

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **“THE BIG MOO CANOE” COMPLETES 250 MILE CHALLENGE TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR CHARITY**

*Ultra-Marathon Canoeing Event Raises Record Amount to Benefit Heifer International*

**Fort Collins, Colo. (June 19, 2008)**- This past weekend June 13-15, 2008, Fort Collins resident Rob Bean, along with his support team, completed the “Big Moo Canoe Challenge” by paddling 250 miles along the North Platte River near Saratoga, Wyoming. The effort was complete after Bean paddled 33 hours in his Spencer Extreme race canoe over three long days. The effort has also set a Heifer International team fundraising record by receiving over \$7,200 in donations – more than \$2,000 over their initial goal.

“It has been great to see how the communities of Fort Collins, CO, Saratoga, WY and beyond have come together to support this great charity event. We received over 100 individual donations from 15 states, in addition to 12 corporate event sponsors. There was a great mix of involvement from individuals and church groups, to businesses and friends who sent donations and words of encouragement in support of this effort. Both of my children – Megan and Lucas - got involved with the project this spring raising over \$400 to buy goats and bees for Heifer. They ran a lemonade stand and gave two solo presentations at area churches to raise awareness for the Heifer and The Big Moo Canoe. My wife Tracey has also been an instrumental supporter, for the last six months, as I trained and prepared for the event.”

Not surprising, the challenge wasn’t completed without some pain and perseverance. The first of the three day event turned out to be the hardest. Rob faced sustained 35 MPH winds and gust to 55 MPH in the canyons for the entire day. The first day had been scheduled to be the longest of the weekend, Rob hoped to paddle over 100 miles, however that changed almost immediately.

“This challenge turned out to be one of the hardest things I have ever done. Though I’ve done a lot of long distance paddling in the past, the reality of paddling 250 miles set in after that first long day in the wind. I pushed off from Treasure Island around 5:00 AM on Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> and on the second bend it was like someone flipped a switch on for the wind, and it just never quit. Thankfully the weather was clear and sunny and the river assisted with fairly heavy spring runoff.”

The following two days of paddling went much better for Rob and the team with little-to-no wind and dropping river levels. They varied the course from day-to-day to keep the paddling interesting and set a new goal to complete an even 85 miles per day. This allowed Rob to not worry about paddling at night and provided a few hours to eat rest and soak in Saratoga’s famous Hobo Hot Spring. Rob also enjoyed “on river” conversations with other paddlers and fly fisherman who had heard about the event coming to Saratoga. Rob credits much of the project success to his team co-captains, Chris and Dawn Betz of Berthoud, CO.

“Their support and encouragement made it possible to get back in the boat on Saturday and get the challenge back on track. I could have never done it without them.”

In reflection Rob feels The Big Moo Canoe been a huge success for Heifer International. He knows the effort has helped to bring awareness to their mission in communities nationwide. There have already been numerous offers to help bring it back in some form next year.

“In the beginning this event was always about mixing my passion for canoeing with our families desire to help Heifer. In the end it has become so much more and it has been very encouraging to watch my children take personal ownership and help someone they don’t even know. I think we have planted a lot of “hopeful” seeds with this effort and I would love to see this event happen in

some form again. I want to thank everyone involved for their love and support, it has been a blast.”

Since 1944, Heifer International has helped 8.5 million families in more than 128 countries move towards greater self-reliance through the gift of livestock and training in environmentally sound agriculture. The impact of each initial gift is multiplied as recipients agree to "pass on the gift" by giving one or more of their animal's offspring to another in need.

We are still seeking donations until the end of July, and there are a number of ways people can still support The Big Moo Canoe. By visiting [www.moocanoe.com](http://www.moocanoe.com), people can donate money directly to Heifer International through the event's secure web site. The Big Moo Canoe is completely self-funded and all tax-deductible donations are sent directly to Heifer International.

Current corporate sponsors include [Advanced Media Services](#), [Burns Marketing Communications](#), [Eheart Interior Solutions](#), [First United Methodist Church](#) in Fort Collins, [FUSEBOX Studio](#), [Jeff Williams of RE/MAX Alliance](#), LBN Insurance, [Montage Graphics](#), [PB Tech](#), [Platte Valley Lutheran Church](#) in Saratoga and [Zaveral Racing Equipment](#).

**For more information about the “The Big Moo Canoe”**

Contact Rob Been at the following numbers. Cell: (970) 214-3414, Work: (970) 776-1780 or Home (970) 266-0252 – via e-mail at [robb@burnsmarketing.com](mailto:robb@burnsmarketing.com), or by visiting [www.moocanoe.com](http://www.moocanoe.com).

**About The Big Moo Canoe**

Fort Collins, Colo., resident Rob Bean started “The Big Moo Canoe for Heifer International” as a way to involve his passion for ultra-marathon canoeing and his favorite charity, Heifer International. In an effort to raise awareness for the organization, as well as a minimum of \$5,000, Bean paddled his canoe for 250 miles on the North Platte River near Saratoga, Wyo., from June 13 to 15, 2008. For more post-event information, visit [www.moocanoe.com](http://www.moocanoe.com).

**About Heifer International**

Founded in 1944, Heifer International is a humanitarian assistance organization that works to end world hunger and protect the earth. Through livestock, training and "passing on the gift," Heifer has helped seven million families in more than 125 countries improve their quality of life and move toward greater self-reliance. Heifer helps build strong communities because each project participant agrees to pass on the gift of animal offspring, training, or skills to another family in need. For more information, visit [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org).

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