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I N S A F

INDIAN SCHOOLS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

A NEW ANNUAL APPROACH TO GIVING SOMETHING BACK

Some of us would like to give something back every year by contributing to some project or the other. However, there are many reasons why we don't get to it. Please see if any of the following feel familiar:

- ◆ There are 12 months in the year — so which month should I choose to make my contribution? May be next month, i.e. March, if I think of this in Feb; September, if I think of this in August. Wish there were a "system".
- ◆ I want to contribute but which project should I support? What exactly are my options? Wish there were a menu from which I could choose.
- ◆ I don't want to contribute to someone else's project but it is not clear to me how I can go about starting my own project. Wish someone else could do the ground work but implement my ideas.

Wish no more. Thanks to some discussions among several of the INSAF members, and some ideas contributed by Saloni & Rajeev Paliwal and Pratibha & Ramesh Paliwal, there is a new way. Page 7 of this Newsletter presents a menu style presentation of at least 8 different ways one can help. And, if you have a new idea, one of the INSAF colleagues will help you implement it. Although any month of the year is a great time to give something back, October-November are suggested as the months to contribute if you haven't already done so by October. Oct-Nov are the months where several of the Indian and American holidays arrive and thus are a good time to think of helping the less fortunate. Making a contribution in October-November will ensure your tax deductible contribution is made during the calendar year while giving INSAF some time to process your contribution and send the funds to the designated project within the year.

Please note that some INSAF members have arranged to get matching contributions from their employers such as Tyco, AT&T, and Procter & Gamble.

Please review and use the sheet on Page 7 this year and e-mail any suggestions to improve it further.

Many thanks to the Project Sponsors, Project Leaders, and other INSAF volunteers for your efforts to support and monitor the projects. Let's see if we can make 2009 a good year by increasing our efforts. Here is wishing Happy Holidays and a great year in 2010 to each and every INSAF member and families.

UPDATE: Animal Welfare Project

If you have an interest in helping the "4-legged people" in India, then you have something in common with another INSAF colleague, **Aruna Marathé**, who lives in California. The INSAF Newsletter reported in its November 2008 edition that Aruna has started a project to support the work of Animal India Trust, a New Delhi organization run by a young, Manipur State born Veterinarian, Dr. Yaiphabi Devi (please see the November 2008 issue which is available on the INSAF website to see a picture of Dr. Devi performing an operation on a dog in a mobile hospital).

This year, Aruna has decided to not only continue her support for Animal India Trust at the \$300 level but also to add support for another organization called "Friendicoes SECA" (where SECA stands for Society for the Eradication of Cruelty to Animals — not to be confused with Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). Friendicoes SECA has been active in the New Delhi area for about 29 years. They have a facility with two operation theaters and several rooms and a kennel where over 150 dogs and cats are being accommodated. Friendicoes also has a sanctuary in Gurgaon, a Haryana suburb of New Delhi. Recently, Friendicoes acquired the ability to operate a 24-hr emergency ambulance service when an Australia based organization donated a van and a UK based fund contributed the financing for night services. A contribution of \$400 is planned by Aruna for Friendicoes SECA.

If you are interested in joining this project, please see Page 7, check the appropriate box and forward your tax-deductible check to INSAF.

TWO YOUNG WOMEN IN KERALA TO STUDY FOR A DIPLOMA IN NURSING WITH INSAF MEMBER SUPPORT

Amalapushpam, a young resident at an orphanage in Paduapuram, Kerala, has been supported in her education for the last few years under the INSAF's child support project by **Bhav & Kaye Sharma**. Earlier this year, Amala and her sister Venila, graduated from their 12th grade class or "plus 2" as it is called in India, which of course is a cause itself for a small celebration. This brought a bigger challenge — the sisters now aspired to attend a 2½ year diploma course in Nursing and Midwifery. The total cost for the first year for Amala and Venila was estimated at \$2,500, which is much higher than the \$160 sent before annually.

Fortunately, **Ashok & Darshan Mehan, Santosh Chokhani, and Raj & Padmashri Lad** have stepped forward. The four families split the cost 4-ways and the orphanage agreed to process the INSAF check for the two sisters. Amala and Venila are now hopefully in the Nursing Diploma School. We would like to report on their progress next year.

NEW PROJECT: Disadvantaged Children's Boarding Home and Education Center, Kurukshetra, Haryana

A group of INSAF families from New Jersey, along with several other families in New Jersey, West Virginia, and Texas have decided to contribute to a boarding home for orphans, adivasi children, and children of leprosy patients in Kurukshetra, Haryana. The boarding home is managed by the Akhand Geetapeeth Shashwat Sevashram Trust (may be loosely translated as the United Geeta-School & Everlasting Service Home Trust). The boarding home and the associated school at the site house, feed, and educate children from disadvantaged backgrounds with the aim to provide them with a path out of poverty. The Trust is led by Swami Shashwatanand Giri, who has been visiting the United States and soliciting support for the boarding home and education center.

The INSAF families joining-up for this project are:

Sh. Bishan & Shail Agrawal

Sh. Ved & Ms. Rajni Chaudhary

Dr. Ramesh & Ms. Pratibha Paliwal

Sh. Vijay & Laxmi Varma

In addition, many thanks are extended to the following for their contributions to this project:

Sh. Umesh Bakhru, New Jersey

Sh. Vijay Bhatt, West Virginia

Sh. Amey and Ms. Maitrayee Bordikar, New Jersey

Sh. J.D. Dave, Texas

Sh. Sanjay and Ms. Poonam Garg, Texas

Sh. Kewal Gupta, Texas

Sh. D M and Ms. Geeta Jayaram, West Virginia

Ms. Geeta Jayaram, West Virginia

Sh. Jay and Kris Kacholiya, Texas

Sh. Kamal and Ms. Rita Kaushal, Texas

Sh. Ramesh and Ms. Usha Kulkarni, Texas

Taste of India Restaurant, Texas

The Ved Mandir, New Jersey

The Vedanta Society of West Virginia

Sh. Sweetadri and Ms. Vasanthi Manohar, West Virginia

Sh. Narendra D & Ms. Niranjana N Parikshak, W. Virginia

Sh. Mukul and Ms. Anshu Saran, Texas

Sh. Pratap and Ms. Hitesh Sharma, Texas

Sh. Vasant Shukla, Texas

Sh. Purushottam L and Ms. Saroj D Verma, W. Virginia

Sh. Ved Wadhwa, New Jersey

The final tally of the funds raised is not available at the time of this Newsletter but an estimate suggests over \$8,700 has been sent by the above. We look forward to reporting further on this project in a future Newsletter.

NEW PROJECT:

J. R. University for the Handicapped, Chitrakoot, UP

In 2001, a scholar named Jagadguru Rambhacharya started a university in Chitrakoot, UP, with the aim of providing higher education and proper rehabilitation to persons with disabilities. The founder, born in 1950, is himself a visually challenged person, and has Bachelor's, Master's, and Ph.D. degrees in Sanskrit from the Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi, UP. The State government of UP has named Jagadguru Rambhacharya a lifelong Chancellor of the new university at Chitrakoot, and a renowned mathematician, Professor S. N. Dubey, the Vice-Chancellor of the University.

The idea that every human being is a valuable resource and should be provided with skills and capabilities has inspired (new) INSAF Life Members Sh. Kailash and Mrs. Savitri Sharma to support the cause with a contribution of \$2,676.

We look forward to reporting further on this project in a future Newsletter.

INSAF VOLUNTEERS WORKING ON IMPROVEMENTS

We are very happy to report that several volunteers from the "next generation" have stepped forward at their own initiative and have taken on projects which will surely improve INSAF and its effectiveness.

Sameep Lad, who works full time in the IT area, has come forward to build an upgraded and improved website for INSAF as his time permits. This work will obviously take some time and we will report on the status of this effort in the next Newsletter. The current website will continue to be available at <http://www.insafweb.org> in the meanwhile.

Life Members **Rajeev Paliwal**, a Microsoft professional, and wife **Saloni**, who is an attorney, have contributed towards the development of the new concept of designating the months of October-November as "Project Contribution Months" and the new Contribution Sheet presented on Page 7. Rajeev is also thinking about how some of the new technologies could be used to enhance the effectiveness of INSAF.

Neal Sharma, a student in a Master's program in Landscape Architecture, has created the new INSAF logo seen on the front page and the new masthead for this Newsletter. This is the first time in 36 years that INSAF has a logo.

We extend our deep appreciation and thanks to Sameep, Rajeev, Saloni, and Neal for the above-mentioned valuable contributions.

WARM WELCOME:

A very warm welcome to the new INSAF Life Members below who have joined this year. Seven of the 10 became aware of INSAF thanks to the efforts of INSAF President Prem N. Bajaj, two — thanks to the efforts of Raj & Padmashri Lad (with Bhav & Kaye Sharma), and one — thanks to the efforts of Ramesh & Pratibha Paliwal.

Sh. Arvind and Ms. Sheila Bajaj, New Canaan, CT

Sh. Ravi and Ms. Jill Bajaj, Wichita, KS

Sh. Ajay and Ms. Lyn Bajaj, Littleton, CO

Sh. Vimal and Ms. Krishan Goyle, Wichita, KS

Sh. Shankar and Dr. Asawari Khadye, Clovis, CA

Sh. Vis & Ms. Ranjini Maddhavan, Wichita, KS

Sh. Om Parkash & Ms. Naresh Nagpal, Bedford, TX

Ms. Anita and Mr. Dean Newton, Prairie Village, KS

Dr. Sadhana S. Samant, Belmont, CA

Sh. Kailash C & Ms. Savitri Sharma, Bronx, NY

Many thanks also to the following for sending in their annual membership for the Year 2009:

Sh. Sunder & Ms. Vinod Bhatla, Dayton, OH

Sh. Surinder & Ms. Nirmal Maheshwary,
Richardson, TX

Dr. Sarwan Aggarwal, Nashua, NH

Sh. Raj & Ms. Suman Shaida

We are delighted to have each of the new members as part of INSAF, and to have the continued participation of the above renewing members. We will look forward to their participation in the projects of their choice. Each member is encouraged to share their ideas and comments anytime via an e-mail to the Newsletter Editor.

E-Newsletter or Paper Copy?

How do you feel about looking up an e-copy (pdf file) of this Newsletter instead of a paper copy? It would save INSAF about \$2.50 per family per year, and you can see the color pictures better. However, we do understand if you prefer a paper copy. If you have not already told IINSAF of your preference, please look for an e-mail requesting you to let us know.

UPDATE: India Prep Project, Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu

As reported in the April 2009 Newsletter, the India Prep project was initiated by "next-gen" **Mr. Prashant Samant**. The project was supported with a total contribution of \$3,108 by **Sh. Shankar & Dr. Asavari Khadye, Drs. Sham & Sadhana Samant, Dr. Raj & Ms. Padmashri Lad, Sh. Ash & Ms. Darshan Mehan, Dr. Sant Chokhani, and Dr. Bhav & Ms. Kaye Sharma**.

The goal of the project was to provide a college experience to middle or high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds and to motivate them towards higher education in science and math.

During April/May of this year, a total of 67 students, ranging from 4th grade through 11th grade, from the Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu area attended the India Prep program at the Annamalai University. Fifty-five percent of the students were from the 8th or 9th grade. The group was comprised of 50 girl students and 17 boy students from the lower middle class and poor families. The curriculum was provided by Prashant's aunt, **Prof. Sangeeta Gad**, who has created and operated the well acclaimed Houston Prep program for inner city kids in Houston, TX area with excellent results. The pictures below show just 3 of the 67 students who participated in the session at the Annamalai University.



Yasmine Grade 9



Selvi Grade 8



Thulsi Grade 8

The initial feedback is that the students had a good experience learning about various science, logic, and math concepts. Congratulations to Prashant Samant and Prof. Sangeeta Gad, and the project sponsors for making India Prep 2009 happen and in a timely manner. Credit is also due to Dr. Surya Thevar Thanikode, Professor of Library & Information Science, Annamalai University, who served as the local coordinator. We hope the experience will be beneficial for each of the children who participated in this novel program.

UPDATE: Pratham Mysore

Pratham Mysore is an NGO which promotes the cause of educating underprivileged children from the slums and narrow lanes of Mysore. During 2008-2009, Pratham Mysore has delivered programs of education at Pre-School and Primary levels to 16,000 poor children.

The NGO, which got its start in 2002, last year expanded to about 52 villages of the Mysore district in partnership with five other NGOs. Under this rural initiative, 2 village based young volunteers were identified. One volunteer worked with the anganwadi (a kind of day care center) teacher to kindle the pre-school children's interest in learning. The second volunteer worked in the government primary school with the teachers to promote reading (by using Pratham's Kannada Vachana) and math (Pratham's Nagu Nagutha Ganitha).

Over 1,000 rural children benefitted from this effort last year. The program's success can be seen by noting that the percentage of children who could read went up from 0.6% to 92.8% after participating in the program.

In recent years, INSAF colleagues **Arun & Padma Cariappa, Shreedhar & Padma Murthy, Chaya Rao**, several of their friends, and the **Bellur Foundation** have sent their contribution to support Pratham Mysore. This year, **Ms. Arundhati Malladi** has sent in a contribution of \$5,000 to support the work of Pratham Mysore.

UPDATE: Children's Home, Pondicherry

As reported in the November 2007 Newsletter, **Sh. Joginder and Ms. Meera Kundra** made a major commitment in 2006 to support the building of a children's home in Pondicherry by the Arya Pritinidhi Sabha (named Jeevan Prabhat or the Dawn of Life). In 2009, the Kundras have sent \$2,500 for the project, bringing the overall total raised by them to over \$70,000 since they started their support.

We look forward to including in the Newsletter a picture and other details of the children's home once it is completed.

UPDATE: Soni Charitable Hospital Jagraon, Punjab

Two INSAF families have sent contributions to support the medical services provided by the Soni Charitable Hospital. A total of \$1,005 has been sent so far this year by **Sh. Raj & Ms. Suman Shaida** (\$100), **Sh. Ashok & Ms. Usha Sachdev** (\$750), and the INSAF Matching Fund (\$155).

UPDATE: Ramalingapuram Village Adoption Project

Ramalingapuram is a unit of two small villages in Chipurupalli district in Northeastern Andhra Pradesh. Now in its 4th year, a project by a group of 8 INSAF families seeks to make some measureable improvements in the village in collaboration with a local NGO, Sodhana. The eight families are: **Chotani, Kundra, Lad, Mehan, Poulose, Sharma, Shrivastav, and Shetty.**

The first phase of the project was the building of a classroom and some area around it at the local Primary School. This was completed in the Spring of 2008 with the help of community labor and INSAF member contributions of Rs. 1.28 lakh (\$2,920 at the then rate of Rs. 43.7 per dollar). A Telugu newspaper recently carried an article about the school (please see the headline and the school room photo below). The headline below says the village school is a learning place. The article mentions the INSAF contribution. An important point made in the article is that the school had a 100% positive result in the recent School Board examinations (held at the 7th grade level in Andhra Pradesh).

In the second phase, a pre-school has been started with help from INSAF member funds. The pre-school is now in its 2nd year and has been a bit of a showcase by Sodhana for VIPs inside and outside the state of A.P.

Please let the editor know if you might like to join this village adoption project. With greater support, a more meaningful impact can be made. The annual contribution varies depending on the annual targets set but has ranged around \$325-375 annually per contributor in recent years.



UPDATE: Women's Empowerment Project, A. P.

Last year, former INSAF Execs **Ashok Mehan and Satosh Chokhani** decided to support the women empowerment project run by Sodhana with a contribution of \$1,375.

Sodhana works with 143 self-help groups in 26 villages in the Chipurupalli area of the Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh. The 26 villages are divided into 4 clusters, each taken care of by one coordinator. The INSAF contribution was used to pay a small stipend to the four coordinators. The coordinators empower the women by helping them become aware of the government programs available to women. They also do the necessary liaison work with the government departments so that the benefits reach the women without the taint of corruption. The coordinators also help the women get medical care when necessary and also help make the women aware of the importance of education for their children — particularly girl children.

UPDATE: Educational Support Project, A. P.

An ongoing project supported by former INSAF Execs **Ashok Mehan and Santosh Chokhani**, with some additional support by **Raj & Padmashri Lad** and **Bhav & Kaye Sharma**, has been in support of education in the Chipurupalli area of the Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh in collaboration with the local NGO, Sodhana.

Last year, a contribution of \$850 was sent for this work. The INSAF funds helped pay modest stipends to 4 volunteers, one educational coordinator (an M.A., B.Ed.), and a cultural coordinator. These volunteers and coordinators work with the school teachers to help improve the quality of education in the village schools.

ONLINE VOTE FOR INDIA CENTERED NON-PROFITS

Here is a great opportunity for INSAF well wishers. Check out <http://greatnonprofits.org/indiya>, which is accepting online votes in support of India centered non-profits. Donors, volunteers, officers are encouraged to write reviews of non-profits. The top vote recipients will be featured on the web sites of GreatNonProfits and Guidestar, which are resources on non-profits.

The deadline is Oct 20.

UPDATE: Govt. High School, Banbhouri, Punjab

As a follow-up to his February-March 2008 India visit (Ref: April 2009 Newsletter), Former INSAF President **Dr. Sudershan Bhateja** has sent a \$1,200 contribution to support the Government High School, Banbhouri.

These monies are expected to be used for any of the following purposes:

1. Poor student's uniforms, books, study-guides, and stationery,
2. Girls' sports at the zonal, district, state and national levels,
3. Scholarships for 5-7 meritorious, poor students,
4. Filling of two vacant temporary teacher posts (until the Government is able to fill them), one for Math and the other for Science.
5. Purchasing a laser printer.

The school is in the process of disbursing the monies except that the laser printer has already been acquired. One good thing from his last visit to the school is that one of the key teachers had shared his home telephone number with Sudershan. Now, Sudershan has established a frequent telephone contact with the teacher. Apart from promoting excellent communication, this dialog has made the implementation of projects very smooth.

UPDATE: Maheshwary Charitable Trust, Hoshiarpur

The Maheshwari Charitable Trust provides a number of services to support the poor in the Hoshiarpur, Punjab area (Ref: Nov 2008 Newsletter). The Trust provides scholarships and tuition support to poor, meritorious students, and provides funding to a local orphanage. In addition, the Trust provided about \$2,500 to help build a new school in the area.

The work has been supported by long time INSAF members **Surinder & Nirmal Maheshwary** and the generous nextgens **Suneer & Laura Maheshwary**. Recently the Maheshwaris sent a contribution of \$500 to support the ongoing work of the Trust. Much of the Trust's work honors the Late Shrimati Dwarki Devi, Surinder's mother, who always gave respect equally to the rich and to the poor.

UPDATE: Sponsored Children Progress Report

(Last names of children being withheld for privacy reasons)

Rutuja, Pune, Maharashtra

We are pleased to report that Rutuja, 16, has now become an 11th grade student at the Renuka Swaroop High school in Pune, Maharashtra. Rutuja has been sponsored by INSAF member **Aruna Marathé** for the last 5 years in collaboration with a Pune NGO named CASP (Community Aid & Sponsorship Programme). Rutuja is a good student (gets good grades), and is very interested in music (plays the harmonium). She also likes drawing, video games, and computer games.

Akshay, Pune, Maharashtra

Akshay, 13, is a newly sponsored child. He was recently assigned to **Aruna Marathé** because a previously sponsored child was leaving the CASP's perpetual sponsorship system. Akshay may be the last such sponsored child because CASP recently announced that they are ending this program because the program is not financially viable. Annual sponsorships will continue to be available. Akshay is an 8th grade student at the Vasantrya Vidya School. Akshay is a good student (gets good grades), and actively participates in elocution competitions and sports.

Shailesh, Pune, Maharashtra

The happy news from Shailesh, who is now 18, is that he obtained 76% marks in his 10th grade S.S.C. Board exam. Shailesh has been sponsored by **Raj & Padmashri Lad** and **Bhav & Kaye Sharma** for the last 5 years. Shailesh would like to eventually become an engineer after higher studies.

Raisa, Pune, Maharashtra

Raisa, 15, has also been sponsored by the Lad and Sharma families for the past 4-5 years. Lately, Raisa's mother's health has not been well and this has affected Raisa's academic performance. Raisa squeezed through her 9th grade final exams with 37% marks but we hope she will be able to do better in her 10th grade S.S.C exam.

Pooja and Anju, Panchkula, Haryana

We are elated that Pooja, 16, has come through with 76% marks in her 10th grade Board exam. Pooja has been sponsored for several years by **Joginder & Meera Kundra**. Pooja's sister, Anju, who is 14, obtained 49% marks in her 9th grade but is determined to do better in her 10th. Anju has been sponsored by **Ashok & Usha Sachdev**.

2009 CONTRIBUTIONS

As the Yr 2009 approaches its end, one of the "to do" items to consider is your 2009 contribution for some project of your interest. Here is a menu of choices for you to consider. October-November are proposed as the months of giving something back. Please mark your choice (s) and enter the tax-deductible dollar figure you would like to contribute. Please make checks payable to "INSAF" and mail to: Sh. K. Kumar Kapur, INSAF Financial Secretary, 33 Waddington Avenue, West Orange, NJ 07052. Don't see a cause you would rather support? Feel free to start something new for your idea with a contribution, and one of your fellow INSAF colleagues will be in touch with you to help.

Your Choice	Your 2009 Contribution	Type of Project	Example of Current or Recent INSAF Projects
1	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Community Development Build a School-Room or some durable facility	Pondicherry Children's Home School Room at Rishikesh School, Uttaranchal School Room at Ramalingapuram, AP Shri Samarth Society School, Mumbai Saraswathy Vidyalam, Eagandiyur, Kerala Govt High School, Banbhouri, Punjab Dwarka Devi-INSAF School, Hoshiarpur, Punjab
2	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Teacher Staff Support Pay for volunteer staff at a school for the poor	Ramalingapuram area schools, AP Bhulpur Shiksha Samiti, UP
3	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Basic Health Services Provide simple medical services for the poor	O.P. Soni Charitable Trust, Jagraon, Punjab Sodhana, Chipuripalli, AP
4	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Women's Empowerment Fund awareness seminars for rural women	Sodhana, Chipuripalli, AP
5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Literacy Improvement Fund efforts to increase literacy	Pratham, Mysore, Karnataka
6	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Hunger Alleviation Fund food services for the poor	Maheshwary Charitable Trust, Kothari Charitable Trust
7	A <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Child Sponsorship Sponsor a specific child Primary thru 12th grade education (6-10 yr commitment)	SOS Children's Village Rajpura, Punjab Bal Niketan, Panchkula, Haryana CASP Pune, Maharashtra Balabhavan, Paduapuram, Kerala
	B <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Child Support for Higher Education Help a student for higher Ed (2-4 yr commitment)	Bal Niketan, Panchkula, Haryana Balabhavan, Paduapuram, Kerala
	C <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Non-specific Education Support Grant funds to a school for tuition/books for students on a merit-cum-means basis or to award a teacher for excellence	OAS DAV School, Kaithal, Haryana P.U. Chem. Eng Dept, Chandigarh India Prep Project, Annamalai, Tamil Nadu
8	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	Animal Welfare Grant funds for care of stray animals in major urban centers	Animal Trust, New Delhi Friendicoes, New Delhi
9	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____		Start a new project based on your idea. Please describe your idea in an e-mail to sharma@interspex.com

Membership Contribution: \$150/couple Life-Membership \$15/couple Annual-Membership 2009 \$15/couple Annual-Membership 2010

The above list of projects is not comprehensive; readers are encouraged to report errors and omissions as well as additional ideas so we can continue to improve this for the future.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS (If changed in the last 1-2 years) _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

TOTAL TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION (payable to INSAF): \$ _____

Federal Tax ID # 23-7338355