



NAFA aims to improve the well being of people in Nepal by supporting sustainable health, education and infrastructure projects.

For more information on NAFA & the current projects & appeals please visit the website

[www.nafa.org.au](http://www.nafa.org.au)

**Nepali New Year Fundraising Dinner 2012**

Don't miss this great night out ... mark it on your calendar NOW !!!

Saturday 12th May 2012  
Marymac Centre, Annerley

Come along for a fantastic night of Nepali culture and food and celebrate the start of Nepali New Year 2069! (Nepal is 56 years & 8 1/2 months in front of us).

Also on the night ... Special presentation by NAFA showcasing current and past projects, market stalls, silent auction, raffles etc.

**Nepal in the Park 2011**

What a huge success!!! ... perfect weather for hiking and there was something for everyone with all the enjoyable activities on offer!

**A record \$10,000 was raised!**

Many thanks to all the supporters: the Red Shirts (volunteers), hikers, patrons, everyone who sponsored hikers and the organisations who donated prizes and goods.

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ALL proceeds from NAFA's two annual fundraisers are used to support sustainable projects in Nepal.

### Welcome to the third edition of NAFA News!

**With a helping hand from NAFA members and supporters, Nepali students are making a difference in their own country!**

**Thank you for your continued support to help make this happen!**

#### City students "lend a pen" for rural students!

Helen, NAFA's Sponsorship Officer, who recently volunteered at VSN School Thimi (Kathmandu) helped Class 8 students translate 20 Australian books, from English to Nepali, for the Tawal students (a remote village 1 1/2 days travel from Kathmandu).

City students in Nepal have more opportunities to learn & practise their English than students living in rural & remote areas, so this special English lesson gave the VSN students a sense of pride that they could help fellow students, living in a remote village.



Four NAFA sponsored students participated—Suman, Sachin, Romee and Nabina.

This is the second time VSN students have translated books for the Tawal students to enjoy!

#### Proud Recipients of Nursing Scholarships ...

Sun Keshari and Ratna Shova are well-deserving recipients of two nursing scholarships, made possible by NAFA supporters who participated in the "Challenge Yourself for Nepal" Fundraiser in August 2010 and June 2011.



Sun Keshari's (left) College Director reported that she is an outstanding student, with an overall pass of 92% for her first year's exam results. Ratna Shova (below) is the second recipient and has only recently started her course.

Both girls do volunteer work in the community in their spare time and are very committed to helping their Nepali communities once they have finished their Nursing courses.



Sun Keshari and Ratna Shova are very thankful to all the generous NAFA supporters who have given them this wonderful opportunity to further their education.

#### A Day in the Life of Agreni ...

Agreni, a PA Nepal student, is 20 years old and currently in 3rd year of a Diploma in Pharmacy through the NAFA FEAT (Further Education & Training) Program.



This is a typical day in her life (6 days a week!) ...

5am-10.30am she attends college, 11am-3pm she volunteer teaches 7 children who live in prison with their parents, 4pm-7pm study time, 7pm-8pm rest time, 8pm-9pm cooking & eating and 9.30pm-11pm more study time. On her "weekend", Saturday, she washes her clothes, cleans her room and also knits scarves, beanies or friendship bands for her friends.

Agreni happily accepts her responsibilities as she is grateful for the opportunity she has been given to study towards her dream of becoming a Pharmacist.

#### Hilly region men benefit from NAFA's FEAT program



Ashok, resident of the remote village of Tawal Besi, completed a 6-month electric wiring course & is playing a key role in the Tawal micro-hydro project. He has put up transmission lines and wired up 100 houses to the electrical grid. He will be the principal operator of the system that will provide electricity to 250 houses, two schools and a health clinic.

Gopal (from the village of Kutal), with NAFA's support, is on the path to achieving his dream after training to cut precious stones. He sources the raw stones in the Ganesh Himal hills & has learnt to cut the stones into faceted gems. He has borrowed money from his father to buy his first machine & his aim is to sell gems to jewellery shops & tourists in Kathmandu. Even with his limited English he managed to tell us how much he appreciates this support from NAFA and how it has greatly benefited his life.

### Double good fortune for Tawal Besi man!



This resident from the remote village of Tawal Besi is twice fortunate. His hearing has been restored, thanks to Lew and Sue Tuck and NAFA's Hearing-Nepal program, but also his life was saved a month ago by Beg, the Tawal health coordinator (whose salary and training is sponsored by NAFA). After falling and slicing open his head, Beg was able to stop the bleeding and use his skills to close the wound with 33 stitches ... ALL performed without anaesthetic!

### A song of appreciation

This elderly man walked almost 6 hours to see Lew and Sue Tuck about his hearing loss. After testing, he was fitted with a "maxi" hearing device. Normally a small deposit is charged to ensure recipients value these expensive devices, but after saying that he didn't have any money he offered to sing for us. People gathered around to hear him sing how delighted he was with his newfound "freedom" to hear.



### Shree Mahakali Secondary School is Living the Dream !



In July, with the help of over 3000 voters worldwide, NAFA won a \$5000 grant from "Sunsuper Dreams" to build two Grade 9 classrooms at a school in the Kavre District of Nepal.

NAFA members visited this very impressive Government School on November 1. Unfortunately it was a public holiday but the Principal and a group of teachers and students came to welcome NAFA members with beautiful hand made flower malas. The Principal and the 19 teachers provide quality education to the 500+ students. The School is expecting to officially open the classrooms in early 2012.

For full details on the Sunsuper Grant see: [www.sunsuperdreams.com.au/winners/july-kylie-gilbert](http://www.sunsuperdreams.com.au/winners/july-kylie-gilbert)

### Tawal school extends to Grade 10!

Due to a partnership between NAFA, NRNA (Non-Resident Nepalese Assoc.) and 'Smile Back to Me Spain', a learning environment was created for Grade 10 students. In 2011, two classrooms were constructed with 50%-50% NAFA/NRNA funds (\$10,000 total) and 'Smile Back to Me Spain' sponsored 3 senior teachers of Math, Nepali and English.

The school is the hub of the local area, with 56% of the students in Grades 6-10 coming from 5 nearby villages. At present 56% of students in those grades are girls, so the school is making a big difference in ensuring girls in this remote region of Nepal receive a good education.

In the November visit to Tawal, NAFA members helped the first 25 Grade 10 students with their English practice lessons. NAFA wishes them the very best of luck in the national Senior Leaving Certificate (SLC) exams in April 2012!

### They came from everywhere for eye and ear camps!

School students and adults experiencing eye and ear problems were invited from 12 villages in the Hilly Region of the Ganesh Himal, northwest of Kathmandu. Community announcements on local radio attracted villagers from other areas, some of whom walked for over 6 hours to get to the camps.

The primary eye and ear camps were organised by NAFA in partnership with Dr Detlev Gueck, an eye specialist from Germany, Lew and Sue Tuck's HearingNepal Program, the Nepalese Association of Hard of Hearing (NAHOH) and the Kopan Monastery.

1,045 people had their eyes checked by Dr Detlev over the 5+ days with over 300 free spectacles being distributed and 1,078 people had their ears tested by Keshab from NAHOH, with many needing wax and foreign objects removed from their ears. More hearing aids were fitted by Lew and Sue, in addition to checking those fitted in previous visits.



Dr Detlev (right) worked 10 hour days to make sure everyone who came to the camps was seen!

### Doing what it takes to have electricity!

The micro-hydro project at **Tawal** and **Tawal Besi** is NAFA's largest project to date. Its success depends on volunteer labour contributions from the community. In 5 months of construction, the volunteer labour devoted to this project has been extraordinary. Each family is contributing by carrying over 100 kg of sand, stones, cement and other construction materials from the nearest road-head 5 hours away. Men and women have also been undertaking other work eg digging channels for the pipes.

On a recent visit to Tawal, NAFA members witnessed women carrying 45 kg bags of sand from the river (a 7 hour return trip) and 22 men carrying the generator (photo below), which weighed 300kgs, from the road-head; it took more than 3 days on steep narrow trails, and this was AFTER an exhausting 3 day trip to carry the 320 kg turbine to the site!

Funds have only been used to pay for equipment, materials and transport. When the community was asked how they felt about their efforts to date, they said it was very hard work but would be well worth it in the end.



Meanwhile, in the small Sherpa village of **Lumsa**, in lower Solu Khumbu, residents have also been working hard to install a micro hydro plant to supply electricity to its 109 households. This project has been mainly funded by the Lumsa community and businesses but also through a \$5,000 allocation from NAFA and earmarked donations to NAFA.



The Lumsa Steering Committee treasurer advised that at the end of November power was switched on to every household after months of hard work by the community. In early January, four NAFA members will visit Lumsa to view the project and meet all parties involved in making this project a huge success.

Look out for more updates on both projects in the next newsletter.