



# Alternative Gifts International

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## A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

Please ask every teacher you know to consider using AGI materials in their classroom.



### A year of crises and optimism—

As I've said before, I like to reflect on current events and issues; sometimes my seminary studies provide an alternative take on the media messages. I tire quickly of reading or listening to the same old pundits, using words that writers so often use without defining: crisis, recession, revolution, landslide, 'won/ lost', record lows/ highs, poverty, wealth, liberal, conservative.

Surely, all such terms are relative only to our own experience, and the more limited our experience, then the more difficult to draw comparisons to what such words mean. Often, that experience may correspond to age—which equals 'maturity'. For example: my father was born in 1909 and immigrated at age 2 to this country. In January, he will turn 100. Neither he nor my mother were able to attend school past 8th grade, but they both learned to read and do basic math, which got them into adequate employment throughout their lives. They lived through two World Wars (although no one in our family did military service), all the economic slumps and recessions, and owned their own home—never had a debt problem, because they never used credit. He went from barn dances to radio to TV to Cable; they even trust electronic deposit for their SS checks!

Dad has beaten the odds, but there are millions more who can say the same thing—both senior citizens and current young parents in 2008-09. In the USA, we consider 10% unemployment as unimaginable. How many of us have already seen these statistics in our lifetimes? Personally, I feel it is our role, as elders and leaders, to help calm the fears of the younger generations that we must never give up hope. One way we can do that is by using AGI materials and buying AGI gifts. Why? They can remind us that when we compare our lives to those who face truly life-threatening circumstances each day, we are richly blessed, and in doing so, we are practicing compassion and teaching empathy.

Blessings & Peace,

Lea McCloud,  
President

In October, I spoke to students of the Pocatello Idaho Charter School (*above*). After taking this photo, we talked about how important pictures are to tell stories. That's part of the reason AGI's materials are so effective. We work to touch hearts.

The print newsletter provides great ideas for discussion in classrooms or offices. Using AGI's catalog is also a powerful teaching tool. But add some discussion and 'hands on' learning, and conceptual ideas and complex processes will come alive.

### Consider the impact:

- when a child understands that the \$4 she pays for a single dip of gourmet ice cream could feed and shelter a child in Kenya for 24 hours (Project 4);
- of creating a display with the contents of a items provided by a food pantry—enough to feed a family of four (Project 32);
- when 28 children each bring \$1 and learn that by adding their dollars together they can send a child to school for an entire month in another country (Project 14)!

**If you would like to introduce a friend to AGI, try forwarding this newsletter to them!**

## Charitable Alternative Gifts:



### An Answer for Expressing Year-End Thanks

Stressed-out human resource managers and executives faced with budget cutting can breathe a sigh of relief. The days of giving the turkey, ham or gourmet fruitcake now has an answer that gives options and shares the satisfaction of giving, along with receiving.

Alternative Gifts International (AGI) is not like most charities that have an option to donate to their specific cause. This innovative charitable practice begun by a visionary Christian Education Director in 1980, not only gives choices, but educates and raises awareness about various sustainable, non-governmental solutions to global challenges.

*My Shopping List for the World* is the catalog of a wide variety of alternative charitable gifts. Gift 'price points' are designed to be affordable, meaningful gifts that children can buy for parents, grandparents or teachers. Teachers can honor their students as well. All gifts are tax-deductible, and 90% of each designated donation is guaranteed to go to the selected agency project—which includes no administrative costs! The ten percent share is what fuels the non-profit that has designed this tool for teaching and giving.

When shoppers adopt the AGI tradition of giving, they find it so easy and rewarding that they return year after year, and expand their gift-giving and charitable giving to birthday and memorial gifts. The variety of gifts allow the gift-giver to personalize their selections, based on the country or location of the gift, along with the endeavor that fits the recipient: education, animals or books; medical supplies, water wells and training for community health workers; transportation for disabled or community-based health workers in developing countries; trees for deforested areas and seed banks, support systems and micro-loans for women who are facing their futures alone. The list has at least two options for each project; some examples include solar heat and groceries or emergency assistance in the USA; long-term solutions to environmental challenges facing Haiti, Tibet and people enmeshed in the struggle of recovering from war or living with debilitating disease.

In recent years, AGI has distributed up to \$1,300,000 annually, to more than 60 reputable local and international charities. Those gifts represent the specific intention of the gift-givers; AGI takes the responsibility to assure the accountability of each agency.

**Gift Certificates are also available which allow the recipient to choose the kind of project their gift will provide to a needy world.**

Shop at our Web site, e-mail [AGI@alternativegifts.org](mailto:AGI@alternativegifts.org) or call 800.842.2243 (316.269.0635 local). The office is located in Wichita, Kansas, and is staffed by fewer than ten employees who work tirelessly during the holidays, as they are allowed to share the joy of their donors who appreciate the kind personal service and ability to personalize their gifts. Gift Certificates are also available which allow the recipient to choose the kind of project their gift will provide to a needy world.

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**Visit AGI's  
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 800.842.2243.**

**Make Your List.  
 Check It Once.**

- won't collect dust
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- no wrong sizes, colors, styles or brands.

**The perfect gift.**

Shop online: [alternativegifts.org](http://alternativegifts.org)  
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Alternative Gifts International  
*"Gifts of Hope & New Life"* 

**Find the  
 perfect gift...  
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Shop any time, any day of the week at [www.alternativegifts.org](http://www.alternativegifts.org).

If you would like to speak with a sales representative about our gifts, call us at 800.842.2243.

Alternative Gifts International  
*"Gifts of Hope & New Life"* 

## Our Global Vision Shopping Mall

When you do your online shopping for traditional items, at least 10% of your purchase will be returned to AGI to help us meet our operating expenses.

1. Go to your fundraising shopping mall [www.ourgvmall.com/alternativegifts](http://www.ourgvmall.com/alternativegifts). Take advantage of the amazing offers and savings - shop at any of the 1000+ retail stores. (WalMart, Office Depot, DELL, E-bay, Hickory Farms, etc.) Remember each and every purchase made through shopping Mall means cash back to Alternative Gift Markets.
2. Spread the Word! Shop and Fundraise! Tell your family, tell your friends, tell everyone you know that they can save time and money and raise funds for Alternative Gift Markets by shopping on your web site. Let people know how easy it is! Go to [www.ourgvrewards.com/alternativegifts](http://www.ourgvrewards.com/alternativegifts) and shop. Expanding the number of shoppers at your Shop & Fundraise Web site is easier than you may realize. There are many friends and family members who might not be active supporters or members of your Non-Profit organization; yet, if they knew of a simple way to help a good cause, they would likely do so. After all, they are already making purchases at many of the 1000+ stores in the Mall!

## Did someone say **FUDGE!**



The Mill Fudge Factory fudge is inspired by the traditional Scottish fudge recipe. It has a melt-in-your-mouth texture that's not too sweet. Each batch is made from scratch, the old-fashioned way, without any preservatives, artificial flavors or colors. Only the finest ingredients

such as real maple syrup, Belgian dark chocolate, natural peanut butter and pure flavor extracts are used.

You can order this delicious fudge and help AGI at the same time with this new fundraiser project from **The Mill Fudge Factory!**

### Here's How It's Done:

- Visit [TheMillFudgeFactory.com](http://TheMillFudgeFactory.com) & browse the fudge flavors.
- Before you check out, click "**Fundraisers**" on the left bar and add the AGI item by clicking "**Add To Cart.**" This will allow The Mill Fudge Factory to track your order as part of our fundraiser and set aside 30% of your order (not including shipping) for our organization.
- Click the red "**Checkout Now**" button. If you prefer, you can check out with PayPal or Google Checkout.

**\*Please note:** If you order 4 or more pounds of fudge, you will automatically receive free shipping, however AGI will only receive 10% of your total. If you would prefer to pay for shipping instead (so AGI raises more money) you can contact [info@themillfudgefactory.com](mailto:info@themillfudgefactory.com).



## What's In the Bag?!

- Earlier this fall, we initiated a new 'premium' gift-- a bright new way to say 'thank you' for donors with orders of \$500 or more. "*My Shopping Bag for the World*" has multiple uses— especially for the environmentally-conscious who try to reduce waste when shopping for groceries, etc.
- However, between December 8 and June 1 2009, you don't have to be a major donor to receive this bag. By sending a donation to '**Funding AGI's mission**' (**project 39b**) along with an email or your request by phone, we'll include this bag in your order, along with 5 catalogs.

*This AGI shopping bag will be a reminder for other people to ask about alternative gift-giving, and you can carry extra catalogs to give them! We'll continue to send you as many free catalogs as you can distribute. Remember—the catalog is good until June 30, 2008. Call us at 800.842.2243 or e-mail [Lynette@alternativegifts.org](mailto:Lynette@alternativegifts.org).*