

# The Kids First Fund

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**My philosophy on giving** was recently reinforced by a 2007 visit to the birthplace of George Washington Carver. The visit provided many lessons and was a reminder of the safety and stability I enjoyed as a child. This good fortune in my life has continued, as I have been able to provide safety and stability for my children. I hope this is a gift that will pass from generation to generation.

George Washington Carver was a black man who experienced very little safety and stability as a child. He was born into slavery in 1864 and was owned by Moses and Susan Carver. His birthplace of southwestern Missouri was a lawless land. A gang of bandits abducted George and his mother Mary; he was an infant at the time. He was returned to his owners after payment of a reward, however, his mother was never seen again. At a young age, George bore the dual distinction of being an orphan and a slave.

Moses and Susan were a remarkable white couple. They adopted George, nurtured him and helped him develop an inquiring mind by allowing him to skip chores and explore the nearby forest and stream. But as a black child, the door to the local schoolhouse was closed to him. The world of the late 1800s did not encourage black people to have intellect.

But George was persistent. At the tender age of 11 he left the Carver home to seek a grade school that would accept black children. Young George was accepted into the home of a black couple in a nearby community and attended a Negro school. His desire to continue his education at a better school required early independence at age 13. He moved to Kansas where he survived on the money earned from washing and ironing laundry. He was often the target of cruelty and prejudice, and had his treasured schoolbooks stolen by white children on more than one occasion.

The challenges of being a black man continued into adulthood. Carver was accepted by Highland College in Iowa. However, when the head of the school realized he was a Negro, George was not allowed to register. His lifelong pursuit of knowledge eventually led him to the Tuskegee Institute where he became a famed agricultural scientist. George certainly was harmed by a society that withheld the right of human dignity from black people. And yet, he greatly benefited from the kindness and intervention of individuals.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## INSIDE

From the President, cont.	2
Numbers Help Tell Our Story	3
Grant Helps Furnish Shelter	4
Online Travel Auction	6
Swiss Air Offers Assistance	7
Google AdWords Nets Referrals	8
Kids First Fund Representatives	9
About the Kids First Fund	10



“No individual has any right to come into this world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

FROM PAGE 1

Dr. Carver knew child abuse during his youth, and he probably had ample reason to be angry at the world. But instead of anger, he chose a purpose-driven life and always acknowledged the need to serve others. There are many lessons for people in today's world to learn from an orphaned slave boy from Diamond Grove, Missouri. Quotes from Dr. Carver appear throughout this report. His words compel us to recognize how we are fortunate, and how we must help those who are less fortunate.

Your support of the Kids First Fund is a humane act in a world that is often inhumane. Your financial contribution permits this organization to intervene to provide safety and stability in the lives of children and their mothers.

The pages of this report describe the accomplishments made by the Kids First Fund during 2007. It was a year in which steady progress was made on building our financial resources, largely due to another successful online travel auction. However, economic conditions in Latvia required us to delay construction of the family shelter in Balvi. I am very happy to announce the Latvia Children's Fund advises construction will begin April 2008. The Kids First Fund also partnered with the Latvia Children's Fund during 2007 by contributing money to a family shelter in Valmiera.

2008 will be a very busy year. The Kids First Fund will spend \$200,000 for its share of the construction cost of the family shelter in the Balvi. Thanks to a planned grant of \$117,000 to be made by a Canadian foundation, we will be able to address the rising construction costs that inflation has created in Latvia and create wonderful outdoor sports and play areas at the new family shelter. The Kids First Fund will also consider expansion during 2008 by adding another country to our program map. I will travel to the Republic of Moldova during March 2008. I will meet with government and NGO representatives to determine the level of need and compatibility with our mission.

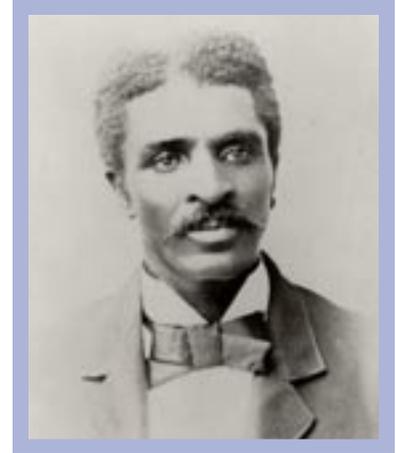
These activities represent a renewal of effort in service to abused children and their mothers, and growth to expand our reach. Friends knew young George Washington Carver as the “plant doctor.” The words “renewal and growth” resonate with the story of Dr. Carver's life and provide a perfect description of the path to be taken by the Kids First Fund in 2008.

For the kids,



Jay Sorensen

Volunteer and President



Dr. Carver's 1894 graduation photo from the Special Collections Dept. & University Archives, Iowa State University.

## NUMBERS HELP TELL OUR STORY

The **2007 annual report** represents a continuing commitment to donor disclosure by including the annual financial statements for the Kids First Fund.

The financial results for 2007 are consistent with prior years. Total revenue was over \$43,500, which represents a nearly 11% decrease from 2006. Individual cash donations dropped to \$6,006, which unfavorably compares with 2006 cash donations of just under \$16,000. The average donation received during 2007 was approximately \$250. Proceeds from the annual International Online Travel Auction for Kids led all other forms of fundraising, with net proceeds of \$26,014. Good cash management and a large cash balance nearly doubled bank interest to \$11,497.

The Kids First Fund continued its tradition of operating on a zero-overhead budget and did not incur expenses related to salaries, fundraising fees, and travel expenses. Results for the 2007 Online Travel Auction for Kids are listed on the income statement as an amount that is net of the selling costs normally associated with eBay. All items were 100 percent donated and 11 percent of the gross amount raised was deducted as a selling cost.

Our bank balance at year end was a very healthy \$277,724. The Kids First Fund has consciously been building its bank balance in anticipation of a major grant event associated with the family shelter project in Latvia. This should occur during 2008 when a grant of \$200,000 will be requested for our portion of the construction costs.

### KIDS FIRST FUND, INC. 2006 INCOME STATEMENT

CONTRIBUTIONS	2006	2007
Cash donations	\$15,983.88	\$6,006.59
Interest from savings account	\$5,804.78	\$11,497.98
In-kind items (see note a)	\$778.48	\$0.00
Online Travel Auction for Kids (see note b)	\$26,665.06	\$26,014.28
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$49,232.20</b>	<b>\$43,518.85</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES AND DISTRIBUTIONS</b>		
Grants made to support mission (see note a)	\$778.48	\$1,290.00
Salaries, compensation & benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional fees & fundraising	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Expenses &amp; Distributions</b>	<b>\$778.48</b>	<b>\$1,290.00</b>
<b>Excess Funds</b> (deposited to bank account)	<b>\$48,453.72</b>	<b>\$42,228.85</b>

Results are not audited, but reflect amounts reported to the IRS.

(a) Printed items were donated that described the mission of the Kids First Fund. These were distributed at various public events, such as book readings. This item appears under the grant category. All items were distributed during 2007.

(b) Net results from the annual online travel auction. All items are 100% donated. Selling expenses associated with eBay auctions were 11% of the gross amount raised.

### KIDS FIRST FUND, INC. 2007 BALANCE SHEET

	DEC. 31, 2006	DEC. 31, 2007
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and investments	\$235,495.19	\$277,724.04
Other assets	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$235,495.19</b>	<b>\$277,724.04</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Net Assets &amp; Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$235,495.19</b>	<b>\$277,724.04</b>

Results are not audited, but reflect amounts reported to the IRS.



## YOUR DONATIONS GIVE ABUSED KIDS A BETTER LIFE IN VALMIERA, LATVIA

**Sometimes it's the little things** that matter the most. Your donations are helping kids and their moms enjoy home-like comforts in a small town near Riga. Board members Rogers Grigulis and Jay Sorensen visited the Vidzeme Regional Support Centre Dardedze in September 2007 to learn about the services provided to children and mothers. Because of our positive financial position, Jay and Rogers were able to discuss a potential grant during the tour. It was obvious the Centre was missing some basic supplies and fixtures.

The Latvia Children's Fund, in cooperation with Latvia's leading child support center, opened the centre in the town of Valmiera, Latvia. This town of 27,000 inhabitants is located 100 kilometers (62 miles) northeast of Riga. The Centre is operated in cooperation with local government social service agencies and is managed by Eva Sare, the executive director.

The design and operation of this Centre will likely provide a template for the family shelter to be developed by the Kids First Fund further east in the Balvi region. The facility operates as a temporary shelter for children and mothers who have been victims of abuse and violence. The Centre is also a regional resource for professional training, conference hosting, health screening, and outpatient therapy.

The building was extensively renovated during 2005 to accommodate its new role as a family shelter. The lower floor consists of administrative offices, therapy rooms, and a meeting room which doubles as a family room for teens. Living space is located on the second floor with private rooms for families, bathrooms and toilets, a commercial kitchen, a dining room, and a children's playroom. The attic has been finished and provides ample conference space, which also generates revenue when it is rented to other agencies.

Local funds are always in short supply and are dedicated to necessities such as heat, food, and staff salaries. Funds for the items that help turn a sterile facility into a "home" are rarely available. It was obvious that a grant was very much needed for supplies and fixtures. These are simple things that enhance the everyday lives of the children and mothers living at the family shelter.



Exterior image of the renovated shelter in Valmiera, Latvia

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

“Where there  
is no vision,  
there is no hope.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

FROM PAGE 4

The board of the Kids First Fund approved a \$5,000 grant to allow the purchase of the following items:

- Chairs and tables for the bedrooms to allow moms and children to be a family in the small space allotted to them.
- Home touches such as new bed linens, bookshelves, cassette players, and bulletin boards in each room to display children’s artwork.
- Sports equipment such as skates and hockey sticks to help burn off youthful energy outside the shelter.
- Benches, tables and outdoor play equipment to encourage families to spend time outside.
- Renovation was required for the anger management room, designed to absorb the abuse of children who have been abused.

In addition to the above, the staff also will benefit from new subscriptions to social work publications.

The grant required a direct transfer of \$1,290 to the Centre from the Kids First Fund account in the USA. The remaining \$3,710 was provided by funds held in Latvia, which were returned when the Bulduri Family Care Centre closed.

These are not large items, but this grant certainly improved the lives of abused children and their mothers in a little piece of Latvia. Your contributions allowed this small act of compassion to occur.



Your donations added more furniture and other home touches to the shelter in Valmiera.



## INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TRAVEL AUCTION FOR KIDS DELIVERS \$26,000

The people voted with their bids and selected AirTran Airways as the recipient of the 2008 Kids First Auction Partner Award. More than 36 travel brands, including AirTran Airways, participated in last year's International Online Travel Auction for Kids.

AirTran Airways was recognized because its auction items raised the highest amount generated by any single donor airline or hotel company. The coach and business class tickets provided by AirTran were valid to any U.S. destination and raised \$5,762 in proceeds for the Kids First Fund. This was more than any amount raised by the other companies participating in the 2007 auction.

The International Online Travel Auction for Kids has become a regular and important component of our annual fundraising activities. The 2007 event generated over 32,000 hits at the Kids First Fund eBay.com auction site. Net auction proceeds were in excess of \$26,014 with over 100 individual items sold during the March 2007 event.



The 2007 auction became more global through the addition of new donors in Europe and Australia. The event reaches a largely U.S. and Canadian audience with a slice of bidder activity from other areas of the world. Website tracking for the promotional site (KidsFirstAuction.com) included visitors from Japan, Russia, Germany and the United Kingdom.



## MORE LOYAL THAN A ST. BERNARD

**The Kids First Fund** salutes the folks at Swiss International Air Lines for their consistent commitment and dedication in assisting our organization. A special thanks to Linda McCready of SWISS who has been instrumental over the years in ensuring that our relief efforts reached the corner of the world in need.

The St. Bernard is described by breeders as a gentle, friendly and loyal dog that adores children. While the folks at SWISS might find the comparison amusing, the Kids First Fund believes the personality of the airline shares the breed's characteristics — friendly, loyal and adoring of children.

About Swiss International Air Lines: SWISS is the award-winning national carrier of Switzerland serving 71 worldwide destinations from its home hub in Zurich, and from Basel and Geneva international airports. From North America, there is convenient service to Switzerland from Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Montreal, Newark and New York. SWISS is part of the Lufthansa Group, and a member of the global Star Alliance. Dedicated to providing quality in every detail, personal care and hospitality, the SWISS commitment is to make passengers feel at home. Pure quality. Undivided attention and a relaxing environment across all classes of impeccable service — only onboard Swiss International Air Lines. Only Swiss-made. For more information, call SWISS at 1-877-359-7947 or click onto [www.swiss.com](http://www.swiss.com).



Images courtesy of Swiss International Air Lines.

## A GOOGOL OF THANKS TO GOOGLE

**According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary**, “googol” is a phrase coined by Milton Sirota, the nine-year-old nephew of mathematician Edward Kasner. The mathematician asked his nephew what he thought a number with 100 zeros should be called. Such a number, Milton replied, could only be called something as silly as a “googol.”

This huge number could also be used to express the quantity of thanks the Kids First Fund wishes to give to Google because of the company’s generosity.

The Kids First Fund receives free AdWords support from the Google Grants program. This non-profit arm of Google has awarded AdWords advertising to hundreds of non-profit groups whose missions range from animal welfare to literacy, from supporting homeless children to promoting HIV education. The Kids First Fund uses its award of free AdWords advertising on Google.com to raise awareness and increase website traffic.



Advertising for the Kids First Fund appears on the screen when a Google.com user enters specific search words. Google.com users from all over the world from Austria to Zimbabwe will see a message from the Kids First Fund when they enter search words such as “child abuse charity”, “prevent child abuse”, and “Latvia charity.” The advertising message includes a headline such as “The Kids First Fund – Learn how you can help needy kids” and a link to the charity’s website.

Google AdWords really works. During a recent month, more than 500 Google.com users clicked on the link and visited KidsFirstFund.org. During February 2008, the top 5 countries from where searches originated were: United Kingdom, United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand (in order of total visits). According to website monitoring software, over 95% of these clicks represented first-time visitors to the website. Google.com referrals generated nearly 90% of total website visitors during the one-month period. AdWords will also help generate exposure for the 2008 International Online Travel Auction for Kids. Visitors may also donate through Google’s new Checkout service. Google is generously absorbing all credit card and processing fees for this service through 2008.



Thank you Google — a googol times — for helping creating worldwide exposure for the Kids First Fund.

“It is not the style  
of clothes one wears,  
neither the kind of  
automobile one drives,  
nor the amount of  
money one has in the  
bank, that counts.  
These mean nothing.  
It is simply service that  
measures success.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

“How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

## THE KIDS FIRST FUND REPRESENTATIVES

### Your Board of Directors and Officers

Bob Bahlman, Treasurer (Neenah, Wisconsin)  
Stuart Benzal, Director (Richmond, Virginia)  
John DeGregorio, Director (St. Louis, Missouri)  
Judge Michael Dwyer, Director (Shorewood, Wisconsin)  
Rogers Grigulis, Director (Riga, Latvia)  
Jason Handal, Vice President (Mequon, Wisconsin)  
Arturs Irbe, Director (Riga, Latvia)  
Irma Kalnina, Director (Riga, Latvia)  
Jeff Patrias, Director (Eagan, Minnesota)  
Sharon Polk, Director (Lenexa, Kansas)  
Jay Sorensen, President (Shorewood, Wisconsin)

### United Nations Representatives

Jay Sorensen and Stuart Benzal are designated representatives to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Rogers Grigulis and Irma Kalnina are the designated representatives to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva and Vienna.

### Special Thanks

This annual report is courtesy of the services contributed by Amy Thomas, who operates field|works, a graphic design firm in Shorewood, Wisconsin.

Hosting and updating of the KidsFirstFund.org website is donated by Matthew Frederick, who operates DigitalPerceptions.com, an interactive web media development firm in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



## ABOUT THE KIDS FIRST FUND

**The Kids First Fund helps abused and abandoned children.** We protect children from abuse. We empower young adults with a positive future. We strengthen families. We build awareness of child abuse. We operate in countries where resources are very limited. Current projects provide support for children in the democratic republic of Latvia located on the Baltic Sea. The Kids First Fund supports programs to educate child welfare professionals such as police officers, judges, social workers and prosecutors on child abuse issues. Direct assistance is also provided to centers providing care for abused children. The Kids First Fund is a very efficient non-profit organization and does not incur any expenses since all staffing and services are donated. The organization has been granted special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

*Learn more and donate online at:*

**[KidsFirstFund.org](http://KidsFirstFund.org)**

The Kids First Fund accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover at its website. Personal checks may also be mailed to the address below. Donors may also visit the website to learn about the tax benefits of stock contributions by U.S. taxpayers. The Kids First Fund always sends a letter to donors to confirm contributions.

*Write to us at:*

The Kids First Fund  
1916 E. Kensington Blvd.  
Shorewood, WI 53211, USA

*Telephone:*

414/961-1939

