

HAITI continued from page 1 toys, and a new home equipped with electricity and water, the children's moral has been lifted and they no longer feel helpless. The nightmares they once had of the earthquake and its aftermath are slowly turning into a good night's sleep for all. We did not obtain any assistance or cooperation from the Government of Haiti at the time, but the government officials did come around to nitpick on the building specifications of the orphanage. We asked the Government to help pay for two teachers but got no response. We learnt that the 9 new schools houses were to receive students but the Government failed to provide teachers or salaries. Since the time of our visit, the Government of Haiti has said it would fund the children's education. We are currently in the process of working out the costs with the government.

The orphanage has also provided a home and employment for our agent who lost his home and had to save his own son from the rubble of their house. He, like so many Haitians, is still waiting to hear when he can have a permanent roof over his head. With no answers in sight some have started reconstructing their homes using their savings, others have moved in with their relatives or friends, reminiscent of what I saw in Sri Lanka, Peru or Kashmir. Underfunded NGOs like ours can only hope that donors will continue to support us in our efforts to expand the orphanage so that we can accommodate an increasing number of children without a home. It was imperative for us to show donors that 100% of the money went to help children as we at FTLOCS are unpaid volunteer.

Water continues to be a major factor in the outbreak of cholera and there is a great need to provide deep water boreholes. FTLOCS is also going to supply solar powered lamps and help people grow their own vegetable gardens.

On seeing the situation in Haiti one wonders why less than a billion of the over \$6-billion pledged towards reconstruction efforts has been delivered by the foreign community.

The Haiti reconstruction fund is supposed to administer \$508-million but has so far only received \$265-million. UN appeal to combat cholera epidemic for \$174-million has raised only 20% of the needed funds. Non-profit organizations raised hundreds of millions in weeks after the disaster; many have not delivered on their promises while some funds have been misspent.

In the light of the above it is very frustrating to see the lack of aid being delivered in the reconstruction efforts. We cannot leave these people in this state of desperation nor can we leave them to become dependant on foreign aid; they need to get on with their lives with some dignity. ♥



PHILIPPINES

Victoria Elementary School

Neta Sharma

FTLOCS provided Victoria Elementary School located in Victoria, Aurora, Isabela, Philippines with \$1,600.00 in aid. The funds were used to purchase story books, school supplies, a laptop, printer, microphone and DVD to facilitate the 104 students. This was also made possible through St. Mary's High School Rotary Interact Club who also donated \$280.95 through their fundraising efforts to aid the school with their educational needs, as well as to assist in feeding the school children. ♥

CANADA

Lindsay Chills Out

Neta Sharma

Lindsay is a 15 year-old born with a rare undiagnosed condition that leaves her severely disabled. She struggles with many complex medical issues which cause severe pain. She suffers from seizure, blood and pituitary disorders. She also has a form of cerebral palsy called dystonic spastic quadriplegia that impacts her mobility. All this requires medication and specialized equipment to make life a little easier for Lindsay and her family.

FTLOCS purchased a Chill-Out Chair for Lindsay at a cost of \$2295.00. It provides her with a safe and comfortable environment that fully supports her during both functional activities and at rest time. The wheel-based chair also allows her family to move Lindsay without having to lift her. This specialized alternative seating is not covered by Alberta Aids to Daily Living Program or Blue Cross.

"Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. She is really enjoying resting in the chair" – Mom ♥

For The Love of Children Society has been helping children in Canada and around the world for the past 30 years. We have 49 schools and orphanages around the world and help war-torn countries and countries hit with natural disasters. We support children in areas including Haiti, India, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Peru.

If you would like to make a tax deductible donation, please make your cheque payable to :

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For the Love of Children
Society of Alberta

DECEMBER 2011



JAPAN

Yamada South Elementary School

Ashid Bahl with Machiko Hashimoto, Naoko Masuda

October 2011 – After the earthquake and tsunami in March, FTLOCS reached out to longtime friend and supporter Machiko Hashimoto to see if we could help the Japanese children in any way. Through her connections, we were able to get in touch with the Yamada South Elementary School in the town of Yamada, Iwate Prefecture. Most of Yamada was destroyed by the tsunami, and the school, situated upon a hill, is one of the few remaining buildings in the town.

The principal, Ms. Saga, requested that we provide funds for an annual overnight study trip taken by fifty grade six students. Although many of the basic necessities have been provided by the government and various NGOs, the trip was something that would have to be abandoned if funds were not found. FTLOCS, with the support of generous donors, was able to raise over \$12,000.00 to cover the cost of the trip. President Ashid Bahl travelled to Japan in Octo-

ber to meet and send the children off on their long-anticipated trip.

Although the children had endured unthinkable tragedy and hardship in the seven months since the disaster, they were eager to demonstrate to Ashid and their community that they were healthy and well. On the trip, the students visited the UNESCO heritage town of Hiraizumi to visit and learn about the history of the area; danced the "Tora-nomai" (Tiger Dance) at a local shopping centre in front of Ashid, Machiko and the community; and enjoyed a carefree afternoon at a local amusement park.

The majority of our work is in underdeveloped areas of the world helping children with the most basic of needs. On this occasion, we were delighted that we could help children with the gift of an experience that would hopefully help to rehabilitate them emotionally and stay with them for a lifetime. ❤️

HAITI

Port Au Prince

Ashid Bahl

January 2011 – After returning from Haiti a year on from the devastating earthquake, I saw that not much had changed for the 1.3 million people left homeless in the ravaged capital.

Thousands still live in inadequate tents without their basic needs being met. Less than 5% of the rubble has been cleared. Cholera epidemic has claimed the lives of over 3,600 people. To add to the existing problems there is the violent political unrest over the elections. Rape is prevalent in the tent camps.

The people are frustrated at the Haitian Government taking so long to decide how they should be helping the homeless. Attempts to provide temporary shelters for the homeless like the Corail project is sadly failing, forcing the Haitian Government to come up with a long lasting solution. The Corail settlement, intended for about 4,000, is built on borrowed land has become much like the slums I see in India. Upon hearing about the settlement many desperate people moved in, building shacks made of corrugated metal. The shacks are surrounded by raw sewage. There is no running water, electricity, health facility, no jobs or adequate transportation.

Many did not like the idea of being moved outside the city, as most make their living within the city and the commute is expensive. In many of the countries we have helped in the past, temporary shelters sadly became their permanent homes. People here believe the same will happen in Haiti.

For our part, and with the help of \$15,000.00 in funding from the Government of Alberta, FTLOCS built one of the first permanent buildings: an orphanage that was destroyed by the earthquake. About fifty orphan children can now live and receive education that is better than before. After receiving new clothing, food, education supplies, *continued to page 4*

GIVING PAYS IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

Alberta's provincial tax credit helps to increase private charitable donations to Alberta's nonprofit and charitable sector. An individual taxpayer may be eligible to receive a combined 50% non-refundable tax credit on the total of donations made above the \$200. So help the kids and help yourself too! Visit www.communityspiritprogram.ca and click on the "Charitable Tax Credit" link for more information. And thank you for your continued support.

CALGARY KIDS

Opening Gaits Therapeutic Riding

For the second year, the Opening Gaits program has been the recipient of a \$3,000 donation from FTLOCS. This donation enables children and young adults with physical and mental challenges to receive ongoing therapeutic horseback riding experience. This therapy helps improve flexibility, balance & muscle strength and provides the participants with a sense of achievement and self-confidence.

Alberta Children's Hospital

FTLOCS provided \$7,056.42 in funding for high-nutrition formula such as Neocate and Neosure to five infants ranging from two to nine months. This life-sustaining formula is vital for infants who are suffering from a failure to thrive, as well as a variety of medical issues including lung deformities, congenital heart defects, and milk/soy allergies. Requests for assistance come from the Alberta Children's Hospital on behalf of families who are struggling financially and facing medical expenses that do not qualify for Child Health Benefits.

Bikes for Kids

Once again with Bow Cycle's Annual Bikes for Kids Program, FTLOCS was able to provide 30 bikes to children from the YMCA Outreach Program.

Teens with big hearts

Jyoti and Asha Ruparell were presented with special medals in appreciation of their continued fundraising efforts. This year both girls collected and donated \$1,155. Great job Jyoti and Asha! You're an example to us all.

COLOMBIA

St Jude FTLOC School

Vince Greco & Ashid Bahl

March 2011 – We took a two day road trip to Florencia and visited the Mercy House Foundation orphanage. It had run out of funding near completion and was unable to furnish the facility. The total amount required based on a quote was \$2,658.67.

Returning back to Bogota, we quickly discovered the true reality of daily life when we arrived at one of the many local "check stops". The locals live in constant, unimaginable fear, intimidated by local gang guerillas.

The school we have been working on, St Jude For the Love of Children Society School, has so far cost \$31,369.34. There are still upgrades and maintenance required such as roof repair, electrical, and painting at an estimated cost of \$2,251.43.

There are currently 50 children, aged 2-14 years. 47 pay \$26.00 monthly to attend. Four teachers are employed at \$260/mo (minimum wage), with a bonus 13th paycheck paid by the church. The school and land are owned by the church and the school is required to pay half of the utilities. Currently, the school is not earning enough income and is behind on payments to the teachers and the church.

There are currently three special needs children. George David Sanchez, 14, is in grade 5. He comes from a poor single-parent fam-

ily and has sight only in one eye with limited hearing. He walks 45 minutes to school each day. Stephanie Diaz's father has been wrongfully accused and is in jail. The 5 year old is usually unemotional and detached, but just giving her attention and affection during our four days helped her to come out of her shell. When we left, she cried and gave me a hug and we suggested to the children to pay a little more attention to her. Mariana, 8, comes from a very dysfunctional and abusive home. Although her aunt helps out, she often comes to school unfed and is fed at school. Despite their individual challenges, education will provide them with a chance at a better life.

The school needs a minimum of 100 students to be self-sufficient. We were able to provide chairs for the library, desks, a computer, laptops, bookshelves and toys. Additional desks, chairs computers and other basic educational tools are still required to ensure that each child has an equal opportunity at a successful future.

We received numerous letters from the children, each unique and expressing their gratitude. Three especially touching letters were written by Karen Morales Rodrigez, Mariana Bay, and Paula Nova, who were always the first to greet us each day. The overwhelming welcome for the services we provided was heartwarming and eye opening and the feeling still follows me today. Although we left with a sense of accomplishment and happiness there is a greater awareness of how much work is further required. ❤️



INDIA

Itanagar and Tawang

Ashid Bahl & Thinley Topgyal

February 2011 – We travelled from Delhi to Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh. Itanagar, the state capital, is named after Ita Fort "meaning fort of bricks", built in 14th Century AD. Tawang is an administrative district within Arunachal Pradesh.

Our first visit took us to an orphanage operated by the Mother Theresa Mission of Charity. There were about 25 orphans from infants to children up to the age of 10 years – some with a variety of medical problems. The Sister in charge asked me to make a wish of the children come true by donating a guitar and we were happy to oblige. We also visited the Oju Welfare Association School. This school's objective is to provide better education, and to promote female empowerment and child welfare. We distributed jackets, school supplies, first aid kits and donated \$500.00 towards the education of the children.

To get to Choephelling Public School in Tawang, we took a helicopter over the Bhutan Mountains and rode in a jeep along winding mountain roads. On our way to the school we saw a mountain trail that His Holiness the Dalai Lama used when he escaped from Tibet into India. Here we distributed jackets, school supplies, first aid kits and donated \$400.00.

We also visited Buddha Culture & Education Foundation in Lumla. Here, we distributed school supplies, but there is a need for 250 desks made of steel and wood for their 10 classrooms. In the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, a state-operated school for disadvantaged and minority girls, the children here need winter clothing.

At Jamtse Gatsel run by the Childug Charitable Foundation, we again distributed jackets, school supplies and first aid kits. Here, there is a need for dental supplies and training in modern dental care methods. Mr. Sharma with Dentists Without Borders is willing to assist us in this aspect. The last school we visited was Manjushree Vidhyapeeth where we distributed jackets, t-shirts, first aid kits and a donation of \$500.00 for a new computer.

Arunachal Pradesh is the northeasternmost state of India and borders Bhutan, Burma and China. It is home to approximately 1.4 million people from 26 major and numerous minor tribes with rich cultural traditions. The major religions practiced here are Lamaist Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity. ❤

CALGARY

Calgary Aerospace Museum

Neta Sharma

FTLOCS provides funding to for Calgary youth to participate in the Aerospace Museum's educational programs. Campus Calgary Aerospace School allows eight classes of students every year to bring their classroom to the museum. Using the museum's artifacts and specialists as resources, broad applications are made that touch on all aspects of the curriculum and help develop the students' talents for inquiry based learning.

Our president Ashid Bahl also takes time to speak at these classes and shares some of his inspirational stories about the significance of giving and how we all can make a difference through small gestures of compassion.

"Thank you so much for sharing your time, knowledge and enthusiasm with my students. Over the week they experienced things that they will never forget thanks to you. Your passion, patient and creative way of presenting to the students was incredible. Your belief in giving and helping others is very motivational" – Miss Moriarty and the grade 3/4 classes ❤

CALGARY

Santa's Xpress Celebrates 20

Neta Sharma

On December 5, 2010, FTLOCS embarked on our 20th Santa's Xpress excursion and gave 54 disadvantaged children from the Y.M.C.A. along with their families a "Fantasy Flight to the North Pole". The day began when the children and families arrived at the Aero Space Museum where they were greeted by The Calgary Airport Pipe & Drums and escorted through a galaxy of Star Wars troops. You could sense the children's excitement as they made their way through the Canada Customs Officers and Candy Detector to have their own personalized passports stamped and their gift bags filled with candy. The families were entertained by performers, mascots, various games and activity booths. They also had the opportunity to view the collection of aircrafts from the history of aviation.

The families boarded two planes provided by Connect Air Ltd. The crew took them on a 45 minute fantasy flight and adventure to find Santa Claus's in a helicopter as he circled the Calgary Tower's "North Pole". In addition, the children were greeted by MLA Dave Rodney in a hot air balloon provided by Marge & Ron Lessoway and the MRL Group of companies.

After their flights, the children were whisked off to the Delta Airport Hotel to enjoy a Christmas party with food, entertainment and a special visit with Santa who had gifts for all. We want to thank all our volunteers and supporters who took part in making this Express a memorable day for everyone! ❤

THANK YOU

Food and Wine Gala Raises over \$33,000

A very warm thank you on behalf of FTLOCS to all our supporters and volunteers for joining us at our 2011 Food & Wine Fest. On May 28, you helped to raise \$33,307.00. Guests enjoyed an evening of culinary celebration and wine-tasting from around the world at Willow Park Wines & Spirits. Your generosity will help provide life-saving care to children from all walks of life here and around the world with a variety of services including education, emergency aid, medicine, once-in-a-lifetime experiences, specialized medical equipment and treatment, and other life-sustaining products. We could not do our work without your continued support.