

Sunrise Children's Association Inc.
"Bringing a brighter future to the needy children of Nepal"



NEWSLETTER
Edition 6,
March 2008

Dear friends of Sunrise,

We hope 2008 has started off as well for you all as it has for us here at Sunrise!

Unlike the long dry hot spells experienced in many parts of Australia in January and February, the beginning of the year in Nepal is winter time so pretty chilly given the lack of heating in most places and lack of hot showers! The children at Sunrise got to wear their beloved beanies and scarves again (some of which they knitted themselves), some nice new fleecy pyjamas (a first for some of them!), and some warm woolly knits sent over one of our past volunteers, Teresa, and her team.



Above: Laxmi and Deewaki at Sunrise

Before we share with you all the exciting things we have been doing at Sunrise in Nepal over the past three months, we would also like to share with you some changes at SCAI in Australia.

After almost three years in the Treasury and Secretary roles **Sarah Kemp** and **Michaela Killips** have resigned from these positions for a well earned break but will remain actively involved as committee members shaping the future of SCAI. This has created an opportunity to bring on Lia Jenkins as Treasurer and Anne Davey as Secretary who are both very enthusiastic about taking on these roles in Australia.



Above: Michaela and Sarah back right at Sunrise

Anne is based in Melbourne and is currently working as Regional Manager South/East for an aged care organization. She brings years of managerial and administration experience to SCAI as well as a strong sense of compassion. Anne has been involved with SCAI over the past few months in a volunteer fundraising capacity and is looking forward to continuing to help drive SCAI forward and help us achieve our short and long term goals. Photo coming in next issue.

Lia has been employed with financial services companies for over 10 years both in Australia and overseas. Her current role is Business Unit Coordinator for a Consulting Group within an insurance broking company. Lia has been involved with the Sunrise Orphanage for the past 2 years in a volunteer / fundraising capacity and has a sponsor child at the orphanage. Lia also brings strong administrative skills and a bundle of enthusiasm to SCAI.



Above: Lia Jenkins, SCAI Treasurer

In recent months our general committee has also grown to include **Rajan Bhattachan** and **Angus Sobels**, taking our team to eight people. Rajan has been involved with SCAI over the past 2 years on a volunteer basis, helping out with SCAI fundraisers, IT and some administrative work so we are glad to officially welcome him to the team. Angus is new to the team, bringing a wealth of corporate experience and skills in running various companies in SA. Angus has a strong focus on helping us achieve tax

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deductibility status and driving SCAI forward to achieve our short and long term goals. **Sarah Thom**, who has been helping out with fundraising and other administrative tasks over the past couple of years, has also joined SCAI in the capacity of Public Officer in Victoria.

With an expanded, stronger team bringing various skills and experience we are very excited about 2008 and beyond!

Welcome Bipin and Binam!

We would also like to warmly welcome 4 year old twins Bipin and Binam Thapa who recently joined Sunrise. The boys have lost their father and their mother is too ill to care for them. They have a 9 year old brother who is nursing their mother through her illness. With much love from the Sunrise staff and their new brothers and sisters, the boys have settled in very well and are an absolute delight to all of us. They will commence school in the New Year in mid April in Nursery Class.



Above: Bipin & below Binam



Holi Festival

This festival is closely related to the water festivals of Thailand and Myanmar and takes place on the full moon day in the month of Flagun (21st March). By this time Winter has come to an end and its starting to get warm. It is also nearing the end of the dry season, so the water that is sprayed around so liberally during the festival is a

reminder of the monsoon days to come. Holi is also known as the festival of colours, so as well as spraying water on everything and everyone, coloured powder (particularly red) and coloured water are also thrown everywhere. Foreigners get special attention, so you can imagine what it was like with 77 children bombarding us at Sunrise!



Above: Shankerman, Emma and Sadhumaya during 'Holi' at Sunrise



Above: Durga during 'Holi' at Sunrise

Visitors to Sunrise

Thank you to Wayne Dobson and Russell King who visited Sunrise on 10th Feb bringing the children a great supply of much loved and very useful colour pencils!

Thank you also very much to **Sarah Connolly and Dan Dezentje** who donated boxes of toys and games for the children, to **Carnegie School and Oxford Press** who very kindly through **DHL** also donated some games, educational materials and books for the children, and to **Phil Ellis** who organized the shipments. They have been greatly appreciated!

Volunteers

Kumaran Yogaranandan, our first volunteer ever in December 2006 returned for another visit in December/January 2008. Kumaran has been one of Sunrise's most dedicated supporters, and we all look forward to yet another visit from our brother Kumaran again this year!

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Teresa McDonald also returned in March for another visit after volunteering at Sunrise in November/December 2007. It is always great to have our extended family back!

If anyone is interested in volunteering in Australia or Nepal, please contact Michaela michaela@scai.org.au. Spending time with the children at Sunrise has been a very rewarding experience for all our volunteers, so we encourage you to take part! Our volunteers are always available to share their first hand experience with anyone interested too!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

On Saturday 8th March we held our bi-monthly birthday party for all children with birthdays in January and February. As always the children were very happy to be sung 'Happy Birthday' by all their Sunrise brothers and sisters, to enjoy a big birthday cake and receive small gifts from their Sunrise family. Games such as musical bobs were again party favourites, but the biggest hit seemed to be the stick on moustaches and eye patches that some of the boys were given!



Above: Birthday children



Above: Bibek and Bishnu

Extra-Curricular Activities

On top of the numerous hours the children spend studying, they make the most of their free time and have continued playing volleyball, basketball, badminton, other outdoor games, singing and dancing.

Excursions
Sindupalchowk

On Friday 28th February eleven children, Sangita, one of our carers, Fulmaya, and I took our Sunrise goats to a village called Sindupalchowk, 3 hours from Kathmandu so they could be cared for by some of Sangita's relatives, along with some other family goats. Our goats have been a little shy about breeding at Sunrise with all the onlookers, but they seem to be making up for lost time in the village since. So hopefully we will see some babies very soon!



Above: Sangita and children in Sindupalchowk



Above: Mansing, Lasang, Laxmi, Marium

Kids Carnival

On Saturday 15th March we were kindly invited to a kids carnival thanks to a couple of local Nepalese friends Nirjana and Shreejana who work for an organisation called TEWA, which is a non-profit organization promoting sustainable development and empowerment.

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It was a fantastic day, with the children being able to enjoy ferris wheel rides, jumping castle, horse rides, face painting, lunch, ice-creams and a comedy show. Thank you Nirjana, Shreejana and all the team that put on such a fantastic day not only for our Sunrise children, but a couple of hundred other children from other orphanages in Kathmandu.



Above: Sunita at the kids carnival



Above: Bibek, Ramesh and Anita



Above: Mariam horse riding at the carnival

Exams

The children finished their end of year exams on Friday 28th March (Nepali New Year is on 14th April) so are now enjoying 2 weeks of school holidays. **We are delighted to announce that ALL children passed, with many of them achieving 1st, 2nd 3rd in their class again.** Exam results will be sent out to sponsors shortly. Eleven of the children made such outstanding progress over the year achieving almost full marks, so those children will be skipped up a year level. Well done!

School holidays are always great fun at Sunrise, and these holidays will be action packed, with a sportsday, singing, dancing, poetry writing and drawing competitions, quizzes, inter-children's home sporting matches, outreach work, 1st aid course, a slide show night, work experience and some children's interviews (which we hope to share with sponsors on a new 'sponsor only' section on the website).

Training and Development Computing and sewing

The children are continuing to improve their computer skills, and the carers have embraced the sewing machines, with carer Fulmaya taking extra sewing classes and making the children's new school uniforms and some play clothes.

Thanka painting

After around 70-80 hours of dedication and hard work, the older children will finish their thanka paintings in the holidays. We will then frame them and put them proudly on display at Sunrise.

The thanka teacher has expressed his congratulations to the children for their dedication and great skill and believes that some of them could build a career from it. For those children that wish to continue, we plan to sell their future paintings in Australia, with 70% of profits going into a separate bank account for that child's future, perhaps 5% for spending money and the remaining 25% back to Sunrise.



Above: 80% complete thanka painting

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The children, who at such a young age, have an incredibly mature and responsible outlook towards their futures' have welcomed this opportunity with open arms, so we will fully support them in this and any other areas they wish to pursue.

Immunisations

On 8th March all children at Sunrise received MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) immunizations – if only injections could be this much fun all the time!



Above: Repa always finds injections quite amusing. In fact of 77 children, there were only 2 bouts of quick tears!

Kids Column

This month we would like to share with you some quotes written by Saugat Mainali, 16 years.

The children are continuing to express a strong social conscience. Their wisdom and compassion is incredibly inspiring and I think we can be confident that we will see some amazing leaders in the future.

"We should respect the elderly because of the experience they bring. We should love children because of their energy and their promise of a brighter future." – Saugat Mainali

"Poor and rich are equal. So we should respect them both." – Saugat Mainali

"Discrimination makes no sense as all people have equal rights. We are all the same since blood is red for all people." – Saugat Mainali

"Those people who have an aim in life and work very hard towards this will be sure to succeed in their aim." – Saugat Mainali

"Stealing other people's property is a crime." – Saugat Mainali

Encouragement Awards

Bi-monthly we provide encouragement awards to those children who stand out in the following key areas:

- Displaying the greatest love, respect, care, kindness and service to their Sunrise family. This includes staff, carers and importantly their numerous brothers and sisters.
- Positive attitude and dedication to their education and personal development. This is not only results based, but is heavily focused on dedication and effort, courage, and persistence in achieving their goals.
- Responsibility and care of themselves and their belongings, including prayer and meditation, personal cleanliness and hygiene, care of school items, books, toys etc.

This month we are pleased to announce the following children were awarded with; **Pasang Sherpa, Khim Maya BK, Kisan Tamang and Bipin Tamang.**

Sunrise Outreach Program

In early March four members of our Sunrise Outreach Team (Lokjan, Saugat, Pema and Dolma), along with Sangita and Emma, visited the people of Kalimati, an area of Kathmandu where over 120 families live in temporary shanty homes along the dirty river bank.

There each child, equipped with pre-prepared questions and discussion points, sat with families and children and facilitated introductions from both sides and sought to identify the needs of these people. Given the dirty and unhygienic conditions in which they live, one key need identified was that of immunizations. In partnership with the local community and the Sunrise committee we plan to disperse Hepatitis B and MMR immunizations to these people.



Above: Pema from Sunrise with his outreach family in the slums of Kalimati

In the school holidays, the Sunrise children will be working on developing a longer term project plan for our outreach work for the remainder of 2008. Not only does

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this build their confidence, it helps them develop a sense of ownership of the program and responsibility towards the local communities around them. This in turn will enable practical sustainable and culturally sensitive solutions to be developed.



Above: Siblings Anita (left) and her younger brother who live on the dirty riverbank of Kalimati river in a make-shift plastic and bamboo shelter.



Above: Sangita with siblings Anita and Moima who live with their parents in the slums of Kalimati

Partners in Australia

We would like to thank the students of Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College and Principal David Beattie for raising \$1000 for the children of Sunrise. A cheque was presented to SCAI in an assembly on Tuesday 25th March.

Sunrise Children's Village (SCV)

SCAI are striving towards purchasing land in which to build SCV within 12 months, but we have a long way to go financially.

If anyone is interested in donating on a monthly basis or as a once off, please contact Emma Taylor today!

Remember, every individual person can make a significant difference; small steps lead to large victories!



Last but not least...

Last newsletter we introduced you to our wonderful team of live-in carers; Krishna, Tulsi, Hasta, Fulmaya, Krisna, Majnu, Fulmaya, Angur, Pramila and Rupmala.

Supporting our amazing chairperson Sangita Bhandari is also our local committee Papita Serchand (VC and Sunrise doctor), Sanjib Parajuli (Secretary), Sriram Subedi (Treasurer), Tulsi Mainali (Founding member and house in-charge) and Laxmi Parajuli. We would like to acknowledge our wonderful partners in Nepal and look forward to continuing our relationship and working together to bring a brighter future to the current and future children of Sunrise. Thank you!

We would also like to thank all our sponsors and donors in Australia and abroad, without your generous contribution we could not have changed the lives of our 77 beautiful children and given them the foundations for developing into happy, self reliant members of the community.

We sincerely wish to thank you all!

Best wishes,

Emma and the Sunrise Family

