

MITRATA-NEPAL FOUNDATION NEWS

Mitrata-Nepal Foundation www.mitrata.org

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SUMMER 2007

CHILDREN IN NEED OF A SPONSOR!



Sumitra Wagle



Pasang Kami Sherpa



Manju Bhatta



Bishnu Chandra
Shahi

These children live in our home in Kathmandu and need a sponsor. Home sponsorship costs only \$800 per year. This covers housing, food, clothing, schooling and medical care. Our children attend a private school where they receive a quality education, learn English and we provide tutors. If you are interested in sponsoring and making a difference in a child's life forever, please contact us.

Dear Sponsors and Donors,

We are currently supporting 70 children in Nepal because of your generosity and compassionate giving. If you would have told me 7 years ago when I first visited Nepal that would be the case, I would never have thought it possible. Life is full of unexpected gifts and changes. In recent months, yet another change took place, my mother, Lillian Schutz, passed away. Because of her illness and death, I did not make my annual excursion to Nepal. As it turns out, many people made donations to Mitrata-Nepal in her name for her memorial service. I have been very moved by these donations and know my mother would have been pleased. A special thanks to all of you.

We have worked very hard since last fall to establish our Board of Directors and "get our ducks in a row". Besides our Executive Committee, we now have 2 committees, Fundraising and Communications and have established projects and meeting dates. This organization has been essential for our further growth. All Board members continue to give selflessly and I am very impressed by their offers of time, money and skills to run the organization.

In Nepal, Nanda accomplished a move to a bigger and better location. We are still in Naya Bazaar, but now our housing is more spacious and comfortable. We continue to get requests for children who need sponsors and as always, we put them on our list and do not turn them away. We have 4 children in our home now who as yet need sponsors. I am confident that we can take care of them.

For a more current update, we asked our dear friend and sponsor, Leah Schulte, who is now in Nepal visiting and working with O.U.E.S.T., for her thoughts and impressions. She has not been there in 6 years and had not witnessed the changes due to the war, oppression and economic hardship created by the recent conflicts. Below are some of her comments, "hot off the press" and live from Kathmandu...

With gratitude.

Christine
President Mitrata-Nepal Foundation for Children, Inc.

UPDATE FROM NEPAL

By Leah Schulte

Just a brief update on the current political situation here from what I can gather through talking with staff, reading the paper, gleaning from other expats, ... Yes, the war has ended and things are calmer and more stable but still there is some discontent brewing. The disarming of the Maoists has gone slowly. The Interim Parliament is running with some glitches but essentially the truce between the Maoists and the 7 Parties is fragile but holding. The big event on the horizon is the Constitutional Assembly election in June (to be monitored by the Carter Center) where elected representatives will rewrite the constitution. This is big and there are major power plays underway. Most feel there is no way the country can pull off major elections by then. If they are cancelled or postponed that might give the Maoists reason to step out of mainstream politics again. Meanwhile the King watches closely in background.

On my first field visit to southwest Nepal, we drove by several Maoist camps interspersed with Army camps along the East-West highway. Both parties are co-existing now whereas for the last 3 years there were nightly curfews and regular fighting. Roads and bridges are in disrepair---from Maoist sabotage and governmental neglect. What is most apparent to me is the urban migration both from insecurity in the hills due to the war and lack of economic opportunity there. Cities are bulging with population...water, sewage, housing, public transportation,...are all insufficient.

Leah Schulte is President of O.U.E.S.T. which is an organization that runs assistance programs in Nepal and was our partner for several years. Leah lived and worked in Nepal for 7 years and is a strong supporter. The O.U.E.S.T. website is www.g3nepal.org.

Nanda's Views on the Nepal Political Situation

Nanda Kulu, co-founder and a Director of Mitrata-Nepal reports she is pleased that the new Interim Government is running fairly smoothly and hopes the politicians can do good work to improve the situation. She is not disappointed that the key Constitutional Assembly elections have been postponed from June as she

feels most citizens, especially in remote regions, are unaware of the important issues and must be educated on them first before the election. As the elected representatives will rewrite the constitution of Nepal the elections are very important, particularly on the role of the King. She herself is unsure how she will vote. While she does not want her vote for a ceremonial monarchy to reward the King for his bad behavior, she feels due to Nepal's history and culture the monarchy should not be abolished. She does state that she along with many in Nepal are very disturbed about the current Crown Prince who will one day ascend the throne as he has very bad habits. She jokes about how its too bad the throne can't jump the grandson recently born!

For the most part, she is more hopeful for peace now and reports tourism is up. Crime is still a big problem though. She reports she recently read that 3 brothers were murdered in their room nearby and not discovered for a week. Crime of this scale in the city is unheard of. It's unclear if it was Maoists or anti-Maoists or what the motive was. Nanda knows there are many Maoist supporters in the neighborhood surrounding Mitrata but since the Peace Accord they have not visited her to request a "donation" or discuss Mitrata issues. She does feel safe at the Mitrata home though. Four to five staff regularly sleep at the home and they have no fears. She states she is more impacted by day to day issues like drinking water and cooking gas shortages, food prices, etc. than crime or politics.

All in all, Nanda states "I'm not so interested in politics these days! My interest is in peace and having more international friends coming to Nepal. I hope for more development in my country and better lives for the children in the Mitrata home."

SAD NEWS FOR MITRATA-NEPAL

We are deeply saddened by the very recent news of the death of Nanda Kulu's husband Ganesh Kunal and her second oldest son, Arun Kunal. Ganesh and Arun were much loved by the children in the Mitrata home and will be missed. Our hearts go out to Nanda and her family and we send our prayers and loving support to them in this time of sorrow.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2007

2nd Annual 3 Summits for Nepal

The 2nd Annual 3 Summits for Nepal is underway, raising money to benefit the children of Nepal. To participate, climbers donate, or raise through personal sponsorships, between \$500 and \$1000 depending on whether they climb one or both mountains. In 2006, 12 climbers raised over \$8,000 which all went to Mitrata. One of the participants and summiteer of Mt. Rainier last year was an incredibly strong, 14-year-old Nepalese orphan girl who was adopted by a Seattle couple when she was a baby. This year we are climbing Mt. Baker on the weekend of June 16 and 17 and Mt. Rainier on July 14 and 15. The third summit is a skill seminar to prepare the participants for climbing with ice axes and ropes on the glaciated volcanoes. If you are interested in participating or know someone who is or would like to donate money for the cause, please contact Ambrose Bittner: Phone: 206-568-0710, email: ambrose@redlanternjournal.com. Visit the web site for more information: www.3summits.net

Festival of Nations

The Festival of Nations is a multi-ethnic arts experience that will take place at Tower Grove Park on Saturday, August 25 from 10 am to 7 pm and Sunday, August 26 from 10 am to 6 pm. This event will feature foods and performances from around the world. Come experience traditional dance and music, ethnic food, cultural and educational exhibits, folk art demonstrations, and international market. Mitrata-Nepal will have a booth at this event in an effort to inform people about the mission of Mitrata-Nepal and we will need volunteers to help staff the booth. If you are interested, please contact Sue Kaiser at 314-725-5881 or konya210@yahoo.com. Mitrata-Nepal will also have a booth at the Greentree Festival in Kirkwood, on Sat. and Sun. Sept 15-16. Volunteers to staff booths on these days will be needed.

ONE CHILD GIVES THANKS TO HER SPONSOR

Sponsors and their children are connected through letters, photographs and drawings. Anita is one of the older girls in the Mitrata home sponsored by Tom Conran. She wrote to him in late November, this special letter and poem in English and her handwriting reproduced here in unedited version ...

Dear Uncle Tom Conran

Namaste! With due respect and humble submission I would like to say heartily "thanks" for helping me and for your lovely letter with warm wishes and best of luck for me. I'm very glad to received your letter. How are you? Hope you and your parents are fine. I'm also fine and happy here in Mitrata home. I'm very much happy to know about you from your letter. I have many friends and brothers, sisters in Mitrata home. They love me very much and I too. I help them in need. I'm doing progress in my study and working hard to get best position in exam. My birthday is on October 27th. I liked all of my friends and teachers in school and they also liked me. I always take part in extra curricular activities in school. I liked to play with my friends and small kids. I read your "Buddha's Compassion" story. I loved it very much. I like to listen story and to write poem in easier time. Buddha is the of God of Nepal who was born about 2000 years ago in Lumbini. Gautam Buddha is the light of Asia and moon of Nepal. He is the symbol of peace. Our school has planned to take class VII-IX in Lumbini where Buddha was born (in this month). We are very happy on it OK. I would like to end my letter. This much today thanking you.

A GIFT OF GOD

*Our talent is a gift from God,
Don't let it fade away,
Use it to make someone happy,
And you too will be gay.
There is so much more we can do,
So many who need cheering up too.
Use your gifts and prove your worth,
A happier place make this earth.*

Anita



IF YOU ARE SPONSORING A CHILD AND HAVE NOT SENT YOUR ANNUAL DONATION, PLEASE DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. MAKE IT A 2007 TAX DEDUCTION!

UPDATE ON MITRATA-NEPAL DOCUMENTARY

Those of us who attended the Everest Café dinner last November were treated to a preview of the film being made for the organization. Mark Hartsuyker reports that after a hiatus of a couple months the activity for the documentary video is back on track. Mark and Scott, who shot the film, have been working on a rough draft of a script that will then be put before the communication committee for comments and critique. Once it is in the final form, the voice-over track can be recorded. Editing should go fairly quickly once this recording is made for it forms the audio foundation for choices of what clips are used. Mark also acquired an upgrade of his main editing computer so he trusts that any effort he makes will not disappear due to a system crash! Thanks, Mark, for all your work. We are looking forward to the final version.

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR CHILD!

Twice a year we send pictures/ letters and sometimes drawings from your child. You can send small items to your child or pictures and letters of your family. The children love to hear from their sponsors. Large items are not recommended and please do not send money. Please send items to the Nepal address listed on the front page.

Please let us know if your address or contact information changes so you can receive mail from your child. Send us your email address for easy communications. **The use of an electronic newsletter and updates could save Mitrata Nepal enough money to sponsor 4 children each year.** If you prefer to receive the newsletter by email, please send Christine your request at drcms@earthlink.net. Thank you.

SOME ITEMS NEEDED FOR OUR HOME IN KATHMANDU

1. Washing Machine: approximately \$700.
2. Vacuum Cleaner: approximately \$200
3. Quilts: \$20 x 54 = \$1000
4. Hepatitis Vaccines: \$50 per child x 54 = \$2700

If you would like to donate to help us purchase these items please contact us.

Mitrata Nepal Foundation for Children NEWS is published at various times each year to keep donors informed. Questions, comments and suggestions should be directed to Scott Biesinger at jsbeez@hotmail.com or by mail at 625 Highland Park Dr. Apt. G, Chesterfield, Missouri 63017.

Mitrata-Nepal Foundation for Children, Inc. Officers

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MITRATA-NEPAL

Children First
They Are Our Future

FOUNDATION
FOR CHILDREN

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