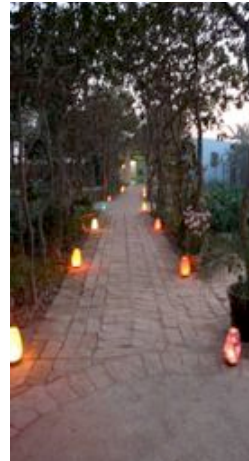


voices

Winter 2010

India Independence Day
Celebration at Sewa
Communities



WELCOME TO THE WINTER 2010 EDITION OF THE SEWA COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER...

Namaste Doston! Hello friends..

The months have flown by since our last newsletter in Spring. The summer heat has passed, along with the annual monsoon season. We are now heading into winter and this year the forecast is for very cold weather! Preparations have already commenced with stockpiling of blankets and warm clothing.

We have so much to share with you all, and will endeavor to do so in this edition, but another cool way to stay in touch is by joining our facebook page, Sewa Communities - visit us and make sure you click on the 'like' button!

What a major milestone for Delhi House Society to be awarded such a prestigious award as the "Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice". What a great testimony to the vision founded on Isaiah 58 by Ton Snellaert more than 13 years ago and to those who continue to carry it and champion it's cause. Being likened to a modern day Good Samaritan is a huge accolade to all the people who make up Sewa Communities.

What's so great about Sewa Communities is that it is a community of stories. Life stories. Stories of our patients, our kids, our partners, our volunteers, our staff – all community members. With these stories we are all presented with an opportunity to play a role – a silent role or an active role - to partner with people and move beyond the donor-beneficiary relationship. This

newsletter is about those people who make up Sewa Communities and their stories. We trust that these stories will inspire you, engage you, and challenge you. A great way to move beyond the spirit of donor-beneficiary and to one of partnership is to stop and listen to a person's story.

We are reminded of the story in Numbers 10 where Moses invites Hobab to join with them on their journey to the Promised Land. Moses is convinced that Hobab will be a great addition and persuades him by promising to share all the good things God would surely do! Like Moses, we too are quietly confident in our calling. We are also confident in the value of your participation in the journey, and for those who are yet to join, bold in inviting. Lets thank God for the great things He has already done and look forward together to the great things yet to come.

Team Sewa

Stay connected to the
community by visiting our
Facebook page SEWA
COMMUNITIES and click
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Sewa
Communities

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.

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: SURESH
YEAR JOINED: 1997

Suresh is 36 years old and is from Nepal and joined our community in 1997. He is a simple, caring, helpful and cheerful member of our community. Suresh had come to India with a hope for a better future - seeking an opportunity to earn a better living and to really start his life.

In 1991 he got a job cooking for a middle class family in Delhi and started to build friendships. However, Suresh's gentle nature was quickly abused by his so called friends who suggested he take an advance of his salary from his boss. Due to his trustworthiness and faithfulness his boss easily gave him the advance, which he used to visit Mumbai with his new found friends. Unfortunately in Mumbai his friends ran off taking his money with them. Stranded, he became hopeless and started to wander not knowing what to do, as he had no money. With no food for several days, he decided to follow the railway track, that would hopefully lead him somewhere better. He managed to arrive back in Delhi, however as a result of little food and water and from walking such long distances, he arrived in a bad state - his hands and feet had also frozen due to the cold of the winter season. Exhausted and unable to travel any further, he finally lay down on the road near by the Interstate Bus Terminal (close to Yamuna Bazaar).

Many people would pass him by, but none would stop to lend a hand...

After a few days a car pulled up and a man with long hair and a beard appeared (Ton Snellaert). Suresh was fearful that the man was going to harm him, however, instead the man took him to a place called Sewa Ashram. Here he received love and care and was able to recover from TB and close to deaths door...

Many years later, Suresh is still faithfully serving the community! He got married in 2001 to Satya and has 2 sons. He and his wife are now house parents caring for 7 other children! Suresh feels heaven on this planet is Sewa Ashram and is so thankful for Jesus in providing him with such a place. Suresh was also able to attend the ceremony when Sewa Ashram received the Mother Teresa Award. What a transformation.

Sewa Communities is also very thankful to God for Suresh.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT 2010

Staff - 24

Volunteers - 16 (Germany, NZ, UK, Australia, Switzerland, Denmark)

Patients - 90 (average at any one time)

Family House Kids - 25

Learning Centre Kids - 115

Slum Families - 50

A word from our Team Leader...



First of all I want to give thanks to the Lord for the work of Sewa Communities and for the opportunity of being a part of the ongoing story and to serve the people.

For the last two years we have been praying for a new opportunity, where we can serve and help build people's lives. We heard about Sewa Community and came to Delhi with my family to visit and see the work and to start Praying for

God's guidance.

Both my wife and I share a desire and a passion to serve the poorest of the poor - the destitute and the rejected - to see them restored and reunited with community.

Our first priority was, and still is people. One thing I have learned is that "people needs tools not rules". There needs to be discipline but not discrimination.

We feel honour to serve the community here as Team Leader and to lead the work of Sewa Community. What I am doing today I have learnt from my Master - this is what he did and I desire to follow Him.

The sense for the need of social justice and compassion promoted by the Biblical verse in Isaiah 58:7-8 "Share your food with hungry and bring to your house the poor who are cast out" stands tall in a world where the virtue and need of compassion seems to be diminishing. Today, Sewa Communities is endeavoring to play the role of a modern day good Samaritan, by demonstrating love for thy neighbor through the work of picking up the sick and dying people from the streets of Delhi and caring for them by helping to restore and rehabilitate them physically, mentally and spiritually - this is perfect redemptive plan of God.

Blessings to you all as we continue to partner together in this cause.

Keshav Dutt Pandey

As Keshav before said, "People first"! We are so blessed with the people God keeps on sending us, people with a heart to serve their brothers and sisters in need. Be it long term staff, volunteers from abroad or former patients with a firsthand experience in suffering and dependency. The later ones easily identify with our patients, recognise the weaknesses and strengths of our Community, whose backbones they are.

The Government is providing health care free of cost in India, but faces big challenges that are foremost due to the huge number of patients and lack of infrastructure. Basic care like providing food, ensuring body hygiene, taking patients through various investigations, etc, during hospitalisation, is the responsibility of family members and relatives.

Most of our patients lack these relationships, what makes it hard for the busy hospital to deal with them appropriately. In order to gain access to these hospital facilities, Sewa Communities stretches out its hand in sending hospital attendants along when somebody needs to be admitted - and for many of them the Community indeed becomes family!

It is easy to pick somebody up from the roadside, relatively easy to get them admitted to the Government Hospital, handing them over to their attendants before heading off back home.

The harder job is to stay with the patient 24x7, or in our case 24 hours for 5 days without having a clean bathroom nor a bed to sleep in and all while being available for the patient none stop.

If an emergency occurs we need people who are ready to jump in to grab the equipment they need to take care for the patient - a blanket, a second pair of pants and off they go - no matter what.

We are really grateful to have precious people with these qualities, without them we couldn't do anything.

Isaiah 58 also has something to say about exploitation of the people we are working with.

It's a challenge to ensure a supportive environment for them. How do we prevent them from getting burned out?

Most of the guys lost contact with their dear ones over time, however being here a number of them were able to get reconnected. This often leads to them taking up financial responsibility for the family, since there is no satisfactory social security offered by the Government. People are ready to work for a small salary with an attitude of service to the community that once helped them in their time of need - even when knowing that elsewhere they could possibly earn much more. But the mentioned responsibility also puts further pressure on them and has resulted in us losing good people in the past. It takes wisdom to tackle appropriate salaries and allowances, keeping in mind the level of resources available.

We also have to recognise their needs and longings to have their own family in a background where marriage is usually arranged by parents. What possibilities can we offer them to grow in their personality and spiritually as well as increasing their skills, enabling them to one day leave better equipped than when they first joined?

Small glimpses of this are seen in people obtaining their driving license to gain work and more independence. We are also looking to send some of our team on short time nursing training courses etc, but there is a long road ahead of us.

Uwe Wildermuth

Some of our Learning Centre Children



The Learning Centre at Sewa Community Narela

The Learning Centre was introduced to provide Quality Level Education for children at risk and below the poverty line in our local community. Our aim is to provide non-formal education and assistance in gaining entrance to the local government schools, and to provide additional tuition to ensure they receive an ongoing quality education. For children who are below five years we provide them with quality care in an environment where they will be properly looked after and taught. This allows their mother to obtain additional skills with the endeavor of gaining further and better employment.

Sewa Community Learning Centre Narela was started in mid April -2010 with Day care, Non-Formal Education and Remedial Education classes.

We started with 15 children and now have 90 children registered in our program!

NAME : RAJU
AGE: 12YRS



Raju comes from a nearby slum to Sewa Community Narela. Raju studies 6th standard in the local government school. He joined our community Educational Programme in April this year. Raju belongs to a poor family and lives with his parents and siblings (one brother and one sister).

His parents work as manual labourers. Their desire is to see their son 'RAJU' on the high position in the field of education. Although a student at the local government school, at the time of joining the Sewa Community Programme Raju was still illiterate. He had very limited knowledge of either the Hindi or the English language. Under the guidance of the Sewa teachers he is improving his knowledge of Hindi & English and can now read and write the basic sentences of both languages. His favourite subject is sports – which is only natural for a young Indian boy! Raju is a good boy and understands the desires of his parents and so wants to achieve a good education and to perhaps one day become a big industrialist and to make his parents proud!

let the children come...

Name: SHIV KUMAR
AGE: 4 YRS.



Shiv Kumar is a very cute and fickle young boy. He is part of our daycare program in the Learning Centre. He comes from a poor family, where his father is a rickshaw puller and his mother is a house wife. He has only one young sister who is 2 years old.

Although Shiv is only 4, he has a very sharp mind and loves to play games. He is often heard making up wonderful and interesting stories and sharing them with both children and adults. When Shiv was first enrolled into the daycare program he was scared and shy - just like most ordinary kids when they first join in something new. However, now he has positioned himself as the leader of all the kids his same age! He likes to command all the other kids and as he tries to do so, his words and expressions are so cute and expressive, that it quickly wins over

the hearts of others.

Shiva's parents feel great pleasure in the seeing their little boy study and having the opportunity to learn so many new things. They are so grateful that their child now has a hope and future of not ending up illiterate like them and will be able to do what they could not.



My name is Katharina, I'm 29 years old and I'm doing volunteer time in Delhi.

If anyone had told me a year ago that I would be quitting my job in order to volunteer in Delhi, I never would have believed them. Yet, sometimes unexpected things happen, and I'm glad they do...

A little more than a year ago, I had just

gotten back from a trekking tour in Ladakh. We had spent the last two days of our trip in Delhi. Seeing the poverty in Delhi shocked me deeply. I have seen slums before, but the situation in Delhi is different. People aren't just living in poverty, they are dying in the streets. After I returned to Germany, I couldn't get the pictures of what I had seen on the sidewalks of Delhi out of my head. I searched the Internet looking for organisations which offer help for these people and I found 'Sewa Communities'. Their philosophy was immediately convincing. I found many organisations offering to sponsor a child in India and so, pay for school fees. But who was helping the homeless, who have to fight for their life on the streets? At 'Sewa Communities', I found the opportunity to sponsor and support the kind of project I had

been looking for. I then went about getting information about volunteering in Delhi, and how to actively participate in helping. Well, I thought it was a great idea, but not very realistic. I had a good job and had just recently begun my promotion. The luxury of taking time off between completing my studies and starting my career was something I had 'thrown away'.

Like so many of my generation, I was climbing the career ladder. I worked my way through my studies in record time, so that at 24, I could call myself a graduate mathematician. Then, without a break, I became part of the working force. Due to the extremely high unemployment rate and my desire to land a good job, I guess I simply forgot to take any time off. Right from the beginning of the

country where I live the luxury of not having to worry about landing on the street and starving.

So, I have been here for 4 months now, teaching Math and Information Technology to children. Looking back, I can say that my decision to come here was a wonderful one. I enjoy every day and have, in this short time, learned and experienced so much. The experience of living in and being part of this community is indescribably wonderful. A kind of community that is disappearing in a country like Germany where everyone is running after money and a career.

A lot of people, who have heard about my volunteer work and say they are envious. They say, they are envious of the opportunity of being here. All I can say is that this kind of

volunteer experience...

economic crisis, the firm I worked for had let people go. So, I felt I needed to consider what I would do if I was one of them. Then, I remembered the volunteer opportunity in Delhi, and I decided if I were to lose my job, I would go to Delhi. But the firm kept me on. As I continued with my career I began to feel more and more burned out and unhappy at my job. The idea began to grow: if I really wanted to work as a volunteer, why shouldn't I just do it? After that, everything happened really fast: I quit my job, gave up my apartment, and in no time, was sitting on a plane to Delhi.

At first I was worried about what would happen after my time in Delhi. Would I be able to find a job? And where would I find a job? But those are simply worries and pressures that we Germans put on ourselves. Of course, I'd find another job and plus, I'd be coming back to a

opportunity is available to almost anybody. You just have to find it and then do it!

Katharina Ernst



Sewa Communities provides free medical care and education to the poorest of the poor for approximately US\$4 per patient per day. We depend on your support to continue to care for the least of these. Thank you for opening your heart to your brothers and sisters in India.

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