

Ghar Sita Mutu - House With a Heart

A home for abandoned children, a training program for destitute women, and a support program for needy families in Kathmandu, Nepal

Winter 2010

It has been another challenging year at Ghar Sita Mutu—filled with both happy and sad moments. The good have outweighed the bad and I am reassured by the fact we continue to touch the lives of many children and women in Nepal thanks to the generosity of you, my dear friends and kind supporters.



Puspa loves to play with our dog Sweetie.

OUR NEW ARRIVAL

We have a new fifteen-month-old baby, Puspa, living temporarily in our home. She was recently adopted by Mark and Karen Mendes from Vermont but she was unable to go home with her new parents because the U.S. has recently suspended visas for adopted Nepali children.

Puspa's new parents are not alone; there are many families who face this same problem.

Puspa's new father had to return home after a two-week visit to Nepal, and I offered to look after her

while the visa problem is sorted out. After a rocky start and some sleepless nights, she has settled in well. Our other children love her and are a great help in looking after her. She has thrived under our care. With Puspa's arrival we have realized we are ready to expand our family and plan to take in some more babies in need.

HOSPITAL RUNS

We've had three horrible experiences with hospital visits in the last few months. It is a challenge just to get to a hospital and once there, I am quickly reminded of how disturbing the conditions are. In the emergency room it's not unusual to see two to three patients to a bed, doctors contradicting each other, blood is splattered on the walls, and patients dying in the midst of the chaos.

Our first trip to the hospital came when our young cook's wife gave birth to an underweight baby. He came for help in the middle of the night when the power was off, and we set off in the dark and menacing streets under the protection of the guard from our house. I am pleased to report that mother, baby, and father are all doing fine now.

A few weeks later, Laxmi, a woman under our care who suffers from seizures due to injuries sustained from carrying bricks for a living, needed to return to the hospital. She is back home with us now and making slow progress.

And lastly, baby Puspa needed emergency care for an ear infection when she first came to us. She was



This is the latest photo of the entire Ghar Sita Mutu family in front of our house.

prescribed antibiotics and is now a healthy and happy little girl.

It is vital for us to have our own transportation so that we can better respond to these kinds of emergencies. It is my hope that next year—our tenth anniversary—we will raise enough money to buy a van.



Carrying bricks is difficult and dangerous work. This is how Laxmi was injured. GSM provides free training for women so that they don't have to do this kind of backbreaking manual labor to support their families.

I am also reminded of how desperate things will get if Nepal is struck by a natural disaster such as an earthquake. The hospitals are simply not equipped to deal with it. As such, we are still trying to prepare ourselves that in the event of an earthquake, we can help ourselves and others in our community.

On a happier note, our women trainees have been very busy producing unique felt and chiffon scarves, silk bags, jackets and pants, as well as our felt puppets. I brought these lovely items back from Nepal, and we'll be selling them mainly in the U.S. with proceeds going back directly to the program. Many of the women are also participating in our literacy program, where they are learning basic reading and math skills.

We recently had some good family time at the House celebrating several holidays including Dashain and Tihar. The children have a month off during these festivals and typical of most children, they have enjoyed the break. We went on some fun day trips and took the time to rearrange the bedrooms again. The children are excited about their new rooms.

While walking with my eight youngest girls last month, we ran into Goma, a woman who received



Priety, our Literacy teacher, teaches women in our training program basic reading and math skills to help them become more self sufficient and confident.

three goats from us two years ago. She now has a healthy herd of eleven including several pregnant females. Ownership of livestock is a way out of poverty, and I'm happy to report Goma's family's future looks much brighter than before.

While I'm in America I keep in close contact with the children and our staff at the House, thanks to the internet. We email daily and make frequent Skype calls when there is electricity. Between power outages and time zone differences, it's challenging to connect, but it is well worth it when we do.

Before I left to come back to New York, one of our older girls, Karmala, wrote me a lovely poem about how much she enjoys her life at the House. I cannot tell you how touched I was. Her words served to put



Friday is Family Night, where we play games, hold talent shows or watch movies and eat popcorn.

all the struggles associated with raising 19 children into perspective.

VISITORS

The students in our Children's Learning Centre were delighted to receive new clothing and delicious Dashain food from **Paila – The Next Step**, an organization of local college students who work with children as part of a volunteer and leadership development program.



Members of Paila worked with the students in our Children's Learning Centre.

Dr. Bibek Aryal visits our House twice a month. We are so fortunate to have him here to examine the children. On a recent visit he taught the small children how to properly wash their hands and talked to the older children about the perils of drug use.

We also had a return visit from some members of **Eyes Wide Open**, a non-profit that facilitates volunteer opportunities in the developing world in partnership with Melbourne, Australia Rotary clubs. The children enjoyed making crafts, learning cooking skills, playing ball, and painting murals with this fun group.

SOLAR PROJECT UPDATE

Monsoon season is over and the dry season begins. Along with it comes rolling power outages which start out at a few hours a day and then creep up to almost 16 hours a day! Thanks to the efforts of **Dr. Branka Pavic**, who raised over \$3,800 from two Rotary clubs in Italy, along with money donated from fundraising parties

Mark your calendars!

Holiday Bazaar **December 12 / noon-7 pm**

Lower East Side Girls Club
56 E. 1st St. / NY, NY

Felt items are also available at
A Repeat Performance
156 First Ave / NY, NY

Purchase beautiful merchandise made by the GSM women in support of our programs.

Benefit concert **January 24, 2011**

Don't miss a special performance by *Anacoustic Mind* and others to benefit GSM. Details will be emailed to our mailing list and posted on our website at www.GharSitaMutu.org.

held by **Bill Boland** in Arizona, and **Colleen Boland** in Ithaca, New York, we are now able to move forward with phase one of our Solar Back Up Project.

Once this is up and running, we will no longer have to worry about our children studying by candlelight or lanterns, or how we are going to pump water and cook our food. Our quality of life will increase immeasurably.



We are thankful that Dr. Bibek Aryal makes house calls to the GSM house.

Ghar Sita Mutu
PO Box 152
New York, NY 10113

Join us on Facebook!
"Friend" Beverly Bronson
and join the Ghar Sita
Mutu fan page.
www.GharSitaMutu.org



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FUNDRAISING EVENTS

By the time you read this, our December 1 fundraising party kindly sponsored by **The Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation** will have taken place in their lovely events room. Many thanks to **Rachel Weingeist, Heidi Albee** and **Anna Gonick** for their work on this event.

We are so grateful for the help of the **Lower East Side Girls Club** and their director **Lyn Pentecost** for selling GSM training program merchandise. They are also hosting our holiday bazaar in their space on December 12, 2010.

Here is how you can help

*Ghar Sita Mutu relies on the generosity of friends like you. All donations are **tax deductible** and go directly toward running and expanding our programs.*

*Please make all checks payable to our fiscal sponsor:
The Candy Jernigan Foundation for the Arts
and note "Ghar Sita Mutu" on your check.*

*Mail checks to:
Ghar Sita Mutu
P.O. Box 152
New York, NY 10113*

You can also give online at www.GharSitaMutu.org

Thank you!

For more information, call Beverly at 212-529-0832.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND



Babu & Krishna, ages 2 & 5

My name is Beverly Bronson. I own a small antique shop called A Repeat Performance in New York City. In 1999 while working as a volunteer in Nepal, I found two abandoned children named Babu and Krishna, ages two and five. After searching for a loving home for them I had no choice but to put them in boarding school. Safe but bleak.

The school appointed me as guardian and I went back to New York with plans to raise money to establish a centre to house abandoned children and help destitute women.

I returned to Nepal later that year with enough funds to rent a house. We opened Ghar Sita Mutu - House with a Heart in 2001 and have been expanding our outreach to the community every year. We moved into our own home in 2004. I split my time between New York and Nepal.