

## **Making Ripples**

### **Great Gifts for Peace on Earth**

by Amanda Bancroft

How many slaves work for you? Modern slavery is tricky to spot, and includes anyone forced or threatened to work without pay, including industry workers, domestic help, child laborers, sex workers, and migrant farm laborers, to name a few. You can visit [SlaveryFootprint.org](http://SlaveryFootprint.org) to take an interactive, often humorous survey that determines approximately how many slaves worked to produce the goods you typically purchase. This survey revealed that, despite being semi-conscious of where my purchases are coming from, there are an estimated 40 slaves who worked to produce the goods for my household, including electronics, clothing and food.

In March of this year, BBC News stated that there are roughly 21 million slaves worldwide (although that number is controversial with higher and lower estimates) and includes about 60,000 modern slaves in the United States. There is a strong movement to buy directly from producers around the world, as well as local artisans and businesses. On Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>, Small Business Saturday was a big success! Businesses and restaurants in downtown Fayetteville were packed with shoppers and Lights of the Ozarks revelers.

The new Center Street Mercantile, which opened Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, offers locally made goods of astounding variety, from fuzzy “Bumble” hats (Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer) to brooms shaped like the Nimbus 2000 (Harry Potter), there is something for everyone. There are tasty edible delights, such as whipped flavored honey, jams, and pasta sauce, and items made with food that aren’t edible, like Margaret Dorfman’s vegetable parchment bowls. Dorfman states that she builds these bowls “slice by slice, from over forty varieties of fresh fruit and vegetables that have been cured for several days, then dried, pressed and aged.”

Chad Snodgrass, owner of the Mercantile, opened the business because he was inspired by Beekman products, which come from their farm in New York. “I wanted to support my local community and help others sell their wares to make a living,” he says. He sells products like soy candles and herbal tea bath bags from his farm, Chadden Farms in Savoy, Arkansas.

There is plenty of time and many opportunities to support Funky Fayetteville locals and those in need worldwide this holiday season. Check out Block Street anytime you want organic clothing, handmade greeting cards, locally made baked goods, great books, or items from around the world purchased directly from artisans in Central America and the Himalayan region. Events include the Block St. Holiday Art Sale at The Shirkey House (229 N. Block St.) on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, the Little Craft Show at the Town Center (Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) the Fayetteville Farmer’s Holiday Markets at the Jefferson Center (612 S. College Ave.) Saturday Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, the Creative Community Center’s Holiday Art Bazaar at Nadine Baum Studios across from the Walton Arts Center on Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, and the Alternative Gift Market at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church on Sunday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Let’s all support Peace on Earth by purchasing thoughtfully this season!

*Ripples* is an emerging online educational center inspired by a holistic approach to making a difference. Follow our journey to live sustainably and make ripples with our lifestyle at: [www.RipplesBlog.org](http://www.RipplesBlog.org).