

Nepal Education Fund

Issue 3

6201 Lower Chippewa Rd. Duncan, BC V9L 5P6 250-746-0249

October 2006

We Continue to Grow

We are now at the end of our second year in operation and it has been an exciting two years with lots of growth and success. We now have 80 children sponsored with more sponsors waiting to be matched and quite a long list of children on the waiting list.

I spent four months in Kathmandu in the spring of this year. In spite of the political turmoil we managed to visit all the children in their homes, matched new children with sponsors and registered them all in schools.

It was so gratifying to see the improvement not only in the children but in their families also. It seems that a little goes a long way. It gives the family hope which is reflected in the parents. The fact that someone is helping them lifts some of their burden and it shows in their faces. They really appreciate what you are doing for their children.

We had one young boy who was very sick and needed an operation. He had gall bladder disease at the age of 14. His mother was distraught that she could not afford

operation; the father is an alcoholic so the situation was impossible. We were able with the help of the sponsor to arrange a private operation for him and I am happy to report that he is now doing very well. His mother was extremely grateful.

Political Situation in Nepal

While I was in Nepal in the spring the political situation came to a climax. The King of Nepal had dissolved Parliament on February 1st, 2005 and assumed absolute power. His rule during this time was unbending and autocratic. Police and army patrolled the streets and it was not uncommon for someone to get shot. An election was held in February which was a sham with the King selecting who would stand for power. Most of the people were too scared to vote fearing reprisals. This led to huge demonstrations by the populace and the King responded with day long curfews. The people called a general strike which lasted for three weeks bringing the country to its knees. The demonstrations grew to millions of people marching in the streets.

I spent most of my time living at the orphanage. There was no running water and so showering was done at the river where a pipe came out of a wall. I would put my bathing suit on and go to it. This is where we washed our clothes as well. Kamal and his sisters must have thought I was pretty useless at it because they always took the clothes from me and made me sit down while they did the washing. The children's hands and feet are like little washing machines and I was in awe as I watched them pummel the clothes with toes and fingers. They would then carry all the wet clothes home to hang on the roof. I was never allowed to carry anything. I came to love the children very much. They never argued or fought and were always smiling. They were up at 5 am and did their chores before studying for two hours till it was time to leave for school. Another two hours of study took place in the evening. They loved this study and progressed rapidly.



In many cases the police and army opened fire and there was death and injury. Finally the King relented and made a speech in which he agreed to reinstate parliament and bring back the last Prime Minister. The government then stripped the King of any power and even changed the name of the Royal Nepal Army to the Nepal Army. Since last April Nepal has been relatively peaceful but still has the Maoist insurgency to deal with.

Last Spring saw the worst tourist season in twenty years. I have heard that this Fall season is much improved. This is good for the many families we are involved with as many of the fathers work as trekking porters and in related tourist employment.

Return to Nepal

I am returning to Nepal in early January for three months. I will be leaving for London December 9th where I will be spending Christmas with family, attending a fundraising beard growing contest (more on this next time) and then leave for Kathmandu Jan 6th. I will be doing more matching of sponsors and children and visiting all the families again.

The school fees are due again by the end of February for the new school year which begins in March. If you are able to send me your sponsorship fees before I leave for England it would be appreciated. Please note my new address at the top of this newsletter.

Cost for the government school is \$75.00

Cost for private school is \$250.00

If this is not possible it can be sent to:

6718 Beaumont Ave.

Duncan, BC

V9L 5X8

Deadline is February 28th, 2007 . This allows us time to transfer fees to Nepal in time for March registration.

Profile: Uma

When I first met Uma she was 11 years old and had never been to school. I found her a sponsor and we enrol her in government school in class 1 and also got her a tutor for three months. Uma is tall for a Nepali girl and being in class 1 with six years olds proved to be too much for her. Even her siblings were making fun of her and saying she was too old to start school. Part way through the year she dropped out and when I went to visit her in Jan. 06 she was hiding under the bed as she knew I was going to be asking about school. I coaxed her out and found her in ragged clothes and quite withdrawn. What were we going to do to help her? I feared for her future. Kamal, from the orphanage, came to visit her and was worried by her whole appearance. He suggest we bring her to the orphanage to live and give her a chance. Her parents welcomed the idea and Uma moved in last February. Her sponsor wanted to enrol her in private school which we did and within a few weeks she was improving rapidly. By the time I left in May she was already reading and writing. She fitted in easily with the children there and made fast friends with the other girls. At my leaving party she was the first to get up and dance, I was amazed at her transformation.

Fundraising

Fundraising this summer included a very successful garage sale which raised \$2000. This was a huge success and the money is being used to help some of the families where the need is greatest. We plan to do this again next year. Thank you to all helped and to all those who donated items.

We also had a \$500 grant from Runners of Compassion. This was for a medical and dental fund for the orphanage. Every month one or two children needed medical help which has to be paid for. They also very much needed dental work as some of the children's teeth were in bad condition. Thank you Runners' of Compassion.

This young boy is disabled. He is from the Terai area of Nepal which is in the far south. He is from a very poor family and has been taken to Kathmandu in the hope of trying to find a shelter and education for him. Hopefully we can take him to SBCH and find a sponsor for him.



I recently received a copy of her school report and she had a 92% average with many A's and a distinction.

It is a great accomplishment for her to have come so far in so short a time. Thanks to Kamal and her sponsor Uma's future now looks bright.

