

Sharing, Inc.

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Dear Sharing Friend,

Have you ever held a tiny bird nest in the palm of your hand? It weighs next to nothing. Its construction is an engineering marvel. Blades of dry grass, delicate twigs, and flimsy strips of discarded paper are laid in a seemingly haphazard way yet with innate ingenuity by a small bird. Each component individually insignificant, but together they make a place that safely cradles new life until it's time for the baby bird to emerge.

We can think of the building of a more just and peaceful world in a similar way. One person's efforts: preparing a meal for someone, calling or visiting a shut-in, giving away some gently-used clothing, sending a note of sympathy or cheer, giving someone flowers on an "ordinary" day, or speaking out about injustice, can be viewed as insignificant. **They are not. They reveal love.** "Love has no real beginning, no real end. It rolls like a snowflake down a hill, growing by gathering, gaining by grappling, increasing in beauty and magnitude."

The wonder of Sharing can be compared to that bird nest. Individual acts: a mile walked, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich made, a doll dressed, a baby blanket made or a check written might seem insignificant. **They are not. They reveal love.** Taken together, starting from Good Friday 1972 right up to this moment, they point to the reality and power of the spirit of God.

Since I have yet to make my usual trip to visit Sharing's friends in Mississippi and Alabama, today I am making a virtual one. Sitting in our "treehouse", a deck off the second floor kitchen, on this spectacular New England July day it's not easy to conjure up the feel of the south's heat and humidity. But my mind's eye will conjure up the sight of that landscape and the soft sounds of southern accents.

Beginning in Mound Bayou, MS, the oldest all Negro town in the United States and the site of the former North Bolivar County Farm Co-op, I would visit the Kemetec Institute. In January of 1972, reading about the cut-off of funding for this Co-op became the instrument of my call to "do something about this one injustice." Encouraged by Sharing, Attorney Chris Campbell founded the Kemetec Institute in 1990 as a place for "Building Self Esteem, Through Cultural Awareness." The Institute formalized the community-building work that the entire Campbell Family had long been engaged in.

Moving eastward I mentally head for Okolona, MS. When I think of the House of Joy Daycare Center located there, I think of many things: of energetic children, of dedicated staff led by Rubbie Jenkins, and of the inequities of government-supported childcare. For example, the state of Mississippi pays a daycare provider only \$87.00 a week for the care of a child from an economically poor family. And if a child misses ten days within a year without a doctor's excuse the state takes away the subsidy.

By way of contrast, the state of Ohio will reimburse a daycare provider \$194.00 a week and the child only needs to attend a minimum of twenty-four hours in that week.

My last stop would be in the town of Eutaw in western Alabama where I would stay with John and Carol Zippert. John and Carol, individually and jointly, have led passionate lives of social justice activism. They have been part of the founding of several community organizations which include the Federation of Southern Co-operatives, the Twenty-first Century Youth Leadership Development Movement, Alabama New South, and the Black Belt Community Foundation. In addition, they publish the weekly newspaper, *The Greene County Democrat*. Carol's second book of poetry just published by NewSouth Books is entitled Meeting Myself Around the Corner.

Now that my virtual trip is over it's time to get to work preparing this summer's shipment of books.

“...a ten year old South Carolinian girl in response to the question, 'What would having a President Barack Obama mean to you?' says 'It means I can imagine anything for myself.'”

A great many of the books we have sent south over the years have presented stories of real people, some well known, others not, who are wonderful role models. This year we are sending over 100 copies of a **spectacular biography of President Barack Obama**, written by award winning writer, Nikki Grimes and beautifully illustrated by Bryan Collier. It is a Simon and Schuster Book for Young Readers.

Ninety-three copies of this book will be distributed to public school libraries in west Alabama. Consider buying a copy to give your local elementary school and another for the young folks in your family. Remember, the pleasure and learning from such books are never “virtual.”

*Shalom,
Kay Doherty*

2009 Walk Financial Statement

As of July 31, 2009

Income

Hingham Walk	59,090.	
Rockville Walk	12,802.	
Wakefield Walk	7,012.	
Other Walks	<u>16,075.</u>	
Total		94,979

Expenses

Awards	989	
Food & supplies	353	
Insurance	660	
Miscellaneous	473	
Postage	466	
Police protection	1,258	
Printing	750	
School use	<u>466</u>	
Total		5,415

Balance remaining

\$89,564

Distributed as of 7-31-2009

Ecumenical Food Pantry (Wakefield Walk)	1,112	
Faith Church Food Pantry (Wakefield Walk)	1,112	
Federation of Southern Co-ops	5,632	
House of Joy	1,360	
Kemetic Institute	3,978	
Scholarships	4,000	
Tri-Town Shelter (Rockville Walk)	<u>4,000</u>	
Total		21,194

Balance available for distribution

\$68,370

Pledged for 2009 distribution

Federation of Southern Co-ops	Epes AL/Atlanta GA	2,000
House of Joy Day Care	Okolona MS	30,000
Kemetic Institute	Mound Bayou MS	18,000
21 st Century Youth Leadership	Selma AL	9,600
Sharing's Scholarship Program		10,000

there is \$2,190 still owed by 24 walkers