

Helping Hands Health Education
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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
www.sannr.com/helpinghands

Future Clinic Dates for Helping Hands Health Village Camps in Nepal.

Date	Clinic	Date	Clinic
January 16 th - February 15 th	Khandbari	September 1 st - September 30 th	TBA
February 17 th - March 19 th	Kusma	October 6 th - November 5 th	TBA
March 18 th - April 17 th	TBA	November 6 th - December 6 th	TBA
April 16 th - May 16 th	TBA	November 24 th - December 22 nd	TBA

PLEASE NOTE : Dates are subject to change. During other dates (May end to August) we can arrange trip to Nepal, but it has to be customized. The village clinics are not available due to monsoon season. Students, doctors and nurses are capable to work in less rainy areas or opt to work a the permanent clinics in Kathmandu. The costs may vary however from the regular trips. Volunteers are always welcome to work at the Helping Hands Chabahal and Indrani clinics in Kathmandu. Each one month session includes two weeks in a village clinic and two weeks on an optional trek. volunteers may participate in multiple clinics.

Another Way to Lend a Helping Hand

Whether you have volunteered with Helping Hands in the past, are hoping to volunteer in the future, or are unable to journey to Nepal this year, we want you to know that you can assist us in our mission all year round. Helping hands is introducing three levels to their membership program: A Helping Hand, Two Hands and A Golden Hand. Each level entitles you to receive this quarterly newsletter, keeping you up to date on the ways that we are expanding ,restructuring and improving our programs. But which ever membership you choose, remember that you will be doing your part to help people of Nepal.

\$30 *A Helping Hand*
 \$75 *Two Hands*
 \$150 *A Golden Hand*
 Other _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____
 Fax _____ e-mail _____

Please make checks payable to Helping Hands Health Education

Hands-On Health
Volume 5, Issue 1 April 2003



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Editor's Pen

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who have contributed to this issue of our Newsletter. We also dedicate this issue to the innumerable volunteers who have provided their time and effort in our mission. We are always indebted to our President Mr. Shrestha for his invaluable guidance to all of us here.

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Hands-On Health News

A publication of HELPING HANDS HEALTH EDUCATION

Helping Hands/ SANN Cosponsors Fifth International Conference on Peace and Nonviolent Action

Fifth International Conference on Peace and Non-violence Action (ICPNA) held at Rajasmand near Udaipur /Rajasthan in India from February 23rd to 26th , 2003 was organized by ANUVIVHA and cosponsored by the Helping Hands/SANN Research, USA; Institute Peace Quest International, Sweden; International Peace Research Association, Japan; The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, UK and Jainworld.com, USA. The theme chosen for deliberations on this occasion was **Seeking the True Meaning of a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World.**



Mr. Shrestha during his presentation at the Event.

The Peace Palace in Rajasmand



promote peace through non-violence and Helping Hands/SANN Research Institute has vowed to work for peace in Nepal and around the world. As part of its first step to work for non-violence and peace, the organization cosponsored this International Event.

As one of the proud co-sponsors of the event, the International President of the organization, Mr. Narayan Shrestha participated in the event held in Rajasmand, India from February 23rd to the 26th. The event was also attended by many Peace Activists and workers from Belgium, Croatia, Greece, India, Italy, Nepal, Russia, UK, South Africa, Sweden, Yugoslavia and the US.

Various discussions on issues of peace around the world was undertaken at this conference with a Declaration being adopted at the end of the session.

It has been in the forefront of a global campaign to

Helping Hands Nepal celebrates its 14th Anniversary

Helping Hands Nepal celebrated its 14th Anniversary on 20th February 2003 in the village of Kusma in Parbat District of Nepal. The event took place at the Chamber of Commerce Hall of Parbat District, with the International President of Helping Hands, Mr. Narayan Shrestha inaugurating the occasion. The local branch office members of Helping Hands branch office in Kusma, welcomed all the guests from branch offices all over the country and hosted the program. The program was followed by Annual Report presentations and discussions on future strategies to strengthen the organization and its programs.



Team members busy at the Health Camp.

The occasion also had the launching of "Helping Hands Souvenir 2003" and the audio cassette "Kanchi le paryo Ranabhulai ma". A "Dohori" song competition was also held to mark the occasion and this gave a cultural perspective to the event.

Following the inaugural ceremony of the 14th Anniversary of the organization, a seven-day health camp was also conducted to provide free and quality medical services to the needy people of the District. This camp was conducted by a very efficient team of Nepali doctors and the western volunteers who joined to serve in the camp.

An Overview of Culture of Peace and Non-Violence—Ahimsa*

We are passing through one of the most violent periods of modern history. 9/11 catastrophe makes it imperative for us to think beyond wars and adopt non-violence as a means of putting an end to terrorism since no amount of military might can defeat it unless we first address the issues that cause it.

We can kill or disarm the enemy but unless the cause of enmity is rooted out, the cycle of revenge will go on for centuries making innocent people vulnerable in the form of 'collateral damage'. Their agonized lament will continue to fall on deaf ears. We see that violence, hatred and especially collective hatred, with its explosions of enmity and violence, are manifestations of the causes of grave deviations, anomalies, folly and many other sicknesses. One of the causes of violence is our failure to understand the actual cultural diversity and our refusal to use our resources equally to mitigate the hardship of each of the religiously and culturally diverse societies within a state. Injustice, exploitation, discrimination, uncontrolled greed, consumerism, and

peace was, 'the culture of the heart or the building of character' and he even went to the extent of saying that 'all training without the culture of the spirit was of no use, and might be even harmful.'

As defined by the United Nations the Culture of Peace is a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations. In essence we can say that the quest for a culture of peace and non-violence is a journey within, a journey into the self. We discover an echo of what we have said in the concluding paragraph of the Seville Statement issued by the most celebrated scientists, sociologists and anthropologists of the world in the International Year of Peace 1985 under the auspices of UNESCO, "Just as wars begin in the minds of men, peace also begins in our minds. The same species, who invented war is capable of inventing peace. The responsibility lies with each of us."

What is a culture of peace and nonviolence?

Now the question before us is what is meant by a culture of peace and non-violence. It was aptly elucidated by the teachings of Buddha and Jesus Christ in the pre-millennium era and of St. Francis of Assisi in the 12th century and of Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. in the twentieth century. Bertrand Russel defines this culture of peace and non-violence in just one sentence, Remember your humanity and forget the rest'. To M.K. Gandhi the culture of

* This abstract is taken from the ANUVIBHA - ANUVRAT GLOBAL organization's website.

Village Profile of Phalewas Village



The Village

Phalewas is a village in Parbat district. Previously, Phalewas was the name of the Village Development Committee (VDC) itself. However, during the last political division of VDCs, Phalewas was divided into two VDCs – Phalewas KhariGaun and Phalewas Devasthan. As we can see that Parbat District lies in the Mid-Western region of Nepal so does the village – Phalewas. Kusma, the district headquarters lies 57 kilometers west of Pokhara, the well known tourist resort. Phalewas is 10 kilometers south of Kusma. Phalewas lies at the center of the Parbat district. It lies in the eastern bank of the renowned Gandaki river. Since recently a trekking route has been operational from Ranighat in Palpa to Jomsom and Muktinath in Mustang. Phalewas also lies on this route. This village has population of 4518 according to the 1990 census. Ethnically, Brahmans, Chhetris, Newars, Kamis, Damais, Sarkis and Gurungs live in Phalewas. Rice is the main production. Wheat and maize are other major crops. There is a good irrigation facility and in terms of cereal crops, this village is self reliant. Although the village is still to be connected to the outside world with motor able roads, it boasts of basic infra-structural facilities such as electricity, telephone and drinking water. Phalewas has the highest literacy rate in the district (70 %). There are three high schools, 10 primary schools and one diploma level campus. There is also a library. However, it may be said that this village has not been doing well in the health frontier. Although there are two health posts and one Ayurvedic post, they are not running well. There are some junior medical practitioners in the private sector. They offer some clinical services. It is sad to note that there isn't a single medical practitioner with an MBBS degree nor are there any laboratory facilities or even X-ray machine. These are in high demand in this village.

Getting there

It involves a three hour trek from Kusma to reach Phalewas. The road from Kusma to Modi Khola (river) is a steep slope descending from Kusma. One can reach Modi Khola in about 15 minutes. Then comes the suspension bridge of Modi Khola. Immediately after the bridge of final 'ascent' Phalewas will begin. It takes about half an hour to get through it. After another half an hour of easy walk, one gets at Phalewas.

Helping Hands in Phalewas

Given the state of medical facilities available in this village and given the high demand for good medical relief services, the health clinic of Helping Hands is definitely an innovative and appropriate idea. With the exception of one or two eye camps, the village has not experienced services of any health camps. It is therefore, hoped that a health camp with lab facilities including X-ray, ultrasound, and ECG equipment could generate high enthusiasm among people. The weaker sections of the society will surely benefit most from the camp. From Phalewas and its neighboring villages some 50,000 people will have the opportunity to use the services of the camp.

What else in Phalewas

For a day off from duties, Phalewas offers much in terms of leisure activities. A 60 to 90 minute trek would bring one to Shanker Pokhari (lake) where one could catch a glimpse of the Himalayan range from Dhaulagiri to Mt. Makalu. Along the Himalaya range one could climb up to Karki Neta. On the other hand, the Kali Gandaki river at a distance of about 1 km from Phalewas offers the opportunity for fishing. In this way one can combine volunteerism work with pleasure in Phalewas.

Helping Hands Holds Presentations at Many Platforms.



International President of Helping Hands Mr. Narayan Shrestha (second from the left) with Chairman, Department of Medicine at Chicago Medical School Dr. Eric P. Gall (extreme right) and other student organizers at the University during one of Mr. Shrestha's visits.
April 2003

April 2003, was a month of travel for International President of Helping Hands Mr. Narayan Shrestha. Mr. Shrestha travelled to various US States representing Helping Hands in various presentations and programs, where Helping Hands was invited.

Mr. Shrestha began his trip to San Francisco, CA during the first week of April. From the 2nd-4th April, he visited various Universities in San Francisco. He continued his trip to Creighton School of Medicine in Nebraska, where he was invited for a presentation on Helping Hands on the 7th of April. Besides the presentation, he also held meetings with several Deans and Faculty at the medical school. The presentation was widely

welcomed by very enthusiastic students. The highlight of the presentation was when past volunteer Mr. Benjamin Platt and Ms. Roseanna Gleser shared their experiences in Nepal with the audience.

After his visit to Creighton, Mr. Shrestha headed off to Chicago Medical School at Finch University in Illinois where he was invited to talk about the organization and opportunities available in various third world countries. Here also Mr. Shrestha met with various Deans and Faculty members besides making the presentation on Helping Hands. Mr. Shrestha

took the opportunity, where many Nepalese from around the US gather, to begin the tour of the cultural program with Ma Ha & the group.

After the performance at the ANA Convention in Denver, the group will tour 10 other North American cities, namely New York, Boston, Washington DC, Chicago, Minneapolis, Atlanta, Omaha, Dallas, Los Angeles and Toronto in Canada.

Mr. Shrestha continued his visits then to New Jersey and Philadelphia. He visited the Thomas Jefferson University, The University of Medicine and Dentistry at New Jersey, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Pennsylvania College of Osteopathy and the Pennsylvania Hospital and held presentation at all these Universities and Hospitals.

This way, Helping Hands received a platform of exposure at all these renowned Universities and hospitals. April sure has been a month of exposure for Helping Hands as it has gained many opportunities to present itself at various platforms, throughout the US.

We thank all the people at these Universities and Hospitals, who provided us with the opportunities and helped us in arranging for the presentations and talks.

Helping to Strengthen Nepali Cultural Values in the Nepali Community in US.

In order to strengthen Nepali cultural values among the younger generation of Nepalese living in the US, Helping Hands Health Education International Office in Boulder, Colorado has decided to invite renowned Nepali Artists from Nepal to present a Nepali Cultural Program in various US cities. HHHE believes that these cultural programs will not only aware the younger Nepali generation on their culture but will also introduce Nepal to more Americans.

In this process, Helping Hands has invited the famous Nepali Duo artists Madan Krishan and Hari Bamsu (MaHa) and a group of performers including Ram Krishna Dhakal, Kunti Tamang, Nabin Chandra Bhattarai and others.

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Helping Hands reaches medical services to people of Kusma

general medical cases diagnosis.



Helping Hands Health brought in quality medical services and distributed free drug in the village of Kusma, Parbat District through its mobile health camp, which operated from 21st Feb to 27th Feb 2003. During the camp doctors and staff attended to a total of 1377 patients.

Out of the 1377 patients treated at the health camp, 360 were general medical cases. The top five medical cases were peptic ulcer, COPD, upper respiratory tract infection, GYN and UTI. The most common medical ailment was peptic ulcers, which consisted of 60% of the

19 surgical cases were attended in OPD.

The total numbers of dental cases attended were 467. Dental surgeon Dr. Prakash Budhathoki was the sole person to provide dental services and Oral Health Training to Paramedics in Kusma. The total numbers of dental trainees were 35. The most common dental problems seen were dental carries, gingivitis, periodontitis. Similarly, treatments provided were extraction; consultation; motivation and referral and minor surgery.

The team serving this camp comprised of Dr. Gupta Bahadur Shrestha, Medical Director of Helping Hands Nepal; Dr. Muna Ar-Rusdi, Physician Volunteer; Mr. Bholu Nath Sharma; Dr. Hem Limbu; Dr. Prakash Budhathoki (Dental Surgeon); Dr. Manisha Budhathoki; Mr. Bhuwan Sharma, PT and Mr. Mitra Bahadur Thapa, CMA (Dental Assistant).

Free Health Services Provided to the Porters Community in Kathmandu.

"I carry your loads whenever you need, but I have a burden that I've been carrying for so many years....and that is to find affordable medical care for the wound I have since past many years.... Who will listen to my plea and who will share my burden...."



This three days free health camp was organized by Help-

ing Hands from the 16th to the 18th of February, 2003. During these three days the team provided clinical services to a total of 612 patients and the type of cases varied from simple general cases to minor surgical cases. The team comprised of Dr. Gupta Bahadur Shrestha, Dr. Birendra Shah, Dr. Hem Limbu, Mr. Dhan Kumar Rai and Mr. Bhuwan Sharma. This camp was one of the several efforts Helping Hands/Nepal has made to reach the poor and needy people of Nepal.

Helping Hands recently answered the plea of hundreds of local porters in the Kalimati area of Kathmandu, where each day these porters begin their day looking for loads to carry from one place to another, in order to earn bread for their family and themselves. These are the poorest of the poor in the country, who can seldom afford medical care and thus live with their diseases until the end catches them. Then they leave behind their young sons as manpower to carry the loads of people who seldom understand their problems. This community



From the village camp in Nepal.....

- Dr. Muna Ar-Rushdi

Dr. Muna Ar-Rushdi participated in the Kusma Village Health Camp in Nepal and sent us this report from the field itself:

" Most people predominantly seen in women's health had major complaints of vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, irregular menses and uterine prolapses. Overall the women had poor understanding of their own physiology and needed education. Their ability to articulate their complaints likewise was affected by their level of education and was even more difficult with using an interpreter. Given more opportunity the women have to access health care directed specifically to their needs. Their complaints were tailored for a shopping list of drugs which were

provided free. The downside is that ignorance leads to improper use of medication amount in the care of antibiotic. The risks for bacterial resistance is real. Limited facilities did not enable accurate diagnosis which would have helped corroborate history and clinical exams.

The district hospital are ideal centers in which to develop a more affective women's health program. The Paramedics/ sisters can hold classes on female anatomy and reproductive health for the lay women. They can hold a Gynea clinic once weekly. They can also be taught PAP Smears and service-vaginal culture collection which can be transported to a central lab in Kathmandu for results, which can be then relayed back. Women with abnormal results can be contacted to follow up in Gynea clinic or

referred to specialty care in Pokhara.

Likewise a more structural format to prenatal care with regular follow up can be instituted through the Gynea clinic- this would allow timely diagnosis and intervention conditions that would otherwise be picked up too late endangering mother and baby that is breech at term.

More regular doctor visits with " directed" care i.e those patients the paramedics/ sisters feel need attention would help. More frequent physician visits would also help investigate the tendency of people to want to stock up on free meds. Regarding the latter maybe some payment for the medication will help curb hoarding.

Overall, it was a very good experience the team got on well together and that created a good working environment . I also got exposure to the practice of tropical medicine that I would otherwise not have.

From Helping Hands Namibia.....

Helping Hands Namibia branch welcomed Dr. Matthew Burtelow, a pharmacology specialist and a medical student of Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota to its UNAM Health Clinic on the 1st of April, 2003. Dr. Burtelow is the third volunteer participating in our clinic in Namibia after Mr. Kyle Fifer and Mr. Tom Chau who participated in the past years.

Dr. Burtelow will be working at the clinic for the first three weeks of his stay and then will move on to enjoy his safari for the rest 10 days before he returns in June, 2003.

We wish Dr. Burtelow an enjoyable and fruitful trip and congratulate HH/ Namibia for welcoming one more volunteer to its clinic.

As Helping Hands Vietnam Country Chapter was preparing to welcome its first volunteer Ms. Colette Wiseman from Massachusetts, the news on SARS and the CDC's warning on travel against Vietnam, especially Hanoi, effected Ms. Wiseman's plans to go to Vietnam. She has now decided to participate in our Nepal program.

Ms. Wiseman and all of us here at Helping Hands were very excited about the Vietnam program, as we would be

initiating our programs in Vietnam with her volunteer efforts. However, we wish to continue our efforts in Vietnam and thus are preparing to take a team of medical professionals during September/October of 2003. We plan to bring in medical help and medical supplies to Vietnam in the very near future.

Now, Ms. Wiseman a medical student and EMT joins Dr. Jill Sheasley in April 2003 for the camp and clinic in Nepal.



Ms. Colette Wiseman.

Volunteer's Corner—Dr. Thomas Sun Shares His Experiences in Nepal.



Dr. Thomas Sun

It is clear that the challenges of providing basic health care to the rural villages of Nepal will continue. This will be further compromised by the unstable political and economic climate the country currently endures. While our contributions to the Nepali people may have been minimal on a global level, we were able to take a small but significant step forward in the difficult journey towards providing ongoing access to health care for those in need.

I am also now a firm believer in the notion that one man can make a difference, thanks to the vision and passion of the Helping Hands president, Mr. Narayan Shrestha. I am furthermore indebted to the Helping Hands staff, volunteers, and my colleagues for giving me such an extraordinary experience, and I will value the new friendships I have developed.

had to bear such difficult circumstances to receive treatment.

The camp would not have been the success that it was without the collective efforts of every member of the Helping Hands staff and the American volunteers. The camp and the clinics were well-organized and run very efficiently. We were fortunate to have the capacity to handle gynecology, minor surgeries, pediatrics, and dentistry, in addition to general medicine. We were also able to run a small inpatient service in the existing primitive but functional hospital. Many of the problems we encountered were clearly related to the lack of continuity of care as well as inadequate sanitation and hygiene. There were also a fair share of social issues that required a better understanding of cultural norms and influences. Our ability to optimize our medical services to the villagers was a result of the strong collaboration between the American and Nepali health care providers.

When we had time off from our clinical responsibilities, we had ample opportunity to appreciate the village life of Bandipur. Many of young village men and women served not only as our interpreters but also as gracious hosts to their village. We were brought to their schools, shops, and temples, and welcomed to observe their festival celebrations. We also accepted invitations into their homes. It was refreshing to see their enthusiasm and pride as they educated us on Nepali culture. In the process, I was reminded of the value of family, friendship, and community as well as the power of generosity, which we often forget to recognize in our busy lives. Bandipur has been regarded as the Switzerland of Nepal, but I believe its true beauty lies in the hearts and attitudes of the people.

It has been said, "You come to Nepal for the mountains, but you go back for the people." This certainly applies to the wonderful people I encountered in the village of Bandipur. It took a tedious 5-hour bus ride along the winding roads leading out of the Kathmandu valley and the bustling capital city to reach the mountain village. Once we arrived however, I was immediately struck by the peaceful atmosphere, the town's rustic architecture, and the beautiful landscape. Not to mention the breathtaking views of the majestic Himalayan peaks overlooking the Marsyangdi Valley to the north. Any fears, concerns, and reservations we may have entertained were quickly forgotten upon our arrival as we were showered with warmth and welcomed with open arms by the villagers.

Our group arrived for the two-week health camp in October, about a year since Helping Hands was last there. This was also the last time any health care provider was present. As is the nature of most health camps, our primary challenge lay in providing medical services with limited supplies and resources. One had to be satisfied with just 'doing your best' with what we had in the short amount of time we were available. Of course, it should be noted that the villagers have had to 'do their best' to function daily without regular access to health care. I believe that this mutual understanding between our group of Western health care providers and the villagers is what made our health camp a success. I was able to feel a sense of trust in our abilities to manage and treat many of their chronic problems as well as acute ones such as asthma, abdominal pain, and a variety of infectious diseases. It was encouraging yet humbling to hear how many patients would walk or sometimes even be carried by stretcher for hours to reach our health camp. Yet, because of both limited resources and time, it was frustrating not to be able to do more for these patients who

"Be the
change
you want
to see in
the
world."

--Mahatma Gandhi