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Theosophical Order of Service International Newsletter

Issue 16 June 2011

to TOS website

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(L. to R.)

Carolyn Harrod is the National Coordinator of the TOS in Australia, Geoffrey Harrod is the International TOS Webmaster and Diana Dunningham Chapotin is the International Secretary of the TOS.

Dear fellow-members of the TS and TOS around the world,

We hope you are enjoying keeping in touch with what is happening in the TOS internationally. Our international electronic newsletter aims to bring you information to inspire your service work within or outside the TOS and to help you get to know TOS members outside your own country.

Remember that the newsletter is designed to be read while you are connected to the internet.

**An invitation to you:** We are currently compiling a collection of easy and enjoyable fundraising ideas for TOS groups. Would you be willing to share your good ideas with your TOS family? Please send us your stories of successful fundraising events and activities to the editors at:

[carolyn.tosinternational@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.tosinternational@gmail.com)

[Click to email](#)

Please also consider sending photographs of your TOS activities and news items that might be of interest to fellow TOS members. We would welcome your contributions to the email above.

Some of you are asking for news of our fellow TS members in Japan after the March 11 tsunami and nuclear disaster. Here is an extract from a message received from Mr Taiichi Yamaguchi, the President of Nippon Lodge in Tokyo:

*I am really grateful for your heartfelt messages and deepest concern regarding the current nuclear crisis caused by the huge 9.0-magnitude earthquake and tsunami in Japan. Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency raised the emergency alert of the Fukushima nuclear plant to level seven – the highest on the international scale of nuclear accidents – on 12 April 2011. The present situation of nuclear radiation is gradually worsening in Japan. I confirm that all 66 members of Nippon Lodge are in safe condition.*

*At the Nippon Lodge in Japan, we make every endeavour to survive in the current horrendous nuclear disaster. If we need further assistance in this most critical situation, I will let you know by email.*

In the meantime, our thoughts of healing and well-being are with our fellow theosophists and their compatriots in Japan.

### Would you like to receive this on-line newsletter automatically?

- a. To sign up, you only have to send a message telling us which country you live in with 'Subscribe TOS e-newsletter' in the subject line to [tos.intouch@theoservice.org](mailto:tos.intouch@theoservice.org)  
[Click to email](#)
- b. If you do not want to receive future newsletters you can easily unsubscribe. All that is needed is a blank message with 'Unsubscribe TOS e-newsletter' in the subject line.

Please ensure the TOS email address is not made available to Facebook or other social networking sites to automatically 'invite'. Also, please do not forward attachments to us unless they are specific contributions for the newsletter or notices of TOS activities.

With best wishes,  
Carolyn, Diana and Geoffrey

### *Life's most urgent question is: What are you doing for others?*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



Pam Evans

### Peace Mala – an initiative of a TS member in Wales

Since its inception, the TOS has promoted the ideal of service based on a recognition of the Divine in all people, and in fact, in all life. The TOS promotes mutual respect, harmonious relationships and peace and many TOS groups include peace oriented activities among their projects. We were therefore excited to hear from Julie Cunningham, the head of the Welsh Regional Association of the TS, about Peace Mala, a peace education initiative started in Wales.

Peace Mala is a multi-award winning project founded by Pam Evans, an experienced teacher of World Faiths, a long-time student of the mystical traditions of our world and a member of the Theosophical Society. Pam is committed to inter-faith dialogue for peace and she sees this as a vital process in the current world climate of fear and misunderstanding.

When describing how she came to found Peace Mala, Pam explains: "As a teacher of World Faiths, I've known about the Golden Rule for many years. In the aftermath of the events of 9/11, when some pupils in my school were being bullied because of their race or religion, I remembered the Golden Rule of all faiths. This inspired me to create the Peace Mala – a symbolic bracelet which would help young people understand the fundamental rule that all compassionate faiths share. I hoped that it would educate my pupils in a fun way and help stop the bullying. To my great joy it did! It spread through the school like wildfire."

The central message of the Peace Mala bracelet is "Treat others as you would wish them to treat you." Its intention is to cut through all forms of prejudice, to confront bullying, to support human rights and to celebrate what makes us different from each other. Fourteen spiritual traditions, along with their individual versions of the Golden Rule, are represented on the bracelet.

[Read more....](#)





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A Peace Mala is a symbolic double rainbow bracelet that promotes friendship, respect and peace between people of all cultures, lifestyles, faiths, beliefs and none. It is a vision for the future. Wearing the Peace Mala is a promise to help create a better world.

Pam says that when she was creating the design for the Peace Mala bracelet she was aware that the rainbow is an important symbolic link between heaven and earth in many cultures. Rainbows are rare and magical and double rainbows even more so. She also realised that the rainbow design would appeal especially to children and young people.

The Peace Mala bracelet comprises fourteen coloured beads with a central white or frosted white bead strung between symbolic knots. The central white bead represents the wearer. The final single bead is used as a toggle to bring the bracelet around the wearer's wrist. This represents unity, harmony and peace.

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The word 'mala' is Sanskrit and means 'garland of flowers'. Peace Mala reminds us that we all belong and that communities filled with colour and difference make life more interesting and exciting. Making and wearing the Peace Mala gives youngsters an opportunity to take part in this wonderful project for world peace. It also introduces them to our plural community of diverse cultures and faiths.

The Peace Mala organisation is a non-political, non-religious charity that does not support any political party, movement or belief system over any other. The main aims of Peace Mala are to:

- educate for global citizenship through the promotion of understanding, respect, friendship, tolerance and peace between all communities, cultures and enlightened, compassionate faiths
- support human rights and confront bullying and all forms of prejudice
- raise awareness of issues of global interdependence and encourage active compassion by learners that will effect positive changes locally and globally.

The Peace Mala organisation produces resources for teachers and youth and community leaders as well as organising events and promoting the initiative.

For more information, visit the Peace Mala website at [www.peacemala.org.uk/index.html](http://www.peacemala.org.uk/index.html)

*Acknowledgment: The images and much of the text in this article have come from the Peace Mala website at Pam Evans's suggestion.*



Pam Evans



A Peace Mala





*Members of the original Peace Mala Youth Team*

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### Service work in Adyar

When members of the TS decide to visit the headquarters of the Society in Adyar, Chennai, India, they often go in December in order to attend the international Convention. In addition to listening to talks given by people from many different countries, they discover all the administrative buildings and the beautiful grounds of the estate. They can also discover the TS's humanitarian service projects.

During their stay at the international HQ last December, George and Gailene Wester of the TS and TOS in Perth, Australia took a number of photos for us. We bring a first group of their photos here. Thanks for your excellent reporting, George and Gailene! You have sent us enough photos for at least four reports on the humanitarian work at HQ!

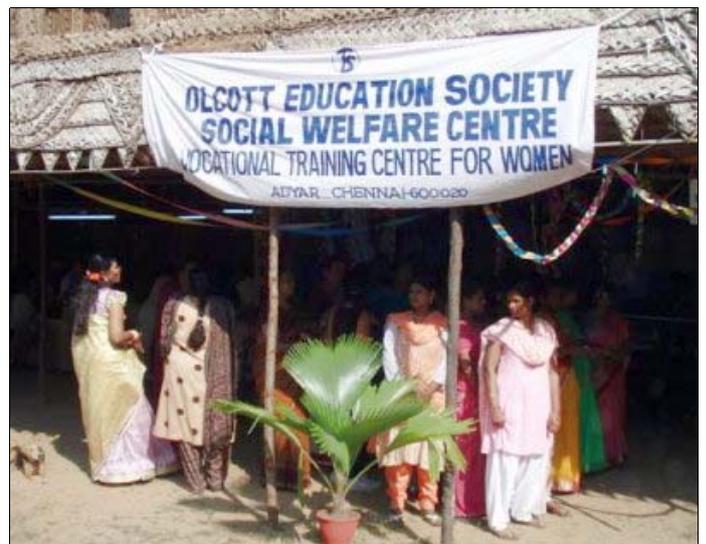


*George Wester (left) and Gailene Wester (right) at Adyar with Singapore TS members, Sonne and Lily Chong*



A number of information stands and sale stalls are set up during the Convention to raise awareness of social issues and projects. Here we see the booth of *Beauty Without Cruelty*, a company with a mission long supported by Theosophists – the production of ethical, cruelty-free personal care products that are made with natural, organic and safe ingredients.

The Social Welfare Centre is one of four activities run under the aegis of the Olcott Education Society. Each year it sets up a stall selling beautiful products made by the women of its Vocational Training Centre.





International President, Mrs Radha Burnier, opens the booth of the Social Welfare Centre. In addition to offering tailoring and weaving training to about 25 young women, the Centre runs classroom, outdoor activities and field trips for around 85 children aged between 2 and 5.

Another project operating under the umbrella of the Olcott Education Society is the Annie Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary. It too has an information stand at Convention.



All her life Radha has actively promoted compassion for animals. She takes a keen interest in the latest information provided on plant-based diets.

It is thanks to Radha's love of animals and personal commitment that the Animal Dispensary at Adyar has been progressively renovated and equipped to serve not just the surrounding community but outlying areas too.



Every year at Convention, the TOS presents a programme. Last December, three speakers described the work of the TOS around the world.

*Left to right: Dorothy Bell (Australia), Dr Cittarajan Sattapathy (chairperson), Sri Birendra Bhattacharyya (India) and Vicente Hao Chin, Jr (Philippines). We thank them for their contributions.*

Another activity in which one can participate at our international headquarters is the work of the modern ceremonial Order of the Round Table. The Order aims to inspire the young with a vision of an ideal world. Every member of the Order is regarded as a pilgrim progressing toward perfection. The way of the pilgrim is through service to the 'King'.



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## TOS news from around the world

### TOS in Mexico – a fledgling group gets started

Last year we announced the formation of a fledgling group of TOS workers in Mexico. It seems that Lissette Arroyo and her fellow TS members are now confident of being able to start some activities. They are already trying to create a team to help stray animals. One of the members is very devoted to finding homes for them. They hope to organise a series of talks at the Lodge in the next few months on ecology-related themes. They also plan to explore the possibility of starting up the TOS healing ritual, guided by the international coordinator of Spanish-speaking TOS activities, Fernando Pérez Martín. We wish them all the best in their endeavours and look forward to photos of their first activities.

Below we see the TOS in Mexico's brochure outlining the different areas of service in which the TOS operates. Lissette invites Spanish-speaking TOS members to write to her for the file of both the poster and the brochure if they would like to adapt them for their own country or local group:

[ots@sociedadteosofica.mx](mailto:ots@sociedadteosofica.mx).

Both the poster and brochure are based on information and files received from Fernando Pérez Martín and Maribel Gil Jimenez.

Lissette has created this splendid poster to attract attention to the TOS and its work. (Click to see it larger or to save it.)

Click here to see the full-size 2-page brochure or to save it.

### TOS in the USA – supporting Native Americans

For many years now, 85 year old Miles Standish, whom we featured in a recent newsletter in his latest role as a glider pilot (!), has been repairing and delivering computers to the economically disadvantaged residents of Native American Indian reservations. We asked him for his latest doings. Here is his reply:

Dear TOS newsletter team,

Very interesting timing! I arrived back home from a delivery trip to the Crystal Boarding & Day School (in New Mexico) this afternoon and when I turned on my computer, there was your message asking for news. I'm happy to give some here, fresh off the press, so to speak.

Early this year I received a request to provide more computers to a school in the tiny town – village might be a better term – of Crystal, New Mexico. The request came from Zelda Cantrell, who is teacher of the 4th grade class.



*Our car all loaded up for delivery*

Crystal Boarding & Day School serves children of the Navajo Indian Reservation which is a very large area of many miles in all directions. It's almost 300 miles from here, so I went yesterday, spent the night in Zelda's cabin on the Reservation, and presented the computers this morning before driving home again.

One planned event was a failure. I had bought into a two-year contract to provide Internet service using a wi-fi mobile hotspot, but the Verizon coverage in that area is unusable. It looks as though they will have to use dial-up.



*Zelda Cantrell in action with her fourth graders...and their new computers.*

Just before our photo session, I made a one or two-minute speech to the parents and children about efforts such as mine to bridge the gap between the white man and the red man (or 'First Americans'). I told them about an office on a reservation near my home town where there is a sign on the wall that reads: "With education you are the white man's equal. Without it, you're his victim." I told them that this is bad and that I want to do what I can to erase that consciousness. I told them I wanted to make personal friendships with them, and that we can communicate by email. They seemed to be responsive to that.

Rosebud Reservation of the Lakota Sioux Indians in South Dakota is not out of the picture. I have bought 25 new winter wool blankets to send them. I also have two backup computers to send for the publisher of the tribal newspaper. I'm hoping to get some contributions to share the expense, and I think that will be forthcoming.

All this work keeps me out of mischief!

With best wishes to you all,

Miles



*Computers were given to five students whom we see with their parents here. The students' names (left to right) are: Ryan Begay, Tyrel Lee, Irina Joe, Jamie Brown, and Marty Sarracino. Miles is at the back on the right.*

**TOS in Australia – helping with the TS Retreat Centre**

In April, members of the Brisbane and Sunshine Coast TOS and TS Lodges in Queensland, Australia donated a weekend of their time to participate in a working-bee organised by the TOS at the Education and Retreat Centre owned by the TS in Australia. The Centre is situated in several hectares of forest in the mountains south of Brisbane. It has several residential blocks and cabins together with a meeting hall and separate dining block.

Thanks to their energy and enthusiasm, the Centre shone inside and out, with sparkling windows, freshly ironed curtains, steam-cleaned floors, freshened bedrooms, washed walls, clean gutters and roofs and beautifully trimmed gardens.

Despite a few sore muscles, everyone enjoyed working together as well as the opportunities to get to know their fellow theosophists a little better. The weekend was not without relaxation, however, with time for walks, meditation, a DVD after dinner, and of course, chats over the delicious meals provided by TOS members.



### TOS in New Zealand – thanks for thinking of the Christchurch earthquake

The TOS in Canada and the TOS on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia both sent a donation to the TOS in New Zealand in solidarity with the victims of the earthquake that took place in Christchurch on February 22.

To tell the truth, the desperate need of the people there seemed to disappear from public view after the earthquake and tsunami on March 11 in Japan. Media attention shifted quite naturally to this comparatively enormous disaster and the rescue work in New Zealand has received relatively little international attention since.

The kindness and sensitivity of the Canadian and Australian members in not forgetting the deaths of a 'mere' 182 people and the extensive destruction of homes and buildings are therefore very touching.

Touching also are these photos of animals being rescued from Christchurch homes which Pedro Oliveira passed on to us from the internet.

The story begins with the rescuers finding this poor little dog they named Ralphie. Someone had already taken him under their wing but they weren't equipped to adopt him.





This little lady also survived the wreckage.



Ralphie and she meet in the back of the rescuers' car. Instant friends, they comfort each other.



Two more beagles are found...



...and the more the merrier. Note the rescued cat coming over the seat needing shelter. Just how is this going to work?



It's going to work just fine, thank you very much!



## TOS in New Zealand – welcoming visitors from the Philippines

New Zealand is a little isolated, way down in the South Pacific, but Theosophists from other countries find their way there surprisingly often. In late April, the coordinator of the TOS, Renée Sell, and her husband Richard, had the joy of receiving Vicente Hao Chin, Jr and his wife Tessie for a friendly visit to their home. Vic, Tessie and their four children were on a private visit to NZ (proof that Vic occasionally takes time off from his around-the-clock work for the TS and TOS) and so there was no official gathering to welcome them. A few key theosophists and TOS workers gathered for dinner and a lovely evening was had by all... discussing TS, TOS and Indo-Pacific work!

Alf and Maureen Paterson are responsible for the collecting of (literally) tonnes of books for the Golden Link School in the Philippines, Elisabeth and John Sell have just finished setting up the Geoffrey Hodson Memorial Scholarship Fund to pay for the education of a child at Golden Link, Renée and Richard Sell have a finger in every TOS pie and John Vorstermans, who is the president of the Indo-Pacific Federation and Margarita Sisam, his partner are wonderful supporters in moving the theosophical cause forward. The NZ team was very happy to have a chance to chat with Vic and Tessie and hear latest news of the TOS work in the Philippines.

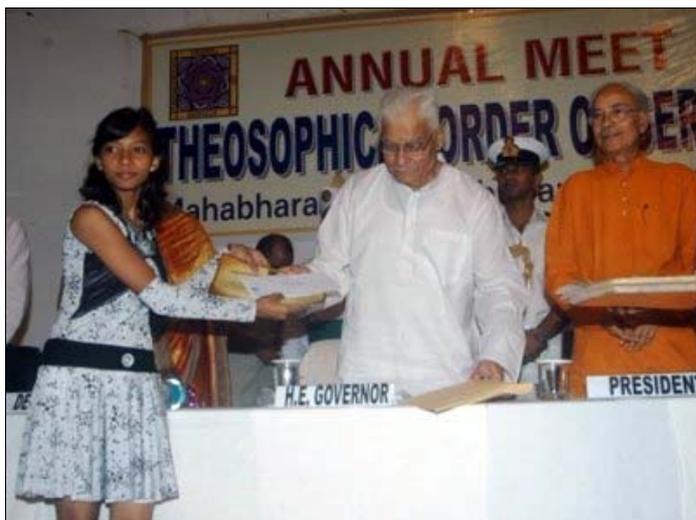


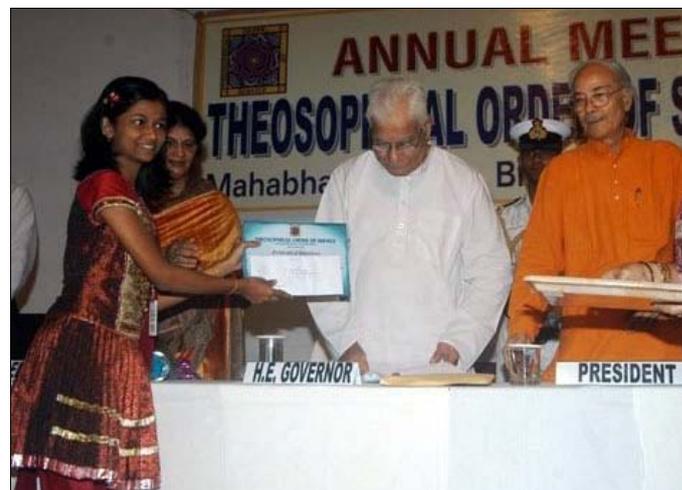
Standing left to right: Margarita Sisam, Elisabeth Sell, Richard Sell, Vicente Hao Chin, Jr, Alf Paterson, Maureen Paterson, Renée Sell. Seated left to right: John Vorstermans, John Sell, Tessie Hao Chin

### TOS in Orissa, India – promoting the message that animals have rights

Last year TOS workers collaborating with Dr Deepa Padhi in Mahabharat, Orissa, India, barely seemed to pause for breath. After the environmental awareness campaign conducted amongst students of the Venkateswar English Medium School (tree planting, a rally, a signature drive and the opening of Besant Nature Club), they organised activities for children on the theme of kindness to animals. A painting competition and an essay competition were organised and prizes awarded at the Annual Meeting of the TOS Mahabharat Group in mid-October, an event attended by the Governor of the State that attracted over 200 people.

*Students in the painting competition worked on the theme "Animals are our neighbours".*





The essay competition was on the theme "Rights of the animal". Winners of both the painting and essay competitions had the honour of receiving their awards from the State Governor, Sri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare.



The Governor launched the project "Save a thalassaemic child", announcing TOS sponsorship of 35 needy thalassaemic children and the provision of blood, free of cost. Here we see the TOS's first sponsored child, Chinu.



2010's winner of the Besant Selfless Service Award was given to Shri Govind Pattanaik for his selfless service towards the mentally ill and to destitute women.



Srimati Snehalata Mohapatra, a senior TOS Member, was congratulated for her lifetime of social service.



The Governor released a set of bookmarks with theosophical quotations.



The Governor also released a beautiful souvenir publication of the magazine Seva.



The meeting was presided over by Bro. B. L. Bhattacharyya, National Director of the TOS and the chief speaker was Brother P. K. Jayaswal, a TS National Lecturer. The entire function with more than 200 people present was a splendid success.

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## Quotations for reflection and inspiration

Every couple of months we add new quotations to the Inspiration section of the International TOS website and we hope you enjoy dipping into them. (<http://international.theoservice.org/inspiration11.html>)

This month, we bring you a collection of our favourite quotations. Some of them may already be very familiar to you but we've included them as perennial favourites and you'll find others that may be new to you. We hope you'll take pleasure in using them in your private reflections and for reflection, discussion and inspiration in your TOS group.



I slept and I dreamt that life was joy.  
I woke and I saw life was but service.  
I served and I found that service was joy.

- Rabindranath Tagore

### Walk

I walked with you today –  
with you and the One inside you  
who beamed light through your eyes.

Your voice seemed more than your voice  
and held meaning beyond your meaning.  
Who was in you speaking?

I walked with you and mystery today,  
and now I need to learn who dwells in you.  
Perhaps the One inside me knows.

- Alan Harris



My religion is very simple - my religion is kindness.

- His Holiness The Dalai Lama

We cannot live only for ourselves.  
A thousand fibres connect us with our fellow  
men;  
and among those fibres, as sympathetic  
threads,  
our actions run as causes,  
and they come back to us as effects.

- Herman Melville





Forms of service depend upon our creativity, and our creative potential is limitless.

- P.K. Jayaswal, TOS India

### O Hidden Life

O Hidden Life, vibrant in every atom;  
 O Hidden Light, shining in every creature;  
 O Hidden Love, embracing all in Oneness;  
 May each who feels himself as one with Thee,  
 Know he is also one with every other.  
 - Annie Besant



It is only when there is realization of our unity with our fellow-beings, and when the only motive is that of giving ourselves in such service as we are capable, that we can fill our lives with rich, helpful and creative action.

- N. Sri Ram

Good timber does not grow under comfortable circumstances; the stronger the wind, the stronger the tree.

- J. Willard Marriott



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## Help end the seal cull in Canada

Every year the government of Canada continues to sanction the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of seals. In 2011, they have agreed to the slaughter of 400,000 harp seal pups. This is extraordinary, when you consider that last August the European Union ban on seal products took effect and significantly reduced the demand for seal pup skins. This government supported slaughter also comes at a time when hundreds of thousands of pups are dying from poor ice conditions.

Over the past decade, the amount of sea ice has been severely reduced in the Gulf of St Lawrence. Since harp seals require a solid and stable platform on which to give birth and nurse their pups, a lack of ice is a major threat to the species. The fact that the Canadian government continues to increase allowable catches and financially support this hunt when so many seals are dying from environmental factors is both reckless and absurd.

The Canadian government tells the world that the slaughter of seals is humane, but videos taken this year show that it is cruel and inhumane and that government officials are not enforcing the regulations for so-called humane slaughter.

Seals need our voices **NOW** to stop this unnecessary and inhumane slaughter once and for all.

Visit the International Fund for Animal Welfare website to see the proof of what the seal hunt is really like.

Go to their Activist Toolkit and find resources for writing to the Canadian government to end the seal hunt.

[Spread the word among your friends.](#)

URL for IFAW: [http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw\\_international/join\\_campaigns/seals/index.php](http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw_international/join_campaigns/seals/index.php)

URL for Activist Toolkit: [http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw\\_international/join\\_campaigns/seals/toolkit.php](http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw_international/join_campaigns/seals/toolkit.php)



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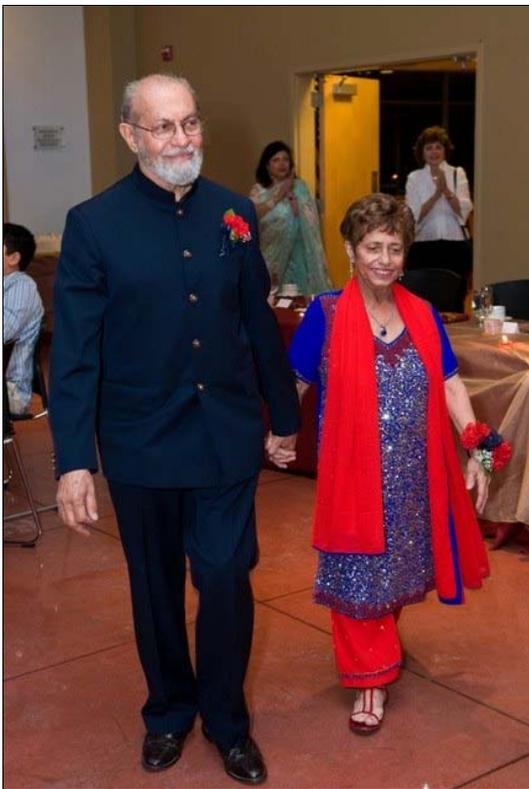
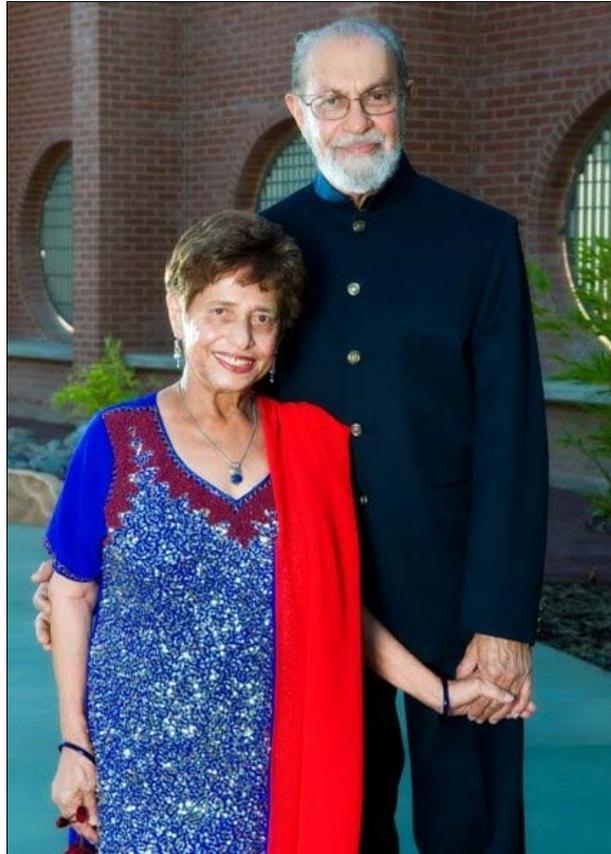


### Simple acts of kindness

Long time American TOS members, Dinshaw and Hutoxy Contractor, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary two years ago. They reported that the day was one to remember.

"All 160 guests enjoyed the party. We had Indian food and all went as planned. We had requested donations to our favourite service projects instead of gifts. We listed four, including a facility called Hope Animal Centre where animals are never euthanised but cared for until they are adopted. Most of the donors wrote cheques to one of the four charitable projects but many wrote cheques in our name and some gave cash. We distributed the money given directly to us equally among the projects and they received a total of US\$5275.00. Our friends were very generous indeed!"

We congratulate Hutoxy and Dinshaw on their generosity and on just reaching their 52nd anniversary. Will they put on a party for their 60th and raise more money for service projects?!



Hutoxy and Dinshaw have five children and nine grandchildren, all of whom were present at their party except a daughter they lost in a tragic accident in 1985.

(left) Dinshaw and Hutoxy walking to the dance floor