from this new fund. It is exciting to manage this fund and give our supporters one more way they can participate in the

cycle of economic justice. It is even more exciting to see the results these investments generate.”

SERRV can offer investments in ten states at present and the list is growing. **Please contact Jon at 1.888.243.4423 or [jonb@serrv.org](mailto:jonb@serrv.org)** to see whether we can accept investments from your state and to request a prospectus.



*Anatolia and Domitilia were trapped in poverty in Peru before they began a fair trade knitting cooperative. Help fund their business growth by investing in the SERRV Community Investment Fund.*

### FAIR TRADE CONFERENCE

This fall, organizations, supporters, shoppers, sellers, producers and activists interested in fair trade will gather in Chicago for a Fair Trade Conference. Anyone can attend— come for alliance building, stories from the ground up, best practices and action for change.

The Fair Trade Futures Conference includes workshops, speakers, producer visits, take home tools and much more. Fair Trade Futures: Living a Fair Trade Life will take place September 30 through October 2.

For more information or to register, visit [www.fairtradefutures.org](http://www.fairtradefutures.org).



### GLOBAL JOURNEY

The International Fair Trade Association has adopted a new mark to help promote Fair Trade Organizations like SERRV International, our parent organization. This new mark is on a Global Journey around the world to draw attention the fair trade message. Following the launch in Mumbai, India in January, a banner of the mark is being passed through all the countries in which IFAT has members.

Now the Global Journey is coming to North America! SERRV, a registered Fair Trade Organization, will host the banner September 7-19.

Check out our festivities at [www.agreatergift.org](http://www.agreatergift.org) and follow the progress of the banner at [www.ifat.org](http://www.ifat.org).

