

# Yuppies Fight Callous Image With "Tap Your Laptop" Day

*by* Con Chapman

BOSTON, Mass. Trip Masefield is a bond trader at an investment bank, the sort of young urban professional or “YUPPIE” usually derided as a self-centered striver, unconcerned with making the world a better place.



*“That kid ‘Trip’—he’s jake with me.”*

“That was certainly me a few years ago,” he says. “I’d come out of the office after having a big day and literally jump over homeless guys on my way to Crickets,” a popular Quincy Market watering hole among Boston-area singles.



### *Quincy Market*

But a freak accident changed all that. “I was at my desk one day and stood up to yell when I made a big sale, and I knocked my laptop over,” he says. “Four years' worth of muffin and donut crumbs that had fallen into my keyboard shook loose on my desk—it got me thinking about those less fortunate than me.”

So Masefield started “Tap Your Laptop Day,” an event that is spreading as twenty-something professionals heed the call to fight hunger by donating the debris of meals eaten at their desks. “All it takes is to turn your laptop or desktop keyboard over once a week, give it a little tap, and you'll probably knock out several ounces of good, if slightly stale food,” he says. Donors scoop the crumbs into prepaid envelopes and mail them to his home address, where he rolls them in grease drippings from hamburgers to make pocket-sized snacks that resemble the suet logs that parakeet owners hang in their pets' cages. “Maybe you or I wouldn't eat the stuff,” he says, “but somebody who's hungry would really chow down on it.”



Relief workers in drought-plagued areas of Africa, where the tasty, homemade products are distributed, agree. "People in Djibouti find that the Laptop Energy Bar is a vital supplement to their daily diet," said Elena Marascovitch of the World Health Organization. "Every now and then we'll find a fingernail in one of them, which the women use to make jewelry."

### *Pappagallo*

Masefield's efforts to relieve world hunger have inspired some of his office mates to start charities of their own. Marilyn Reath, a statuesque hedge fund manager, organized a "Pappagallos for the Poor" campaign that collected over a thousand pairs of summer pumps and espadrilles, which she will be distribute this winter to single mothers who head low-income families. "There is nothing to brighten a dark winter day like a colorful pair of 'fun' shoes," Reath says.



### *"I'll take the pink foulard!"*

At the next desk over from hers, Tyler Hanson says he's organizing a "Hermes for Haiti" benefit that will encourage his co-workers to donate their slightly soiled power ties to be shipped to that poor Caribbean nation. "I read in *The New Yorker* that Haitian politicians give 'burning ties' to their opponents. They tie them up, put tires around their necks and set them on fire. Hermes for Haiti will try to bring peace to that impoverished country by teaching men to live in harmony through mutual compliments of each other's neckwear."



*"He's really stubborn—he says he's going to stick with the pinot."*

Masefield says his involvement in charitable work has given him a new outlook on the downtrodden that he encounters as he makes the rounds of Boston's singles bars. "I try not to be judgmental," he says. "If I've had a big day, I give them five bucks and say 'Go buy yourself a glass of merlot—it's not as subtle as a pinot noir, but it'll stick to your ribs.'"

