

imagine Render



Empty Bowls
a project of
The Imagine/Render Group



P.O. Box 1689
Burnsville, NC
28714

e.mail:
imageren@yahoo.com

Welcome to The Empty Bowls Project, an international effort to fight hunger. Included in this packet are some suggestions for implementing the project in a variety of settings. These suggestions are intended to give you enough information to start your own project. We hope that after reading them you will be inspired to shape the project into the form that best suits your particular situation.

The basic idea for The Empty Bowls Project is simple. Participants create ceramic bowls, then serve a simple meal of soup and bread. Guests choose a bowl to use that day and to keep as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. In exchange for the meal and the bowl, the guest gives a suggested minimum donation of ten dollars. The meal's sponsors and/or guests choose a hunger-fighting organization to receive the money collected. Any organization fighting hunger qualifies. Please consider making a donation from your proceeds to The Imagine/Render Group to help us continue to administer this project. Our expenses are considerable as you might expect. Fill out the enclosed Empty Bowls Participant Response Form and return it to us so we may maintain an archive of Empty Bowls events.

It is our intent that the Empty Bowls project maintain a high level of integrity; that it is a project of inclusion; that it cut across social, political, racial, religious, age and any other perceived boundaries; and that it provides you with a

The Imagine Render Group,
A 501c3 non-profit
organization, strives to
create positive and lasting
social change through
the arts, education and
projects that
build community.

powerful tool that allows you to join with many others in working towards a common goal--ending hunger. Since The Empty Bowls Project is designed as an advocacy and educational project to raise both money and awareness in the fight against hunger, please include an educational component in your event. You could share hunger statistics, discuss the impact of welfare reform on your community, learn about the number of families relying upon emergency food programs in your area, etc. If you choose a local organization to receive the proceeds from your event, the director of that organization might be willing to speak at your event to explain how the funds will be utilized to work for food security in your area.

By choosing to utilize this copyrighted project you agree to maintain its name, intent and integrity. We endorse the use of the trademarked name and logo, The Empty Bowls Project or Empty Bowls, only under these conditions. Include our organization's name and address in your promotional materials so others may contact us and become involved in this project.

The main objectives of this project are:

Raise as much money as possible to feed the world's hungry people.

Increase awareness of hunger, food security and related issues. Through education, awareness and actions, concerned individuals can bring about an attitude that will not allow hunger to exist.

Advocate for Arts Education. Nurturing the creative process through the arts enhances the possibility of finding new solutions to old problems.

Provide a powerful service learning project for students of all ages.

We have attempted to include enough materials in this packet to make it very simple to be involved in The Empty Bowls Project. You will find:

Suggestions for implementation

Service learning information

A Hunger Resource List

A short story called "Serving the Soup"

An order form for Empty Bowls t-shirts

The Empty Bowls Participant Response Form
A small piece of the original Empty Bowls clay
A logo stamp

Review the suggestions and design your own event. Read the information about service learning and see how students of all ages, utilizing any part of the curriculum, can be involved. Send for information from the Hunger Resource List. Read the wonderful story that our friend and mentor Paulus Berensohn wrote entitled "Serving the Soup" and get a feel for the rewards of building community. Order a lot of t-shirts (the proceeds help us fund this project). Use the invitation blank to create an invitation like the "cut-out" in the packet that has the great story about learning to feed one another. Fill out and return the Empty Bowls Participant Response Form and help us keep track of the growth of this project. Crush and sprinkle the clay from the original Empty Bowls event into your clay body and continue the connection between bowls made worldwide to fight hunger. Stamp your wet clay bowls with the logo to identify them as Empty Bowls.

Empty Bowls began as a pilot project in the fall of 1990. We imagined that it would be a one-time event. The power and success of that first luncheon convinced us that it needed to live on. Then we imagined the project being completed by World Food Day, October 16, 1991. World Food Day is an annual commemoration of the founding of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1945. We chose World Food Day because it is a day dedicated to education, advocacy and action on food and hunger issues locally, nationally and internationally. As Participant Response Forms began to come in, it became obvious that people intended to continue to use The Empty Bowls Project beyond World Food Day as they explained what they planned to do at their next annual event. Due to the tremendous success of these events and the work of literally thousands of participants, Empty Bowls events now occur throughout the year raising millions of dollars to fight hunger. Tens of thousands of people, perhaps many more, have been impacted. And it grows each day. We continue to be amazed at the success of this endeavor. A remarkable collective genius has been created by the people involved. We are pleased that The Empty Bowls Project remains a powerful tool for bringing about positive social change. As effective as The Empty Bowls Project is, however, it can not replace the responsibility of our state and federal governments. We must all work to elect leaders dedicated to bringing about the end of hunger.

We hope you will join the effort to make the ending of hunger a priority within our communities and our world. Be sure to let us know what you are doing by filling out the form included in this packet (or write us a letter if you prefer) so that we may keep track of how much money is raised. We look forward to any anecdotes, newspaper clippings, video tapes, etc. pertaining to your involvement in The Empty Bowls Project.

You may visit our web site at www.Emptybowls.net

Some final thoughts:

The Empty Bowls Project has proven to be a remarkable tool for advocacy and fundraising. It has engaged tens of thousands of people across the United States and beyond. Numerous groups now hold annual events raising tens of thousands of dollars each year. The project continues to grow every day. Much good has been accomplished. We have so very much to celebrate. Yet there is much to do. It is clear that this one tool, as powerful as it can be, will not end hunger. The world's largest canned food drive will not end hunger. All the emergency food providers now working very hard every day to feed those in need can not end hunger. David Wagner, professor of social work and sociology at the University of Southern Maine, reports in his book What's Love Got to Do With It? A Critical Look at American Charity, "The United States has the sharpest rate of income inequality in the Western world, the sparsest public social-welfare system in the industrialized world, a poverty rate among the highest in the Western world..." Wagner goes on to express frustration by saying "A core of nice people and a rhetoric of kindhearted feelings cannot replace a more intelligent and generous social policy."

Continue to be "nice people." Continue to have "kindhearted feelings" as you work to bring about change. Nice people with kindhearted feelings are making the world a much better place. At the same time, be aware of what makes up our social policy. Welfare reform, food stamps eligibility requirements, minimum wage laws, access to transportation and affordable daycare and educational programs, are all part of the mix. Learn about laws and policies that impact hunger, food security and poverty. Make informed decisions. There are no easy solutions. But each of us can play a vital role by doing whatever it is we are moved to do. Be moved.

The Empty Bowls Project--Suggestions for Implementation

Schools

The potential impact of this project in schools is unlimited. Imagine millions of students nationwide learning about the persistence of hunger in this country of wealth. And of the persistence of hunger worldwide. Imagine the results of thousands of student-organized Empty Bowls meals. Please consider the following list of possibilities to be just a few of the many ways you and your students may participate:

Ask the school board to make a commitment towards alleviating hunger. Suggest the creation of a "Hunger Awareness Week" in your school or in your district.

Have your Ceramics students, Student Council, Key Club, National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, language clubs, etc. organize Empty Bowls meals for the staff, for other students, parents, the local City Council or the whole community. The first staff meal at Lahser High School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, raised six hundred dollars in one lunch period. It was the success and support of that day that encouraged us to make this an international endeavor.

Allow the students to work at a local soup kitchen or deliver meals to "shut-in" senior citizens.

Plant gardens at your school, even a tiny one in a barrel, to grow food for Empty Bowls meals or to donate to a soup kitchen.

Create a meal that demonstrates the distribution of food on this planet. See Hunger Resource List under OXFAM heading.

Plan multi-age projects where college students help high school students create bowls, high school students help middle school students, etc.

Plan a "bowl-a-thon" where students create bowls on a Saturday morning. Include students from all grade levels. Have students teach their parents how to make bowls. Call the media.

Have a meal for your staff, school board members and district administrators to emphasize hunger awareness. Ask your local education association to support the project.

Ask your state educational organization to host Empty Bowls meals. The Art Education Associations in California, Connecticut,

Kentucky, Michigan and New Jersey have all held Empty Bowls meals at their conferences.

Leave Empty Bowls on the counter for a week or longer to gather pennies for a hunger-fighting organization.

One bank participated in Empty Bowls by purchasing clay for students in a local school to use for making bowls. Perhaps you can establish a school/business partnership.

K-12 schools, colleges and universities could combine Ceramics and Culinary Arts programs to create Empty Bowls meals.

Invite speakers to talk with faculty, staff and students about hunger. Perhaps the speaker could be from the hunger organization that will benefit from your Empty Bowls meal.

Contact your local chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility and ask them to be involved.

Use this opportunity to work within existing Service Learning programs. Create new ones within your district, or even at the state level.

SERVICE LEARNING

Community Service Learning is an instructional methodology which provides students with an opportunity to learn through active participation in organized service experiences integrated into the curriculum. Students gain a sense of responsibility, an awareness of their individual role as part of the whole community, a concern and care for others and an understanding of the meaning of citizenship and service and of the value of community involvement. Learning is taken out of the abstract and connected to real life experiences, giving students an added sense of meaning and purpose.

The Community Service Learning Center, Springfield, MA

We are a nation founded upon active citizenship and participation in community life. We have always believed that individuals can and should serve. It is crucial that service toward the common good be combined with reflective learning to assure that service programs of high quality can be created and sustained over time, and to help individuals appreciate how service can be a significant and ongoing part of life. Service, combined with learning, adds value to each and transforms both. Those who serve and those who are served are thus able to develop

the informed judgment, imagination, and skills that lead to a greater capacity to contribute to the common good.

The National Society for Internships and Experiential Education

SERVICE LEARNING--SAMPLE LESSONS

The whole school and community can be involved. At Upland Hills School in Oxford, Michigan, that is the case. Students (K-8) and staff plan their activities around World Food Day in October. The first step is to plant vegetables for soup in the school and home gardens. Everyone helps make and/or decorate bowls. In woodworking class students carve wooden serving spoons. Children make invitations to the Empty Bowls meal. Students pick, clean and chop vegetables and make "Stone Soup". The youngest children perform the play "Stone Soup" in the afternoon for the school. "The Hunger Song," written by Upland Hills staff member Ted Strunck, is performed. Everyone helps bake bread. At the Empty Bowls meal the school director demonstrates the use of a three foot spoon (see story on cut-out). It is a powerful, moving experience. The money raised is donated to the county food bank. The director of the local food bank is invited to share how the money raised will be used to help alleviate hunger in their area. Similar scenarios have been repeated in hundreds of schools throughout the country.

The following lesson plan was developed by Anne Campbell and David Barrett for The Empty Bowls Project in the Bloomfield Hills Schools, Bloomfield Hills, MI. It is based on "A Guide for Creating a Community Service Learning Unit" published by Community Service Learning Center, Inc. This was originally created for KIDS CAN, a collaborative project between The Imagine/Render Group and The Food Bank of Oakland County developed to involving students creatively in working towards bringing an end to hunger.

(Note: Involve students in planning the projects.)

- I. Identify the need and your theme
Hunger
- II. Define your goals
 - A. Increase awareness of hunger
 1. around the world
 2. within our own community
 - B. Integrate Art Education with other academic areas in the curriculum
 - C. Earn community service credit
- III. Determine learning objectives
 - A. Determine resources
 1. community

- 2. individual
- B. Explore alternatives for alleviating hunger
- C. Engage in a positive pursuit within our community
- IV. Build an interdisciplinary unit by connecting the theme to core curriculum areas
 - A. Social Studies
 - 1. social/political--reasons hunger exists
 - 2. cultural/economic consequences of hunger
 - B. Language Arts
 - 1. Reading--research
 - 2. Writing--journals, newsletter publicity
 - 3. Speaking--discussions of findings, feeling, insights
 - 4. Listening--invited speakers, each other
 - C. Geography
 - 1. world-wide location of hunger prevalence
 - 2. community locations of hunger prevalence
 - D. Visual Art
 - 1. clay--bowls for an Empty Bowls meal
 - 2. 2-D--design posters, invitations, etc.
 - 3. video/photography--documentation of speakers, service projects, etc.
 - E. Math
 - 1. collecting and interpreting data
 - 2. charting and graphing
 - a. hunger statistics
 - b. money raised from Empty Bowls
 - c. pennies collected
 - F. Science
 - 1. What constitutes a balanced diet
 - 2. What are physiological effects of insufficient nourishment
 - 3. Research technological innovations for food production
- V. Include problem solving, observation, active learning and service experiences
 - A. Collect pennies in Empty Bowls
 - B. School food drive
 - C. Create Bowls and sponsor Empty Bowls meal
 - D. Volunteer to aid local food providers
 - E. Write impressions/experiences
 - 1. Journals
 - 2. Newsletter
 - F. Create bulletin boards and display cases
 - G. Share knowledge with other students
 - 1. play
 - 2. song
 - 3. poetry
 - 4. posters
 - H. Write letters to the editors of local newspapers
- VI. Anticipated student outcomes
 - A. Journals

- B. Newsletter articles
 - C. Songs
 - D. Visual Displays
 - E. Bowls
 - F. Video documentation
 - G. Performances
- VII. Build in reflection component

CONCERNED INDIVIDUALS

Have an Empty Bowls meal for your friends, neighbors or professional associates. Invite a community leader to speak.

As a parent or community member, contact your local school district and/or your child's school. Share The Empty Bowls Project with them and ask that they become involved.

Offer to work with the school in setting up an Empty Bowls meal or arrange for students to make bowls to be used for community sponsored meals.

Contact your place of worship and share The Empty Bowls Project. If you are not a potter perhaps someone within your religious community is.

Contact the media, your Senators, City Council members, school board etc. The Empty Bowls Project is a terrific way to involve diverse communities in common work.

Organize a community "bowl-a-thon" involving local potters, schools and community members to create bowls that you can use for Empty Bowls meals.

Contact your State Potters' Association or state Art Education Association and request that they be involved in some capacity. You might ask that some of the members schedule a workshop to help you and other members of the community create bowls to use in the project.

Contact your local restaurants. Ask if they might hold an Empty Bowls meal during a slow time or as a special event. (see also Restaurant page)

Most of us belong to at least one professional organization. Bring up the idea for The Empty Bowls Project at your next meeting.

Vote for those candidates who are demonstrating an interest in and willingness to work for social justice.

Expand your garden by 1/10th or 1/2. Donate the extra produce to your local emergency food provider.

Volunteer your time at an agency dealing with hunger.

Be creative. Utilize your gifts and vision to create your own solutions.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Many religious organizations have existing programs to feed hungry people. Offer to use Empty Bowls to raise money for these programs.

Encourage your Rabbi, Minister, Priest, etc. to reaffirm the organization's commitment to ending hunger.

If there is an existing newsletter, use it to spread the word and statistics about hunger. You may also wish to publicize agencies where people can volunteer time and/or donate money locally.

Work with the youth groups or school programs to create bowls and sponsor Empty Bowls meals.

Perhaps Jewish organizations could utilize a covered ceramic piece or an Empty Bowl for Tzedaka with donations going towards feeding those in need.

Encourage your organizations' leaders to take Empty Bowls information with them whenever they attend conferences.

RESTAURANTS

Create a special event for one day with your local restaurant and have an Empty Bowls meal during a slow time or evening they are usually closed.

Perhaps you have several local chefs who have favorite soup recipes. Get them together and have a soup tasting event for Empty Bowls.

Find out if there is an association of restaurateurs in your state and approach them with The Empty Bowls Project.

Ask about adding a special soup to the menu of your favorite restaurant with all sales or a percentage of sales from that soup going toward Empty Bowls.

Encourage restaurant owners to participate in the 7% Solution, a project sponsored by the World Food Day Committee. (See Resource List).

Participating restaurants donate 7% of the proceeds from food sales on or near World Food Day, October 16.

POTTERS/POTTERS' ORGANIZATIONS

Host an Empty Bowls meal using your own ceramic bowls.

Make bowls to give to others for their meals.

Make serving dishes, pitchers, mugs, etc. for your local soup kitchen. Everyone should have beautiful dishes to eat from.

Work with students from your local school or religious organization to create bowls.

Donate a piece of your work for a local auction to raise money for hunger relief. Organize the auction.

Donate the proceeds from the sale of one piece to hunger relief. A group of potters could hold a group firing and designate a kiln load for a special fund raiser. One potters' guild reported that the sales at their annual holiday sale doubled because of the publicity that their first Empty Bowls event. That was in 1993. They are still at it.

Numerous potters' organizations hold Empty Bowls booths at art fairs. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been raised in this manner. Thousands of ceramic artists and students have donated bowls.

One potter has suggested that he will, for the rest of his life, warm up at the wheel each day by throwing bowls and dedicating them to Empty Bowls events. You can follow his example.

Hunger Resource List

This is an updated version of a list provided in part by Bread For the World to help you obtain hunger education materials and curriculum. This is only a partial list of the thousands of organizations involved in similar work. It is in no way intended to suggest endorsement of the organizations included.

American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA. 19102. Telephone: 215.241.7000. Web site: www.afsc.org Quaker organization, produces educational resources favoring non-violent solutions.

Bread For the World Institute, 1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 1000, Silver Spring, MD. 20910. Telephone: 301.608.2400. Christian citizens' movement on hunger issues. Institute provides educational resources.

Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education, 261 W. 35th Street, Floor 12A, New York, NY. 10001. Telephone: 212.268.4210.

Catholic Relief Services, 209 Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD. 21201. Telephone: 410.625.2220. Web site: www.catholicrelief.org Provides humanitarian aid internationally and education about development and hunger in third world countries.

Childrens' Defense Fund, 25 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20001. Telephone: 202.628.8787. Web site: www.childrensdefense.org Offering information and materials regarding children and poverty. Working directly on policy of Federal programs dealing with these areas such as the Federal Summer Food Program and the Federal Child Care Food Program. Publications list available.

Christian Childrens' Fund, 203 E. Cary Street, Box 26227, Richmond, VA. 23219. Telephone: 804.644.4654. Offers information and materials regarding children and poverty. Works directly on policy of Federal programs dealing with these issues.

Church World Service, PO Box 968, Elkhart, IN. 46515. National office telephone: 800.297.1516. Web site: www.nccusa.org/cws Provides educational activities and resources, sponsors "CROP" hunger walks. For CWS/CROP office in your area, telephone: 888.297.2767.

Educators for Social Responsibility, 23 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA. 02138. Telephone: 617.492.8820. Facsimile: 617.864.5164. E mail: esrmain@igc.apc.org Web site: www.benjerry.com.esr Offering a wealth of educational resource materials.

Heifer Project International, 1015 Louisiana Street, Little Rock, AR. 77202. Telephone: 501.376.6836. International donor of producing animals and educational resources for U.S. citizens. Regional office telephone: 800.422.0474.

Hunger Project, 15 E. 26th Street, Suite 1401, New York, NY, 10010. Global Office telephone: 212.251.9100. Focusing on public education surrounding hunger and on making the end of hunger a priority on political and economic agendas. Offer videos, hunger education materials and speakers for schools and in-service meetings.

Lutheran World Relief, 390 Park Avenue South, New York, NY, 19916. Telephone: 212.532.6350. Facsimile: 212.213.6081. Web site: www.lwr.org Founded in 1945 by U.S. Lutherans to help refugees after World War II, LWR today works in some fifty countries helping to improve harvests, health, education and participation in community life for all.

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17051-0500. Telephone: 717.859.1151. Through action and education programs expresses concern for peace and justice issues.

National Council of Churches, Office of Global Education, 2115 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 301.727.6106. Supports global education and provides information and resources about interdependence.

Oxfam America, 26 West Street, Boston, MA 02111-1206. Telephone: 617.482.1211. Facsimile: 617.728.2594. Web site: info@oxfamamerica.org Oxfam America supports the self-help efforts of poor and marginalized people--landless peasants, indigenous peoples, women, refugees, and survivors of war and natural disasters--striving to better their lives. Programs include Fast for a World Harvest, Global Village Meals and the Mickey Leland Memorial Hunger Banquets.

Peacenet: Institute for Global Communications, 3228 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. Telephone: 415.561.6100. Computer-based communications system providing news and analysis of peace-related issues.

Presbyterian Hunger Program, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202. Telephone: 502.569.5000. Program for education and advocacy around hunger-related issues with national network.

Religious Action Center of Reformed Judaism, 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202.387.2800. Facsimile: 202.667.9070. Web site: www.rac.org Social justice arm of The Union of American Hebrew Congregations working on many issues including hunger.

Second Harvest, 116 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 4, Chicago, IL. Telephone: 312.263.2303. Facsimile: 312.263.5626. Web site: www.secondharvest.org Second Harvest is the nation's largest domestic charitable hunger-relief organization. The nationwide network of nearly

200 regional food bank warehouses serves all 50 states and Puerto Rico by distributing food and grocery products to nearly 50,000 charitable feeding programs, including local food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, Kids Cafes and other nonprofit agencies. Statistical information available.

Share Our Strength, 1511 K Street, NW, Suite 940, Washington, DC 20005. Telephone: 202.393.2925. Mobilizes industries and individuals to contribute their talents to fight hunger. SOS awards grants to more than 800 organizations in the United States, Canada, and the developing world that work to alleviate hunger now and prevent hunger in the long run. More than 10,000 chefs, restaurateurs, writers, business leaders, and concerned individuals contribute their skills to SOS's creative fund-raising, community outreach, direct service, and public education programs, helping SOS broaden awareness and support for the cause.

United Nation Non-Governmental Liaison Service, Rm FF-346, United Nations, New York, NY 10017. Telephone: 212.963.3125. Facsimile: 212.963.8712. e-mail: ngls@un.org Provides educational materials for religious or community groups on development, the environment, food, etc.

United States National Committee for the World Food Day, 2175 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20437. Telephone: 202.653.2404. Facsimile: 202.653.5760. National Coordinator: Patricia Young. Hunger education curriculum materials and resource lists.

1511 WHY (World Hunger Year), 505 Eighth Avenue, 21st Floor, New York, NY 10018-6582. Telephone: 212.629.8850, 800.5.HUNGRY. Facsimile: 212.465.9274. Web site: www.iglou/why World Hunger Year (WHY) seeks to end hunger and poverty by addressing their root causes and promoting self-reliance., WHY tells the stories of empowerment and community-building and works in partnerships to support effective programs and policies. Hunger materials available.

Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202.452.1999. Research and publications about global environmental issues.

Serving the Soup

by Paulus Berenshon

We shared this project with Paulus Berensohn at his home in Penland, North Carolina before Empty Bowls was really underway. A smile came over his face and he reached across his desk and retrieved a story he had written in preparation for an upcoming teaching engagement. He confessed he was not sure how he was going to utilize it but after talking with us, he felt it might be of some use to us. He read it aloud and with broad smiles (and a tear or two in the corner of our eyes) we accepted this gift.

In the spring of 1987, I received an invitation to be an artist-in-residence for the summer at a well-known crafts school. I declined, but asked if there might be a position available in the school's kitchen. I thought that I would be more comfortable; perhaps make a more easeful relationship with the students, faculty and staff if I came in through the back door, so to speak, rather than to carry the title "artist-in-residence." So I worked in the kitchen.

The food prepared in this kitchen was excellent, fresh, tasty and inventive. The head cook was a cheerful young woman who was an especially inspired soup maker. It was the first thing she attended to when she arrived at 9 a.m. after all signs of breakfast had been cleared away. Some days she made two soups. Just what soup she made was a dialogue between her musings on her long drives to work and what fresh, locally grown soup materials were available that morning in the walk-in refrigerator. My job was to clean and slice the carrots, dice the potatoes and prepare the parsnips.

The kitchen was busy and the cook a little behind time one day early in the summer. It was her custom to fill a dozen or so bowls of soup leaving them on the counter of the open pass way between the kitchen and the dining room for the students to pick up while she went about other tasks. She would keep her eye on the supply of soup bowls and when there was only one bowl left she would fill a dozen more and so on. But she had no time for that on this particular day and asked if I would take over. From that moment on, it became one of my daily tasks, the one I most looked forward to and most enjoyed.

At first, I did as Rosemary had done, filling a group of bowls, waiting until almost all had been collected before filling some more bowls. But soon I began filling the bowls one at a time, when it was taken I'd fill another. Then I began to wait until someone came up to the pass through before I filled the bowl. Eventually it slowed down even more. I would lift a bowl with one hand, ladle the soup with the other, put down the ladle and offer the bowl with both hands to whomever was there waiting for soup. I would look into their face, their eyes, say their name if I knew it or ask, occasionally a few words were exchanged, or a greeting, there was a lot of smiling, but mostly what passed between us as I served the soup was said in silence. Lines began to form, but no one complained about the wait. Rosemary was delighted as more people than ever were eating her soups and the distance between the kitchen and the dining room felt as if it had become smaller, more intimate.

It was a new experience for me, this serving of the soup. At first I was just doing something and then suddenly I was serving, standing there ladling, offering, making contact. Simply serving the soup, a little dance, a little communion. This bowl is for you and this bowl for you.

One journal entry for that time reads: "It looks like I am an artist-in-residence here this summer after all. My art? Serving the soup."

Empty Bowls Response Form

Name _____ Date _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____
Email _____ Website _____

Name of organization _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____
Email _____ Website _____

Description of project _____

How much was raised? _____
Who received donation? _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____
Email _____ Website _____

Please describe donations other than cash _____

Please add your story to the official archives. Send photographs, newspaper articles, publicity materials, posters, etc. and help us make the archives as complete as possible.

You may return this form and any archive materials to:

The Empty Bowls Project
c/o The Imagine Render Group
P.O. Box 1689
Burnsville, NC 28714
Email: imageren@yahoo.com
Website: www.emptybowls.net

The Imagine Render Group is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization striving to create positive and lasting social change through the arts, education and projects that build community.

Believe that we here on earth can learn to feed one another as well.

Our goals are to raise money to help organizations fight hunger, to raise awareness about the issues of hunger and food security and to help bring about an attitude that will not allow hunger to exist.

You can participate by organizing an Empty Bowls event. The basic premise is simple: guests are served soup in a handmade bowl in exchange for a cash donation to fight hunger. They are asked to keep their bowl as a reminder of the meal's purpose. Every time they take the bowl from their cupboard, they will be reminded that someone's bowl is always empty and that on this one occasion they helped to alleviate hunger and could choose to do so again at anytime.

EMPTY BOWLSTM

All money collected will be donated to an organization fighting hunger chosen by the people involved in that particular event. We ask that you return the follow-up form in our packet indicating how much money you raised, the nature of your event and where the money was donated.

Sound simple? It is. Think about it. Ceramic and other craft students creating bowls, home-economics students making soup and bread, potters teaching students to make and glaze bowls, Empty Bowls booths at your local art fair, school service learning projects happening at every level, special gardens producing food for your event. The possibilities are endless.

We invite you to participate. We have an information packet which includes everything you need to get started: suggestions for creating Empty Bowls events in a variety of settings; three or four pages of hunger resource information; a small logo in the shape of a bowl to stamp into your ceramic bowls; the follow-up form; and a tiny piece of clay (to mix into your clay) carrying with it the essence of the original batch of clay that started this grass-roots endeavor to fight hunger in 1990.

From its humble beginnings as a meal for the staff of one high school, Empty Bowls has spread across the United States and beyond and has raised tens of millions of dollars for anti-hunger organizations.

For the information packet, send \$5 to:

The Imagine/Render Group
PO Box 1689
Burnsville, NC 28714
email: ImagineRender@a100.com
Website: www.emptybowls.net

Empty Bowls is a project of The Imagine/Render Group, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to positive and lasting social change through the arts, education and projects that build community.

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by Alan Cohen

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There is a story about a man who left this earth and was taken on a tour of the inner realms. He was shown a room where he saw a large group of hungry people trying to eat dinner, but because the spoons that they were trying to eat with were longer than their arms, they remained frustrated. "This," his guide told him, "is hell." "That's terrible!" exclaimed the man. "Please show me heaven!" "Very well," agreed the guide, and on they went. When they opened heaven's door, the man was perplexed to see what looked very much like the same scene: there was a group of people with spoons longer than their arms. As he looked more closely, however, he saw happy faces and full tum-mies, for there was one important difference: the people in heaven had learned to feed each other.

