



season's greenings

William Norwich learns from three eco-conscious holiday shoppers what to give—while giving back.

"I am not an earthy, crunchy kind of girl at all," Behnaz Sarafpour tells Anna Carter when the two women meet at Behnaz's Chelsea office in New York City. "I design for a luxury consumer, but for spring I was looking for a way to be conscious of environmental issues and have a luxurious lifestyle at the same time." Carter—who in addition to having recently been named a trustee for the Natural Resources Defense Council is married to *Family Fair's* editor in chief, Graydon Carter—kicks off today's holiday shopping by previewing Behnaz's flora-inspired spring collection. It includes coats, jackets, and dresses made of eco-friendly fabrics and dyes. When the designer began sourcing material nearly a year ago, she discovered that high-end organic fashion is not as easy as it sounds. She describes a heroic odyssey that led her to sources around the globe, from mills in Italy to fabric dyers in France, then to Japan, India, Africa, and, finally, home to the United States.

"Did you ever think it would be so difficult to find eco-friendly fabrics?" Carter asks. Sarafpour, in wide jeans, a white shirt she made for Target, and a beige Michael Kors sweater vest given to her by the designer, answers diplomatically. "I think whenever you try to do something new in the fashion industry, it requires a very special effort." Behnaz was motivated by "designers in the contemporary market who have spearheaded some great work with organic material that had not been addressed so much in the luxury market."

Leaving the showroom, ferried in a Toyota Prius operated by Ozocar, a Manhattan service using fuel-efficient hybrids, Carter explains that her interest in Sarafpour's collection is not just personal (to find something wonderful to wear); she is in the early stages of creating a green initiative with the fashion industry on behalf of the NRDC. In some parts of the world, pollution from textile mills can rival the toxicity of the chemical industry; the NRDC's goal is to develop "a list of green rules and standards that extends from sourcing fabrics to manufacturing, to laundering and dry cleaning." According



to the NRDC statistics Carter quotes, it takes more than five ounces of pesticides to produce one traditional cotton T-shirt. Every year, more than a billion pairs of blue jeans are dyed with synthetic indigo and benzene derivatives and then further treated with chemicals like hydrogen cyanide.

With that, the **Ozocar** is directed almost immediately to Kaight, a boutique on Orchard Street on the Lower East Side selling eco-friendly women's and men's fashion—organic blue jeans, including the popular Loomstate label, and lovely, colorful, soft winter scarves made of sustainable spun bamboo. Today Carter is wearing a tailored white wool Prada dress with white leather piping and black Louboutin heels, and carrying an Hermès agenda with her holiday gift list inside a Kotur handbag—a grand uptown look, yes, but within minutes Carter is trying on a white cowl-neck sweater dress made of very ethical cashmere and a pair of white organic-cotton jeans. "Oh, dear," she says, suddenly self-conscious. "I am not supposed to be shopping for me, am I?" Then she finds, among other things, soy candles and an amusing necklace for a friend.

The 20 or so people on Carter's shopping list will receive memberships to the NRDC, books, and antique and vintage items found at flea markets, including her favorite, the Pier Antiques Show in New York. For young children, she'll give sustainable-wood toys from Holgate Toys and Rosie Hippo. Her Christmas tree will be farm-grown, and the house will be decorated with an abundance of little pines in terra-cotta pots from Blue Meadow Flowers, which will be replanted at her house in Connecticut. Even the bubbly she serves, Veuve Clicquot, will be eco-friendly. To deter grape moths, which can ruin champagne-grape crops, in lieu of pesticides, scientists at Moët Hennessey, owners of the label, have opted for a more natural way to sexually confuse the moths and thereby stop them from breeding. One hopes this will not incite a protest by animal-rights activists.

"They wouldn't do that," Carter says, heading home in the **Ozocar**. "Would they?"