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Christmas with the Kids

One weekend in the lead up to Christmas several of the volunteers invaded Olga's house to celebrate Christmas with 4 local children's homes; Happy house, Friendship house, J and K house. There was a great atmosphere as the volunteers and kids were running around playing pin-the-tail-on-the-elephant, pass-the-parcel and musical chairs (which was made even more entertaining by the absence of a CD player!!

The highlight of the day was then Father Christmas (in the form of our longest volunteer Sebastiaan) coming down the hill with a sack full of presents for the children!

Sebastiaan played the part amazingly, all the children were entranced, and one by one (most) of them sat on his lap and had a quick chat. Even Sajani got her chance to sit on his lap and tell him what she wanted for Christmas.

We were then given far too much food and the biggest chocolate cake anyone has ever seen.

It was great to spend this day with the kids and explain the festival to them and everyone had a great time. We would like to thank Olga again for letting us use her house to entertain the children, and of course Sebastiaan for being such a good sport!



NEPTA Physiotherapy Conference

On the 14th November the Nepal Physiotherapy Association (NEPTA) held their 4th national convention in Kathmandu. The conference was attended by international delegates, volunteer students and Nepali physiotherapist.

Physiotherapy as a profession in Nepal started 40 years ago, but it has significantly changed in recent years. New techniques, technologies and scientific discoveries have all played a part in these changes.

In developing countries such as Nepal, physiotherapy cannot be a service to all the area of Nepal due to geographic distribution and shortage of physiotherapy man power. The conference was held not only for physiotherapist to develop professionally but also for public awareness. NEPTA conference is an opportunity for all Nepali physiotherapists to gain professional and educational interaction between national and international delegates.

The aim of the conferences was to explore the theme of 'movement for health'. The theme is central to the work of physiotherapists and the services delivered to the patient/client around the world. Some of the topics covered during the two day conference were: the

Mulligan's mobilization in weight bearing and non-weight bearing; effectiveness of different treatment strategies on acute ankle sprains; physical rehabilitation – a strategy point for community impact; spinal cord injured patients expected functional outcome and indications of prosthesis and its components.

Also speaking at the conference was a Project's Abroad volunteer Belindra Kerr. Bel gave a 15 minute presentation on an overview of physiotherapy education in Australia. She gave a great presentation and at the end there was a student video so we could see what the Australian physiotherapy students really got up to!! It was Jessica Haysom's birthday on the 2nd day of the conference and she was sung to by the whole of the conference hall – sorry for the embarrassment Jess!

The NEPTA conference was definitely useful for developing new ideas about treatments and techniques for physiotherapy practice in Nepal. I also enjoyed meeting and talking to different physiotherapist from Nepal, New Zealand, Australia and UK. I hope that NEPTA can continue to develop the importance of physiotherapy within Nepal over the coming years.

Ruth Malthouse

SINTERKLASS!

Normally Sinterklaas is a typical Dutch celebration, but this year the Sint made an exception and visit Nepal as well! For the people who don't know Sinterklaas: think of Santa Claus, make his beard longer, his body skinner and change his clothes into red bishop's clothes. He has many black assistants named Piet, comes with a steamboat, ride a horse on the roof and gives candy and presents to children. It's crazy... it must be Dutch.

So a group of naughty volunteers were sitting in Maya's bar in Thamel, when (not) totally unexpected the Sint made his entrance! The two black albino Piets (Maya and Susan) throw some candy and after singing Sinterklaas could sit down.

Some of the volunteers had to sit on the lap of Sinterklaas and had to give an explanation for their behavior this year. How does Sinterklaas know this? Because Sinterklaas sees everything! But luckily the conclusion was always that they were nice and good children. So they could leave the lap of Sinterklaas with some candy.

After a photo shoot Sinterklaas had to leave to visit other children. The Dutch people sing their songs, the rest of the volunteers clapped their hands and Sinterklaas waved.

After Sinterklaas was leaving, Sebastiaan was coming back from the toilet. Everybody had a nice dinner and most of the volunteers had made poems. The most poems were a bit teasing, but always friendly in the end. Specially Graham was a target to write poems for. After the celebration the group went to Fire club to continue the Christmas festivities!



Dhal Bhat!



Dhal Bhat (rice and lentils) is the most popular of all Nepali dishes. It's an inexpensive and tasty meal to eat no matter what the occasion. As it is the national dish of Nepal, it is also probably the safest thing to eat whilst travelling through the country. The main source of protein in dhal bhat is the dhal (which is the lentil soup). You can find several different kinds of dhal, and you'll begin to notice that everyone has a slightly different way of cooking it!

Black dhal is grown in Kathmandu at the edge of the paddy, yellow dhal comes from the terai in southern Nepal. Dried peas and beans are also called dhal and the various types are often mixed.

For those adventurous ones who want to recreate a little bit of the Nepali experience when back at home, here's the recipe to make your very own Dhal Bhat...

Dhal

Ingredients

- Half a cup of dhal (black or yellow lentils)
- One and a half teaspoons of salt
- half a teaspoon of ghee
- Ground ginger
- 4 cups of water

1 pinch of jimbu (A special Nepali rice, see the following note)

1. Boil water and a quarter of a tablespoon of ghee
2. Put the dhal and the salt in the water and cook for an hour for black dal and half an hour for yellow dhal.
3. Add ground ginger
4. Take oil off fire
5. Heat the rest of the ghee in a stirring spoon and fry the jimbu and put it in the dal.

Serve hot

Bhat

Wash two cups of rice. Do not pour the water directly onto the rice. Pour the water first on the hand held over the rice so as not to break the grains (Well that's what it says in Kailash!). Wash the rice about four times and drain off the water.

Add one and a quarter cups of water (sufficient to cover the rice) and a heaped tablespoon of ghee. Do not use poor ghee. If necessary use butter instead.

Bring to the boil. Stir the rice only four times. Cook only for fifteen minutes. Each grain of rice must be separate and undamaged. (I always cover the pan and put a heavy weight on the lid. It also seems to cook better if you don't look at it)

Donations Corner

Thank you to Jess Bell for making and selling a 'Faces of Nepal' calendar to raise money for MSPN, the HIV/aids center

As usual, thank you to all the volunteers that leave their clothes upon departure from Nepal. Navin is busy distributing to the very needy.

A huge thank you to Larissa Robson for donating her camera to J and K house, 2 children's homes after spending a lot of time with them taking photos.

Other News...

Shanika returns! After spending two months in England Shanika is finally back with us! She has been greatly missed and we are all so pleased that she came back to us!

Greg from the Head Office is coming to Nepal on the 1st of February to have a look at all of our placements and to meet the volunteers.

Chancel from the India office is here in Nepal for three weeks to work alongside the Projects Abroad team to learn all about the placements and what volunteers get up to. Hopefully you will all get a chance to meet with him and tell him about your experiences so he can then go and use that information to set up placements in Delhi and continue the good work that our volunteers do for the community.

KRISTIN AT ARNIKO

Arniko Boarding School, known for its good education and bright teachers, is located in Satobato, Lalitpur. About 30 children live at the school, and the overall attendance is just over 100. There are 15 or so teachers, each of whom instructs their class in Nepali, English, math, science, social studies, and language arts. There are usually approximately 25 kids in a class.

I volunteered at Arniko for a month and half—one of the best times in my life. The teachers are friendly and helpful, and the principal is also the Uncle at K House, a local children's home. My schedule when working there went like this; Monday thru Thursday I taught Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade, and on Fridays I taught Kindergarten, 1st grade, and Drama club for a couple hours in the afternoon. My specialty was art, and I worked with the children on sketching and eventually painting, which was quite an adventure.

My first goal when I started working at the school was to teach painting, which is the form of art I am the most familiar with, and as such the most comfortable sharing. Unfortunately, I was never taught how to instruct others in art, and now greatly wish I was. I had no idea what was expected of me, so I gave it my best shot and hoped that it would all work out.

My first experience with painting with the children was a disaster- the paint store tricked me into buying oil paint (I really was tricked; they showed me acrylic paint, and in the same can, gave me oil). As such, I didn't buy turpentine to clean up the paintbrushes, worktable, and kids.

So once I got to school, opened the paint cans, and got the kids to work with the instructions "Paint anything, in any color, and fill the whole page", I discovered that the paint inexplicably



stuck to the student's hands and clothes, and was impervious to soap and water.

Panicking, due to the fact that the clothes were the only school uniforms they owned, and that they worked so hard to keep them clean, I raced to a different paint shop and ordered turpentine- to which I was given a water bottle filled with petrol. What followed was a race against the drying paint and the end of the school day. After cleaning up the students with petrol, I took the kids to the sinks to wash it off with soap and water. But as so often happens in Nepal, there was no water, so I then took my smelly students to the cook, who had a small amount of water, but no soap. After racing around the school grounds looking for both soap and water, having the kids run off in different directions because apparently the smell didn't bother them, and making them sit down while I doused them with frigid water, my task was done.

Painting, Anyone?

Kristin Kudbeh

Upcoming Events

KAYAKING TRIP ON THE TRISULI .

17-18TH Jan

For those who are brave enough!!

A Trip to Chitwan

30th Jan- 1st Feb 2009

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS and FESTIVALS

(January/February)

Prithvi Jayanti: This occasion is celebrated in honor of King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the founder of modern Nepal, with a colorful ceremony in front of the Singha Durbar gate in Kathmandu on January 11, 2009 (Poush 27th, 2063).

Losar: 20 Jan 2009 The Sherpas most impressively observe this festival in the month of February. They organize folk songs and dances on this occasion. These dances can be seen in Kathmandu, Helambu and other northern regions of Nepal and also at Bouddhanath in Kathmandu.

National Democracy Day: This day is officially observed as Rastriya Prajatantra Divas or National Democracy Day as a mark of respect to the people's Revolution of 1950-51. It generally falls on February 18, 2009 (i.e. Phalgun 7)

Maha Shivaratri: (23 February 2009) Shivaratri or the Night of Lord Shiva is observed. It is celebrated in honor of Lord Shiva. A great religious fair takes place in the Pashupatinath Temple and thousands of people from all over Nepal and India flock the temple to worship Lord Shiva.