



July 2013

RAPHAEL

Newsletter



**RAPHAEL
CELEBRATES
55TH
FOUNDERS
DAY**

RAPHAEL RYDER CHESHIRE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND, INDIA

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Friends, supporters and well-wishers of Raphael,

It is time yet again to update you with our newsletter and activities of the last six months.

The scorching summer months did not deter us from carrying on with our many and varied activities with the usual enthusiasm, especially evident in the celebration of our 55th Founders Day in April. The function was well attended and enjoyed by all our supporters and local dignitaries.

Before commencing, I would like to make a mention of the recent calamity in Uttarakhand. Our thoughts are with all those who have lost their lives and their near and dear ones. Their homes in the hilly regions of Uttarakhand along with their possessions have all been lost in the recent unprecedented devastation caused by heavy rains, flash floods, cloudbursts and landslides. Never has the state experienced such a magnitude of destruction.

The massive loss of life and property is inconceivable and to bring about normalcy in the affected areas is expected to take years. However, our Government and the State have risen to the occasion. The ongoing relief operations for rehabilitation have been tremendous, assisted by the Army, the Air Force and para military personnel who were responsible for many a valiant rescue operation.

Mercifully and with God's grace our residents and children who had traveled to their homes in these troubled areas during the summer vacations are safe and are back in Raphael, and the good news is that their families are safe too. The Rispana river flowing outside Raphael was in spate also and some families marooned for a while are safe now.

We convey our sincere thanks to all our overseas supporters and sponsors for their concern and continued support and our gratitude also goes to those local friends and supporters who give so much of their support to our children and residents.

Raminder Mann

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear Friends,

When the flash floods hit the upper reaches of the state and as messages of concern for the well-being of Raphael and its residents started to trickle in from our friends and well-wishers, we were reminded of our own anxiety when Christchurch was a victim not so long ago. Whilst Dehra Dun was not in any way affected, except for heavy water discharge in the adjoining Rispana river, the loss to life and property in the valleys beyond has still not been assessed in its entirety. Why thousands of pilgrims, whose only desire was for spiritual fulfillment, should so cruelly be washed away, one will never know. One wonders if this is nature's revenge for indiscriminate development in an eco sensitive area? We were relieved to learn that none of our children or their families were directly affected although disrupted communications did come in the way of some.

The demand for residential facilities in the mentally challenged wing has been increasing progressively, so the Governing Council has braved the decision to expand capacity by carrying out major modifications to the Little White House building, even as we look for sponsors to support this venture. Once the construction is complete our capacity will go up by fifty percent. Our mobile outreach programme is taking root and we are absorbing the lessons that we have learnt so far. Unfortunately, with the recent disaster not only is the local administration totally committed elsewhere, but communications are also disrupted so we may need to pause till things stabilize.

Founder's Day is always one of reflection and celebration. To reflect on the dedication and spirit of the Founders and draw strength from it while celebrating our ability to have continued on the path they set for us. It is also a matter of pride that ten of our employees have completed twenty-five years of service in Raphael and they were duly felicitated on this day.

We are delighted that the list of institutional supporters is steadily increasing. That many of them have local presence in the city helps them keep in touch with our routine activities. May this list continue to grow!

I want to extend my special thanks to the school children of Ballarat who have thoughtfully collected funds for a project in Raphael and we are making a children's park with these funds. One hopes that some of them in later life will come as volunteers and see the fruits of their effort.

On behalf of the Governing Council and the entire Raphael family I wish to thank all our friends and well-wishers for the tremendous good will and support and wish you and your families all the very best.

Brijesh Jayal

DAY AND RESIDENTIAL CENTRE

The proposal to increase the capacity of Ava Vihar (residential hostel for the intellectually disabled) to 120 from the present number of 79 is being actively pursued. This would be a boon to many parents who reside in the interiors of the state or outside Dehra Dun. The extra capacity is proposed to be carved out of major modifications to the Little White House complex and should be available in a years time. Very good news for needy children and their parents.



Greater emphasis on mainstream education for the children in keeping with the policy of 'education for all' and 'inclusive education' is being laid. Many of the children have shown remarkable progress in daily living skills and opportunities to train them in various fields are being explored. Three of the students, Avanti Goyal, Dheeraj Uniyal, and Soni Kori were placed for 'on the job' training at two places, the infirmary of the Doon Girls School and Singh Furnishers with the specific purpose of preparing them to stand on their feet and develop vocational skills.

Dheeraj Uniyal, Ajay Bhandari, and Kamil from CBR participated in a four-day camp organized by the Unified Football World Cup, in Andhra Pradesh. Even though our children were not selected, their participation has given them confidence that they will make it in the next round of selections.

Routine activities continued till school closed for the summer vacations. All the children went home to their parents. School has commenced again in July with renewed excitement and enthusiasm.

BARBARA COTTAGE

The four girls Asha, Chavi, Komal & Pooja in the cottage are progressing very well and enjoying their new home and independence. They are able to look after themselves



Sumit Roy who did us proud by participating in Floor Hockey in the World Winter Games in Korea and winning a silver medal continues to show keen interest in sports and inspiring other fellow students to follow in his footsteps. Shown here with the Chief Guest Rear Admiral Nair.

without too much of assistance. They love their new home and keep it spotlessly clean. A highlight was when they were invited for a birthday party to one of their day scholar friends. Stepping out of Raphael premises was indeed a great experience for them. The girls are believed to have spent the entire week planning for what clothes to wear for the occasion!



STATE NODAL AGENCY CENTRE (SNAC)

Raphael functions as the State Nodal Agency Centre for Uttarakhand on behalf of the National Trust set up for the welfare of certain disabilities. In order to bring in more awareness and synergy between the Trust, the state authorities and Raphael, a meeting was organized at Raphael in February. Chaired by the Principal Secretary for Social Welfare for Uttarakhand, the aim was to draw up a road map such that issues concerning various disabilities were addressed meaningfully.

COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION (CBR)

Focus on Early Intervention besides other normal activities of the project, which looks after 144 children, is of prime concern to us. 27 children are already on this programme. The parents of the children are very involved in their progress and take a special interest in their welfare and enjoy doing their bit along with the teachers. The project has indeed been a success.



MOBILE OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Readers are aware that we had launched two pilot projects towards a mobile outreach programme, one in Tehri district and the other in Champawat. As a follow up, the Anganwadi workers of Champawat participated in training cum awareness programme in April. Follow up to the earlier visits was also done in the remote districts of Tehri. We are analyzing the outcome of these pilot projects to arrive at our future plans for these locations. However we will have to await return of normalcy after the recent devastation to carry out any follow up programmes.

RESOURCE CUM TRAINING CENTRE

Awareness regarding learning difficulties seems to have increased amongst parents who are keen for Raphael to assess their children for any learning disabilities. Raphael has been assessing a number of children on a regular basis. We also sent our special educators to various seminars, workshops and to visit special schools to get increased exposure to different methods of teaching and managing the special children. Some of the students attending courses on Special Education at our Centre have successfully been placed in various jobs. Credit goes to our faculty who have worked hard to achieve this at the Training Centre.



TB HOSPITAL

The TB Hospital under our Medical Superintendent, Dr Gupta, remains as busy as ever. Patients from far flung areas of Uttarakhand and neighbouring districts of Uttar Pradesh continue to come to be treated in the hospital and go back cured and happy. We have also come a long way in treatment of Drug Resistant (DR) TB patients, seven of whom are presently receiving treatment from us.

CHRONIC WARD

Our chronic ward patients continue to stay well despite their respective disabilities. Sudeep remains cheerful and Bhola is kept happy being wheeled all over Raphael and outside by other residents and visiting volunteers. Chhatru keeps busy stitching and tailoring for the sheltered workshop and is pleased with the remuneration he receives doing these jobs. Pritam is gradually becoming independent.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH CAMP

For the third consecutive year, Max jointly with Raphael organized immunization camps as part of the MIF- Raphael Partnership month. Two Immunization and Health camps (1st and 2nd doze) were held in March and April for underprivileged children in Mussoorie and another camp in May in Tehri district of Garhwal.

In May a 'Limb' camp was organized for the distribution of artificial limbs to people who had lost their limbs for various reasons. Badal from Shiv Sadan who had lost one of his limbs earlier was provided with one.

Many of our volunteers both from overseas and India assisted in the limb camp and were able to see how artificial limbs were created on the spot, tried and tested on the patients till they comfortably walked out with them.

SHIV SADAN - A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Shiv Sadan the oldest wing of Raphael housing cured leprosy patients draws a great deal of interest. Some of the residents are now old and in need of constant attention, medically and otherwise. However they are a contented lot and love their life in Raphael. A number of them still pursue their old trades of carpentry, plumbing and electrical work and are of great help to Raphael. Others are experts in weaving in the Rehabilitative Workshop and weave attractive table linen and fabric of all kinds. These are put up for sale eventually and some of the proceeds go to the weavers.

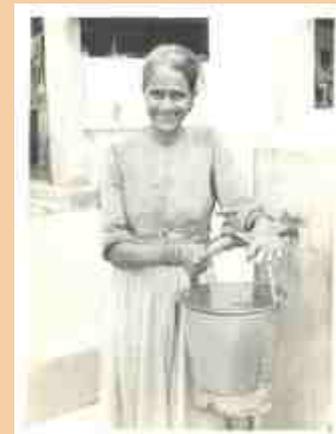
A number of them remember the Founders and their visits to Raphael and recount the past with nostalgia. Many have stories to tell of old times at Raphael and their interaction with the Founders.

Kisni and Khunka, both 81 years of age had come to Raphael in 1959 (year of establishment). Kisni cherishes the short conversations in Hindi which she had with Sue Ryder and shaking hands with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, during his visit to Raphael. Khunka, on the other hand, regrets not having been able to do so due to shyness. She, however, relates very lovingly about garlanding Lord Cheshire and Lady Sue Ryder when welcoming them during their visit to Raphael. Both these women spend time together under a tree reminiscing the wonderful times. Another old timer, Bhaglu, now 85 years old gets nostalgic in narrating how they would all collect at Raphael's entrance gate to welcome the founders, Lord Cheshire and Lady Sue Ryder.

OLD TIMERS - THEN AND NOW . . .



BHAGLU



KISNI



KHUNKA

LITTLE WHITE HOUSE

Children of Little White House have returned after their long summer vacations. This time a record 17 children appeared for Board Examinations- Arjun, Purshottam, Shamsher, Vikram among the boys and Geeta, Shakuntala, Radha and Pushpa among the girls have cleared their Class XII and are now awaiting to join professional courses. As for the Class X Board examinations, Sunil Bahadur, Rajesh, Deepak Kumar and Vasim among the boys and Tara, Meena, Priyanka and Santoshi among the girls have stepped into Class XI in their respective schools. Deepak Yadav was unfortunately left behind by a few marks in just one subject. We wish him success next time! Other children have been regular with their school activities and many have fared well in their final examination. All have been promoted to next higher class.



IAYP (INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR YOUNG PEOPLE)

Our children both from Ava Vihar/ Day Centre and LWH have been showing great interest in this programme ever since it was introduced in Raphael in 2011. 14 of the intellectually disabled children and 18 of the LWH children, who were working for the Silver Award after having successfully received the Bronze Award, completed the activities that would qualify them for the Silver Award except for adventure camp. Simultaneously, five intellectually disabled children (fresh batch) working for the Bronze award have also completed all the mandatory activities except Adventure Camp. Adventure Camp for both categories would be planned after the monsoon season.

VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Lesley Evans, Christine Cooper and Jamie Mc Cartney from the UK enjoyed their time at Raphael and found themselves totally involved with the residents and children's activities. Kate Davenport from France left with great memories of Raphael and the children she worked with.

Children and Staff also formed their attachments to these volunteers and were sad to see them go. The exposure that the residents receive from our overseas visitors and volunteers is invaluable and we look forward to their visits and welcome their time at Raphael.

Robert Brookes from Australia and a frequent volunteer at Raphael was aware that we were looking out for a donor for starting a mechanical laundry and it was a pleasant surprise to learn from RCA that he had donated an appreciable sum of money for this project. It was fortuitous that Robert was here to inaugurate the facility in person.



We have of late been encouraging Indian volunteers to assist us with our children. We are pleased that there has been a good response from them and recently we had five of them volunteering and enjoying doing so. Hopefully we get many of them now to help us in our cause.

Jane Forster, a frequent visitor at Raphael and one of our old time supporters has always made it a point of visiting Raphael every year. It is to her credit that she continues single handedly to work towards getting donors and volunteers from the UK. A dedicated and loyal supporter she is a very familiar and welcome visitor. She was with us again recently and everyone enjoyed her presence at Raphael. We look forward to her visiting us again.



Volunteer - Robert Brookes & Lesley Evans

REHABILITATIVE WORKSHOP

The workshop has been very busy of late and new products have been introduced. The children are making scented candles in attractive stained glass containers, newer designs in block printing and colorful fabrics made into tablemats, runners and curtains. During Founder's Day the display was impressive indeed and the sale was good. Samples of some of these products have been sent to our Australian Sponsor Secretary and all are also on our website.



ASSISTANCE FOR PROJECTS

In addition to our long-term supporters in Ryder Cheshire Australia, Ryder Cheshire Foundation New Zealand and Swedish Organization for Individual Relief (SOIR), a number of short-term supporters have come forward to provide assistance. Target TB and Sarvashubamkara from UK, Max India Foundation, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, Aptara and Blessed Heart Foundation all from India; have joined the band of Raphael's institutional supporters. We extend our most grateful thanks to both our long and short-term supporters. Our special thanks to Carolyn Tapley (RCF New Zealand) for continuing to assist in our 'Daily Milk to the Residents' scheme since 2008 and to Melody Smythe, Project Officer Raphael in Ryder Cheshire Australia for helping us with donor's support for many of our small and big projects, the latest being contribution made by children from two schools in Ballarat for setting up of a Children Park.

STAFF NEWS

We welcome Mrs. Raminder Mann who has joined as Liaison Officer cum PR manager and Mrs. Anjali Kalra who takes over as the Coordinator of the Rehabilitative Workshop.

We bid farewell to Nandika Thapa, Manpreet Kaur, Millee Bahuguna and Milandeep who have left us for personal reasons and wish them the best in their endeavours.

FESTIVALS

Festivals are a part of India's culture and heritage. Each festival has significance and besides celebrating them as a part of a tradition, every adult and child anticipates them with excitement and fun. Holi is one such festival and in March all the wings of Raphael got together to enjoy the festival of colours by throwing colour at each other. Perhaps who enjoyed it even more were our overseas volunteers. For them it was a novel experience and a taste of India.



FOUNDERS' DAY CELEBRATIONS

Founders Day has always been a celebration of a very special kind not only for the children and staff but even for those of our regular supporters and friends who look forward to seeing our children and residents perform with so much of joy and abandon on this particular day.

The children and residents were seen practicing for the day, months ahead. The programme was planned to be different and special this year with our overseas volunteers joining the performers. It turned out to be a cheerful spectacle of dances, songs and short plays, displaying the talents of our children.

The Chairman while welcoming the guests paid tributes to our Founders and their undying spirit that still keeps every member of the Raphael family devoted to their vision of providing relief to the suffering. He also recalled the very long period of leadership of Major General Bakhshi during whose time Raphael grew to what it is today.

The chief guest for this day was Rear Admiral Nair, the joint Hydrographer from the Naval Hydrographic Office in Dehradun. The chief guest in his address congratulated the children on their performances and lauded Raphael's efforts in continuing in the footsteps of its Founders. To those of our friends who may wonder what the Indian Navy is doing in land locked Dehra Dun, the Naval Hydrographic Office has had its home here since 11th June 1954 and remains one of Raphael's ardent supporters.

From this year, we have started a practice of honouring those employees who complete 25 years of unblemished service, with a certificate and token cash incentives on the Founders Day. It speaks of the dedication of the Raphael family that there were 10 such employees.

The celebration ended with the chief guest presenting Bronze medals won by our children in the IAYP programme.



Rear Admiral K M Nair

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