

# Bentonville Resident Raises Over \$75,000 for Charity Selling Handcrafted Cards



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*The Hollands in Ethiopia: Nancy (far right) and Bob (middle back row).*

What started as a simple thank-you card for a friend has turned into a journey of purpose for Bentonville residents Nancy and Bob Holland.

The couple was living in New Jersey 16 years ago when Nancy sent a friend one of her unique, handmade thank-you cards she had been crafting for years. Her friend, impressed by the card, asked her to design the invitations for a charity fundraiser she was hosting.

That small favor sparked a long-term commitment to a cause half a world away: supporting orphaned and impoverished families near Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Following the fundraiser for the [Medhen Orphan Relief Effort \(M.O.R.E.\)](#) — a small U.S.-based nonprofit that supports vital programs in Ethiopia — Nancy joined her friend on the board.

Since then, Nancy has raised over \$75,000 for M.O.R.E. by selling her handcrafted cards. Now living in Bentonville, she spends most afternoons creating the cards, which she sells at fundraisers, home shows, popups at [Blue Moon Bentonville](#) and [on Etsy](#).

The Hollands personally cover the cost of all materials, ensuring that 100% of every sale goes directly to the children and families who need it most. The banner on her [Etsy](#) page reads “Changing Lives...One Card at a Time.”

“Collectively, it has added up beyond my wildest dreams when I first started doing this. I never dreamed I would be at this point,” Nancy said. “My goal is to hit \$100,000.”



## The Work of M.O.R.E.

Nancy and Bob have now visited Ethiopia six times. They said it was eye-opening to witness firsthand how poverty-stricken the community is in that region of the world.

M.O.R.E. provides crucial funding to the locally run Medhen Social Center, which offers education, food, healthcare, counseling, vocational training and other essential services.

“We have seen how critical the need is, and we have seen the impact M.O.R.E. has made,” Nancy said.

M.O.R.E. has raised over \$3 million since its inception in 2007. The nonprofit is run solely by volunteers, with no paid administrative staff, ensuring most of its funding goes directly to those in need.

The Medhen Social Center is run by Sister Senkenesh, who began her work helping families affected by leprosy in the 1980s. At the time, she worked to create a foster care system, placing orphaned children with caregivers.

“With the early medicine that the lepers were taking, they became sterile and they couldn't have kids of their own,” Bob explained. “Loving families that wanted to have kids, she'd match them up with these orphan children and pay the family a stipend for care and food. That's how this all started.”

In the 2000s, the community was struck by the AIDS epidemic, Bob said, and many children were losing parents to the disease. Through the years, the number of families supported by Sister Senkenesh's work has steadily increased, and continues due to civil war in the country. Now her program also helps children and families cope with the lasting trauma caused by the conflict.

"She's always evolving her program, she's always looking down the road to what's next," Bob said. "What's the next step for these kids? What do they need, culturally or emotionally?"

The Hollands have plans to go back to Ethiopia in the future, and in the meantime, Nancy will continue to spend her afternoons making cards to sell.

"The benefits and the improvements that we've seen over the years ... is amazing," Bob said. "A generation of children have gone through the program since we started with M.O.R.E., and to see what they've accomplished, and see what they brought back to the community and give back to the community, is absolutely amazing."

