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Please see attached photos

Contact: Bill Rankin
President, GAIA
415.461.7196
wrankin@thegaia.org



Contact: Amy Rankin-Williams
Development Director, GAIA
415.461.7196
amyrw@thegaia.org

**GARDEN PARTY FOR GAIA: CELEBRATED AUTHOR SPEAKS AT
BENEFIT FOR GLOBAL AIDS INTERFAITH ALLIANCE
340 GUESTS ATTEND; OVER \$400,000 RAISED**

Author Anne Lamott presents and Columnist Jon Carroll emcees the auction

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (June 2, 2008) -- Linda and Jon Gruber hosted the "Garden party for GAIA" on Sunday, April 27, 2008 to raise funds for the Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance's (GAIA) programs in Malawi, Africa.

Author Anne Lamott read from her book Traveling Mercies and *SF Chronicle* columnist Jon Carroll emceed a live auction to support GAIA's services for children, women, and men affected by AIDS in one of the world's poorest countries. Nobel Peace Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu was Honorary Chair; California's First Lady Maria Shriver was Honorary Co-Chair.

The gardens of Linda and Jon Gruber's Ross home easily accommodated the 340 guests who enjoyed presentations by Anne Lamott, Malawian staffer Gertrude Chipungu, and GAIA President & CEO The Rev. Dr. William Rankin. Festivities

included live music by the Nigerian Brothers and delicious food and wine provided by Paradise Foods Market.

The event's proceeds support GAIA's "Village by Village" Initiative to feed, clothe, and educate AIDS orphans, provide HIV prevention education to young people and care to AIDS patients, and develop economic opportunities for women to help villages become self-sustaining.

"I know a lot of us feel a lot of hopelessness and powerlessness" said Lamott about the AIDS pandemic. "GAIA is one place where there are small daily miracles... That is what Bill and GAIA are doing -- taking the breath and spirit of caring attention to people who were scared to death, and now have hope."

About the Presenters and Sponsors

Anne Lamott is the best-selling author of *Bird by Bird*, *Operating Instructions*, *Traveling Mercies* and more, and is known for her deep yet hilarious commentaries on life. Jon Carroll has been a widely read and greatly admired columnist of the *San Francisco Chronicle* since 1982.

Gertrude Chipungu joined GAIA as our Central Region Programs Manager in 2005. She is a registered nurse and midwife in Malawi whose studies focused on sexuality, gender and human rights. Gertrude earned her B.A. from Catholic University of Western Africa, Kenya and an M.A. in Gender Analysis and Development from the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom.

The Rev. Dr. Bill Rankin holds many honors for his work as a priest, dean and activist. He founded GAIA in 2000 with internationally renowned neurosurgeon Dr. Charles Wilson, to address AIDS in Malawi, an epicenter of the pandemic. He has ensured that GAIA's supporters and beneficiaries include Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and adherents to traditional African religions.

Since the end of apartheid, **Archbishop Tutu** has been a leader in battling the AIDS pandemic in Africa and an outspoken advocate for HIV prevention and treatment. He has served as honorary chair of GAIA events over the last three years. With a long career in journalism, Maria Shriver has served as a reporter, correspondent, and anchor and authored five books. Her husband, Arnold Schwarzenegger, is governor of California.

About GAIA

The Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance, a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, was founded in 2000 in response to the global HIV/AIDS catastrophe. Driven by the desire to stop this devastating disease, William Rankin, GAIA's president and chief executive officer, and Charles Wilson, GAIA's former board chair

and Professor of Neurosurgery, Emeritus, UCSF, focused on using the religious networks in Africa to prevent the spread of the disease in developing countries. GAIA currently works in Malawi villages, rural hospitals, and nursing schools to prevent the spread of AIDS through education, empowerment to women and families, voluntary testing for HIV, clothing, food, school supplies, and care to orphans and the dangerously ill. In addition to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Elizabeth Taylor HIV/AIDS Foundation, the organization is supported by more than 30 U.S. religious congregations and numerous individual donors. For more information or to learn how you can help, please visit www.thegaia.org.

In Malawi...

\$21 feeds and clothes and orphan for one year

\$100 pays for yearly secondary school fees for an orphaned child

\$500 buys enough food and medicine for 60 orphans for five months

\$1,000 buys five bicycle ambulances for transporting patients

\$5,000 supports a project providing food, life skills training, and care to 270 people living with HIV/AIDS for a year