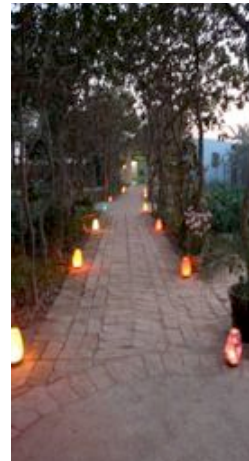


# voices

Summer 2011

India Independence Day  
Celebration at Sewa  
Communities



WELCOME TO THE SUMMER 2011 EDITION OF THE SEWA COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER...

*Namaste Doston! Hello friends..*

**Welcome to the current edition of Voices. The idea of this newsletter is to connect you with some of the community members of Sewa Ashram and to hear their experiences and their involvement in the community. We trust that you feel part of our community as you spend the time reading.**

**Earlier in the year, a group of ex-volunteers from New Zealand put on a fundraising dinner 'Eat Simply so others can Simply Eat'. It was a great success and NZ\$4,000 was raised. If you would like to put on one of these dinners in your community, please let us know and we would love to help make that happen!**

**A large part of this newsletter is also geared towards the kids. Our kids program is rapidly growing and we need your continued to support!**

**Again, we want to take this opportunity to thank all our partners and community members around the world. We pray that God continues to bless you as he has blessed our community here in Delhi.**

**Team Sewa**

It's really a great privilege and challenge for me to be a housemother for the 17 kids in our Family House. I am really glad and thankful to God and you for your prayers and concern for the kids that God has given me to take care of.

It's a big challenge for me to see the kids grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In our family there are 8 younger kids and 9 teenagers. Two of our teenagers have recently finished their 12th grade, which is a major achievement. Ruchi has been admitted into nursing college and Reika is pursuing her business studies.

One of our dreams for the children is to grow up and to live a life standing on their own two feet. This is also their dream, so they are very happy to be doing further studies. As a mother it is such a great reward to stand with them as they fulfill their ambitions.

I must say that as the children grow and stand firm and do their level best, despite this busy life and their adverse situations, it is just because of the prayers you offer on behalf of the children and me. Thanks a million.

*Praseeda Prakash, Housemother*

Delhi House Society, registered in Delhi NCR No. S-35565, is a Christian humanitarian development organisation that has been faithfully serving the poorest of the poor in Delhi for more than 10 years.



Sewa  
Communities

Our main project Sewa Community Narela located in the northern part of Delhi is committed to providing healthcare, education, income generation and microfinance in a therapeutic community to the poorest of the poor and partnering with them in their transformational journey

NAME: GOPAL SHARMA  
YEAR JOINED: 2010

I am Gopal Shrama from Chopan, Dist. Sonbhadra, Bihar. My childhood was normal as any other child. After completing my 10+2, I started to work in a medical store, where I worked for 10 years. In 1994 I got admission for my paramedical studies, which I never completed because I got caught up in a bad circle of friends and started using drugs.

This led to problems with my family and caused big dramas at home over the next 10 years of my life. During this time my father became paralyzed and my mother also died. After that, I lost everything and left home in 2004 and went to the Agra. I continued to make bad decisions and in 2006 I went to Delhi.

In Delhi I was living at Azmeri gate and was involved in all wrong activities to make money for buying drugs. In 2007 I had an accident and came to the Sewa-Ashram. After my wound healed, I went back to the same place. Still I had the addiction problem, which made me suffer from the same wound again.

In 2008 I come to Sewa-Ashram again with the same wound, this time I stayed at the Ashram for a week and I left again for drugs.

In 2010, I was in very bad condition and one brother from Sewa Ashram found me and brought me to the Ashram. I started my treatment immediately. My wound was growing with septic; I got admission at the local hospital and was operated on. After long treatment and exercise, I am now almost walking properly.

I am now part of a Sewa Life Group and am involved in many different activities. Including helping in the clinic, leading people in health education and patient care etc. Now it is going to be a year and I haven't touched drugs and I want to continue being free from it.

## A word from our Team Leader...



### We Bless and They Bless.

During one of our community meetings God gave me insight that at the end of the meeting I should ask all community members over 50 years old to come forward and put their hand upon all people and to bless us. Some were crying while blessing us, because they had never blessed any one in their whole life!

Today we think those who are above 50 can't do anything. My wife and I both believe that we need to have the older generation to guide us, to provide advice, and to Bless.

One day two people came with two boxes of apples. They shared that they had received a blessing from Sewa Ashram in the past, but today they brought apples to bless the Ashram.

I was reminded that as we sow good things we will reap good things, but if we sow bad things we will surely reap bad things. We are here to bless people and we are able to do this because of the blessing in the support you provide us. This is a chain of Blessing.

Few people know that they have the power to bless life. We bless the life in each other far more than we realize. Many simple, ordinary things that we do can affect those around us in profound ways; we can even bless total strangers and be blessed by them.

We want to be a part of God's promise to Abraham - that our blessing would cause us to be a blessing to the world. We thank you for your continuing partnership in the work of Sewa Communities and speak blessing on you all!

**Keshav Dutt Pandey**

Stay connected to the  
community by visiting our  
Facebook page SEWA  
COMMUNITIES and click on  
the LIKE button!



Sewa Communities provides free medical care and education to the poorest of the poor. We thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to care for our brothers and sisters in India. Online donation is available on our website: [www.sewa-communities.org](http://www.sewa-communities.org)

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“ I realised that we are all ill to an extent...and need to be recovered by the doctor of our souls.”

## volunteer reflections...

Everything is provided for the Indian patients. They get food, medicine, new clothes, attention and love... the volunteers –the western patients- also do have their needs. I came to know that the Ashram-founder Ton had said something like that and I really didn't like the comparison between the Indian and Western patients. In general I don't like the denomination 'patient' because it feeds a thought of hierarchy that I am trying to fight in my mind –that is why I prefer to make use of the term 'the guest that has to recover'. But in my eyes I wasn't a guest that had to recover from something at all. I was a highly motivated alumnus of a discipleship training school in Germany and I felt the call to India so clear in my heart and I was so excited to see how God would make use of me in the Ashram. I simply pictured a romantic mission trip that should start in April 2010 and which had no clear end. Well...something great welcomed me but it didn't coincide at all with what I had in my mind or expected. Quickly after my arrival I got to learn that the call to the Ashram wasn't there in my heart so that I could show the Indian brothers and sisters Christ's way, but to search this way together with them.

I got the chance to learn to search him - Christ himself - in the people around me. This made me feel at home even though in the Ashram / in India everything seemed so different to what I have learned in Germany and to what I am used to.

I am so thankful for these 6 months in India were I learned the basics of life: if we put aside language, culture, age, social

background and religion we find that we all have the same inner core; a heart that is aching to love and to be in a healthy relationship. We are all the same. In India I realized what it means to really believe this well-known truth and to really live it. Of course there were moments where I felt every personal boundary being challenged, and though challenging it was these moments that kept me going 6 months. These few situations are like diamonds I keep now in the treasure box of my heart and I don't want to miss them. These diamonds are the moments in which I could lead people into death, when I cavorted with street kids, when their mothers invited me to sing 'Jesus songs' with them or when I was sitting amongst some village-women in a train and we were playing drums together and taught each other songs we knew. The scripture says that the fruit of the spirit is happiness and in these moments I felt happiness so pure. We were equal, eye-to-eye.

I realized that we all are ill to an extent and we need to be recovered by the doctor of our souls.

A few days ago my biological father died and I guess I would not have been able to guide him into death if I had not learned to deal with death in India.

Thank you Jesus and thanks to my family in India.

With love, Gigi didi



...sharing your food with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, ...

...Then when you pray, God will answer..'



Some of our Learning Centre Children

## COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT 2011

- Staff - 25
- Volunteers - 4 (Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Canada)
- Patients - 115
- Family House Kids - 25
- Learning Centre Kids - 155
- Slum Families - 50

Our team has a big vision to continue growing the work of Sewa Ashram and to see more lives and communities transformed. Our holistic approach includes working and reaching out to more children and to partner with them in their transformation.

school. Our philosophy is not to replace the local government schools, but to work with the children in getting them admitted and then to continue providing remedial/support education. This provides us with an opportunity to hold the school accountable

# kids@sewa communities....

Although Sewa Ashram continues to have a major focus working with destitute and broken men from the roadside, we believe that working with children gives them a chance at avoiding ending up like many of the men that we care for and serve.

Sponsorships play a key role in achieving this. Sponsorship involves more than just sending a monthly donation, but provides you with the opportunity to share the journey and to participate in their story. Without your support these children would continue on a certain future of poverty with little hope for any change.

We have a number of sponsorship initiatives, which are geared towards different stages of the child's situation and development:

### FAMILY HOUSE - US\$60/MTH

Sewa Ashram will always choose to keep a child with the family first, however this is not always an option. We continue to work with the family house model, which provides the children with house parents, a home and a family, for children that are either orphans or come from very poor families outside of Delhi. We currently have 25 children in our family houses.



### LEARNING CENTRE - US\$20/MTH

We have more than 155 children currently registered with our Learning Centers. The children come from local slums surrounding the Ashram as well as our new project in Old

Delhi. Many of the children have never having been admitted to

and to see long term sustainable change in the community that benefits the whole community.

### LIGHT FOR EDUCATION - US\$8

Many of the children use kerosene lanterns to study, which is dangerous and toxic to their health. Our new 'seed to sell' initiative



provides the children with a solar lamp at the cost of Rs399, which they are able to take home for 2 weeks. We provide the family with a small loan to make the purchase after seeing the benefits in health to the family and savings in kerosene. This also provides additional income to the Learning Centre to continue growing the work.

### TERTIARY FUND

For some of our children further education after High School is a dream. We provide them with the opportunity to pursue tertiary education under a scholarship. We provide them with the finances they need to cover college fees, books and lodging. At the end of their studies they have the option of returning and working for Sewa Ashram for 3 years, or should they gain good employment to repay the scholarship interest free.

For any further information on any of the above sponsorship opportunities please email us at [office@sewa-communities.org](mailto:office@sewa-communities.org). We look forward to hearing from you! Praseeda, Satya and Savita.

Contact details for Sewa Communities web: [www.sewa-communities.org](http://www.sewa-communities.org) email: [office@sewa-communities.org](mailto:office@sewa-communities.org)