



Asha Kiran

Asha-Seattle's quarterly Newsletter

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Greetings all!

The quarterly Asha newsletter endeavors to provide glimpses into the communities and lives of the people that are improved by the generosity of Asha donors. In this issue, Jay Dave who is an active Asha volunteer and project coordinator, provides a view into the work done by Janseva Mandal & Jeevan Vidya. Shankar Narayan also provides an inspiring article on fund raising for Asha with active events like running and biking.

Asha Seattle events were extremely successful this year and we hope to have your continued involvement in

upcoming and future events. One of Asha's primary fund raising events, the 12th Annual Manhas Family Charitable Golf Tournament, was held on October 7th and we would like to thank all the participants for their support.

Thank you, as always, for your support and assistance at Asha for Education, Seattle Chapter.

We look forward to hearing your suggestions and comments. Our contact e-mail id is seattle@ashanet.org

Asha Seattle Team

Janseva Mandal & Jeevan Vidya Projects in Nandurbar, Maharashtra, India

By Jave Dave

Janseva Mandal is located in the district town of Nandurbar. It was founded in 1969 by Bernard Massat as part of the Jesuit organization Bombay Xavierant Corp which also has a stake in the Xavier's College located in Mumbai. Jeevan Vidhya is a branch of Nirmala Niketan, a women's development institute.

Janseva Mandal and Jeevan Vidhya have been working on tribal development for over 25 years. They initiated a dialogue with tribal communities to formulate strategies of economic and social mobility covering environmental conservation in farming, credit management, and alternative education. Their primary approach includes the inclusion of tribal youth in the development of their own communities on a semi-voluntary basis through motivation and training programs. Janseva Mandal and Jeevan Vidhya together provide boarding and lodging facilities for 120 tribal children in Nandurbar. Janseva runs the facility for boys and Jeevan Vidhya runs the girls' facility.

Asha has been providing financial support to these organizations since 2008 providing approximately 40% of their annual budget to cover food and living expenses. With Asha's support over the past four years, these organizations have been able to focus on improving the facilities that they provide to the

children. These improvements include a computer lab with over 45 laptops, Math and English classes, nutritious food, studying facilities for Janseva boys and solar heaters.

The academic year 2011-12 began on 15th June 2011 for the schools. Jeevan Vidya admitted 16 new female students into the 5th grade bringing up the number of girls to 73. The number of boys in Janseva remained at 60.

In addition to the work with tribal communities, the organizations have identified issues with the quality of primary education at the local schools where a number of students have difficulty with basic Math. They have teamed up with another organization called QUEST to provide remedial classes in Math to the students. QUEST provided the services of a teacher that is specifically trained to teach basic Math to students in the Fifth and higher grades.

The computer lab that was set up 2 years ago provides additional benefits to both organizations. A trained instructor teaches various software packages to the students based on their age e.g. MS Paint for students in the 5th grade and Excel worksheet for students in the 10th grade.

In addition to educational activities, the kids are also involved

in agricultural work on campus. This serves the dual purpose of keeping them in touch with their agricultural roots while teaching them the dignity of labor. Every alternate Sunday both the organizations organize various co-curricular activities and competitions for the students e.g. handwriting contests, essay competitions, drawing events, drama, dancing etc. The goal is to ensure that each student are well-rounded. The boys of Janseva participate in team sports like cricket, football and kabaddi. Jeevan Vidya also hosts a Sports Day (January 8 this year) where the girls participate in various activities like sack race, lemon and spoon race, frog jump, etc.

Janseva celebrated Parent's Day on Jan 29th 2012 and the event was attended by 60 parents. The boys developed a cultural program for their parents and at the end each boy designed a card and presented to his parents. The event concluded with a community meal. This was a proud day for the parents who traveled great distances to see their kids perform. Jeevan Vidya hosted a similar event on Jan 22nd 2012 for 175 parents. It was a proud day for the parents to see their girls perform on stage.

At the event, Jeevan Vidya awarded the girl who scored the highest marks in SSC, a scholarship to continue her education.

Janseva and Jeevan Vidya also organize a few activities where the kids from both the organizations could mingle including a Christmas celebration and cultural programs by both the boys and girls followed by a community meal, and then a day long picnic at a nearby park. Janseva also organized an excursion to Mumbai for 18 boys from classes 7, 8 and 9. Jeevan Vidya too organized a similar trip to Mumbai for the girls of class 9th and 10th. The kids spent 3 days in Mumbai and had a great time visiting various places of interest and enjoying Mumbai experiences. For these kids, all of whom live in remote rural areas, Mumbai was truly a trip of a lifetime.

The support provided by Asha goes a long way in improving the quality of life for the students at both the organizations. With the food and boarding expenses provided, these organizations can devote their additional funds to improving the education for these kids as well as providing them with better and more nutritious food.

Fund raising for Asha

By Shankar Narayan

My involvement with Asha began with a question to one of the organizers of Asha when I saw the fund raising email to an Indian Distribution list at Microsoft. I could not understand why I needed to pay ASHA to run and this was probably due to my lack of maturity in understanding fund raising at non-profits. I was initially more attracted to the physical routine than into the actual fund raising but when I got acquainted with the volunteers and heard about the various projects that ASHA supports, I realized how significant the efforts involved were and the positive impact they had on the actual recipients.

I then got really serious about raising funds for Asha. I have started reaching out to all my contacts seeking their support even if there was a lack of prior regular communication. Over years of fund raising, I have realized that people need to be contacted in person, or addressed personally and not in groups. It is also important to provide information on the impact of their contributions, and it has been an effective approach for me. For the 5th year in a row of fund raising, I have participated in challenging events to inspire the valuable contributions from the community. As I raise the

bar on activities, it is helping me to improve my personal traits and habits, leading me to a more fulfilled life. It is also gratifying that I am able to give back to the community. I truly enjoy it and would highly recommend it.

In short, I do this because:

- **Keeps me fit**
- **I enjoy biking**
- **I enjoy the opportunity to do something that many are still considering**

Spread the message and raise awareness about disadvantaged youth that are desperately in need of assistance for the basic need of education

I have done my part to train hard and ride hard, with a strong appeal to help educate the underprivileged children in India. I have now successfully completed my 4th STP ride and 3rd consecutive 1 day ride. You may find more details at my blog (http://sankarathlete.blogspot.com/2012_07_01_archive.html)

Events, past and future

May 30	Talk by Harsh Mander: India's Unfinished Battle Against Hunger
July 22	Indus Creations Play
August 11	Allgorthyths
Aug 20 – 24	Vision Studios 2012's film making crash course
Aug 26	Fun in the Sun Walk/Run event
Oct 7 – 12	Annual Manhas Family Charitable Golf Tournament
Oct 18	Microsoft Give Campaign Poker event
Nov 10	Asha Seattle's Diwali concert