

NCEF GYAN

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NEPALESE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND

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A TYPICAL NEPALI TEMPLE by LAXMI SUNUWAR

A drawing by Laxmi Sunuwar



Dashain and Tihar Celebrated in Nepal!

The months of October and November are filled with Joy in Nepal as people indulge in the celebration of two major festivals: Dashain and Tihar. Dashain is the most auspicious festival celebrated by Nepalese throughout the country. People worship Goddess Durga, and also visit relatives, seek blessings from elders and enjoy delicious food.



A Temple. By Laxmi Sunuwar
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Tihar is the festival of lights that falls between October and November and is the second largest festival after Dashain. This festival lasts for five days and people worship Laxmi – the Goddess of Wealth - and light up their homes in hopes that Laxmi will enter in their house. People also honor and worship crows, dogs and cows for what they have done in the lives of humans. The last day of Tihar is Bhai-Tika – Brother's Day – when sisters worship their brothers and pray for their healthy and long life.

During these festivals, our volunteers and students in Nepal were also busy spending time with their families as offices and schools across the country were closed. At the end of the break, students went back to school to “hit the books.”

Discussion underway to increase budget for post-10th grade students

An extensive discussion with area coordinators, knowledgeable people and volunteers in Nepal and the US is currently underway to increase the assistance for students studying post-10th grade. A final decision will come after evaluating the expenses of post-10th grade education, which is significantly higher than that of primary and secondary education.

Students who passed the SLC (School Leaving Certificate) exam, the national-level exam given to mark the completion of 10th grade, have two options: either to do intermediate studies or enroll in what is commonly referred to as '10-plus-2' studies. Finishing two years of either study is equivalent to finishing high school in the US. These programs differ in their cost of attendance and sometimes quality as well. Likewise, the cost of the program also depends on whether the institution is private or public and also on the field of studies. Students normally start to specialize in their field of study after 10th grade, and the costs-of-attendance vary significantly between programs, i.e., expenses differ for medicine as opposed to sociology training. Another important factor that is important in making the decision to increase pos-10th grade support

is the location of the institution, as some of the post SLC students reside in areas that have schools with higher cost-of-attendance.

A new CE board appointed for 2007-08

Campaign for Education (CE), our sister NGO in Nepal, held its annual board meeting on October 30, 2007. The meeting elected the following members to the board:

Maheshwor Kafle (Chairman)

Bidur Dhungana (Secretary)

Saraswoti Shrestha (Treasurer)

Rameshwor Kafle

Sanu Kancha Shrestha

Atul Pokharel

Pankaj Jalan

WHAT ARE CHILDREN DOING?

Puja in Nepalgunj said that she felt very good when teacher said 'good job' about her home work.



Rabisha in Nepalgunj enjoyed using a computer.



Trishna in Nepalgunj had fun reading poems.

Do you GoodShop?

NCEF will receive donation from your online shopping for the Holidays at no cost to you!

When you shop online through **GoodShop**, the retailers will make a donation to NCEF at no cost to you.

Many retailers, including WalMart, Target, Best Buy, Macy's are participating in this noble program. Click here to start:

www.goodsearch.com/?charityid=860619

ALSO, Now every time you search the Internet using **GoodSearch**, a penny will be donated to NCEF. Please check out the link above. You can help change the lives of needy children with a click of a mouse.

Volunteers' Corner

We would like to welcome our new volunteers:

Alina Pokhrel – Alina is interested in helping with operational and fundraising work in Nepal.

Deepak Joshi – Deepak is interested in helping with publicity and fundraising.

Julia Fizer – Julia likes to help with operational work.

Wedding Gift Donation from Siri and Satyam Panday

Sharing Joy to Underprivileged Children

Recognizing the need, many individuals, families, organizations and even a group of sweet sixth grade kids have given a generous donation and offered support to NCEF in our modest effort to change the future of some deserving children. In this article, we feature a generous couple that asked their guests to give them the perfect gift for their wedding - the happiness and brighter future of needy children in Nepal.



Our family and friends who attended our wedding made generous donations in our honor. We were pleased that they were excited to donate to this meaningful cause.

Q: How do you evaluate NCEF's overall work in helping disadvantaged Nepali children?

We have a very good impression about NCEF's

overall work in helping disadvantaged children. We like that the organization maintains low overhead, allowing for the funds to reach the children without wasting the needed money.

Q: How do you evaluate NCEF's effort in keeping donors and supporters informed about NCEF operation?

The website is useful in receiving updates about the organization. It is great to be able to follow individual success stories of the children.

Q: What do you like to see NCEF do more in keeping donors and supporters informed?

We would like to request NCEF to continue maintaining the web page and featuring the children who are receiving the aid.

Q: General comments:

We are very pleased that we chose NCEF for our charitable giving and will continue to do so.

Siri and Satyam Panday currently reside in Boston, Massachusetts. Siri, a Montessori teacher by profession, has a deep compassion towards children and loves to travel, read and do yoga. Satyam received his education in International Economics and Finance and is currently pursuing postgraduate studies. He also enjoys reading and is keen on playing and watching sports. We present below an interview with the couple:

Q: Donations from your Wedding Gift raised approximately \$3272, which put 32 needy children to school for a whole year. Please describe to our readers your motivation for donating to NCEF?

We believe that education is very important in improving the lives of children in Nepal. We were excited to use the occasion of our marriage to encourage donations to NCEF.

Q: How do you describe the donors who contributed to this wedding gift?

Meet Laxmi



Laxmi Shrestha is a six-year-old student in Patan. She lives with her parents and her little sister. Although her father is physically disabled, he supports the family by selling vegetables. Her mother also works as a maid to put food on their plate. The family experienced tremendous financial difficulties last year while trying to support Laxmi's schooling with an annual in-

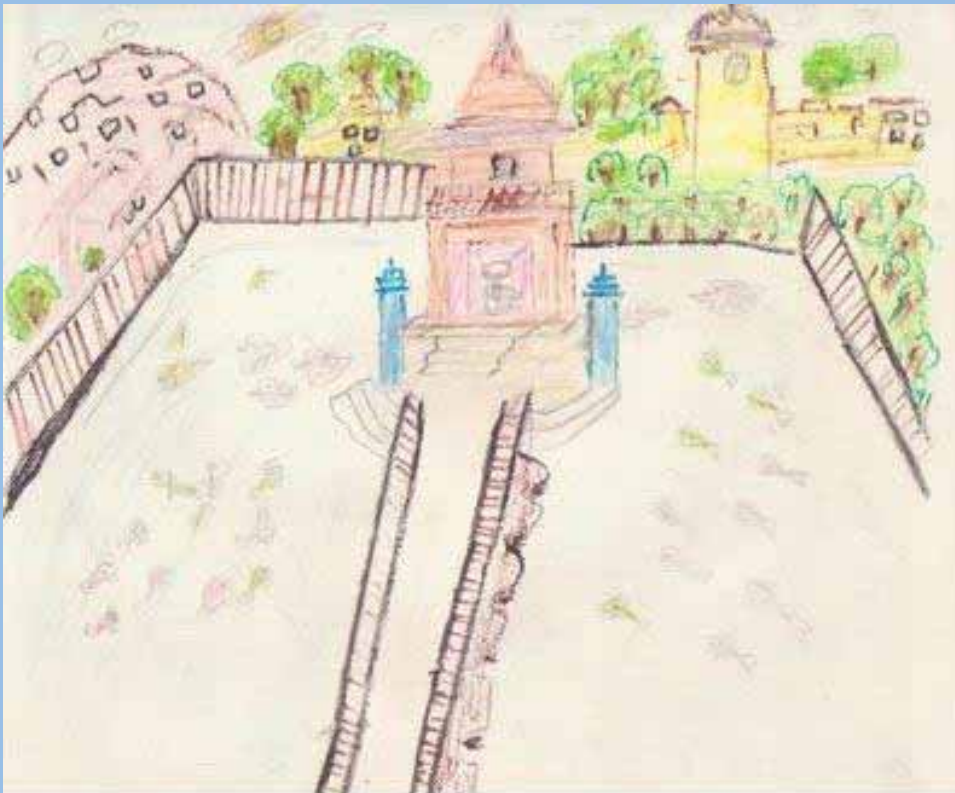
come of approximately \$180. Despite the hardships, Laxmi's father, as our field volunteer tells us, was very eager to support her education even if it meant sending her to a public school, which typically is of lower quality than private schools. With NCEF's assistance that started earlier this year, Laxmi now has an opportunity to "spread her wings and reach for the sky."

KIDS GOT TALENT!

A Typical Temple in Nepal

LAXMI SUNUWAR

Pragati Sikshya Sadan Secondray School



2007 FUNDRAISING METER

\$6158

MAKING DONATIONS

□ Online:

www.nepalchildren.org/donation.html

□ Checks:

Make checks payable to:

Nepalese Children Education Fund or NCEF

Mailing address:

Nepalese Children's Education Fund

P.O. Box 380061

Cambridge, MA 02238-0061

Questions?

Website: www.nepalchildren.org

Email: contact@nepalchildren.org

THANK YOU!

ABOUT NCEF

NCEF is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to develop the potential of disadvantaged Nepalese children through education. Need-based scholarships are provided to deserving students who would otherwise be unable to attend school. Our social workers in Nepal meet regularly with the selected children and their parents to assist in each child's development. We dedicate our resources to each NCEF child until they complete high school (twelfth grade).