



Novi Survat Charitable Organisation

(New Beginnings – for the destitute of Goa)

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Newsletter 026 March 2010

Once again apologies for the lateness of this newsletter, my excuse being that I did not return from Goa until March 10th and have been playing 'catch-up' with the emails, correspondence etc. as well as spending most days running our stall in the indoor market.

It was a real pleasure to see so many of you whilst in Goa and my thanks for everyone who gave up their holiday time to come and see the children and join them on their various outings and in some cases to visit their sponsored child at home.

Starting Point.

A number of children had returned to their villages in other states and have not returned so the numbers of children attending school on a regular basis has fallen to about sixteen. We will however have a new influx in June.

There have been a number of parties the first when about sixty children, past & present pupils, came to the Christmas Party. Subsequently there have been parties for Republic Day sponsored by Jean & Paul, a beach party sponsored by Jim & Moe and a day at the Baga Water Park sponsored by Pat & John. The end of February saw the visit for two weeks from students of Braintree College who have just completed a Child Care Course. They did a fantastic job painting the outside walls of the compound as well as brightening the interior of the school with fresh paint and the addition of caricature paintings. They also visited the Day Care Centre, Damedem and the settlements where the children live and treated the children to yet another day out on the beach.

Damedem Care Home.

Christmas, though a busy time, was enjoyed by all. The children received many nice gifts, enjoyed endless parties and went for some outings, including a trip to the cinema in Panjim to see the movie 'Three Idiots' and a visit to a water park.

January saw the children back to their studies and it is hoped that some of the older ones may be able to attend the Open School in June. Sadly Cat & Theresa will be leaving at the end of March. The children have really enjoyed their computer studies and made good progress and we will try and keep up the good work.

February was a month of birthdays with Nikunj 1 yr, Pavitra 6 yrs & Asha 14 yrs plus some of the staff and Dr Mina. Of course there was the usual party with chocolate cake, candles, balloons & the children's favourite lunch Chicken Biryani, pilau and fish fry! Another February birthday was 'Jim Uncle's' who celebrated with the children (wearing full Indian Wedding Dress) up on the playground with a picnic & games.

February 11th (children's day) saw the inauguration of the new Care Home by the Archbishop of Goa, a very impressive three story building. However there is still a lot of work to be done before it is habitable and it is doubtful if the children will be able to move in before the monsoon rains come.

A local man Lenin, known to the children as the 'Snake Man' because he talked to them about snakes and demonstrated how to handle them, is planning an extensive programme for the summer including drama, dance, music, singing, painting and trips to the forest, countryside and play parks. We now have a total of thirteen children taking ART and their health and prospects have improved markedly.

Day Care Centre.

This continues to flourish and there are now 23 children regularly attending with three doctors covering six full days each week. Unfortunately this means we are rapidly running out of space and quotations have been received to build an aluminium and glass extension (which will cost in the region of £450.00). It is hoped that the work will be carried out in April 2010 as there are about 20 children waiting for places who can not be considered until additional space is available.

Educational Sponsorship Scheme.

The children continue to attend St Teresa's and Little Flower schools regularly and are all doing well except for three children, from the same family, who went to their village in the state of Karnataka and did not return. Regrettably we have no means to know if they will continue with their schooling. I will be contacting their sponsors in the next few days.

We hope that at least eight of the children currently at Starting Point will be graduating to the senior schools in June providing they can produce birth certificates.

Volunteers.

Cat and Theresa will be completing their six months as volunteers at the end of March. I am sure they will find it hard to leave the children with who they have formed close ties. They have been a great asset to the projects and will be greatly missed. They have worked tirelessly for five days each week spending the mornings at Starting Point School, three afternoons at Damedem and two afternoons at the Day Care Centre. Staff at each of the projects have said how much they have appreciated the work that Cat & Theresa have done and that they will be sad to see them leave. Thank you Cat and Theresa for all your hard work and I am sure everyone will join me in wishing you a fantastic time and every success at university.

Sponsors and well-wishers.

In addition to those mentioned earlier who sponsored various parties and days out I would like to say a very big thank you to everyone who sent me donations to spend on the children and to those who gave so generously buying fruit, ice-creams, crisps etc in Goa.

Thank you to 'Dee' who sponsored the purchase of a twin tub washing machine making the washing of the children's school clothes a much easier task and to the couple who donated a pressure cooker and frying pan for use by Gracie the school cook.

To Ian & Moira who donated Rs 25000 for the purchase of beds for the Damedem Care Home and to Jim & Moe for paying for six new cots for the babies.

To all of you who have taken goods out to Goa and brought back items for us to sell at our stall in the Indoor Market which continues to be a major source of income to us and to those who donate second-hand books.

To the members of the Newton Abbot Spiritualist Church who held their 'annual' Curry Night on 12th March raising much needed funds from the sale of some delicious curries and the auction of donated goods.

Goa will soon be experiencing the monsoon season – hopefully we will experience a long hot summer.

Best wishes to you all.