

Living Matthew 25

Meeting the Needs of OUR World!

SIMPLY AMAZING

by Sean D. Krausert

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On Sunday September 6, 2009, Nova Donelon entered the history books. In a matter of 12 hours and seven minutes, she conquered the English Channel – a 34 kilometre swim in frigid ocean water between England and France.

This young woman from Canmore, Alberta has been swimming much of her life, but had only swam in the ocean on two previous occasions. It's hard to imagine being in a bathtub for 12 hours, let alone open ocean water that is 10 degrees Celsius. Admirable.

But, there's more. Nova is only 18 years old and in Grade 12. This makes her the second youngest Canadian to accomplish the swim. And, she is no slouch when it comes to speed . . . her crossing was the 6th fastest of the 15 crossings so far this year. Remarkable.

And, in my opinion, here is the best part. In this achievement, which she could easily have made 'all-about-me', Nova made it all about someone else. She chose to take this opportunity to raise money to support CAUSE Canada's work with women in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Simply amazing.

Having been a child sponsor through CAUSE Kids for some time, she has felt an attachment to the plight of people in Sierra Leone following many years of conflict. This attachment has now grown into empathy for women who have survived the war only to be raped, abused, and otherwise oppressed.

While admittedly feeling powerless at times, rather than give in to these feelings Nova decided to do something about it. In the face of such abuse of human rights, she strongly believes that we cannot hide behind our borders or only fight to protect our own rights. Nova declares – "We as people have a responsibility to help them, regardless of one's nationality!" How true.



*Nova Donelon
Swimming for the Rights of
Sierra Leone Women*

"We as people have a responsibility to help them, regardless of one's nationality!"

Nova Donelon is an amazing young woman setting a wonderful example for all of us. On behalf of Canadians and Sierra Leoneans . . .

THANK-YOU Nova!

WALKING WITH MARY

Written by Travis Wilkins, CAUSE Kids Cdn. Rep., Sierra Leone, West Africa:

Meet Mary Sessay. Mary is 12 years old and lives in one of the hardest places in the world to be a girl and a child – the Koinadugu region of Sierra Leone, West Africa. In Sierra Leone, one child out of four dies before the age of five and as a girl you are likely to leave school early, marry and start having children when you are a teenager. You will be illiterate, have fewer rights than boys and often have to carry more of the burden for your family. With some help from Canadians, however, Mary's own story could turn out differently.

On a long walk to her home, Mary told me the beginning of her story. She was born on her parent's farm, in a mud and grass hut far away from any medical facility (her mother has given birth to 10 children, 5 of which are still alive today). At a young age she contracted polio and after months of being sick, her one leg was left crippled. As she became older she would talk to cousins who were going to school and she asked her parents if she could also go. They replied that they did not have the money and that she would not be strong enough to walk. "Everyday I begged my mother to let me go to school – douya Mama, I wan fo learn!" Mary told me in a mix of English and Krio. Her mother finally gave in and sent her to live with an Aunt in a village with a school. "I was excited to attend school, but I soon realized that my Aunt had too many chores for me, I spent all of my days carrying water and splitting firewood – I hardly ever saw the classroom."

Mary was not deterred, however, and again asked her Mom if she could go to a bigger town and live with friends there. She reluctantly agreed and Mary began attending one of the CAUSE Kids schools in Kabala; "I was very happy for the school and especially that they gave us breakfast and lunch, and a uniform so my Mom would not have to buy it."

"Everyday I begged my mother to let me go to school – douya Mama, I wan fo learn!"

- Mary (mix of English & Krio)



Mary, and her little sister, Neneh.

1 in 8 Sierra Leonean women die in childbirth, the majority of women are illiterate, and just 1 in 5 girls finish secondary school.

Source:

UN Children's Fund's (UNICEF) 2009 State of the World's Children Report



Mary at the family home.

Unfortunately, Mary became ill, and the headmaster took her to the local hospital. Mary was diagnosed with abdominal problems due to tuberculosis and malaria, and CAUSE Kids transferred her and her mother to a hospital in Freetown (the capital city) for an operation. However, due to poor medical facilities, her abdomen became infected and she had to spend two months there and undergo a second operation to repair damage done in the first one. It is nothing short of a miracle that she was able to recover from these two major surgeries.

Mary is not out of the woods yet – life in Sierra Leone is hard with few breaks. But for now she is healthy, in grade six and looking forward to secondary school, which will be paid for by CAUSE Kids. She makes and sells butterscotch on the weekends to help pay for food and is looking after her younger sister who has also moved to town to start school. Her Mom walks the 12 kilometres into town every week to check on them and brings what she can from the farm, selling some things in the market and buying rice. Like so many children here, Mary is extraordinarily strong and determined and her family is doing the best they can. With some extra help from her friends in Canada and a little of God's grace, her story might have a happy ending.

EDITOR'S NOTE – CAUSE Kids is a child sponsorship program provided by CAUSE Canada in Sierra Leone, West Africa. CAUSE is dedicated to working with the poorest of the poor.

To find out more information, to sponsor a child like Mary, or to make a donation, check out their website:

www.causekids.ca

Questions? Please contact Deb Penninga at debpenninga@cause.ca or (403) 678-3332.



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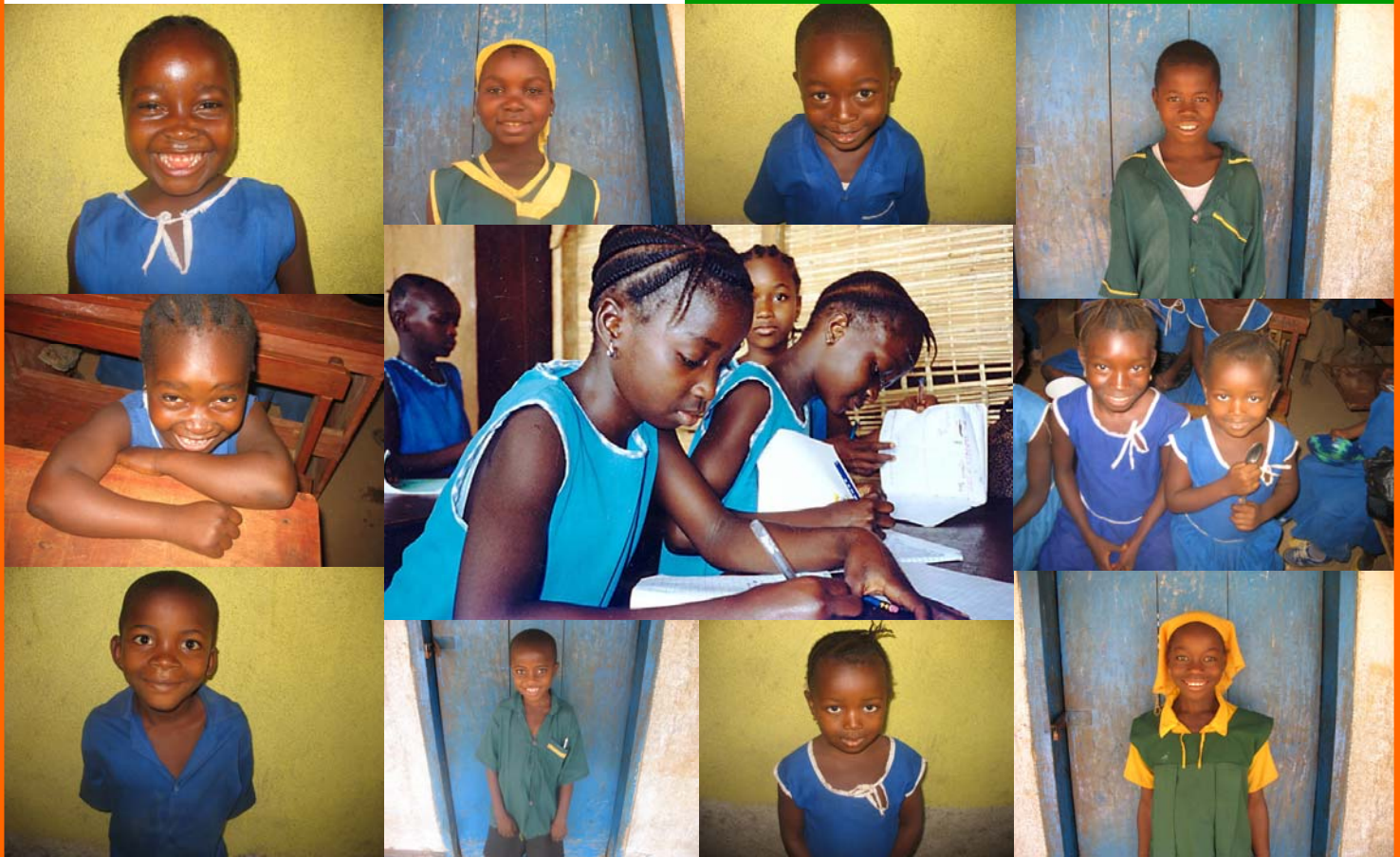
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DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

Written by Bob McInnis – Executive Director of Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids

"You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." **2 Corinthians 9:11-12**

Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids ("BB4CK") has received a very generous offer from a long time supporter. Eric and Kathy Prosser from the Prosser Charitable Foundation have agreed to match every donation from September 15th to October 31st, 2009 up to a total of \$60,000. This offer has come at an opportune time for BB4CK as the organization faces increasing costs and, unfortunately, an increasing demand.

BB4CK makes a life changing difference for the children it serves. Teachers in Calgary schools can attest to this:

"Students are ready to learn when they are well fed. Behaviour, attention spans and work habits improve when they are fed."

"Brown Bagging is essential to our schools. The students that use this service (sometimes it's the only meal they get!) have a better chance at learning because you are also feeding the mind as well."

"It's the difference between empty and full bellies for our kids."

What would the future for these children be like if they miss out on an education because of an empty tummy?

BB4CK appreciates all the support it has received to date as lunches continue to be prepared in its downtown kitchen with the help of volunteers (2000 volunteers through the 2008/9 school year!) and delivered to schools throughout the city. In addition, BB4CK continues to explore community based solutions with churches, schools, caring parents and businesses.

Now, as BB4CK prepares to meet increased demand, thanks to the matching Prosser funds, contributions made in October will go further than usual. For example, with matching funds, every \$100 donated will now allow 200 nutritious lunches to be prepared and delivered. In total, BB4CK expects that almost 1 million meals will be served to children and youth during 2010.

As always, and now more than ever with this opportunity to double your impact, at Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids a little goes a long way!

EDITOR'S NOTE – Donations can be made to BB4CK:

- (i) ON-LINE at www.canadahelps.org – just type "Brown Bagging" into the charity name box and follow the instructions.
- (ii) BY MAIL to 223 12 Avenue SW Calgary, AB T2R 0G9. Cheques should be made payable to "Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids". **PLEASE NOTE - Envelopes postmarked before October 31, 2009, are eligible for the matching program!**

Questions? Please contact Bob McInnis bob@brownbaggingit.org or (403) 264-7979.



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Society

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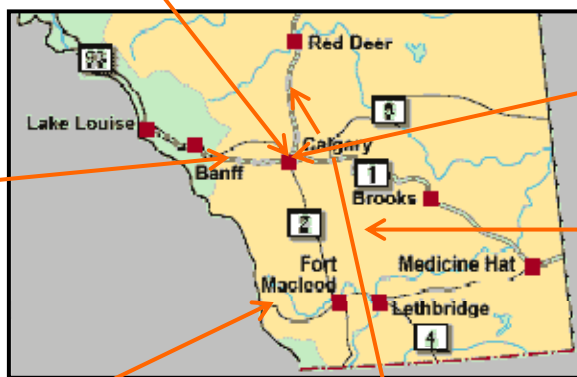
PARISH OUTREACH UPDATE

Parishes throughout the Anglican Diocese of Calgary are tackling serious needs through their Outreach Programs. The following are some examples of recent outreach activities in some of the parishes. Communication with these parishes is encouraged in order to find out more, collaborate, and to support one another.

St. Michael's (Canmore) – With space being very expensive in the mountains, we are focusing on hospitality as a primary form of outreach. St. Michael's facilities hosts the Fall Turkey Supper (a long-standing town event), the Seniors Christmas Lunch, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (another longstanding town event), ACW lunches and bazaars, Christian Meditation, Noon Hour Discussion group, Tai Chi, Bow Valley Chorus, Post-Partum Depression, and Healthy Moms - Healthy Babies. Further, we host the Canada World Youth Exchange Students from Tanzania, share our space with the Mountain Baptists, as well as host and support Soul Survivors – one of the most socially active youth groups in the Diocese. We also host St Michael's Spiritual Center for spiritual exploration aimed at deepening and spreading our Faith.

Holy Cross (Calgary) – Our two major outreach initiatives are providing support to St. Edmund's programming and participating in NeighbourLink Calgary. St. Edmund's operates a food and clothing bank for those in need in the community. The mission of NeighbourLink Calgary is help neighbours-in-need through a network of church volunteers expressing their love for neighbours in practical ways. Holy Cross is one of over 100 churches representing 30 denominations that participate in the program in Calgary.

St. Augustine's (Calgary) – While a small church, we try to do as much as we can with what we have. We support the Water School, an organization providing a low cost method of purifying water in tropical climates. In response to a potential flu crisis, we will be working with Bridges of Love – which coordinates a faith community response to pandemics and emergency situations. With other churches, we are also starting a program called *Between Engagements* - which provides practical, emotional and spiritual support to those who have lost a job in the current recession.



Grace Anglican United Church (Blairmore) – Outreach projects for the congregation include:

- 1) Supporting Nelson Okello, a theological student in Kenya (2nd year of a 3 year commitment).
- 2) Under the leadership of some of our church women and with community support, 87 fleece blankets were made for congregant David Amundsens' troop in Afghanistan. Extra blankets were given to other CNP Canadian Force personnel deployed overseas.
- 3) We have an active prayer shawl ministry, provided to those bereaved or in need.

St. John's (Olds) – We support the local Food Bank, the Christmas Angels, the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity, and we contribute to the Ministerial Association Benevolent Fund which assists people who have emergency needs that do not fall within the scope of other agencies in the community.

St. Aldhelm's (Vulcan) – We are a tiny parish, but we do what we can. So far in 2009, we:

- hosted the ecumenical service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January)
- held our Spring Sing! Event for the community with the offering going to the Vulcan Food Bank (April)
- supported Emmanuel College (Lenten offering)
- sent money to the Diocese of N. Malawi (Easter offering)
- have plans underway for the fall Songs of Praise hymn sing evening (same as Spring Sing! only a fall version) (October)
- will be hosting the Advent Lessons & Carols service put on by the Vulcan Ministerial Association.

Contact Living Matthew 25 to describe the outreach activities in your parish.

Share your light!

STARTING OVER

By Sean D. Krausert

Based upon materials provided by Stephen Ford of the Anglican Diocese of Calgary Refugee Committee

Uprooted by their circumstances, refugees are forced to flee their homes, often with only the clothes on their back. Arriving at whatever destination will take them in, these homeless survivors must start their lives afresh. Imagine what that must be like.

A refugee is a person who has fled from their homeland because they have a well-founded fear of torture or death in their homeland due to their religion, race or political beliefs. Refugee sponsorship involves identifying refugees, having the Canadian government select them, sometimes matching them with a sponsor, bringing them to Canada and assisting them in settling in Canada.

The Primates World Relief and Development Fund ("PWRDF") is now well into its 50th anniversary celebrations, which the Anglican Diocese of Calgary has embraced enthusiastically. In recognition of this milestone, PWRDF has launched the '50 Refugee Families Sponsorship Project'. The Diocese of Calgary Refugee Committee has committed to sponsor three Palestinian families (or individuals) from the El Hol refugee camp on the Iraq/Syria border.

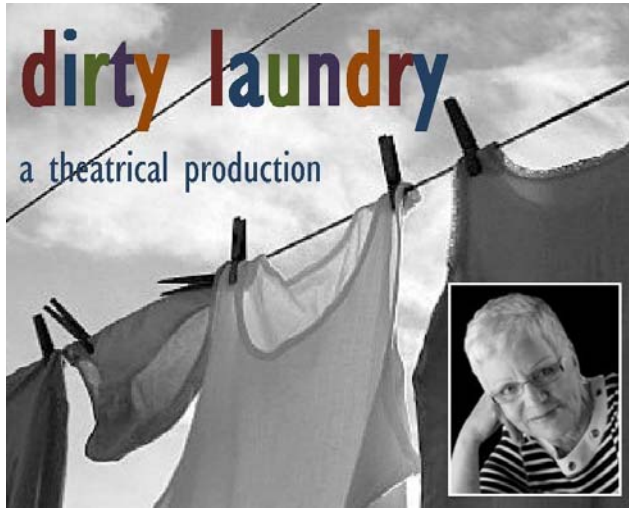
The Anglican Diocese of Calgary has a long history of providing assistance to refugees. Many of the families that have been brought to Calgary through the Diocesan Refugee Committee have been families headed by women. These families are at high risk in the refugee camps. They come to Canada as "Joint Assisted Sponsorships" (JAS), a situation where the federal government provides the money for their necessities and the sponsor provides the resettlement assistance. These sponsorships can be either one or two years.

The committee recruits and trains visitors to make the resettlement process as effective as possible. Ideally each family has a visitor that is called a "friendly visitor" who helps with day-to-day issues such as health care, education, finance, transportation and shopping. There is a separate visitor that specifically helps the family members with learning English.

On Saturday October 17th at 7 PM there will be a PWRDF Diocesan Celebration and Fundraiser reception at St. Stephens (Calgary). This event will feature ethnic food, entertainment, and a cash bar. The cost is \$20 per person. Funds raised at the event will go to the Diocesan Refugee Committee for their work with the '50 Refugee Families Sponsorship Project'.

Interested in attending the Diocesan Celebration on October 17th? Contact Alison Longson (pwrdfcalgary@telus.net).

Interested in learning more about the Diocesan Refugee Committee? Contact Stephen Ford (stephen.ford@shaw.ca).



Written & Performed by Marilyn Avient

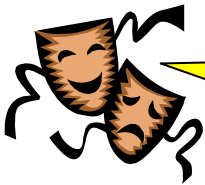
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UPCOMING SHOWS

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INITIATIVES

THE DUELING TALES of ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION IN ALBERTA

*Written by Greg Powell
Alberta Acts on Climate Change*

If you were to ask me, “are Albertans generally engaged on environmental issues?” I might give you a completely different answer from one day to the next.

On the surface, it’s easy to characterize those who drive oversized pickup trucks around city streets (and have never hauled a bale of hay) as being apathetic and/or completely disengaged from the environmental realities we now face. (<http://earthtrends.wri.org/index.php>) It’s easy to look at a low-density town where living car-free is nearly impossible and begin to think that people simply aren’t concerned about health or the environment. (http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/active_trans.htm) But if that pickup driver is in Okotoks, chances are she may have bought her vehicle at the car dealership with the smallest carbon footprint of any dealer in Canada. (http://www.keithpontiac.com/dcm2/dealer_page3.html) And if that car-dependent community is Cochrane today, I say come back in a few years once the sustainability plan takes flight and you may be surprised to find interconnected green spaces, a transit service and people-friendly travel corridor. (<http://cochranesustainability.ca/>)

Jurisdictions outside of Alberta tend to think of us as a lost cause: “Forget about them”, the others say, “they’ll never get it.” But the truth is that municipal Alberta is a place where things are happening. The men and women working on sustainability issues on the ground actually get it. They understand what a vibrant community looks like; they understand that a healthy community cannot exist in an unhealthy environment; they understand that the food that nourishes healthy children cannot be grown in perpetually drought-stricken fields.

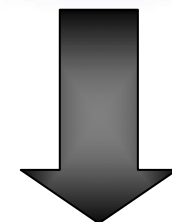
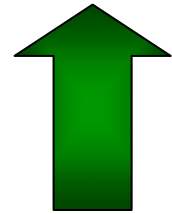
Take Medicine Hat, for example. The Hat Smart program (www.hatsmart.ca)

defines strategies for air quality, renewable energy, energy conservation, waste/recycling, water and land use. And these strategies aren’t just lofty, unattainable goals. The Hat is putting its money where its mouth is. Interested in a solar water heater? No problem — Medicine Hat will pitch in \$3,000 worth. Solar electricity? \$6,000. And if you’re a business, consider half of your solar thermal costs covered.

How about Olds and the Municipal Area Partnership? (<http://www.olds.ca/sustain.html>)(<http://www.mountainviewcounty.com/MAP>) Didsbury, Carstairs, Mountain View County, Sundre, Olds and Cremona join forces to advise the six participating councils on civic matters such as how to prevent dangerous climate change. A bright, energetic regional sustainability coordinator applies principles of The Natural Step to prove that thriving lifestyles don’t have to harm the planet. (<http://www.thenaturalstep.org/en/canada/>)

I’ve seen enough to know that Alberta is far from the greenest of provinces. (<http://www.oilsandswatch.org/photos>) I also know that Albertans exceed a sustainable carbon footprint several times over. But when I survey climate and sustainability initiatives around the province, I see a big change on the horizon. When the US administration refused to move on climate change (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2007/sep/29/usnews.climatechange>), dozens of states took charge of their own carbon fate (<http://climatestrategies.us/>). Alberta municipalities are similarly calling their own shots for fostering a safe, healthy environment.

One tale is a legend that Albertans are apathetic about the environment. Another tale is that Alberta municipalities taking strong leadership on the environment. I’ve see the second tale to be true. As for the first tale, the one about a lack of citizen engagement? We’ll soon see about that.





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35% of marriages end in divorce
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(Source: Statistics Canada)

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AROUND THE WORLD

WOMEN MUST PLAY FULL PART IN PEACE-BUILDING, SECURITY COUNCIL DECLARES

5 October 2009 – The Security Council today unanimously urged all countries and international bodies to take further steps to ensure full participation of women in all stages of conflict resolution and peace-building, with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon calling it “a top priority for the United Nations.”

The 15-member body voiced deep concern about the under-representation of women at all stages of peace processes, particularly the very low numbers in formal roles in mediation processes, nearly nine years after it passed an earlier resolution calling for increased female representation at all decision-making levels in preventing, managing and resolving conflict.

“A growing body of evidence suggests that bringing women to the peace table improves the quality of agreements reached, and increases the chances of successful implementation,” Mr. Ban told the Council in a message to a day-long open session on Women, Peace and Security delivered by Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro.

Read more . . . www.un.org

“CLIMATE WITNESSES” DON’T WANT HANDOUTS

CAPE TOWN, 5 October 2009 (IRIN) - The "climate witnesses" - all poor farmers - told a special tribunal on climate change in Cape Town, South Africa, on 5 October: "We don't want any handouts from the West." Instead, they needed strategies and policies to help them overcome the effects of climate change.

"It was not until I went to a meeting in Kampala [capital of Uganda] about climate change that I heard it was not God, but the rich people in the West who are doing this to us by releasing too much [greenhouse] gases into the atmosphere," said Constance Okollet Ocham, a farmer from the Tororo district of drought-affected eastern Uganda.

"The testimony of women and men who are already struggling to cope with a changing climate is a powerful reminder of what is at stake in the international climate negotiations. Already impoverished communities across Africa stand to lose so much because of a climate crisis in which they have played no part," said Robinson, an Honorary President of Oxfam International, one of the organizers of the hearings.

Read more . . . www.irinnews.org



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UN INDEX SHOWS DEEP INEQUALITIES PERSIST BETWEEN COUNTRIES RICH AND POOR

5 October 2009 – The world's countries continue to record substantial improvements in human development but vast inequalities still exist between rich and poor States, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) warned today as it unveiled its annual measure of progress in human well-being.

The Human Development Index (HDI), which combines measure of life expectancy, literacy, school enrolment and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, was this year calculated for 182 countries and territories – a record number – and released today as part of the annual Human Development Report.

Norway, Australia and Iceland remain the top-ranked countries on the HDI . . . Niger, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone are at the bottom of the rankings (of 182 countries). Canada remains ranked 4th in the world.

A Norwegian child can expect to live 30 years longer and will grow up to earn an average of \$85 for every \$1 earned by a person in Niger.

Read more . . . www.un.org

VILLAGE ACCESS TO MEDICINES, FEWER MATERNAL DEATHS

DAKAR, 29 September 2009 (IRIN) - Putting medicines for haemorrhage and infection in the hands of community health workers could mean significantly fewer maternal deaths in Africa, according to researchers at University College London (UCL).

More than half a million women die from pregnancy or childbirth complications per year – some 90 percent in Africa and Asia, according to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

The UCL researchers developed a mathematical model to show the impact of making misoprostol (for haemorrhage) and antibiotics available through village health workers or volunteers. This community-based drug access would be in addition to strengthening health systems.

The researchers say the two approaches can be complementary. "We believe that debate about the relative merits of health system strengthening versus community intervention perpetuates a false dichotomy," the paper said. "Both programmes are necessary to tackle maternal mortality and the correct balance of approaches crucially depends on the local context."

Read more . . . www.irinnews.org

WANNA DANCE?

An Editorial by Sean D. Krausert

I was just reflecting on the season that has passed . . . summertime! Going outside without a jacket, playing in the sprinkler, ice cream, camping, beaches, and so much more!! The season when people slow down, spend more time with family, and take a deep breath to recharge. From a kid's perspective – being on summer break makes everything brighter, friendlier, and truly sweet. Good times.

Most teens in Canada don't have to worry about much in the summer. Some get a job in order to earn spending money; others just hang with their friends. For some teenagers, summer is the season for love. With school not clouding the picture – they can focus on the things they love, and dream about the people they love. However, before crossing the point of no return as I delve into rose-coloured nostalgia, if I am being honest - there were some incredibly awkward moments.

I remember being a teen starting to spread my wings, and feeling trepidation with each new step – especially when the new step involved girls. We've all seen it or felt it. Reaching for the phone several times before dialling her number, and then slamming it down before the first ring. Suffering that butt-cheek-puckering, forgetting-to-breathe angst while sidling over to a girl to ask her if she wants to grab a bite to eat or go to a movie or something? Aaahh . . . the awkward, coming of age "Wanna Dance?" ritual.

The "Wanna Dance" ritual is not confined to our culture. A few years back, while in Honduras, I saw a teenage boy go through the same set of feelings and expressions that I knew oh so well. He was about 15 years old – a little on the skinny side – but a good-looking kid. I saw him at a gas station where we were filling up, and he had his sights set on his target. At first, you could just see the wheels turning in his mind – "Should I or shouldn't I? What do I say?" Then, with a deep breath, he started to make his move only to abandon his quest before engaging in conversation. He did this several times before eventually losing his nerve and strolling off down the road. I guess he chose not to "dance" this time.

The boy thought that the subject of his focus hadn't noticed him, but he was wrong. I did. He was focussed on me. No, I don't think he was going to ask me to dance. But he did want to ask me something – I know it. I've seen the look often and heard the questions. "Do you have some food? . . . Can I have your shoes? . . . Can you help me?" In walking away, perhaps the boy decided the asking – or rather the begging – was too hard. Perhaps he decided . . . "I'll go hungry for now."

We all have a part to play in feeding OUR world. I look forward to that time – hopefully not too many summers from now – when a boy or girl anywhere on Earth only experiences the "Wanna Dance?" ritual when they are actually asking someone to dance. Not when they're hungry.

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

The top 5 languages spoken at home in Alberta are . . .

- (1) English 89.5%
- (2) Chinese 2.2%
- (3) German 1%
- (4) Punjabi 0.8%
- (5) French 0.7%

- 2006 Census of Canada

For the 1st time in history, the number of overweight people (globally) equals the number of underweight people. As some grow more prosperous, others remain confronted with serious hunger problems.

www.greenexpander.com/2007/10/30/20-shocking-facts-on-the-environment/

A 5-minute shower with a standard shower head uses 100 litres of water.

Meanwhile, African and Asian women walk an average of 6 kilometres each trip in order to fetch water.

- Environment Canada

Contaminated rivers displaced 25,000,000 people from their homes in 2008.

This is more than were forced to flee from war zones.

- www.apolloideas.com/thirst

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTS, FIGURES, and FASCINATING STUFF

#1 – **GREAT PACIFIC OCEAN GARBAGE PATCH** - An enormous whirlpool collects most of the world's dumped plastic that has found its way to the Pacific Ocean. The collected mass of garbage is approximately twice the size of the state of Texas.

www.mahalo.com/great-pacific-ocean-garbage-patch

#2 – **BEAUTIFUL BUSES** - One busload of passengers takes approximately 40 vehicles off the road, and keeps approximately 50 tonnes of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere each year.

www.ec.gc.ca/EnviroZine/default.asp?lang=En&n=E6D433A4-1

#3 – **HUMAN-MADE TOXIC LAKES** - Oil sands tailings ponds covered approximately 130 sq km by 2008, making these toxic lakes among the largest human-made structures in the world.

www.pembina.org

Environmental Factoids provided by:



Together, WE can build a better
Canada for our children.

www.pembina.org

WALLS & BRIDGES

An Editorial by Sean D. Krausert

Sniff, sniff. "Jackpot!" thought Hank, "Fresh berries!!"

The big grizzly bear followed the scent through the forest to his favourite feeding spot only to happen upon a new highway blocking his way. Bewildered, he sat and scratched his head. In the weeks that followed, Hank cautiously rambled up to the edge of the road everyday, trying to decide whether to chance crossing to his beloved berries.

Then, one day a newly erected fence appeared. Realizing his treasure was forever lost, the grizzly turned his mind to finding a mate. "Dang!" – his spirit sunk even lower - the only female grizzlies on this side of the fence were his Mom and his sisters. Defeated, Hank glanced back at the fence and the highway. Humans sure know how to put up walls.

People go much further than erecting walls that inconvenience Hank. We put up fences between neighbours, and borders between nations. We set boundaries - that is yours; this is mine. But the barriers are not enough – we add locks, alarms, barbed wire, armed personnel, and weaponry. Got a problem – build a wall. Got a big problem – build a big wall. Perhaps you can tell something about a community by looking at its walls. For instance, the troubles in Northern Ireland are readily apparent as soon as you see the big honkin' walls in Belfast and Derry. Yup, Hank was right – humans sure know how to put up walls.

Walls take many forms and fulfill different purposes. Walls protect, keep out, keep in, block, separate, exclude, contain, and divide; all walls create ignorance of what is on the other side. Walls attempt to compartmentalize a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected. Walls often end up just getting in the way and create more problems than they solve.

Without a doubt – some walls are intended to be useful. However, there is often a corresponding cost. Since the road endangered Hank, the fence was designed to protect him. Although a good intention, it has been discovered that limiting the habitat of bears by introducing barriers causes great harm and actually contributes to the extinction of the species. The solution – underpasses, overpasses, and wildlife corridors. Bridges. They're harder to make but worth the effort. Just ask Hank . . .he now has his berries and no longer has to date his sister.

Similarly, mankind has to find ways to build more bridges. Bridges that recognize, understand, and meet the needs in our society that led to walls being erected in the first place. Bridges that disarm and disengage enemies through helping each other meet basic necessities for life and security. Bridges that carry OUR world to peace and harmony.

Next time you contemplate putting up some form of wall, stop and take the time to determine if it is possible to build a bridge. Some will say – "Dream on peacenik. That's pie in the sky stuff!" Well, I like pie, and so does Hank. Besides, as Einstein noted - "You cannot solve a problem with the thinking that created it."

SALTS



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The Southern Alberta Land Trust Society (SALTS) is a locally-based, rancher-driven, non-profit organization with registered charity status, dedicated to preserving the ecological, productive, scenic and cultural values of Alberta's Eastern Slopes, prairie and foothill regions.

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www.salts-landtrust.org

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info@salts-landtrust.org

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The Mustard Seed is a non-profit Christian humanitarian organization that has been caring for Calgary's homeless for over 24 years.

Through its four ministry centres across Alberta, it cares for the essential needs of the less fortunate through food, clothing, and shelter provisions, along with education and employment programs, supported housing, health and wellness services, and personalized mentoring.

Providing hope for the future.

www.theseed.ca

Please visit our website to learn about volunteer opportunities and ways you can get involved in supporting Calgary's homeless.

**VOLUNTEERS & DONATIONS
Are Now Needed**

The Mustard Seed Centre Street
102-11 Ave. SE Calgary, AB T2G 0X5
Main phone: (403) 269-1319
Email: info@theseed.ca

READY . . . SET . . . MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

OCTOBER 2009

13 – Calgary premiere of *Age of Stupid* at the Calgary Public Library Central Branch John Dutton Theatre - 6:30 PM. Free admission. Panel to follow. (<http://calgarypubliclibrary.com/>)

17 – *Anglican Diocese of Calgary PWRDF Celebration & Fundraiser* – Reception featuring ethnic food and entertainment at St. Stephens (Calgary), with proceeds supporting refugees. Tickets \$20. 7 PM. Contact parish PWRDF representatives or Alison Longson (pwrdfcalgary@telus.net) for details.

24 – *The Mustard Seed Gala Dinner* – Celebrating 25 Years of service to Calgary's less fortunate. For details see www.theseed.ca/Upcoming-Events.html.

25 - *Is Global Warming a Moral Issue?* Join Dave Toycen, President and CEO of World Vision Canada, and Graham Saul, Executive Director of the Climate Action Network - Canada as they explore the moral implications of climate change. 7 PM – 9 PM at Rocky Mountain College (4039 Brentwood Road NW, Calgary, AB). RMC contact information - (403) 284-5100.

NOVEMBER 2009

20 & 21 – *Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Conference*. St. Peter's Anglican Church (Calgary). For more information visit www.calgary.anglican.ca.





The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF)

is the Anglican Church of Canada's agency for sustainable development, relief, refugees, and global justice. With the support of Anglican parishes across Canada, PWRDF makes financial and human resources available to support partners' initiatives and to promote knowledgeable actions of solidarity at home and around the world.

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THE WEIRD & WONDERFUL WORLD OF *LIVING MATTHEW 25*

The Life of a Lawnmower

by Sean D. Krausert

Can you imagine life as a lawnmower? Sitting most of your miserable existence in a cold, dark garage or shed just waiting to be used. I expect that Summer would be about as good as it gets – only coming out for a few hours every couple of weeks. In the Fall it must be akin to an annual death ritual. Winter and Spring must seem like an eternity. Even worse than sitting idle for 95% of your time is the loneliness of knowing that there are many other lawnmowers just like you in the neighbourhood with whom you cannot communicate. It's enough to drive one to the brink of insanity.

Perhaps life would be better for the lawnmower if people got together and made better use of their resources. For example, a single lawnmower could take care of the lawn care needs of an entire neighbourhood. While still being lonely for parts of the year, the lawnmower would probably relish the

well-earned rest from a busy Summer of cutting many lawns.

I wonder how many other resources are similarly wasted? Each house having its own tools and power appliances - washers and dryers,



chainsaws, toolkits, mixers, etc. Or what about unused extra space in our houses that we inefficiently heat and light? Or what about excess vehicles and gas we use driving by ourselves to locations to which our neighbours are also commuting? Is there space in our house, freezers, storage that we are paying for that is filled with stuff we will never use? Through caring only for ourselves,

individually, I wonder how much duplication or inefficient use of resources takes place right under our nose.

When one starts to think on a national or global scale, I wonder what the total cost of excess gas, electricity, machinery, space, etc. would be?? Betcha it's a big . . . no . . . HUGE number. Betcha that same amount of resources would do something like eliminate world hunger, or stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic, or ensure all children can read. Betcha the world would be an incredibly better place by pooling some of our resources and reallocating the excess, while not drastically affecting our lifestyle.

Ahhh forget it – it's just nice knowing there's a lawnmower in the shed whenever it is needed. Besides . . . somebody else will do all that other stuff.

RIGHT??

Want to find out more about communal tool projects? Check out –

- ✓ *The Working Centre – Community Tools Project* www.theworkingcentre.org
- ✓ <http://eco-chick.com/2006/11/593/communal-tool-sharing>

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