



# ECHO NEWS

Networking Global Hunger Solutions Volume 32 Issue 3

## ECHO ASIA

meeting a dire need

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## FROM OUR PRESIDENT'S DESK

I had known David for eleven years when he attended the ECHO Asia Conference in 2007. Not one to show his feelings, I was surprised one day by the depth of emotion in his face. I asked if something was wrong. He replied, "Stan, I work with a team of twelve others in Cambodia and nobody understands why I work with farmers. And here I am, surrounded by 150 people who truly understand my work with the poor. It's overwhelming!"

We organized this first ECHO Asia Agriculture Conference to see if there was significant interest in an ECHO Office in Asia. Our goal was to see six countries represented. Delegates from 15 countries made the need for ECHO very clear.

When God gives a vision, He confirms that vision by providing the resources. A clear example is the way that the ECHO Asia office has become a reality. Our dream for the Regional Office in Asia was for it to become a hub for those working with small-scale farmers in the area. This has happened much faster than we could have even imagined.

Rick Burnette, Director of ECHO Asia, is already experiencing the impact of the newly opened office. Rick writes, "Several people come each week to use the library to get ideas for more effectively assisting the poor. We need to add books to our small library." For a gift of as little as \$25, we could expand this resource.

ECHO Asia Notes is the technical document specifically written for residents of Southeast Asia. The list of recipients has jumped **from two hundred to almost one thousand in just three months!** The translation of these documents into regional languages is almost complete, and with the upgrade of the ECHO website, ECHO Asia will have local language sites to help non-English speakers as never before.

It is obvious even in these early stages that ECHO's Asia office is greatly needed and appreciated. To those of you who have helped this office become a reality, thank you! As we continue to grow, we ask for your help to meet the needs of our network by partnering with us in our mission to help the poor change their world.



Stan Doerr  
President, CEO

## WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM?



### Annual HIV/AIDS workshop

Students with different backgrounds and career goals gathered last month at the farm for ECHO's annual workshop, "Agricultural and Nutritional Options for those with HIV/AIDS." This workshop offers participants who work with those suffering from the disease, hands-on experience with plants, techniques and appropriate technologies that have the potential to improve lives. Pictured left, three participants gathering moringa leaves.



### Local Students learn, work and eat!

Bonita Springs Middle School students made a field trip to ECHO where they planted, weeded and harvested vegetables that they will soon be planting in their own ECHO Edible Schoolyard Garden. The students received hands-on instruction and experience tending the gardens and learned about mulching, seeding and even how to prepare meals from the fruit of their labor.



# ECHO ASIA

Under the shade of a large raintree, an 80-year-old building on Chiang Mai's historic McCormick Hospital campus houses the new ECHO Asia Regional Office. With work space on the ground floor and a small (but growing) resource library housed on the second level, the new location serves as a peaceful hub for ECHO's vigorous regional network.

Some might wonder, "Why an ECHO Regional Office in Asia?" Despite considerable economic gains over the past three decades, Asia remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor. This is due to the region's vastness, its enormous population and uneven economic growth. Remaining challenges related to regional poverty and food insecurity include:

- More than 600 million Asians live in absolute poverty (making less than US \$1 a day).
- By 2015, although Asia's share of the global gross domestic product is expected to approach 42 percent, the region is expected to be home to half of the world's poor.
- Growth in rice production, Asia's staple, has slowed and rice production areas are in decline.
- Growing resource scarcity (i.e., water) will increasingly constrain food production growth.

The recent establishment of the Asia office enables ECHO to better connect with regional partners who are addressing these concerns through their grassroots efforts. ECHO's Asian presence provides not only improved networking opportunities but enables new regional-based services such as:

- Hosting a bi-annual regional agricultural conference for development workers; the next is scheduled for September 21-25, 2009 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Facilitating similar national agricultural conferences throughout Asia (e.g., Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia) once or twice a year.
- Offering the quarterly ECHO Asia Notes, a regional e-supplement to the ECHO Development Notes offered in English and regional languages such as Burmese, Thai and Khmer.
- Maintaining an ECHO Asia webpage to disseminate and exchange relevant technical information in English and other regional languages.
- Operating a seed bank to provide seeds of regionally appropriate crops for development workers.
- Offering periodic courses and workshops related to topics of interest for network members in Asia.

With its new regional office, ECHO is in an even better position to network with regional partners for the exchange of ideas, information, technology and other resources. And considering ECHO's growing global network, such interaction will benefit small-scale farmers in both the Asia/Pacific region and beyond.

**Above:** A teenager harvesting fish in Southeast Asian waters. Fishing is a livelihood of many coastal and riverine nations. **On the cover:** Children are often given tasks of caring for younger siblings while parents work the fields. Both photos by Larry Yarger, ECHO Agriculture Consultant, taken during his 14 years working in Southeast Asia

# INTERN SPOTLIGHT

For a Canadian prairie girl, arriving at ECHO in October (when it was starting to freeze at home!) seemed like I was arriving in the garden of Eden. I was surrounded by green, lush abundance! Themes of **abundance** have continued to weave throughout my time at ECHO.

There is an **abundance** of learning opportunities! Whether it is through growing underutilized plants in the rainforest area, tending the ducks and goose under my care, or problem solving in the seedbank, there are so many avenues to learn about tropical agriculture at ECHO. There is also time to learn from people; discussing books or attending seminars, visiting with volunteers and guests, be it over a pile of dishes or a pile of weeds; the world is my classroom.

Such a dynamic learning environment has not been without an **abundance** of challenges. Through them I have learned more about the Lord's abundant grace extended by his people. I really appreciate the **abundance** of passion at ECHO! It is inspiring to be surrounded by other interns, staff, and volunteers who love what they do!

I am excited about the adventures in store for me after my internship. The Lord has placed a longing in my heart to share my knowledge and passion for sustainable agriculture with others. Whether it is with my neighbors here in North America or overseas (hopefully both!), I look forward to sharing the **abundance** of knowledge and experience that I have gained here at ECHO.

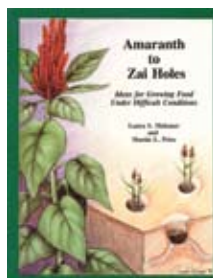


*Terri Lynn Paulson  
From Foam Lake, Saskatchewan  
Responsibilities: Rainforest,  
Ducks, and Seed Bank*

## Innovative Options for the Poor

Many supporters ask us what specific projects are in need of funding. This summer, we would like to introduce our readers to a couple of important projects that have received initial funding.

Our A-Z book, (Amaranth to Zai Holes) is a compilation of our first 50 issues of ECHO Development Notes (EDN). Since that book was published, we have produced issues 51-100 of EDN and have received partial funding from two sources to publish a sequel, "**Innovative Options for the Poor.**" The information contained in these books is vital to assisting organizations working with the poor overseas. This sequel will highlight the most sought after agricultural techniques, offering options to the small-scale farmer working in some of the most difficult areas of the world. The cost to write and publish this book is approximately **\$260,000**, and we have received **\$45,000** in grants and donations toward this project.



The second project is our **Plant Resource and Training Center (PRTC)**. This center includes a propagation building, service road, greenhouse, chemical storage, and seed and soil testing lab. Currently, this work is being done in various areas of the farm, with limited space and resources. In addition, during the rainy season, the weather conditions in Florida interrupt each afternoon as most projects cannot be completed during the frequent lightening storms. This **Plant Resource and Training Center** will bring all the necessary propagation techniques, intern training, testing and packing under one roof, increasing production and providing a safe, horticultural hub necessary to meet the plant resource needs of the Agriculture Resources Department. The cost of the PRTC is **\$290,000**, of which **\$30,000** has been pledged.

For more information on these and other projects, please contact Mary Moore at (239) 567-3349.



“We don't ever do anything that they cannot replicate.” That is the ministry goal of a group of dedicated volunteers from McGregor Baptist Church in Fort Myers, Florida. As a church they have adopted a segment of the Wanka people in the mountains of Northeastern Peru and have committed to not only sharing the Good News of the Gospel, but also caring for this group's most basic needs.

On the initial visit to San Damian, a remote town of 600 homes, the team asked the village nurse what some of the needs of the people were. She mentioned three basic physical needs: pure drinking water, eliminating the health problems caused by cooking over open fires, and improving the nutrition and yields of their small farm plots. Team leader Claude Diehl remarks, “When we first heard this, my wife and I both immediately said, ‘ECHO!’”



Chuck Firestone is one of the team members who came to ECHO looking for answers. Chuck and other volunteers have trained the local people and taught them to train others to make biosand water filters, mud-brick rocket stoves (that need less fuel and create less smoke) and are starting to experiment with ECHO seeds in their farming plots. He has seen great change in the people since they started to share these options. Chuck explains, “We made one five-gallon biosand water filter and left it with the nurse. When we returned three months later, we asked her if she was still using the water filter. She said, “What do you mean are we still using the water filter? Of course we are. It is the only pure water in town!”

“Now when we greet them, they greet us back and give us eye contact,” states Chuck. “They even ask us to sit down with them in their homes or shops. I know it is the direct result of our meeting where we shared the information from ECHO. People don't care how much you know until they first know how much you care. ECHO has given us a sustainable way to help them that they can replicate. We taught a group of them [how to make biosand filters] and now they are teaching others.”



**Top to bottom:** San Damian is nestled high on the hillside; Chuck Firestone leads the mud-brick cook stove workshop; Originally contaminated with worms and bacteria, clean water comes from the biosand filters.

Photos by Jaz-mar Photography

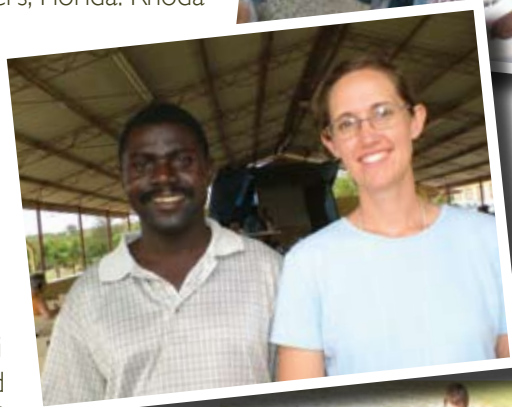
## Where Are They Now? Former Intern Report

ECHO Intern Rhoda Beutler finished her internship in December of 2005. She completed her overseas component in Haiti and since then has been vital in helping ECHO prepare students, development workers and missionaries to help the poor overseas!

Rhoda is extremely passionate about relationships, experiential learning and agriculture's role in sustainable livelihoods. These passions and skills suit her perfectly for her current position as Educational Programs Coordinator at ECHO's headquarters in Fort Myers, Florida. Rhoda coordinates educational workshops and self-study programs for about 100 students per year who come to the ECHO campus to better prepare for their work overseas.

Rhoda's work keeps her extremely busy, but she still maintains close ties with network members in Haiti and was able to spend three weeks there visiting agricultural projects in 2008. Most recently, Rhoda spent a week north of Port au Prince, Haiti participating in and encouraging an ECHO-inspired conference that included 150 delegates from 60 organizations working in all regions of the country. She led a workshop in seed-saving techniques and encouraged networking between various organizations that she has been assisting for years.

About her job, Rhoda says, "I love the chance to help people be more effective in their ministries around the world!"



### *Looking for a Predictable Future in Uncertain Times?*

Are your retirement savings caught in the wild swings of an unstable stock market?

A charitable gift annuity can bring back the stability you are looking for during your retirement years. You will receive guaranteed fixed payments for life at a payment rate that is higher than you might expect. In addition, you will receive a charitable income tax deduction, and a large portion of your income will be tax-free. These winning combinations can bring back the predictability you are looking for in an unpredictable world.

Then, after a lifetime of payments to you, the gift annuity will fund ECHO's important mission of providing hunger solutions to the poor. If you would like a no-obligation look at what a gift annuity can do for you, check out our link at [www.echogifts.org](http://www.echogifts.org) (click "Create Your Plan" then click "Gift Annuity"), email [ologelin@echonet.org](mailto:ologelin@echonet.org) or call Orlando Logelin at 239-567-3343.

# The ECHO Gift Catalog

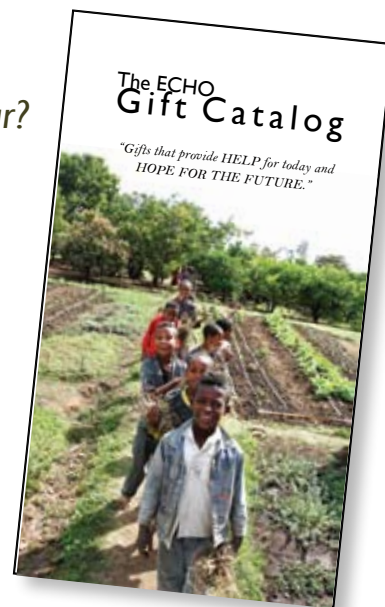
Wondering what to give family members for their birthdays this year?

Consider a gift from The ECHO Gift Catalog! This special catalog outlines many meaningful ways you can give that will make a positive impact on human lives all over the world!

We will mail a personalized card to your loved one for their birthday, anniversary, Christmas or any special occasion informing them of your gift in their honor.

You should receive a copy of this catalog in your mailbox this Fall or you may order gifts online at our website, [www.echonet.org](http://www.echonet.org).

Thank you for helping ECHO plant seeds of HOPE!



## PASSPORT TO THE WORLD TRAVELOGUE FILM SERIES



ECHO's Passport to the World Travelogue Film Series tickets are now available for the 2010 season. Enjoy four exciting shows that will take you across the world from Egypt to the Caribbean Islands. Feast on a delicious buffet lunch at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre while you explore these exotic destinations!

To order tickets for these shows, please fill out the order form below and mail to ECHO. Call Debby at (239) 567-3347 for more information or to order by phone. Make your reservations now; seating is limited!

..... **Early Bird Special! Order your tickets by Aug 28th for this special rate!** ..... ✂

**SERIES OF FOUR FILMS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Set of two (2) SERIES tickets @ \$280 per couple
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set of one (1) SERIES tickets @ \$140 per person

**SINGLE FILM TICKETS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$80 per couple
- \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$40 per person

Make checks payable to ECHO Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or pay by **credit card:**

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Visa/MC/DISC Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name Here: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: ECHO, 17391 Durrance Rd., North Fort Myers, FL 33917 | [www.echonet.org](http://www.echonet.org) | (239) 567-3347

Doors open at 11:30 am for lunch. Please select your choice(s) below or save \$50 by ordering the entire series:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Jan 22, America's Parklands – Part 2
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Feb 19, Egypt's Treasures and Cruising the Nile
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Mar 5, St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Caribbean Jewels
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Mar 12, The Real World of: Western Europe

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## EXTRAORDINARY PLANT:

# Loofah

Originating in India, the loofah is a curcubit, belonging to the same family as gourds, pumpkins and cucumbers. It grows well in fertile, sandy soils and loves warm, humid weather.

The flowers and young fruit are edible. The seeds can be used to make oil, and the leaves and stems can be used as an insect or animal repellent. The older, fibrous fruit can be used in soaps, as sponges or stuffing for pillows, or sewn together and used as filters, hot pads, insoles, sandals or bathmats.

This extraordinary plant matures very quickly and can develop from seed in two months.