



John Rosenow, President of The National Arbor Day Foundation, presents the foundation's highest yearly honor, the J. Sterling Morton Award, to Sebastian Chuwa during ceremonies at the Lied Lodge in Nebraska City, Nebraska June 2, 2007.

Arbor Day Foundation Awards Sebastian Highest Honor

On June 2, 2007, Sebastian Chuwa was presented with the highest yearly award given by The National Arbor Day Foundation, the J. Sterling Morton Award, at ceremonies in Nebraska City, Nebraska. Each year the NADF board of directors, staff and invited guests attend 2-day awards ceremonies to honor individuals and groups from around the world who have made substantial contributions towards bringing trees into public attention through the media, books, educational initiatives and tree-planting activities.

John Rosenow, president of the foundation, presented the award with these words: "Sebastian's dedication to community-supported initiatives and youth education has inspired a generation in his homeland to plant and celebrate the value of trees. Through his

tree-planting efforts, he is making an impact at home and around the world."

J. Sterling Morton was the Nebraska pioneer responsible for the establishment of the first Arbor Day ceremonies in Nebraska City, where he and his wife, Caroline, were the inspiration for widespread planting of beneficial trees on the windswept, treeless prairies of the US heartland. As the Secretary of Nebraska Territory and the editor of the state's first newspaper, he advocated widely for tree planting and it is estimated that over a million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day in 1872. Now the event is celebrated in nations around the world.

Today The National Arbor Day Foundation keeps alive the memory of its founder. His original homesite is a (see **Arbor Day**, bottom page 2)

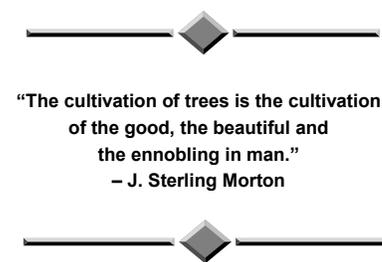
Good Gifts Catalogue Raises Funding for Mpingo Planting

As reported in last year's newsletter, the ABCP has been chosen for inclusion in a UK charitable venture called the Good Gifts Catalogue.

Hilary Blume is the inspiration behind the Good Gifts Catalogue, a project she founded in 2004 as a service to charitable organizations around the world. Her idea was to re-channel some of the gift money that people spend in developed nations towards projects needed for development in less fortunate countries. So, instead of buying something that may never be used for a friend or loved one, a gift can be chosen that will cover the cost of an item or an animal that will help bring a poor family needed income or nourishment or send its children to school, or, as is the case with the ABCP, plant threatened or endangered trees.

In its first 18 months, among the gifts that people bought were 4,000 goats, over 1,000 acres of Ecuadorian rainforest, and 10,000 kg of African-farmed maize and millet. All gifts are delivered by local projects.

An example of one unique offering is the purchase of an army tank or Kalashnikov rifle, salvaged from weaponry discarded in war-torn West Africa. These are supplied to farm communities ravaged by war to dismantle and fashion into new implements for agriculture, school bells and domestic implements.



**"The cultivation of trees is the cultivation of the good, the beautiful and the ennobling in man."
— J. Sterling Morton**

Through this initiative the biblical proverb, to “beat swords into plowshares” takes on a quite literal meaning, replete with hope for future betterment.

Ms. Blume, an astute businesswoman, started a long and interesting career in the charitable field when she established the UK-based Charities Advisory Trust (CAT) 25 years ago to provide impartial advice for charities on investment and trading. The initiative has blossomed into a many-branched endeavor of quite imaginative projects to not only raise money for charities, but also to train people for working in the non-profit sector.

One of her first initiatives was Card Aid, founded to produce Christmas cards for charities to sell to their supporters. Now CAT itself runs about 50 seasonal outlets for these cards, mostly in London supporting the work of 300 charities.

CAT also runs the Green Hotel in India, a model of sustainable and charitable tourism which uses its profits to support charitable and environmental projects in India. Its ‘Development from the Inside’ program trains students in international development and NGO work. Its ‘Medical Student Electives’ program exposes students from the West to a rural medical program in a developing country. ‘Mailout’ is a distribution company in London employing people with learning difficulties.

Additionally CAT runs a graduate internship program which has trained over 1000 people for work in the voluntary sector, and makes yearly donations through its grant program to a variety of causes such as tree planting, homelessness and peace and reconciliation. Blume herself has published several books on fundraising and charitable work.

Since being chosen to be included in the Good Gifts Catalogue, the ABCP has received funding for planting over 21,000 mpingo trees. See www.goodgifts.org/goodgifts/ for information on the catalog. The web addresses for the ABCP mpingo offerings may be accessed from the ABCP website, at www.blackwoodconservation.com/goodgifts.html. □

Muongano Makonde Carver’s Initiative Funded by Good Gifts

In 2004 we reported on a community mpingo planting project in Makuyuni, Tanzania, funded by a UN program for environmental remediation called COMPACT (Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Project). The planting project was implemented by the Muongano Makonde Carvers, a group of highly skilled and creative artists who sell their work at an open-air market in Moshi.



Grouping of mpingo elephants executed by Muongano Makonde Carvers.

The carvers negotiated with the village government of Makuyuni and secured 25 acres of land to establish a permanent site for mpingo trees. They used seedlings from the ABCP nursery, and Sebastian assisted them as technical advisor. They also implemented educational programs in schools of the area to raise awareness about mpingo’s uncertain future, and are planting other needed species of trees for environmental remediation in additional areas.

These are their accomplishments (from their brochure): “In 2 years, the project has raised awareness in primary schools located in Makuyuni ward and individuals about the potential extinction of mpingo trees. Kilema village has owned the project by formulating by-laws to protect mpingo tree species. Village guards have been posted at the project site to protect planted trees on a long-term basis. There has been reforestation of the half-mile strip of Kilimanjaro forest reserve along the border with Kilema ward. Over 35,000 tree seedlings were planted in Makuyuni ward. In addition, 10,000 indigenous trees were

planted in the Kilimanjaro Forest Reserve at Kilema North ward. Trees planted included local hardwood varieties, namely ‘loliondo’, ‘camphor’ etc.”

Now with recent funding from the Good Gifts catalog, this project is being expanded. Makuyuni Village has designated additional acreage for use for replanting mpingo and the ABCP has contracted with the villagers to clear the land and plant it with a mixture of mpingo and fuelwood trees. Since mpingo takes so long to mature, the fuelwood trees will give immediate benefit to the villagers involved.

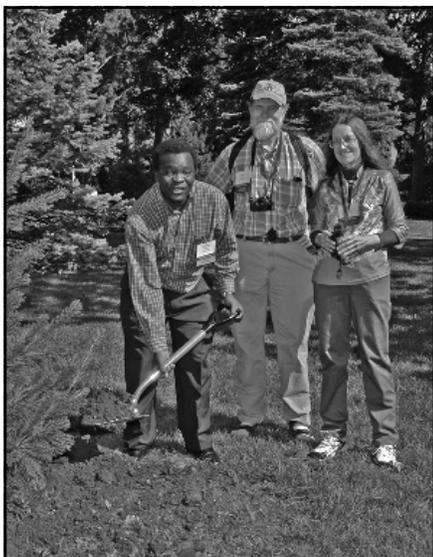
The ABCP has a present commitment from the Makuyuni villagers to closely manage the plot for the next 5 years. Additional land will become available as further funding is designated for mpingo conservation. □



Because of an increasing difficulty in finding usable mpingo, carvers are utilizing other species. This Muongano artist works on a bas-relief of an African woman balancing a basket, carved from Jacaranda.

(Arbor Day, cont. from page 1) state park and the ancestral farm is devoted to public demonstration sites, fully producing orchards and a hotel/facility for conference meetings and tours called the Lied Lodge.

US ABCP Directors, James Harris and Bette Stockbauer-Harris, joined



Sebastian, James and Bette participate in the ceremonial planting of an Eastern White Pine tree at the Arbor Lodge State Historical Park in Nebraska City on Saturday, June 2, 2007.

Sebastian in Nebraska City to celebrate the awards ceremonies with him, spending extra days before and after the official activities working together on the planning of future conservation projects for the ABCP.

We are grateful to The National Arbor Day Foundation for inviting us and bestowing this great honor on our colleague. The congeniality and hospitality of the Arbor Day Directors and staff in Nebraska City were deeply appreciated and we hope to continue an association that will last into the future for many Arbor Days yet to come. See further information on our website at: www.blackwoodconservation.org/arbordayaward/index.html. □

Cottonwood Foundation Awards Grant to ABCP Partner

In March of this year we were contacted through the ABCP website by Emmanuel Noel, a young man from Tanzania who has recently graduated from the University of Dar es Salaam with a major in Geography and Environmental Studies and a specialty in Environmental Management/Community Based Natural Resource Management.

Emmanuel expressed a desire to

join our efforts for environmental conservation, with a focus on Mt. Meru, 50 miles west of Kilimanjaro. Mt. Meru, like Kilimanjaro, is a primary agricultural area for coffee, banana and various vegetable crops. It also suffers similar problems to those in the Kilimanjaro area, as recent price drops in international markets have devastated income levels of the people and led to overuse and misuse of their natural resources.

Tree cutting, increased land clearing to expand farming, charcoal production and accidental fires from honey harvesting have resulted in lessening land cover, high rates of erosion and degradation of water sources. Consequently, Mt. Meru is being stripped of its precious topsoil and its service as a primary water catchment area is being lessened year by year.

Emmanuel and ten founding members have organized a volunteer group called the Environmental Greenishing Group, or EGG, with by-laws and a constitution.

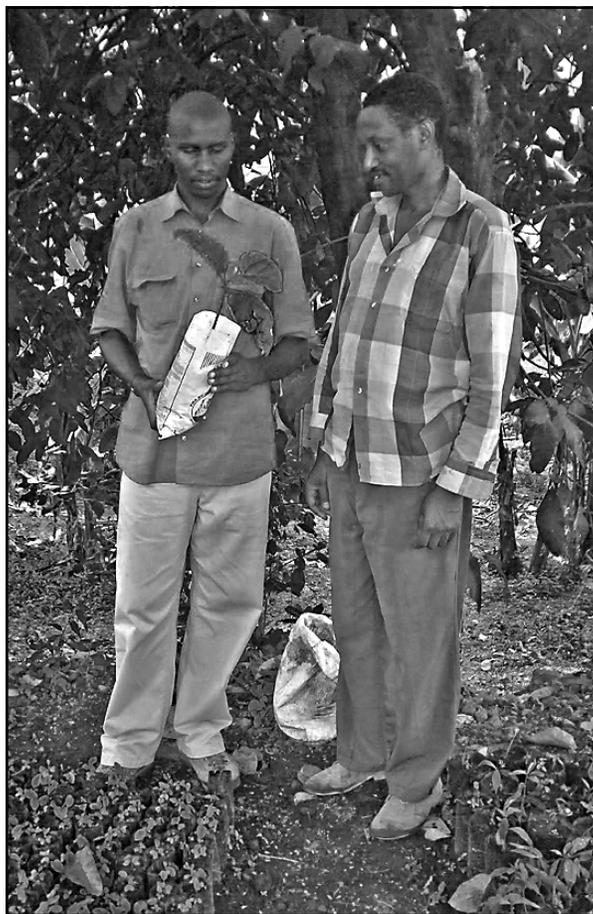
Their objectives are: 1) To work with local communities in raising awareness about sustainable natural resource management, assisting them in becoming the controllers and protectors of their local environments, 2) To help the communities to identify resources that are underutilized, misused or overutilized, 3) To help communities to establish tree nurseries and replanting

A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit.

— Elton Trueblood (1900-1994)

programs for reforestation, afforestation, city beautification and production of needed tree products for domestic use, and 4) To establish “Environmental Education and School Greening” projects to educate school children about wise management of their natural resources.

In September the ABCP assisted the EGG in securing a grant from the Cottonwood Foundation that will be dedi-



Emmanuel Noel and Gideon Ndukay are founding members of the Environmental Greenishing Group (EGG), a new ABCP affiliated organization implementing conservation education and tree planting programs in the Mt. Meru area of northern Tanzania.

cated to purchasing equipment for a tree nursery along with educational supplies to expand its current community outreach.

The ABCP encourages the commitment of the EGG to the conservation of natural resources on Mt. Meru and looks forward to a long and fruitful association. □

**Infrastructure Improvements
And Future Expansion Plans
for the ABCP**

Our trip to Tanzania last year provided us with extended periods to meet with our Project Partners and discuss plans for the future of the ABCP. We wish again to thank Roger and Pauline Stockbauer (Bette’s brother and sister-in-law), for their generous contribution in providing air miles (and lots of incentive!) to make the journey, which has had the result of expanding our vision for the future into new areas.

Infrastructure Improvements: Projects completed during the past year include a new nursery structure at the original Moshi Mpingo Plot and a chain link fence around the expansion acreage recently contributed by the local village council (see photos). Consequently, we now have the capacity to raise 100,000 seedlings every 18 months. We also have permanent nursery attendants, Raphael and Joseph, who live on-site and provide the constant care needed by a large nursery operation.

Coffee: The Kibosho East Environmental Group, one of our Project Partners, has planted several hundred ‘mother plants’ from which to harvest cuttings for coffee trees. These cuttings will produce disease-resistant trees that, after final planting, will be ready to bear within 2 years. Sebastian has already distributed over 20,000 coffee trees and this project will increase his outreach. The objec-



A delighted young conservationist from Sungu School on Mt. Kilimanjaro learns the skills of tree planting and environmental conservation. Here he carefully weeds *Grevillea/Silk Oak*, a fast-growing tree for fuelwood.

The great French Marshall Lyautey once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow growing and would not reach maturity for 100 years. The Marshall replied, 'In that case, there is no time to lose; plant it this afternoon!' — *John F. Kennedy*



Mpingo seedlings just emerging in Sebastian’s nursery. The seeds are sprouted in flats and later transferred to pots.



Workers at the Moshi Mpingo Plot have constructed a new nursery shelter using Cottonwood Foundation and contributor funding. The poles are set in plastic pipe sleeves filled with concrete to inhibit termite infestation. Sunshade netting covers the roof to control the amount of sunlight reaching the tender seedlings which will be germinated and grown under the shelter.



A chain-link fence was constructed around the new acreage at the Moshi Mpingo Plot. This will ensure survival of young mpingo trees planted from seedlings in our nursery.

tive is to replace old and disease-prone trees with new varieties to energize the coffee sector on Kilimanjaro.

Future Plans: Several years ago, Sebastian was awarded a hectare (about 2 1/2 acres) lot of land on the northern side of Moshi as compensation for his community service by the Town Council of Moshi. This year the ABCP fenced the area and is drawing up a plan to create an educational center, which would have a central building with a conference hall, media center, library, offices and kitchen facilities, for seminars, and on the surrounding grounds a number of nurseries, a greenhouse and a building for a permanent groundskeeper.

Activities would include hosting

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter.”

—Rachel Carson

educational tours and classes for students from schools in Arusha and Moshi, and holding seminars for adults on such topics as organic farming, tree cultivation, municipal beautification, leadership training in community-based conservation, and livelihood diversification strategies, i.e., bee-keeping, fruit tree horticulture and the building of en-

ergy efficient stoves.

A primary objective of the center will be to offer training in occupational pursuits that simultaneously provide income and protect the delicate ecosystems of the Kilimanjaro area. Another focus will be mpingo conservation. We hope to increase our production and outreach since this will be a new location.

This project has the ongoing support of our seven Project Partners. Working together we feel that we can help make a difference in the lives of the people and the natural environment of the Kilimanjaro area. A mock-up of the building and grounds can be seen on our website at: www.blackwoodconservation.org/project.html. □

New Threats to Mpingo Loom as China Becomes World Leader in Importing Hardwoods



Mkapa Bridge over Rufiji River in south-east Tanzania, opened for traffic in 2003.

As one of the most exquisite and expensive woods in the world, mpingo is also one of the slowest growing commercially useful trees to reach harvestable maturity. It has been exported from Africa since antiquity, and in modern times, with exponentially expanded world transport, its future is in serious jeopardy. Already commercially extinct in Kenya and many parts of northern



Logs set for transport seized by Tanzanian government agents just north of Rufiji River soon after the opening of the Mkapa Bridge.

Tanzania, a new threat is emerging as a result of the construction of the Mkapa Bridge over the Rufiji River in southern Tanzania. Within days of its opening in 2003 a logging boom began and scores of containers of often illegally harvested wood ended up in the port of Dar es Salaam.

Alarmed by these developments, over the next 3 years, Tanzanian forestry officials imposed bans, halted shipments and drew up new regulations and oversight activities to stem the huge losses in revenue and natural resources, losses for both the government and the local communities managing the woodlands. A key player is China, now the largest importer of wood products in the world, since its own decision to ban in-country harvesting after excessive erosion from tree harvesting caused devastating floods in the Yangtze and Yellow River basins. In 2005 Tanzania was Africa's 6th largest timber exporter to China, its trade having increased by 1386% since 1997.

Mpingo is always a highly targeted resource and even during the recent bans, some mpingo suppliers received special “off the record” permission to continue their trade. And alarmingly, new uses are being found, as manufacturers in China and Japan are now milling the wood for parquet flooring. Unfortunately it is seldom the people of Tanzania who are justly rewarded, as whole trees are often sold at US \$0.50-2.00. The reasons for such over-exploitation of the nation's resources are many, but underlying everything is poverty. With a yearly income of \$240 and relatively high living expenses the average Tanzanian family needs several breadwinners in order to make ends meet. Hence, the selling of natural resources can sometimes be the only way to support a family. The government is likewise impoverished, having been strapped by debt since the 1970's and often enduring unfavorable terms of trade on the world market for its commodities.

The ABCP is approaching the problem from several vantage points, educating local communities about the value of the tree, sponsoring replanting programs, teaching sustainable harvest techniques, and alerting the larger world to the fact that when this priceless resource is gone, it will be multiple *lifetimes* until it can once again be revitalized.

Kristian Mohl Donates Yahoo! 'Green Icon' Contest Award

Yahoo!, the Internet search engine and index giant, recently conducted an online design competition for the best 'Green' logo to be used on its network where it wishes to highlight and encourage sustainable and environmentally sensitive products, services and actions that can be taken by the public in response to global climate change. Awards in the amounts of \$20,000 for first place and \$5,000 for second and third runner's-up were to be given to charitable conservation organizations selected by the three winners.



Kristian Mohl, who won both third and fourth place, designated the ABCP to be recipient of the award for his entry. Kristian, whose Green Yahoo! Tree Icon design is pictured at left, is an independent web and graphics designer who lives in Cakovec, Croatia, a town about 100 km from the capitol city of Zagreb. He believes digital media will eventually replace print media, saving natural resources in the process, so he has aptly named the website he created to promote his work as www.noprint.com.

The ABCP is honored to have been so chosen and extends its great appreciation to Mr. Mohl for his excellent artistry and philanthropy, and to Yahoo! for their generosity and encouragement of a green lifestyle. The Yahoo! website covers this contest at <http://bix.yahoo.com/contest/16536>.

"I want to encourage you to support campaigns to save African forests and biodiversity. The importance of forests and the many services humanity gets from them is well known: ecological balance of the earth; they absorb carbon; prevent loss of soil and subsequent desertification; they offer safeguards against flooding; they are reservoirs for genetic resources; they control rainfall patterns and serve as catchment areas for freshwater and rivers. Forests have been a source of wealth and inspiration throughout centuries."

—Waangari Maathai, Kenya

2004 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

2004 National Arbor Day Foundation J. Sterling Morton Award Winner

• SEE THIS NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT WWW.BLACKWOODCONSERVATION.ORG/O7REPORT.HTML •

African Blackwood Conservation Project

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So that
the song
of the
Tree of Music
will not go
silent...