



A non-profit charitable, U.S. foundation assisting...
...*"the forgotten children of Nepal"*

August, 2013

"PATH of LIGHT"

A REFUGE FROM BRUTAL CHILD LABOR



Our years of rescue, support and service to Nepali children trapped in the worst circumstances of poverty and despair led us to the brick factories of Kathmandu. As much as we had experienced the horrors and bravery of impoverished and disabled children struggling to survive in Nepal, it was with the child laborers in the brick factory compounds of Kathmandu where we found some of the most disturbing conditions of daily life. Forced child labor, grueling

working environment, lack of sewer sanitation and clean water, and incredibly decrepit housing are everyday surroundings for the children and their families. Most of these workers are from discriminated, low-caste backgrounds and must readily accept any kind of work available in the conditions offered to them. In their desperate effort to earn enough income for family survival, their children are pressed into labor work as

young as 5-years old.

Initially, we faced the difficult task of dealing with parents and guardians who were reluctant to allow their children time away from domestic chores, brick work to help the parents in their labors, or the worst, and sadly very common, – forced child labor. With the invaluable help and patience of volunteers and our Nepali school staff, daily visits and talks with the parents convinced several of the families to allow their children to attend our school. In no time, the word spread and classes grew in size. The appeal was heightened considerably by the provision of free nutritional lunches for the school



**Virtue's Children Nepal is an
ALL-VOLUNTEER FOUNDATION**

No funds are spent for U.S. salaries, office rent, bonuses or special benefits. Board members cover their own travel expenses. Administration costs in Nepal are minimal and are covered by board member contributions.

children, free school uniforms and health and emergency services. All of this was advanced by occasional "parents day" at the school with food and refreshments, where parents and guardians were made to feel a part of the progress and were reassured that education of their children, would in time, bring benefits to everyone and hopefully break the caste barriers that have entrapped their families for generations.

These days Path of Light educates as many as 70 children a day and assists with government regional exams to ensure that each child is given official credit for their studies. Many of the children have gone on to government schools after Class-3, with encouragement from their families and assistance from Path of Light. Every success story has a beginning and we know that without our efforts, all of the children who have been a part of this remarkable school would be hauling bricks on their small backs and continuing to live in darkness.



The alternative to an education.

"PATH of LIGHT"

- ❁ **FREE EDUCATION THROUGH CLASS-3**
- ❁ **FREE NUTRITIONAL LUNCHES EVERY SCHOOL DAY**
- ❁ **FREE SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES**
- ❁ **FREE HEALTH SERVICES**
- ❁ **FREE EMERGENCY SERVICES**



Best part of the day - meal time.

John Flinn, travel writer

ANOTHER KIND of FAMILY LIFE.

Driving through the chaotic and pot-holed streets of Kathmandu, past infant beggars with grotesquely twisted legs and ragged children picking through piles of garbage, it's sadly easy to feel hopeless.

Your heart aches to help, to do something. But the scale and depth of the poverty is so vast, so unfathomable, that you despair: What can one person, or a small group of people, do? Allan Aistrophe was about to show us.

My friend Scott and I, just back from the Khumbu, were riding in a taxi with Allan to the Manang Nepalese Childrens' Organization group home for orphaned girls that he recently dedicated to the memory of our friend, Lynn Ferrin, a pioneering travel writer whose passion for Nepal inspired so many of us.

Tucked up against the green western hills of the Kathmandu Valley, east of the renowned Swayambunath Buddhist Temple, stood a quiet neighborhood of family homes and a scattering of small shops.

In the courtyard, protected from the road by a big metal gate, half a dozen girls and one young boy were skipping rope, bouncing basketballs and wobbling around on small bicycles. There was lots of laughter. In this moment, at least, they were enjoying the kind of idyllic childhoods we take for granted in the leafy suburbs of the United States.

But, as a reminder that Kipling had it right when he wrote that "the strangest dreams of Kew are just the facts in Kath-



6 beauties, rescued, safe and happy.

mandu," I learned that they had had to move here from a house a few blocks away that bordered the Nagarjun Forest Reserve, the king's former hunting preserve, after their family dog was killed by a night-stalking leopard on the roof of their home.)

Here the orphans were getting more than just a safe place to live, a bed, food, clean clothes and access to education: They were also getting a chance, possibly for the first time in their lives, to be part of a real family.

A Manangi couple, Sandup and Purfu Lama, was acting as foster parents to the girls while also raising a daughter and son of their own. Upstairs lived Sandup's 75-year-old mother, the girls' surrogate grandmother, a "hajur ama".

I got a big hug from Pema, the couple's 14-year-old daughter, a sensitive and beautiful young woman with a smile that lit up the room. At an age that's difficult for girls anywhere in the world, she has had to share her parents' love and attention with six other girls. Allan said it hasn't always been easy, but she handles it beautifully as a caring older sister and helper.

While we were out playing in the courtyard, Purfu, assisted by 15-year-old Yoten, the oldest orphan, was preparing a feast of Nepali dal baht, (rice and lentils), with special lentils carried down the mountains from Manang; curried chicken; vegetables and achar, a kind of Nepalese salsa. On the cab ride over Allan had been smacking his lips in anticipation of Purfu's cooking, and now I understood why. It was, by far, the tastiest and most lovingly prepared meal I had in Nepal.

What made the meal even more enjoyable was the setting: eight happy, well-cared-for children in clean clothes sitting around the kitchen table with "mom and dad" – a Nepalese scene straight out of Norman Rockwell.

Were it not for Allan, Sandup, Purfu, VCN colleagues and generous donors, these girls would likely be begging on the streets, harvesting whatever they could from the garbage piles along the river – or, worse, on their way to the brothels of Mumbai.

On the cab ride back to our hotel I told Allan that our visit to the group home was the antidote to despair. We can't rescue every impoverished child in Nepal, but that's no excuse not to help those we can. And remember: The directors of Virtue's Children Nepal serve as volunteers and cover their own travel expenses, so your donations go directly to support these girls and VCN's other orphanages and programs.

– John Flinn



GIRLS' ORPHANAGE

Undoubtedly, one of our major challenges and greatest success has been the orphanage home that we constructed and supported for 25 girls. While the actual rescues of these 25 orphaned girls were incredibly dramatic and heart-warming, it's the life we share with them that brings the greatest joy and gratitude for this privileged accomplishment. Rescuing these children and providing them a sanctuary from the horrors of their early childhood was the initial moment of discovery for all of us, but many more rewards were to come.

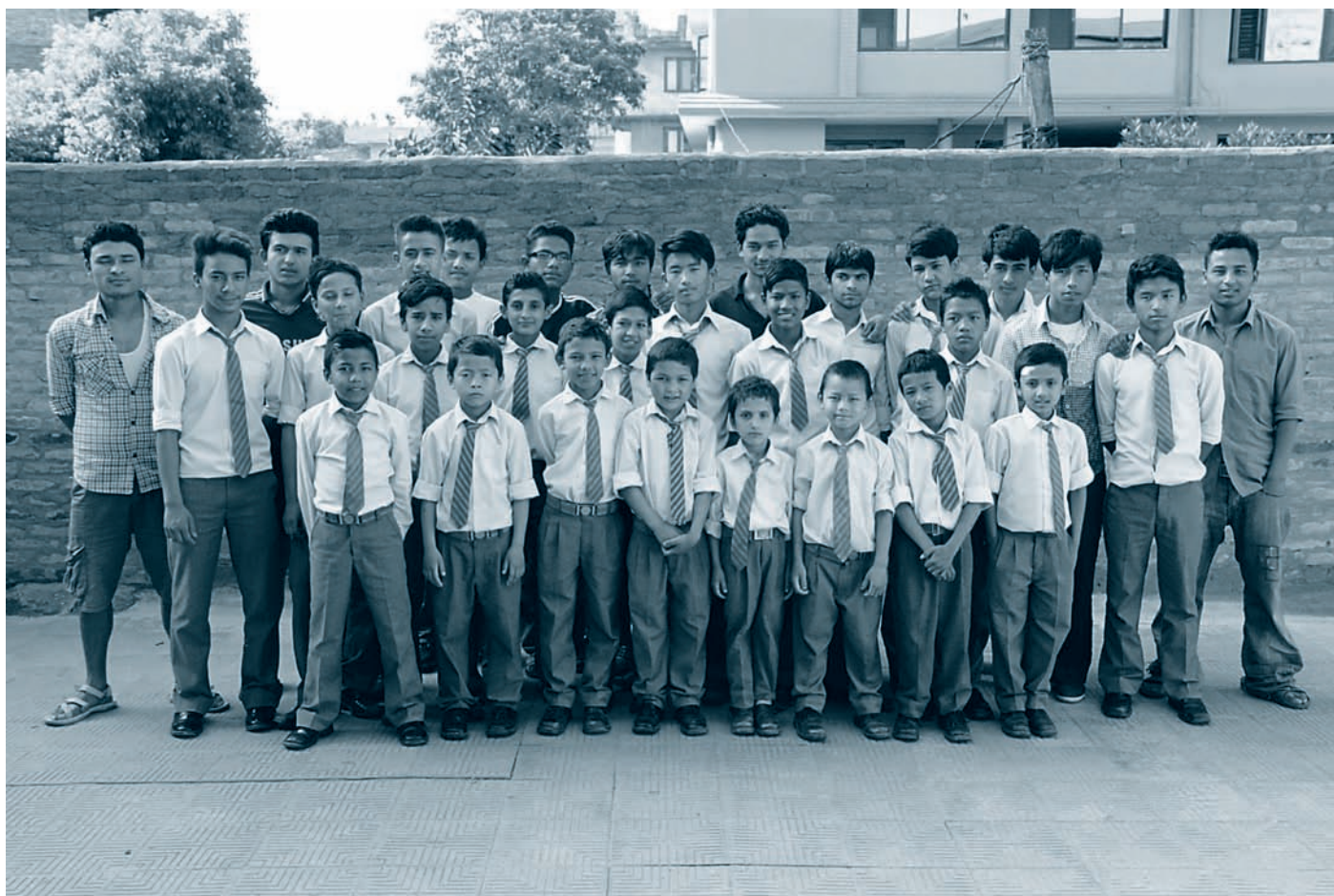
Once settled in, these girls bonded into a "sisterhood" of mutual support and encouragement that would be the envy of any family. From help with homework, to sharing domestic duties, to recreational activities, the children excel at friendship and responsibility and we are there to applaud

them. Gratefully, the girls consider themselves VCN family as well as children under the watchful eye of special friends and the administration of Nepal's Paropakar Organization. Together, Paropakar, sponsors and VCN have wonderful expectations for the future of these children. The girls' outstanding academic performance in school is testimony to their noble ambitions to rise above abusive beginnings and seek the future that we are guiding them to. Many of these girls rank number one in their classes, and many more are near the top. All are doing splendidly.

We continue our parental roll with all these children as dotting providers, with special attention given to advantages and all the needs which will enable them to have comfortable lives, walk proudly and succeed in future challenges.

SCHOLARSHIPS for blind, physically impaired and impoverished students continue to be a top VCN challenge in our efforts to secure decent life opportunities for outstanding students. Our students immediately recognize the rare lifeline they are given and struggle to achieve the highest honors in their schools.

To make our support possible, we continually seek sponsors for all of the children we support. Scholarship costs vary according to situations, but average about \$750 - \$1000 per year, covering all living and school expenses. Please consider joining us in this most important provision to some of the most disadvantaged children on earth. Contact us for specific information on children needing your support and any arrangement that would suit your preference.



BOYS' ORPHANAGE

If one single factor were to be given credit for the formation of Virtue's Children Nepal, honors would have to go to Paropakar Orphanage, or more to the point, to the remarkable young residents there who inspired us to become involved in their lives. Paropakar established the first orphanage in Nepal over 57 years before, and they continue to faithfully operate this secure home for up to 50 boys. Dependent upon local donations the orphanage's resources are severely limited and the children have learned to sacrifice and do without as situations dictate. The boys, however, are quick to express gratitude for their mutual brotherhood, their meals and security, and most importantly, their opportunity for a good education.

This is where VCN is able to improve living conditions for the children. Emphasis of our donations is

for purchases that offer attention to health concerns and other priority needs. Annually, we provide warm winter clothing, as well as good sport shoes, jean pants and the auxiliaries of underwear and T shirts, winter quilts, sports equipment, computers, house repairs and any needed emergency items that requires our attention are also on our list.

Our distribution day for this cherished giveaway causes great commotion and excitement, for both the boys and the VCN distributors. The best part by far, though, is the rare reward of witnessing these deprived children celebrate these simple benefits that otherwise would not be happening. Every time the boys are reminded by VCN that the true givers are the very special friends and supporters in America who generously make possible these most needed and appreciated gifts.

CHILDREN HELPING CHILDREN

VCN has been rewarded with dramatic and continuing support from many remarkable American children who are familiar with our efforts in Nepal and choose to participate in our cause. Through the years, local school children have shown initiative and resolve to find creative ways to contribute to improving lives of hundreds of Nepali orphaned children. Their contributions have been extremely generous and have allowed VCN to make desperately needed improvements in the lives of impoverished children in Nepal. We heighten this participation with back and forth pen-pal relationships for all the children and up-dates on how the donations are put to the best use. Everybody wins.

WE WORK TO DIRECTLY RESCUE AND SUPPORT THE MOST DESTITUTE AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN IN NEPAL.

- * VCN – Paropakar Orphanage home for 25 girls.
- * Support and provisions to children of Paropakar Orphanage for boys.
- * MNCO Orphanage home for 6 girls...with more children to come.
- * Scholarships for over 75 orphaned, blind and physically impaired students.
 - * "Path of Light" School for children from brick factory compounds.
- * Services and donations to elderly victims of leprosy.

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Our progress in Nepal is completely dependent upon the generosity of supporters who believe in our goals and wish to join a team effort for the rescue of impoverished and neglected children in Nepal. When you plan your charitable participations, please consider the purpose of our work and the maximum extent to which our contributions are utilized for the direct support for the children we serve.



A NON-PROFIT, ALL-VOLUNTEER, CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Virtue's Children Nepal is a U.S. 501 (c)(3), charitable foundation. Donations to our organization are tax-deductible and acknowledgement letters are provided for donations received.

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Virtue's Children - Nepal
invites you to join
KarmaQuest
Ecotourism
and Adventure
Travel on a



customized, cultural tour of the Kathmandu Valley and Pokhara, and a jungle safari in Chitwan National Park to benefit orphans and physically impaired children in Nepal. A highlight of this journey will be a visit to Paropakar Orphanage in Kathmandu, where you will become acquainted with incredibly courageous and delightful orphan boys and



girls. A portion of the cost of this trip will be donated through Virtue's Children Nepal to directly benefit these children or other orphans with emergency aid or educational support. Virtue's Children Nepal board member Wendy Brewer Lama and her husband Karma Lama are directors of KarmaQuest, an award-winning adventure travel company based in Half Moon Bay, California. They have designed this special tour to highlight the medieval wonders and UNESCO Cultural Heritage treasures of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur cities, while giving you a taste of village life in Nagarkot, a bird's eye view of Mt. Everest on "an unforgettable mountain flight, a restful stay in serene Lakeside Pokhara and a three-day, guided jungle safari excursion in Royal Chitwan National Park. Customized treks to the Everest region will also benefit Virtue's Children Nepal and its work in Nepal. Please inquire for details.

Your travels with KarmaQuest will benefit from Wendy and Karma's extensive knowledge of Kathmandu and Nepal, and their ability to introduce you to cultural insights and new, cross-cultural friendships through their expert Nepali guides. To learn more about KarmaQuest and their trips, partners and beneficiaries, please see www.KarmaQuests.com or contact Karma and Wendy at karmaquest@earthlink.net, or telephone at (650) 560-0101.