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

It is with great pleasure that we welcome our new TOS President, Tim Boyd, and look forward to his visionary leadership as we implement and further develop our [Plan of Action](#) for the next five years.

This issue is packed with news from groups around the world, sharing ideas about dynamic service projects in their communities. You'll meet members from TOS groups in France, India, Italy, Kenya, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania and the USA.

In our last newsletter we introduced our newest TOS group – in the Ukraine. All of us outside Ukraine are following what is reported on the news. It is hard to understand the complexities of the situation but we care very much about what our sisters and brothers are going through and are praying with all our hearts for their safety and for a cessation of hostilities. Please keep them in your hearts and healing thoughts.

Thank you for being part of our 'in-touch' community. Together we can make a real difference to every person, animal and plant whose lives we touch with joy and compassion.

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

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 by email to the editors at carolyn.tosinternational@gmail.com.

With best wishes in putting theosophical principles into action,

Carolyn, Diana and Geoffrey



The editorial team (*L. to R.*)

Diana Dunningham Chapotin is the International Secretary of the TOS

Geoffrey Harrod is the International TOS Webmaster

Carolyn Harrod is the past National Coordinator of the TOS in Australia

"As time goes by, I become more and more convinced that the power of our service work will not be found in any of the projects or specific activities we undertake, but in the people and the quality of the mind that serves. In Buddhism there is the idea that any work that we do can be 'spiritual' whether it is working in a soup kitchen serving meals, or working at home changing diapers and balancing the family budget. The determining factor is the mind. When we do something with the sense that the task and its outcome are not ours, but originate from and return to the Divine within us all, the work is transformed. It becomes something extraordinary."

Tim Boyd, *From the President's Desk* in the Fall/Winter 2008-2009 issue of *For the Love of Life*, the magazine of the TOS in the USA



Our new TOS President

We are pleased to welcome Tim Boyd as the new International President of the TOS, a post that comes ex officio with his election to the presidency of the Theosophical Society.

No stranger to the work of the TOS, Tim served as president of the TOS in America from 2007 to 2011. Under his leadership, the TOS in the US was restructured so that projects were highlighted rather than departments. This helped release energy for the activities of the organisation, giving members the freedom to focus on what they were passionate about instead of trying to find people to fill different departments. Tim also helped set in place the Kern Foundation matching challenge grant which has been significantly benefiting the Golden Link College in the Philippines for seven years now.

For 25 years Tim worked with a group helping troubled youth in the Chicago area. More recently, Tim's involvement with the TOS and the Chushul orphanage in Tibet led to an audience with the Dalai Lama which resulted in the TS in America sponsoring his visit to Chicago in July of 2011 for a two-day event attended by ten thousand people. The event raised more than \$400,000, all of which was donated to educational projects aiding Tibetan communities worldwide.

[See photos of our new president, Tim Boyd here....](#)

Update on relief work in the Philippines

When a typhoon hit the Philippines in November 2013, there was an outpouring of concern for the thousands of people killed and millions left homeless. Donations sent from Theosophists around the world to the TOS in Manila were unprecedented since those received by our international TS HQ in India following the tsunami of December 2004.

Vic Hao Chin has sent us a fourth update on emergency relief operations. It can be found with



earlier updates [on our international TOS website here](#). We thank Vic for his regular reports and send our heartfelt thanks to the entire team in the Philippines for their tireless work.



Extensive service starts off the year in Mahabharat, India

Mahabharat, India, TOS Group leader, Deepa Padhi, would like to thank all who are supporting her work to combat violence against women. In the first four months of this year, she and her team have carried out so much work benefitting the abused and downtrodden that we can do no more than list their activities. They've installed more billboards to promote awareness of the destructiveness of violence against women, conducted workshops for young people on gender equality, organised blood donations and supported senior citizens, the ill and destitute.

[Read more....](#)

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The TOS and the TS working together in New Zealand

It is very pleasant to see how harmoniously the Theosophical Society and the Theosophical Order of Service in New Zealand collaborate, allowing room for and supporting each other's creative activities.

[Read more....](#)



Welcome news from the Olcott Education Society

Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, the Secretary of the Olcott Education Society and International Secretary of the TS, sent us this brief but heart-warming message in mid-March:

Let me share the good news with you all that the Government's approval for the upgrading of the Olcott Memorial High School to a Higher Secondary school was finally received this morning. We can now officially call it the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School. The school will soon complete 120 years of existence.

Warm regards,

Chitta



Joyful service continues in Kenya

How many readers of this newsletter remember the lively, upbeat (and sometimes mischievous) service project reports of Usha Shah, the Convenor of the TOS in Kenya? Since 2010 we have read of tree planting, famine relief, livelihood training for disadvantaged women and exciting parties for slum children and children in hospital. Here Usha sends us no fewer than three reports. If you would like to learn how to put on a party for 48 children in your TS branch, or supply abandoned women with solar lighting or get a thousand fruit trees planted,

[read on here!....](#)



TOS news from around the world

In this issue you'll find news from the TOS in **Tanzania**, about the exploits of one of their young members, Malaika Kapur, and ten fellow students from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, who recently completed a trek in Nepal to raise money for the *Tanzania Heart Babies* project. There's also news about scholarships recently awarded by the TOS in **America** to two Native American nursing students and an update on the involvement of TOS groups in **Europe** in the *Teddies for Tragedies* project, championed by the TOS in **England**.

[Read more....](#)

What's new on the International TOS website?

In our [Latest News](#) we welcome our new International President, Tim Boyd and share some of the highlights of his leadership as President of the TOS in America.

The new [Featured Article](#) is the Keynote address given at the International TOS Conference in July 2013 by Mr Mahendra P. Singhal, Vice-President of the TS. At the opening of the conference, held at the National Centre of the TS in America, he shared his key thoughts about the TOS. "The TOS is developing around the theosophical world as a friendly and healing organisation," he said. "Congratulations to the international team for the guidance and support it offers to groups around the world."

Our [Featured Project](#) describes an initiative of the TOS in Italy to support relief work in the Syrian refugee camp of Bab al Salam in collaboration with the international association Time4Life which leads the relief project. There are four million displaced people in Syria because of the civil war. They are victims of hunger and poor sanitation in camps where food, medicine, clothing and health care are lacking. Those most at risk, as always, are the children.

You'll also find additions to the TOS photo gallery and the expanded *Inspiration* section. Go to <http://international.theoservice.org>



Sandra Sartori and Stefania Schiavo, coordinators of the Italian TOS project, hand over boxes of relief material to Paolo Brunello.



'Meatless' meat: Is it the future?

Many of us avoid the use of animal products and by-products for spiritual, ethical, environmental or health reasons. We enjoy opportunities to introduce friends to food that may interest them in *ahimsa* dietary choices. On the *Today Show* in the United States, NBC's Craig Melvin recently reported on a new product called 'Beyond Meat', and challenged his colleagues to identify it in a taste test. Vegetarians will love this informative and fun four-and-a-half-minute video clip. It reminds us of the revolution taking place in the area of vegetable-derived proteins and the fresh possibilities opening up for promoting a lifestyle respectful of animals.

[View the video here...](#)

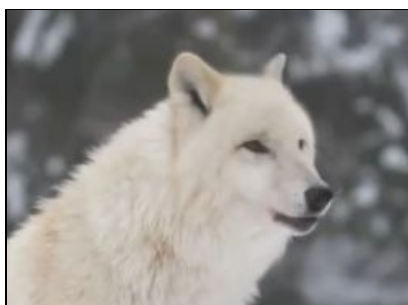


Using the media to promote animal welfare in South Africa

Meet Roz Griffin, a singer and composer with a studio in Pretoria, South Africa (www.rozgriffin.co.za). She writes across all genres – ballads, rock, jazz, country and pop, also rap, which she penned for inclusion in a feature film score. Roz is a regular meditator and avid believer in self-empowerment. She is a member of the TS and lectures at her local lodge on subjects like the subtle power of music, the importance of kindness to others, creating our own reality and how gratitude brings miracles into our lives (including one that will be related here).

Pillars of the TS in South Africa, Ann and Tom Davis, have alerted us to Roz's other passion – animal welfare – and how she recently put her writing talents to work to help launch a nationwide campaign that has achieved undreamt of success.

[Read Roz's story here...](#)



How wolves change rivers

This remarkable video documents the importance of all endemic species to the continuing health of their ecosystem. You'll not only see wolves from a different perspective but also gain an understanding of the important role they play in their environment.

[View the youtube video here...](#)



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Philippine Relief Operations Update, April 29, 2014

THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE PHILIPPINES

Additional 20-foot container shipments of construction materials were made to various provinces and towns to help the victims of the super typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda). Cash amounts were also given to individuals through the lodges or local groups of the Theosophical Society. Below are highlights of the latest shipments:

Leyte (Ormoc and Palompon)

The TOS in the Philippines donated construction materials and cash to victims in Ormoc and Palompon, Leyte, including members of the Theosophical Society. Below are some photos of the extent of the damage to property of members of the TS, including some photos of the materials and money given to them.





The funds and materials were given through Bro. Arnold Lumangtad of the Ormoc Lodge, Leyte, and Bro. Rey Olorida of the Palompon Study Group, Leyte (in photos above).

Samar

After much delay, goods were finally shipped to Samar province by the Theosophical Order of Service. This goods distribution was done in cooperation with the local Knights of Columbus in Borongan, Eastern Samar, managed by Bro. Teofrido Lagria. The items consisted of plyboards, chainsaw, tarpaulins and other construction materials. They have reported that the goods were distributed to typhoon-Yolanda affected communities in both Samar and Leyte, such as Guiuan, Eastern Samar, Barangays Garawon and Batang, Hernani, Eastern Samar. In Leyte the goods were distributed in San Juaqin, Palo, Leyte.



Guiuan was one of the worst hit during the typhoon because it was the first town where the typhoon made its landfall.

Bro. Victor Penaranda, Vice-President of the Theosophical Society in the Philippines, visited Samar and Leyte.



Iloilo Province

Through the efforts of Dr Penny Bundoc, the Theosophical Order of Service was asked to assist households of people with disabilities (PWD) who were affected by typhoon Yolanda by providing them with rice, which was their basic need at this time. These are disabled people in the 5th district of Iloilo on the northernmost part of Panay, specifically the towns of Carles, Balasan, San Rafael, Duenas, Lemery and Ajuy.

They requested 103 sacks of rice which were repacked in 5-kilo bags and distributed to 1,030 households of the disabled. Victor Lo, President of the Iloilo Lodge of the Theosophical Society, arranged for the needed endorsement of DSWD and applied for approval to purchase from NFA.

The rice bags were distributed by the Iloilo Provincial Federation of Associations of People with Disabilities, through its president, Mr Bonifacio Castigador and coordinator, Mr Mario Abaygar.



Ormoc, Leyte

Another 20-foot container of construction materials was shipped to Leyte through the Rotary Club of Omoc, consisting of plyboards, tarpaulins, nails, hammers, plastic mats, etc. This was arranged by Atty. Coeli Fiel, sister-in-law of Dr Roselmo Doval-Santos, President of the Theosophical Society in the Philippines.

Tacloban, Leyte

A shipment of construction materials was also made to Tacloban, Leyte, and was distributed in coordination with the Leyte Metropolitan Water District, in Barangay Nula-Tula, Tacloban City. In a letter addressed to the Theosophical Order of Service, the General Manager of the Water District Office, Mr Nestor Villasin, wrote: "I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for the relief goods you sent in order to help us rebuild our homes after

Super Typhoon Yolanda hit our place. Your assistance in these difficult times has done a lot to ease their burdens brought about by the said typhoon."

The linkage with the Leyte Water District was made by Victor Penaranda, Vice-President of the TS in the Philippines. To the right is a photo of the plyboard materials that were used in the repair of their houses.



Again, we sincerely thank the many donors from many countries as well as from the Philippines who sent in funds and goods. The TOS in the Philippines has tried its best to organise direct donation and distribution of materials to those who were affected by the typhoon. Numerous individuals, too many to name, have personally attended to helping make such distributions possible: from the survey of the damaged houses, to the packing, documentation, arranging for the shipping and trucking, travelling to the small towns and villages, arranging for volunteers to load and unload goods, and managing the actual distribution of the goods and cash to the families affected.

THANK YOU ALL!!!

For earlier reports go to the [TOS News page](#).

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Extensive service starts off the year in Mahabharat, India

Mahabharat, India, TOS Group leader, Deepa Padhi, would like to thank all who are supporting her work to combat violence against women. In the first four months of this year, she and her team have carried out so much work benefitting the abused and downtrodden that we can do no more than list their activities.

A secondary school workshop on gender issues

In January, a workshop was organised at higher secondary school level in the city of Bhubaneswar. Six topics were given to the students for discussion:

- Gender equality is first and foremost a human right;
- Man and woman are complementary halves;
- The legal consequences of gender-based violence;
- What are some means to change the mind-set on gender roles?
- What would the world be like without one of the two sexes?
- How can gender equality in schools be promoted?

Special guests enriching the deliberations were Dr Amrita Patel, researcher on women's issues, Prof. Vedabati Mohanty, a social analyst and Mr Abasara Beuria, a former ambassador in the Indian Foreign Service.

A signature drive was also organised at the school in which students, guests and faculty members participated to show their solidarity with the cause of gender equality.

This whole event was sponsored by the TOS in New Zealand.

Installation of more billboards

In early February, a billboard sponsored by New Zealand TOS was installed in the city of Cuttack. It was unveiled by former Director General of Police, Mr G.C. Nanda. In the photo below, members are seen with the billboard at Station Square, Cuttack.

Mr T.K. Nair, Indian TOS National Secretary, also unveiled a billboard in Fire Station Square, Bhubaneswar, sponsored by the TOS in Italy (photo to the right).



Organising blood donations

In mid-March, a blood donation camp was organised in the Co-operative Management Institution for poor thalassaemic children. (Thalassaemia is an inherited condition affecting the blood. Countries such as India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan are seeing an increase of thalassaemia patients because of lack of genetic counselling and screening.)



Cups and certificates were given to the donors by the Red Cross Society



A student of the Co-operative Management Institute donating blood in the camp

Providing water and buttermilk in the summer

In summer in Odisha, it is extremely hot. There is a

scarcity of drinking water and people get dehydrated and suffer from heat stroke. Different humanitarian organisations open “water sheds” or stands on the roadside for travellers where they can stop to obtain water. Permission is sought from the Municipal Corporation for the space to house the water containers. Since 2006, the TOS has employed a person to provide this service from 9.30am to 4.30pm throughout the summer months



In early April, Indian TOS National Secretary, Mr T.K. Nair, (above) came to the official opening of the TOS's shed which distributes both water and butter milk.



Caring for senior citizens, the ill and destitute

Mr Nair visited Mission Ashra – a home for destitute, abused and mentally ill women and on behalf of the TOS Mahabharat Group donated 50,000 rupees for the welfare of the 200 residents.

He also visited a modest Day Care Centre for poor senior citizens run by the Mahabharat TOS Group and distributed clothes and hand fans to its 12 beneficiaries (two men and ten women).

Later, Mr Nair visited Debapi Lodge where he delivered a lecture and then inaugurated a homeopathy clinic offering free service.





Organising a workshop on gender issues in the workplace

A major workshop was organised in association with the National Institute of Fashion Technology on the theme *How safe are women in their workplaces?* The Program Manager for UNICEF and Mr Nair were guests of honour. Ms Jaggi Panda, a successful lady entrepreneur, was the chief speaker.

A design and caption competition on the theme of gender equality had been organised among the students and cash prizes were awarded to the winners. The students actively participated in the workshop through discussions, skits and poems. A touching note of this event was that at the end, three students and two faculty members expressed their desire to join the TOS. At all these events the guests were given Theosophical books as gifts.



Mr T.K. Nair, Indian TOS National Secretary, delivering his speech



The Chief Guest, Ms Y. Padma, Program Manager for UNICEF, lighting the lamp



Student participants performing a skit on gender equality



Student participants receiving their certificates



Students signing their commitment to gender equality



The winner of the design and caption competition receiving the cash award from Ms Y. Padma

Supporting an orphanage

Finally, Mr T.K. Nair visited a small orphanage at Cuttack, the building for which was donated by a TOS member. There are 12 children up to the age of six. They received school bags and learning materials to equip them for nursery class.



Unveiling yet another billboard

Just a week after Brother Nair's densely packed program ("densely packed" is the least one can say!), Acting International TS President Mr Mahendra P. Singhal and his lovely wife, Shashi, visited Bhubaneswar, unveiling a billboard sponsored by TOS New Zealand in the Regional College Square of Bhubaneswar.



Mr Mahendra P. Singhal on the left, his wife, Shashi, on the right and Mrs Deepa Padhi in the centre



Mahendra and Shashi also visited a Day Care centre for senior citizens, donating a tricycle to a disabled resident on behalf of the TOS Mahabharat Group. A standing fan was also donated by a member.

Deepa hopes that the work she and her team are accomplishing is worthy of the confidence shown by all those so keen to support the defence of abused women, as well as the needy of all ages, of course.

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Joyful service continues in Kenya

How many readers of this newsletter remember the lively, upbeat (and sometimes mischievous) service project reports of Usha Shah, the Convenor of the TOS in Kenya? Since 2010 we have read of tree planting, famine relief, livelihood training for disadvantaged women and exciting parties for slum children and children in hospital. Here Usha sends us no fewer than three reports. If you would like to learn how to put on a party for 48 children in your TS branch, or supply abandoned women with solar lighting or get a thousand fruit trees planted, read on!

REPORT ONE

Dear All,

Our latest party was a hit! The Masai Slum in Nairobi has about 200 persons comprised of 35 families living in miserable conditions on a tiny piece of land. A friend and I visited the place and invited around 20 children to come to our party on December 23. We invited 25 children from Gachie Village too. That made 45 children to entertain from noon till 5pm.



The Gachie children arrived at the Lodge at around eleven and the others soon after. As if to compensate for the rainy day of our November party for the children of Deep Sea slum, the day was cool and pleasant. Each child was welcomed with a drink and biscuits.

We once again put up a huge bouncing castle, slides and a trampoline. These children were somewhat younger than our last ones but no less enthusiastic about the play equipment. They had a riotous time. To see them jumping tired me out! There was time to paint the faces of most of the children and they became spider men, batmen, tigers and cats! Then we played games amidst a lot of merriment and laughter.



We have to bear in mind that organised games and exciting play equipment are a complete novelty for these slum children. Naturally some were timid to start with. One small boy just sat in a corner not joining in in the games and I wondered why. It turned out that he could neither hear nor speak! I didn't know what to do but slowly managed to get him to join in the games. His clothes were in tatters. A couple of days later we managed to provide some

decent clothing for him. There was also a twelve-year-old girl looking after a three-year-old. She looked wistfully at all the children having fun and so we took care of the toddler so that the 'ayah' (or 'aunty') could have fun!



While the fun and games were going on, we cooked potato curry and rice to serve with chapattis. The children received strawberry flavoured milk as well. This was all a great treat for them and they loved every bit of it. Their usual diet is limited, you see. They usually eat 'ugali' which is cooked maize meal and a green vegetable called sukuma wiki. They have no fruit at all and no bread or milk.

We also distributed party packs containing stationery, clothes, sweets, juice, crisps and soft toys, along with our remaining teddies knitted by the ladies of the TOS in Italy.

As they left, the children also received food packets for their mothers containing wheat flour, baking flour, oil, sugar, salt and tea leaves. They were reeling with the weight of the packs but, more than that, at the thought of having food for the next few weeks! I had to drive a few of the little ones home in my car! They all left reluctantly but with full stomachs and taking happy memories with them.

Blessings upon all who helped.

Usha

P.S. Donations to help cover the costs of this party came from the Pattni family from London but most of the cost was borne by the Kenyan TS. The sponsors wanted to see how we organised the whole programme with a view to providing more financial

support possibly.

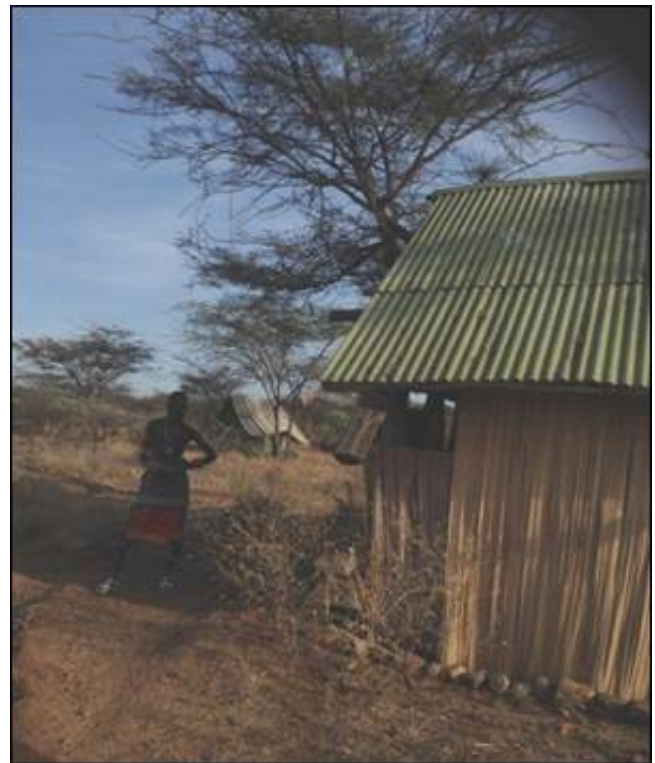


REPORT TWO

In early April I went to visit my dear niece, Shivani, in Samburu County. She manages a Non-Governmental Organisation called 'Ewaso Lions' which looks after lions and educates the members of the Samburu tribe on wildlife conservation.

While I was with her, Shivani took me to visit a village inhabited by women who are widows. There are nine of them living in mud huts. I learned that when a woman loses her husband she has to fend for herself and cannot live with either her in-laws or parents. It was a shock for me to see how young some of these women were. Apparently the older men get married to very young girls who are widowed at an early age.

The nine huts were enclosed in a rough patch of land. Prettily dressed in traditional attire, the women were going about their work with animals nearby and children running around in rags. I met one young lady who was making a lion shape using bits of wire and beads. Amazing work which helps her to earn a living.





She took me to see her hut and it was a revelation as I saw at first-hand how different their lifestyle is! The limited space was divided by hessian cloth or just plastic sheets into three parts, a kitchen, a bedroom and a living room. One had to crouch down in order to get in there. It was dark and gloomy, the only light coming from the cracks in the wall. Smoke was coming from the wood burning in the grate used for cooking. The lack of light limits the ladies' work after sunset and so they use kerosene lamps whose fumes give them a cough, asthma, etc. Later I talked to them and saw that they were learning to read and write. An enlightening visit!



After coming back and talking to our TS Lodge Chairman Narendra, it was decided that we would send solar lamps to these ladies. As Shivani was travelling to and from Samburu, we sent ten lamps with her. The huts now have light, eliminating the need for kerosene lamps and lengthening the ladies' working and learning hours. They also now have the ability to charge their radios and mobile phones. (You may wonder how people living in mud huts can afford mobile phones. Well, given the absence of electricity, mobile phones are the only way to communicate. They are very cheap to buy and calls costs less than a penny to make.)



Shivani and her aunt Usha prepare a solar lamp for use.

So we have been blessed once again with the opportunity to empower women disadvantaged by certain practices that can develop in patriarchal society. God helps those in need and does it in mysterious ways.

REPORT THREE

As has been reported by Usha before, in recent decades Kenya has suffered drastic destruction of its forests, grasslands, wetlands and other critical ecosystems. Its people are increasingly taking the matter in hand, however. They know that forests are important for protecting ecological diversity, regulating climate patterns and acting as carbon sinks. Forests are the basis of water catchments. Their loss increases pressure on a population grappling with hunger, water shortage and power shortage.



Theosophists in Kenya are joining in the work of reforestation. Their most recent initiative took place in mid-April when Navin, Narendra, Pratibha and Induben Shah, Mitesh and Himatlal Doshi, Shivani Sarkar, Mary Gachumba and Joseph Kiyo drove into the countryside outside Nairobi to plant one thousand fruit trees for two schools who hope to market the fruit for school revenue. This particular project was accomplished with the help and guidance of Mr Samuel Wakori, a senior officer in the Government Forest Department. He will oversee the trees and ensure that the schools take care of them appropriately.

Usha Shah describes the planting expedition...

Those who are superstitious consider the 13th day of the month to be inauspicious and I began to think this may be true when the bus that was to pick us up at 8 a.m. still hadn't come by 8:45! I was becoming more

frantic by the minute. Finally we decided to take our cars and drive the 40 kilometres down to Kiambu District and to Thirime Primary School. We left in a convoy and passed through some beautifully scenic places. The newly constructed road was very pleasant to drive on. For us in Kenya to have such a road is just sooooo good!

Anyway we made it to the school and found the Principal, members of the school committee and the children waiting to give us a warm welcome.



After the preliminaries, we set to work with a will to plant the trees. We had all brought chits with messages written on them invoking blessings on the project and wishing the seedlings to grow well. This is a practice I learnt in Chicago at the TOS Conference held in July 2013.

It was good to see all of us mucking around in mud, hands receiving a mud massage, getting the seedlings out of their black plastic bags and putting them in the holes already dug and lined with manure and compost.

In a short time we planted about 150 fruit trees and indigenous trees. The rest were to be planted by the school pupils the next day.





We then drove about ten kilometres to Mahinga Primary School where we planted about the same number of trees.





By this time, all the trees will be planted in fact. The staff and children are now responsible for looking after them.

We tried to take the mud off our shoes with very little success. In fact I drove my car back home in bare feet!
Nice!

Yes, the thirteenth of April was not a bad day after all! How can it be bad when we gave our Earth a thousand trees to nurture and heal herself?

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TOS news from around the world

International group of teens trek in Nepal to raise funds for the Tanzania Heart Babies project

Tanzania, a nation of 45 million people, tells a compelling, poignant story about little Tanzanian children dying needlessly. One out of 200 children born there suffers from congenital heart defects. With lack of paediatric cardiac surgical facilities, these children have to be sent to India for open heart surgery. As you read this now, and at any given moment, more than a thousand children await surgery. Their only hope for life lies in the generosity of donors. No wonder so many people want to support the *Tanzania Heart Babies* project.

Deepa Kapur, the coordinator of the TOS in Tanzania, tells us about the exciting and courageous Everest Base Camp climb, a fund-raising drive, undertaken in May by her daughter Malaika, a TOS teen from Tanzania herself, and ten fellow students from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada as well as one from Chicago, USA. Leading the team was their trainer who hails from Scotland. With immense support from around the world, including a hand-written note from the UN Messenger for Peace, Jane Goodall, they have raised an impressive sum for the *Heart Babies* project. We send warmest congratulations to these fine young citizens of the world.



Malaika with a heart-crippled child from the Maasai tribe near the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania



"Neverest till we reach Everest!"

Photo to the left is the first batch of university students arriving at New Delhi airport on 3rd May en route to Nepal for the Everest Base Camp Climb. From left to right: Benjamin Bar-Gera (Switzerland), Tanaya Bhardwaj (USA), Malaika Kapur (Tanzania/India), Anne-Sophie Deman (Belgium) and Johannah Cramer (USA).

For a full account of the team's climb, visit www.tzfortheheart.org

To donate through the TOS to the *Tanzania Heart Babies* project, contact Deepa Kapur at deepakapurjambo@gmail.com

The TOS in America awards scholarships to two Native American nursing students

The Theosophical Order of Service in the United States of America recently announced the recipients of its

2014 Oglala Lakota College scholarship, awarded to Native American nursing students who are passionate about using their education to give back to their communities. This year's scholarship is shared by two recipients – meet Nicole and Amy below:



A member of the Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe, Nicole Griffin was raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nicole moved to South Dakota six years ago to work toward her goal of becoming a Registered Nurse.

Currently in her second year of nursing school, Nicole plans to graduate with an Associate of Arts degree in Nursing in June 2014. Her longer-term goals include working toward a Bachelor's degree in nursing.

Nicole relates that life has not been easy for her, but says, "I have managed to make it this far and have no current plans on giving up." The mother of five children ages 1-12, Nicole drives 200 miles per day from her home in Rapid City to attend classes in Pine Ridge, all the while working part time as a nursing assistant. Nicole says that getting her nursing degree "is like a dream come true for me and my family."

Amy Wilson is a member of the Oglala Lakota Tribe and is a lifelong resident of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Her grandfather, Chief Oliver Red Cloud, founded the Red Cloud Indian School that has educated Lakota people for over 100 years. Amy was raised with traditional Lakota values, including respect, generosity, courage, fortitude and wisdom. She finds that "the feeling of sharing and caring is immensely calming."

A single mother of three (ages 17-25), Amy's family has expanded to include two daughters-in-law and two grandsons.

Amy worked for the Lakota Housing Authority, then obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. She found her true calling, however, while caring for severely injured and ill family members. Amy sees a great deal of suffering on the reservation, and is determined to use her nursing skills to help her community.



“Teddies are sometimes as important to healing as medicines”: an update on the Teddies for Tragedies project

We have often reported in this newsletter on the *Teddies for Tragedies* project championed by the TOS in England. Last year we shared the excellent news that our British knitters received recognition for collecting over 12,000 teddies to comfort children traumatised by war, famine, abandonment or natural catastrophes. (They are closing steadily in on 14,000 now!) In recent years, members in Italy and France have been inspired by the Brits to join the team.

It is interesting to learn how the project started. The website <http://www.teddiesfortragedies.org> tells us that Teddies for Tragedies originated with the Women's Royal Voluntary Services workers who, in 1985, knitted teddy bears for orphans housed in a temporary orphanage set up by the *Emergency Care for Children* nurses in a Sudan refugee camp for 2,000 children with tuberculosis.

The teddies were such a success that more were

requested. Soon teddies were being sent to Peru, Uganda, Zambia, Jamaica, Armenia, India, Thailand, Romania, Croatia, Albania and Nepal.



Doctors treating children in developing countries find that the teddies are sometimes as important to healing as the medicines. And like medicine, a continual supply of teddies is needed as each child keeps the bear he or she receives.

The TOS in France has just enlisted the help of the ladies in a retirement home in the region of Burgundy. Below, we see the presentation of their first bunch of teddies to Michel Chapotin, President of the TOS in France.



Anyone can participate in the project. Just ask friends for wool remnants and download the knitting pattern here:

<http://www.tos-uk.org.uk/teddies.htm>

The trickiest part is possibly getting the teddies to children in need. If the children are overseas, it can be difficult finding friends or associations to transport them for free. For advice and encouragement, write to Atma and Cynthia Trasi of the TOS in England at: atmatrasi@btinternet.com.

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Using the media to promote animal welfare in South Africa

Meet Roz Griffin, a singer and composer with a studio in Pretoria, South Africa (www.rozgriffin.co.za). She writes across all genres – ballads, rock, jazz, country and pop, also rap, which she penned for inclusion in a feature film score. Roz is a regular meditator and avid believer in self-empowerment. She is a member of the TS and lectures at her local lodge on subjects like the subtle power of music, the importance of kindness to others, creating our own reality and how gratitude brings miracles into our lives (including one that will be related here).

Pillars of the TS in South Africa, Ann and Tom Davis, have alerted us to Roz's other passion – animal welfare – and how she recently put her writing talents to work to help launch a nationwide campaign that has achieved undreamt of success.



The organisation **Be Wise Sterilise** (<https://www.sterilise.co.za/>) is displaying this sign around Pretoria as part of its campaign to combat one of the biggest problems in animal welfare around the world.



At our request, Roz relates her story:

In South Africa, many people are very poor and cannot afford to pay to sterilise their animals. Animal shelters are full to the brim. Countless creatures never know a real home other than a cage in a shelter until euthanised. Tens of thousands die simply of disease or neglect every year. South African citizens are unaware that vets often offer special rates in order to fight the animal population explosion.

In December 2013, I came across people from an organisation called **Be Wise Sterilise**. When I heard of their intention to launch a campaign, I offered them the wording and music for a radio announcement. They accepted. I suggested they contact one of the larger radio stations in our area of Pretoria. I am happy to say that some weeks later they advised me that they had been granted free airplay by the largest media group in the country which owns four stations across South Africa and had offered to run the announcement for seven days on all four stations five times a day.

These stations reach across the whole country and the advertising time they donated would normally cost 266,000.00 Rand (over \$US25,000).

The result for this campaign has been way beyond any expectations the campaign organisers had. They have been flooded with calls from all over the country from people wanting to donate, or offer their services. Another station took up the announcement ([hear it here](#)) after they were contacted and ran it twice a day for the entire month of April and are continuing today, all at no charge.

Other local stations nationwide will be contacted by the **Be Wise Sterilise** team once they have had the time to handle all the enquiries and offers that have come in so far.

I am happy that Tom and Ann Davis asked me to write this story for the international TOS because it

may inspire readers to try for free radio time in their own countries on sterilisation or a different animal-related issue.

At the Pretoria Lodge, we have a practice that may interest readers. The collection taken up at meetings is sometimes donated to animal rescue organisations. On those occasions, attendees are invited to bring some dog or cat food as a donation for a selected shelter. The Pretoria Lodge members always give generously and I thank them very much.

Kind regards to you all,

Roz



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