



Guide to Holding An Alternative Gift Fair

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1. Overview

Each year, millions of Americans face holiday shopping with fear and anxiety. A recent poll said that 84 percent of Americans would prefer a less materialistic holiday. Another poll reported that 85 percent of Americans said they like spending time with friends and family a lot, while only 17 percent placed the same priority on getting lots of presents.

There are many ways to refocus your holiday priorities for your family, friends, and neighbors. Hosting an Alternate Gift Fair is a positive holiday experience that you can bring to your entire local community—a fun way to bypass the annual stress of holiday shopping and the accumulation of “stuff” while honoring friends and relatives with donations that fit their values. What’s more, Alternative Gift Fairs provide critical support for a diverse collection of local, national, and international organizations that have established track records of helping people and the environment—diverting money to these charities rather than to department stores and outlet malls. A successful fair may attract hundreds of shoppers and raise \$15,000 or more.

Alternative Gift Fairs come in many shapes and sizes, from a larger fair that fills an entire hall and involves dozens of volunteers to a single table staffed by one or two volunteers. Any size fair can do a wonderful

job of drawing community together around common values and alternatives to a commercial culture. To get a good idea of what a gift fair may actually look like, see our sample description below.

This guide will:

- Give you a timeline and checklist for hosting a fair.
- Share sample materials and promotional language used in previous fairs.

Putting on an Alternative Gift Fair will take a core team of 2 to 4 people to organize, along with 2 to 10 or more volunteers on the day of the fair. You will need an appropriate-size room, decorations for the room, at least six charitable organizations to participate, and some printed materials. The following timeline and tips elaborate these ideas to help you put on a successful event.

2. Description of an Alternative Gift Fair

Picture yourself walking down the outside steps leading to a church hall. Your eyes scan from a large group of children playing in an adjacent playground to a woman in front of you. It's a blustery day but the woman greets you with a warm smile, welcomes you to the Second Annual Alternative Gift Fair, and hands you a "shopping list" (see Appendix). You scan the list, seeing gifts of garden plots for urban families in the United States, microenterprise loans to Haitian families, solar cookers for refugees in Kenya, solar water systems for hurricane victims in Honduras, and cargo bicycles for South Africans. The alternative gifts range from \$5 to \$100 and all are tax deductible.

You thank the woman and walk through the door. Inside, the hall is bustling with activity and aglow with holiday spirit. Volunteers have decked the place out in holiday decorations, and two musicians are playing a guitar and banjo on the other side of the room. The room is ringed with tables, one for each group on your shopping list. Each table contains information on the charity, its mission, and its projects. Local charities have sent representatives to staff their tables, while tables for the international charities are staffed by a volunteer who has read up on the organization and can describe their work to the several dozen shoppers milling about the room and roaming from table to table. In the center of the room, several shoppers are sipping hot cider and eating baked goods. Upon closer look, you see a table behind them where a man is selling hot drinks and goodies to help the group cover the cost of putting on the fair.

There are three other tables at the front of the room. At the first, three cashiers are collecting shopping lists and money from the shoppers and giving them receipts and attractive gift cards. Many of these shoppers then make their way over to a second table, staffed by calligraphers. You lean over one shopper's shoulder and see that the inside of her card now says: *"Dear Mom, A bike helmet has been given to an at-risk youth in Montgomery County on your behalf. Love, Stephanie."* The final table contains a wealth of information on other ways to celebrate meaningful holidays: a "top 10 list" of homemade gift ideas, a "gift of time" certificate, and sample copies of Bill McKibben's *Hundred Dollar Holiday* and New Dream's "Simplify the Holidays" brochure.

Shoppers come and go, but you stay to mingle and watch. At the end of the afternoon, the crowd thins and the cashier table closes. One by one, the volunteers collapse into chairs, but each is sporting a big satisfied smile. They're exhausted, but they're psyched. They've brought holiday cheer to a couple hundred members of their community. They've raised a ton of money for causes dear to their hearts. They're on target for a record early finish to their holiday shopping. And their signup sheet for volunteers for the next year's fair is completely full!

Some feedback from Gift Fair organizers:

“People were *thrilled* to see us doing this.... We were ‘laid back’—two tables, two volunteers staffing (one more helped in the planning stages), cookies, and wassail for free. It felt like a huge success.”

—Denise, Costa Mesa, CA

“This was our second AGF and we definitely want to do it again! It was a wonderful day, alive with the spirit of GIVING!”

—Nancy, Califon, NJ, who organized a fair of 11 organizations

3. Materials, Volunteers, and Set Up

MATERIALS

- 1) GIFT CARDS. When shoppers have made their rounds of the booths sponsored by participating charities and are finished choosing which they’d like to donate to on behalf of loved ones, they proceed to the gift insert or gift card table. Here, they can pick up gift inserts describing the type of gift and the charity that will administer it. You may also wish to have volunteer calligraphers available to write cards on behalf of gift-givers. This is a very popular option but it requires a little extra organizing. It is nice to have locally designed and produced cards, but try to ensure that they all have the same format (preferably blank inside) to reduce confusion for the calligraphers.
- 2) SHOPPING LISTS. A shopping list is a list of all available gifts at the fair and is given to shoppers as they enter the room. Shoppers can use this as a checklist as they review each organization’s table. You can use a legal-size shopping list, or expand to a two-page, folded list, with international options on one side and local options on the other. The front and back pages can be used to describe the need to simplify the holidays and provide background on Alternative Gift Fairs. Make sure there are extra copies available for shoppers who want to keep a record of the specific gifts they purchased.
- 3) DIRECTIONAL SIGNS AND PROMOTIONAL FLYERS
- 4) FURNITURE, OFFICE SUPPLIES, MISC. Supply tables and chairs as necessary. Include a jug of water at the coffee table, and provide drinks for volunteers since most of them will talk a lot and get thirsty. pencils with erasers available for marking the shopping lists. Make sure there are hangers for people to hang their coats.

VOLUNTEERS

- 1) ORGANIZING COMMITTEE. Set up a planning committee meeting for organizers in mid-October. The organizing committee is the core set of people in charge of planning and running the logistics of the event. It will take 2–4 dedicated volunteers to effectively organize this event. Suggested roles are:
 - Logistics Guru
 - Publicity Emperor or Empress
 - President or Organization Liaison
 - Executive Director of Volunteer Coordinating

One of the organizers should take the responsibility for ensuring that the timeline is followed and that all deadlines are met. Depending on the time that volunteer organizers have available, one person may tackle two or more responsibilities or two people may share one responsibility. However, all

organizers should work closely together to make sure nothing falls through the cracks. Try to have organizers meet at least every other week in the two months prior to the fair.

- 2) **GREETERS.** Greeters welcome people at the door, hand out shopping lists, and explain how the fair works. At least two greeters are usually needed, with more if the fair is large. If the fair is held in a building with multiple rooms, make sure there is at least one greeter outside the gates to direct people to the correct room. People coming into the room are initially confused—this is probably the first time they've ever been to something like this!—and they should be given direction. (For instance, attendees may head toward the calligraphy table before going to the community booths.)
- 3) **ROOM MANAGERS.** Two “Room Managers” should be available on the day of the fair to deal with any situations that may arise (e.g., going out for tape or markers, assisting representatives from organizations, giving assignments to volunteers, etc.) The Room Managers are like stage managers in a play, making sure that everything runs smoothly. Communicate well with your room managers so they are equipped to handle any situations or confusions that arise for volunteers or shoppers during the day of the event.
- 4) **CASHIERS.** Money can be collected in two main ways: each organization can accept individual checks for donations, or shoppers can keep a list and write one check to a central cashier. To avoid overwork, it may be good to have as many as four cashiers available to keep up with demand. Advanced planning and training should be done, e.g. how to code shopping lists and receipts, etc. Every shopping list needs to be accounted for, or you will not know to which organization the money goes! Each cashier should have a different colored pen or code to represent different series of gifts, e.g. Red 1–10, Blue 11–20, etc. This saves an incredible amount of time when reconciling accounts.
- 5) **GIFT INSERTERS/CALLIGRAPHERS.** Shoppers should bring their shopping list to the gift insert table. Here, they receive a slip of paper describing the gift and the charity that will administer it. Shoppers also have the opportunity to write gift cards to accompany these pre-printed gift descriptions. Another option is to have volunteers on hand who can write in calligraphy (or in elegant or neat handwriting) the type of gift the shopper has given (and to whom). To avoid overwork, it may be good to have as many as five calligraphers (working no more than two-hour shifts) available to keep up with demand.

SET UP

- 1) **THE SPACE.** At one event, the basement of a local church (roughly 50 feet by 50 feet) was an adequate size for about 16 charities and 200 attendees over a four-hour period. It would be inadequate for larger crowds and extra cashier tables. At the same time, it is better to have the space slightly crowded than looking completely empty. Musicians may also be hard to hear in a much larger room. One suggestion is to look for a more centrally located space on a main street.
- 2) **DECORATIONS.** You will want festive decorations for the room where you hold your gift fair. These can be made by volunteers, a local school or youth group, etc.
- 3) **LIVE MUSIC.** Music can greatly add to the festive atmosphere of the fair. At one fair, performers that were featured on a locally produced benefit album played music for half the day. Refreshments might be placed near the musicians to encourage attendees to listen to and appreciate the music. If musicians are unavailable, festive music played on a stereo is suggested.

- 4) **BAKE SALE.** A Bake Sale and Raffle may help defray the cost of setting up the fair, with volunteers baking everything for the sale.
- 5) **CASHIER & CALLIGRAPHY TABLES.** Put a rope in front of the tables or move them away from the doorway so that people coming in do not try to go there first.
- 6) **WORK STATION TABLE.** Set up a table behind the cashier where cashiers and calligraphers can store extra materials and spread out during busy times.
- 7) **SIGNS CLARIFYING GIVING LEVELS.** Each organization in the room should offer a few levels of donation. The shopper will be paying for different services or causes for each donation level offered. Small colorful signs at each fair table clarifying each possible “gift” offered by that organization (and coordinating with the shopping list) can be helpful for participating organizations and shoppers.
- 8) **MASTER GIVING CHART.** It is very helpful to set a master chart on an easel at the door to mark total donations (check marks will do) throughout the course of the fair. This can create an atmosphere of excitement and also helps shoppers see which organizations could use a boost.

4. Sample Timeline: 8 Weeks to a Successful Gift Fair

The following timeline assumes that planning begins in the first or second week of October, and that the Alternative Gift Fair is held the first weekend in December. The second or third weekends would also be popular and would give you more preparation time.

WEEK 1: Goals

- *Assemble organizing committee* of 2–4 people
- *Hold a meeting*, with the following agenda items:
 - Assign roles (logistics, publicity, volunteer coordinator, organization liaison).
 - Brainstorm about what your gift fair could look like.
 - Discuss and decide the kind of gift fair you would like to produce. (How many organizations would you like to participate? How much money do you want to raise? How many visitors would you like to attract?)
 - Brainstorm possible locations, dates, and times.
 - Gather names of potential organizations to involve by doing a survey.

WEEK 2: Goals

- *Logistics:* Secure a location, date, and time. Check in with other members of coordinating team.
- *Publicity:* Place a listing in community papers and bulletins of local civic, faith-based, and other groups, announcing the Alternative Gift Fair and calling for volunteers to help with baked goods, a decorating party, and event support. Such organizations often meet monthly, and they may agree to announce the fair at their next meeting, so don’t wait to contact them. (*This could be combined with the logistics step in the following week.*)
- *Volunteer coordinator:* Choose a time and place in mid-November for a decorating party.
- *Organization liaison:* Collect organizational surveys, select local organizations, and begin inviting them to participate. A total of 15–16 organizations may be enough: the donations received make it

worthwhile for the groups to attend, and the room may be too crowded with more. Give organizations strict deadlines for providing giving levels and the necessary documentation for participation, emphasizing that if deadlines are missed, they will not be able to participate. Identify back-up organizations that you are ready to contact if your first choice cannot make it.

- Ask organizations to:
 - a. By October 31, send annual budget, copy of IRS 501(c)3 status letter, one paragraph description of organization, a list of “giving levels” (what a gift of \$X would enable the organization to do, at the \$10, \$25, \$50, and \$100 levels), and a statement that funds will be used as directed;
 - b. Provide a staff member or volunteer to represent their group on the day of the fair, and
 - c. Help publicize the event.

WEEK 3: Goals

- *Logistics*: Invite local Rotary Clubs, Women’s Clubs, Girl Scout troops, faith-based organizations, etc. to cosponsor event (i.e., help publicize and provide volunteers). Put interested groups in touch with your publicity and volunteer coordinators. (*This could be combined with the publicity step in the previous week.*)
- *Publicity*: Place listing on local listservs announcing the Alternative Gift Fair and calling for volunteers to help with baked goods, decorating party, and event support.
- *Volunteer coordinator*: Begin collecting cardboard and other material for decorating party. (See decorating party below.)
- *Organization liaison*: If including international groups from Alternative Gifts International (AGI), order materials from AGI or download from www.altgifts.org.

WEEK 4: Goals

- *Logistics*: Order gift cards (*See materials list below. A variety is best, ordered from local artists, AGI, etc.*). Check in with other members of coordinating team.
- *Publicity coordinator*: Fax or mail PSA, calendar announcement, and/or press release to all local radio, television, and print media.
- *Volunteer coordinator*: Solicit more volunteers, including live music.
- *Organization liaison*: Follow up with local groups, reminding them to submit materials by October 31.

WEEK 5: Goals

- *Logistics*: Order, borrow, or assemble materials and ideas on other ways to celebrate meaningful holidays that can be distributed at the gift fair—a “top 10 list” of homemade gift ideas, a “gift of time” certificate (for massages, child care, pet walking, hikes, etc.), and a sample copy of Bill McKibben’s *Hundred Dollar Holiday* and New Dream’s “Simplify the Holidays” brochure.
- *Publicity coordinator*: Pursue a story in local media outlets.
- *Volunteer coordinator*: Remind volunteers of decorating party date, place, and time.
- *Organization liaison*: Mail announcement and flyers to participating organizations so they can plug the event through their own local networks (the earlier the better!)

WEEK 6: Goals

- *Logistics*: Check in with other members of coordinating team.
- *Publicity coordinator*: Continue to pursue stories.

- *Volunteer coordinator:* Hold decorating party—crafting decorations, large “giving” chart, display materials for international organizations, and directional signs for outside.
- *Organization liaison:* Type up and copy descriptions of organizations to be inserted in cards.

WEEK 7: Goals

- *Logistics:* Plan the layout of the gift fair—location of tables, chairs, etc.
- *Publicity:* Post recycled paper flyers in local businesses, near metro, and in community centers.
- *Volunteer coordinator:* Finalize list of volunteer shifts and roles.
- *Organization liaison:* Type and design your “shopping list” (See sample materials list below. All giving levels need to be finalized prior to making shopping list)

WEEK 8: Goals

- *Logistics:* Check in with other members of coordinating team.
- *Publicity:* Send final media advisory. Email final announcement to local listservs. Follow up with press, particularly local television. Post a second wave of recycled paper flyers in local businesses, near public transportation, and in community centers.
- *Volunteer coordinator:* Remind volunteers of shifts and roles. Write sample inscriptions for calligraphers. (For role of calligraphers, see appendix.)
- *Organization liaison:* Reconfirm participating organizations and ask them to help with final publicity push.

DAY OF FAIR: Goals

- Set up booths, decorations, directional signage, and volunteers.
- Sell, sell, sell.
- Take photos!
- Have fun, relax, and congratulate yourself for a job well done!

FOLLOW-UP: Goals

- Tally up total donations.
- Send thank you letter, donation tally, and checks to participating charities.
- Send thank you note to host venue.
- Write letter to editor local pape thanking all shoppers and volunteers.
- Draft follow-up report and tips for next year.

5. A More Streamlined Event

For organizers who may be short on volunteers or resources for publicity, one way to bring an alternative gift fair to your community is by having a table at another local event, like a craft fair, church bazaar, or meal after congregational services. The fair could have both local and international organizations or could be just a local event. It could also more provide information about simplifying the holidays.

At a smaller event, consider the types of organizations you would like to invite. A fair featuring only local organizations will benefit by needing fewer volunteers on fair day. Local organizations can provide their own volunteers to staff their table. Hosting a just-local event will need more effort in the planning stages,

as you will need to identify organizations you would like to attend and to coordinate with them what they need to bring on fair day and how the event works. However, this approach may also increase your success at publicity, as more people in the community will be directly participating. In this way, awareness of the event can spread by word of mouth and through each organization's involvement.

If you choose to feature international organizations, groups like Alternative Gifts International (www.altgifts.com), SERRV (www.serrv.org), and Heifer International (www.heifer.org/) are reputable organizations that provide materials for donating alternative gifts to them. You may need more volunteers on the day of the event to staff donation tables, but this reduces the recruiting and coordinating you would need to do with local charity organizations. Confirm volunteers for any international booths that you set up well in advance and make sure they are aware of their responsibilities. (AGI cannot send representatives to staff events.) Get local churches involved early so they have time to identify potential volunteers.

6. Appendices

- A. Sample Invite Letter for Planning Committee
- B. Sample Call for Volunteers
- C. Sample Application Form for Participating Organizations
- D. Sample Funds Letter for Participating Organizations
- E. Sample Shopping List
- F. Sample Gift Card Inserts
- G. Sample Tax Receipt Form for Shoppers
- H. Sample Thank You Letter to Participating Organizations
- I. Sample Evaluation Form for Participating Organizations

Appendix A. Sample Invite Letter for Planning Committee

October 5, 2013

Winkie Bierbower
5035 Westpath Terrace
Bethesda, MD 20816

Dear Winkie,

Judy Smith mentioned your interest in learning more about Alternative Gift Fairs and possibly including St. Columba's in the gift fair fun this holiday season. I'd like to personally invite you to the October 15 D.C. Metro Area 2013 Alternative Gift Fair Planning Meeting to be held at our offices here in Takoma Park.

WHEN: Wednesday, October 15, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

WHERE: Our offices, 153 Main Avenue, Takoma Park, MD; two blocks North of the Takoma Metro; across from CVS

WHO: Past alternative gift fair organizers, experts, and volunteers as well as anyone interested in learning more or getting involved

WHY: Alternative gift fairs are a fun way to bypass the stress and “stuff” accumulation of the holidays while honoring friends and relatives with donations to worthy causes that fit their values. To see photos and learn more about Alternative Gift Fairs, visit www.newdream.org.

We'll be providing pizza and beverages. Please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions: 555-891-3683. You can also contact me via e-mail at [name@website.org].

I look forward to meeting you and appreciate your interest in Alternative Gift Fairs!

Sincerely,

Liz Jones
Outreach Associate

**In keeping with our commitment to reduce and shift consumption, this list is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled, process chlorine free paper*

Appendix B. Sample Call for Volunteers

Call for Volunteers:

Looking for a way to make a difference this Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Winter Solstice season? The [Your Fair's Title] Alternative Gift Fair, to be held on [Your Date], is currently seeking volunteers. If you're not familiar with a gift fair, it's an opportunity to make a gift to a charity in honor of a friend or relative during the holidays. Gifts from previous years' fairs around the country have included a lifetime of clean water for a family in the Dominican Republic, backpacks for kids in Afghanistan, and "Good Food" boxes (local and organic) for low-income families in urban areas.

Volunteers are crucial to the success of Alternative Gift Fairs. Volunteers are needed to do calligraphy, help with set up and clean up, bake for the bake sale, and decorate on the day of the Fair, as well as help with publicity in the weeks prior to the event. The Gift Fair is supported by community volunteers and based on a model by the Center for a New American Dream. To learn more about New Dream's national "Simplify the Holidays" Campaign, visit www.newdream.org. To volunteer for the [Your Fair's Title] Alternative Gift Fair, contact [Your Volunteer Coordinator] at [E-mail] or [Phone].

Appendix C. Sample Application Form for Participating Organizations

[Insert Name or Location of Your Fair] 2013 Alternative Gift Fair

Thanks for your interest in [Your Fair's Name] 2013 Alternative Gift Fair! This Alternative Gift Fair offers shoppers a choice of holiday gifts to honor family and friends while supporting charities and non-profit organizations in a festive atmosphere. Gifts include [Modify Wording:] \$5–10 school supplies for schoolchildren in Africa, \$15–20 for a cab ride for a family escaping domestic violence, \$25 to save a piece of wetland, and \$50 for a microcredit loan to women entrepreneurs in a developing country. For each donation, the giver will get a holiday card with a description of the organization and gift.

The gift fair will be held [Insert Date] from [Insert Time] at [Insert Location]. Each organization will be given a table to display information about their programs and gifts. Organizations are encouraged to have staff present to answer questions and talk with shoppers. The attached form will give you an idea of the price and type of 'gifts' that have been done in the past. [Attach Copy of Shopping List]

If your organization would be interested in applying, please submit the following information by **[Insert RSVP Deadline]** to [Insert Contact Info]:

1. Application form
2. IRS c(3) certification
3. Funds statement stating that all money raised at the fair will be used for the stated purpose. (See sample following.)

Or mail it to:
Alternative Gift Fair
c/o [Insert Contact Name]
[Insert Address]

The selection for organizations is competitive, so please get your form in on time!

Thanks,

[Your Name]

Please tell us a little about your organization:

_____	_____
Name of Organization	Contact Person
_____	_____
Address	Phone
_____	_____
City, State, and Zip Code	Email

Is your organization: Local National International

What type of work do you do?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Hunger Relief | Environment | Domestic Violence |
| Shelter/Home Rehabilitation | Habitat Rehabilitation | Nutrition |
| Medical Assistance: General | Child Survival | Women's Empowerment |
| Medical Assistance: AIDS | Livestock/Farm Aid | Drug Rehabilitation |
| Education: Youth | Emergency Disaster Relief | Animal Rescue |
| Education: Health | Aging | Small Loans for Entrepreneurship |
| Education: AIDS | Peace/Justice | Other (please specify): |
| Homelessness | Job Training | |

What is your organization's mission: _____

What is your organization's annual operating budget? _____

Please list possible 'gift items' shoppers that could purchase within the following price ranges:

\$5–10 _____

\$15–30 _____

\$50 or over _____

Have you taken in part in an Alternative Gift Fair in the past? Y / N

If so, through what organization? _____

How will you advertise the fair to your members and supporters? (email, website, social media, etc.)

Do you plan to have a representative at the fair? (We will use volunteers to staff international programs that cannot be present.) Y / N

Thanks again for your interest—We look forward to seeing you at the fair!

Appendix D. Sample Funds Letter for Participating Organizations

[Should be on organization's letterhead]

[DATE]

[Recipient's Address]

This letter is to confirm that all funds received by [Applying Organization] from gifts received at the [Your Fair's Name] Alternative Gift Fair will be used for [Applying Organization] programs to (Statement About Applying Organization's Mission). Following are a list of suggested Items and values,

[List gifts and prices.]

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Appendix E. Sample Shopping List

ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR *SHOPPING LIST*

sponsored by the Center for a New American Dream and the local community

ORGANIZATIONS	GIFT	# GIFTS	AMT
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS			
Kairos: Bata Ola Choir Project	\$16 One Recorder for Choir Member		
	\$50 Transportation, Food, Lodging for Music Teacher-One Month		
	\$100 Scholarship for Bata Ola Choir Member to Study in Managua		
Pedals for Progress	\$15 One Pedal Wrench or Equivalent Tool for Training Workshop		
	\$25 Collection, Transport, Reconditioning of One Used Bicycle		
	\$100 Basic Set of Bike Workshop Tools for Microentrepreneur		
Alternative Gifts International			
Safe Deliveries & Inoculations/ Haiti	\$8 One Safe Delivery for an Infant and Inoculations for One Child		
Clean Water/Burundi	\$38 Lifetime Clean Water for One Person		
"Head Start" for Village Children/India	\$22 Monthly Honorarium for One Teacher		
Sheep & Hens/Croatia	\$10 Ten Laying Hens		
	\$25 One Share of a Lamb		
	\$126 One Lamb		
	\$253 One Ewe		
Plant a Tree, Grow a Forest/Panama	\$14 Train One Farmer, Plus 800 Tree Seeds		
LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS			
Capital Area Community Foodbank	\$10 Breakfast for Class of 40 Schoolchildren		
	\$15 Three Meals Daily for a Week-Family of Four		
	\$25 Collect & Distribute Over 140 Nutritious Meals		
Casa de Maryland	\$10 File Small Claims Court Case for Unpaid Wages		
	\$25 Refreshments for Domestic Worker's Meeting		
	\$50 Citizenship Class for Legal Permanent Resident		
Center for a New American Dream	\$10 Twelve "Tips for Parenting in a Commercial Culture" Brochures		
	\$25 Gift Membership to the Center for a Friend or Family Member		
Community Bridges/ Jump Start Girls!	\$15 Art Supplies for One Group of Fifteen Girls		
	\$35 Educational Field Trip for One Group of Fifteen Girls		
	\$100 Curriculum Materials for One-Half a School Year		
Community Vision	\$9 A Month of Comfort and Cleanliness for a Homeless Person		
	\$26 Psychiatric Counseling Session for a Homeless Person		
	\$50 Tools for a Living Wage Job		
Cycle Across Maryland	\$5 One Bike Helmet for an At-Risk Youth		
	\$20 Participation in Bike Rally		
	\$40 Accessories Packet for a Student's Bike		
EcoStewards Alliance	\$15 Native Plant for Wildlife Habitat		
	\$35 Bird Feeder and Food for Wildlife Habitat		
	\$50 "My Roommates are a Bunch of Worms" Presentation		
Samaritan Inns	\$10 Recovery Bath & Health Kit		
	\$15 Money Management Sessions for One Person		
	\$20 Pain-Relieving Acupuncture Therapy		
Washington Free Clinic	\$10 One HIV Test and Counseling		
	\$35 One Prenatal Visit for an Expectant Mother		
	\$100 One Primary Care Visit		
Other:			
TOTAL:			
# Cards x \$.25			
GRAND TOTAL			

Appendix F. Sample Gift Card Inserts

A Gift of

A School Book for a Child in Guatemala

has been sent in your honor.

PROPETÉN es una organización no gubernamental sin fines de lucro, dedicada a la conservación de la biodiversidad en el departamento de Petén, Guatemala, donde se ubica la Reserva de Biósfera Maya (RBM), corazón del corredor biológico Mesoamericano y parte de la Selva Maya.

ProPetén started as a conservation organization creating economic alternatives to slash-and-burn farming by helping local communities in Petén, Guatemala establish enterprises such as ecotourism, non-timber forest product extraction, agroforestry, and sustainable timber management. By the mid-1990s, ProPetén expanded its programs to include environmental education, applied biodiversity research, policy reform, as well as gender, health, and population projects. In each area, ProPetén has worked on a grassroots level, then used the success of community projects as a catalyst for the creation of regional change.

A Gift of

[Caligrapher writes gift here]

has been sent in your honor.

PROPETÉN es una organización no gubernamental sin fines de lucro, dedicada a la conservación de la biodiversidad en el departamento de Petén, Guatemala, donde se ubica la Reserva de Biósfera Maya (RBM), corazón del corredor biológico Mesoamericano y parte de la Selva Maya.

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Appendix G. Sample Tax Receipt Form for Shoppers

[Gift Fair Date]

Thank you very much for your generous contributions to the Alternative Gift Fair.

Pursuant to IRS requirements for substantiation of charitable contributions, no goods or services were provided to the donor in exchange for this gift.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you again for such a thoughtful gift.

Sincerely,

Administrative Director

Amount of Gift: _____ Gift Description: _____

Check Number: _____

Appendix H. Sample Thank You Letter to Participating Organizations

January 9, 2013

Dear [Organizational Representative],

Thank you for your participation in the recent Alternative Gift Fair sponsored by [Your Group]. Your organization's presence helped make the event very successful, rewarding, and fun. We brought together community, shared information about the important work we all do, and enabled people to make their holidays reflect a generosity of spirit rather than a commercialized frenzy. Kudos to all involved!

Enclosed please find your check as well as the spreadsheet breakdown of purchased items. Hopefully this list will help you properly allocate funds as well as let you compare how different types of gifts sold. (Although your organization might not be able to offer the cuddle-factor appeal of a donation of fluffy baby chicks, you may still find the list useful when you select and describe gifts for future fairs.) Finally, please take a few moments to fill out the Evaluation for Participating Organizations form; your feedback and comments will be very helpful as we prepare for gift fairs in 2014.

On behalf of all the 2013 Alternative Gift Fair organizers and volunteer staff, thank you very much for your involvement!

Best wishes,

Liz Jones
Outreach Associate

Appendix I. Sample Evaluation Form for Participating Organizations

2013 Alternative Gift Fair: Evaluation for Participating Organizations

Thank you for participating in the Alternative Gift Fair. We would appreciate your comments regarding the fair. Your responses will be taken into consideration by next year's planning team.

Please return the evaluations to:

1. Is your organization: Local National International

2. What is your organization's annual operating budget?

3. What was your reason for participating in the fair?

4. Did the fair meet your expectations? Please explain:

**5. Please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = Excellent 3 = Average 5 = Poor
(comments also welcome)**

Location:

Size:

Lighting:

Music:

Parking:

Atmosphere:

Time & Date:

6. How could we have helped you prepare more thoroughly for the event?

7. How did you advertise the fair to your members and/or the general public?

8. Do you plan to participate again next year? Y / N

9. Name of organization (optional)