



FRIENDS OF TIBETAN SETTLEMENTS IN INDIA ("FOTSI")

Annual Report and Newsletter for 2007-8 Projects in Mundgod and Bylakuppe Settlements



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H *health*



E *ducation*



L *eadership*



P *artners*



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Financial Report for 2007 (ref. IRS Filing, Marty,Lyle, Doty & Jones, LLC)

Income

Donations	\$55,996
Interest Income	\$ 991
Total Income	\$56,987

Expenses

Program	\$46,916
Fundraising (newsletter, US mail)	\$ 424
Administrative (e.g. IRS reports, State Reg)	\$ 569
Total Expenses	\$47,909

Our Program Expenses in 2007:

Education **\$10,972**
College+ Nursing Scholarships, Boarding School Fees (TCV),Dre-
Gomang School, books, other student aid

Health/Hygiene/Emergency Aid **\$12,073**
Representative's Emergency Fund, Hospitals, Monks' and Nuns'
Medical Funds, direct aid during trip to India

Sponsorships/Self-Sufficiency/GroupSupport **\$19,380**
45 sponsorships through Rep. Office, temporary for others, cow
purchases, 21 nuns and 39 monks sponsored, other one-time aid

Leadership Programs (new for 2007) **\$ 1,950**
Tibetan leaders and projects, including generator for pump Camp
#6, computer setup Tibetan Women's Assoc., English for nuns' tour,
computer aid for translators, plans for loan education

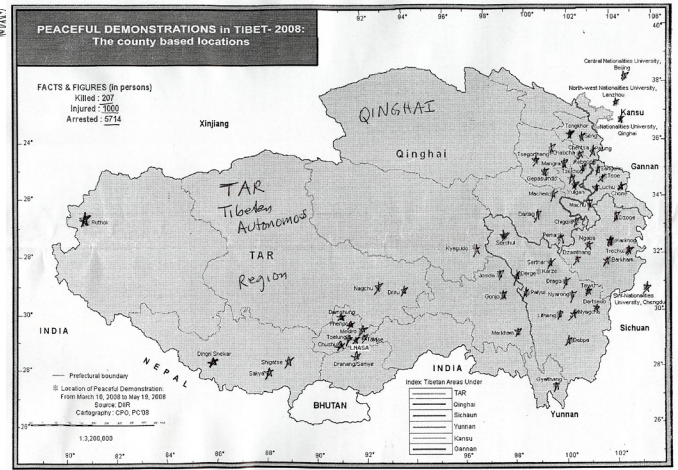
Program Expenses for India **\$ 2,541**
Travel to/in India (most donated by President) \$2110, mail to India
directly for program \$327, and supplies used in India (\$104)

Including our early work as CFT/TSI, and later as FOTSI, our program service has exceeded **\$400,534**. Other work has been done in our name or with our advice by groups working with Tibetans in India, Nepal, and Tibet. As usual, **no salaries have been paid to anyone in FOTSI. We deeply thank all donors who have donated for FOTSI's operating expenses!**

July 2008

Dear Friends of Tibetan Settlements in India,

Words cannot express our gratitude for all your help to Tibetans! They continue to write to FOTSI and many of you, with gratitude for your invaluable financial support and heartfelt encouragement in these difficult times. In 2007-8 we sponsored 105 people, including laypeople, monks, nuns, students, and teachers. We helped hundreds more through our medical, self-sufficiency, educational, and infrastructural efforts. Our direct support for people and projects in India was \$46,916. This aid goes far due to low costs in India and no FOTSI salaries.



Demonstrations in Tibet 2008

This year we entered new realms with our Tibetan partners and creative donors. Our leadership program, initiated by a grant from the Mediators' Foundation, bore fruit in new leaders and wonderful projects, such as the generator for dependable water for Mundgod's Camp #6, aid to a first ever nun's tour for 2009, and a computer setup for the Tibetan Women's Association. Our scholarship program has produced 6 graduate nurses working in hospitals in India, while other students near graduation, and 5-7 new scholarships begin. We've aided the Tibetan Volunteers for Animals, whose work helps both animals and humans (rabies shots, etc.). This newsletter has many examples of great things you made happen.



Image of Tibet

I was fortunate my health improved enough for me to travel to the Mundgod settlement for January of 2008, and to be there for the 2 weeks when HH the Dalai Lama gave teachings and talked with his people. There was a happy mood, with Tibetans celebrating the Congressional Gold Medal awarded to the Dalai Lama in an inspiring ceremony in Washington, D.C. on October 17, 2007. Our photo collage on the back of this newsletter shows him at that time, with Nancy Pelosi in the background (top, center).

Unfortunately, in spite of Tibetan hopes rising early in 2008, this has been a terrible year for Tibetans. Our Tibetan friends in settlements in India have had to watch as over 200 Tibetans were killed, over 1000 injured, 5714 arrested, and many disappeared in Tibet up to mid-May of this year. Frightening news is still coming in. The large number of peaceful demonstrations (see them dotted on the inserted map of many prefectures in Tibet and China) were widely distributed in the Tibetan Autonomous Region as well as many parts of Tibet not included as the "Tibet" region on maps. Doctors who aided injured demonstrators were injured. Monks have been forced into "re-education". Many Tibetans I've communicated with in the USA and Mundgod were told by relatives not to call or write until further notice. Information is sparse. Identity cards are needed every few blocks in Lhasa, and without them, one is arrested. The dream of old mystical, free Tibet seems far away. Tibetans in India and the USA have been active in peaceful vigils, information programs, demonstrations, and prayer. They plead with the world not to forget them.



Tibet

In a statement by HH the Dalai Lama during an interview by Der Spiegel in Germany, he replied to a question about some violence and possible arson by young Tibetans in Lhasa: “I assume that this was the case. I condemn it, and it makes me sad to see my fellow Tibetans acting in this way – even though it was most certainly the result of deep-seated disillusionment and despair over being second-class citizens in

their own country. But this is no excuse for

violence. I have proposed an international investigation of the events in Tibet, to be completed by a recognized, independent institution. But one thing is certain. It was, for the most part, innocent Tibetans who suffered under the brutality of the police and the military. We deplore the loss of more than 200 lives. But we too lack a complete and detailed picture of what happened and is still happening in Tibet.”

The media, mail, phone calls and email are all heavily monitored. Tibetan aid organizations and information sources have had their email and websites hacked, and even a Chinese woman only trying to promote dialogue had her parents attacked so badly they’ve gone into hiding. As of June 25th, the Chinese Government reopened Tibet to tourists after it had been closed due to unrest in Tibet. The decision to allow tourists back partly resulted from passing the Olympic torch through Lhasa without protests. However, the situation is still not normal in Tibet. Many of the monasteries have been closed and only a few tourists have been seen in Lhasa. Many groups had to cancel trips. Some are planning for 2009. There was also damage to some Tibetan communities due to the earthquake which was so damaging in China. We’ve had little further news about that. Our hearts do go out to both the Tibetan and Chinese people who suffered and died in that catastrophe.

The Tibetans in India remain hugely grateful for all of your support. They also hope that you will all speak out for them and their parents and relatives, many of whom are silent in Tibet.

With Gratitude,
Chela Kunasz, President, FOTSI



World Tibet Day, Boulder, CO 2008

Leadership Projects – 2007

Great Impetus from the Mediators Foundation Brings Action

Kharyak Charitable Society Leadership Projects

In our 2006-7 newsletter we wrote that donor **Jennifer Fox** helped FOTSI get a \$1500 grant for **leadership training** from the Mediators Foundation led by Mark Gerzon. The grant has had excellent results.

We sent \$650.00 to the Kharyak Charitable Society (KCS) for training and helping new Tibetan leaders. Mr. Tenpa TK, head of KCS and Mundgod's assembly, embodies the kindness and compassion the Tibetan culture encourages. He chose to work with the Camp #6 leader, Mr. Tenzin Gyelek, who, after researching the needs of Camp #6 residents, proposed the **water pump alternate power supply project**. **All of us worked to raise funds for this project, with Mr. Tenpa TK and the Tibetans raising \$1550 and FOTSI sending \$3450 from 27 donors.** We are delighted that an appropriate pollution and noise controlled **generator** has been purchased and installed. The Tibetans put a plaque above the generator to thank us! Our photo of the generator shows the new Camp #6 leader, Mr. Tenzin Namgyal,



Generator

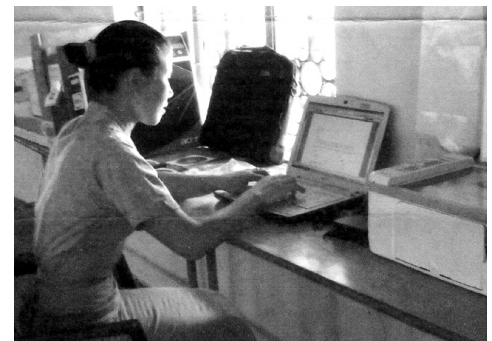
and Mr. Kalsang, the pump operator, known as the “waterman”. Now, when the regular electricity is off for significant periods (up to 2 weeks), the many hundreds of people of Camp #6 can get water! Previously, they had to carry buckets, ride in jeeps, etc. to try to get water. We explored alternative possibilities (e.g. individual and play pumps popular in Africa), but the generator we finally got was the only practical and appropriate choice. This is one of FOTSI's most useful projects.



Mr. Tenpa TK +wife Dr. Kyizom

The other half of the funds we sent KCS was used to assist the **President of the Regional Tibetan Women's Association (TWA)**

in Mundgod, Ms. Tsering Palmo. She used that plus another \$900 FOTSI sent to purchase everything for a **complete computer setup (computer, printer, digital camera, supplies, power protection) for the TWA.** She has had training and advice from Mr. Tenpa and others about equipment use, data collection, and presentations. Other TWA women also use this equipment. Using this setup is good training and saves a lot of time. TWA works hard to assist and speak for the community in Mundgod. They tutor school children, work for cleanliness in the community, and speak for all the Tibetans about conditions in Tibet, their community, and they cultivate warm interactions in India. They speak up for non-violence and are an active voice for peace and justice, not only for Tibet, but for the world.



Ms. Palmo and computer

In all, KCS, Mr. Tenpa TK, Tenzin Gyelek and Ms. Palmo used the total amount we sent (\$650 + \$3450 + \$900 = \$5000.00) to great effect.



Jangchub Choeling Nunnery Leadership Project

Jangchub Choeling, with over 200 residents, takes in many recent escapees from Tibet. While some of the nuns' buildings are new and upgraded, this housing is insufficient to accommodate them. Many new arrivals are living in moldy rooms abandoned by the Home for the Elderly. Still they must turn away many prospective residents. The nuns do a lot of community service. We sent \$100 to nun Tenzin Norzom to help her train other nuns in ways that will help the nunnery and others.



Nuns making mandala

When the Shakyamuni Tibetan Buddhist Center in Portland, Oregon (www.stbcportland.org) and its



Nuns Tour Group

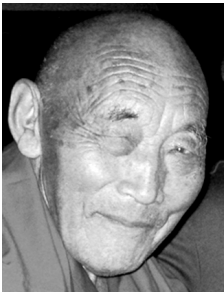
Director, Geshe Kalsang Damdul, invited the nuns to come for one of the few Tibetan Nuns' Tours on record (most likely in 2009), this seemed a godsend. As the nuns have various large financial problems, including the need for new buildings, they were excited about the tour opportunity and have been working hard, learning to make sand mandalas, present Tibetan sacred dances, speak of kindness, compassion, and peace. Tenzin Norzom decided to use the leadership money towards English training for the tour. FOTSI also gave them appropriate vocabulary study materials and contacts in the USA who may invite them for appearances beyond Portland. We are excited

about the new project the nuns are trying. This is a great use for the leadership funds – a contribution both for the nunnery and for their positive message for the world. If you wish to help the nuns with this tour, please contact FOTSI or the Portland center.

Office of the Representative of the Dalai Lama and Drepung Gomang Monastery Leadership Projects

The Representative's Office will be using the \$100 leadership grant we sent them to implement a "loan awareness plan" which is badly needed in the settlement (see Pg. 11 of this newsletter). A study was made at Drepung Gomang Monastery of computer and English skills training possibilities. Other aid groups, such as the Canadian Friends of Drepung Gomang Monastery, are working to help with computer hardware. We are helping a translator who has aided FOTSI and the monastery in many ways by contributing towards a laptop for him. **The discussions of future and current needs have been as useful as the actual funds sent** and purchases made. The encouragement of leaders who come up with helpful and inspiring projects and who will contribute to a positive future for the world is a priceless gift. See <http://www.mediatorsfoundation.org> to learn about the Mediators Foundation's mission "To foster global leadership for a peaceful, just, and sustainable world."





Gen Monlam

Tibetans Who Make FOTSI's Programs Happen



Lobsang Sangyas



Jigme Namgyal

We are most grateful to the Tibetans who are the backbone of our work in the Tibetan settlements. There are many. Here we mention the essential people for 2007-8: **Geshe Lobsang Sangyas**, **Ven. Lobsang Ngawang** (monks' emergency funds), **Geshe Ngawang Tsondu** (translator, lots of help), **Gen Monlam** (advisor), **Mr. Migmar Tsering** (Drepung Gomang Monastery), **Ven. Ani Tenzin Norzom** (nuns' sponsorships, medical fund), **Mr. Ngawang Norbu** and **Mr. Palden Dhondup** (Representatives (2007,2008), Mundgod – no photos), **Mrs. Tenzin Yangkar** and **Ms. Nyima Lhamo** (Rep's Office), **Mr. Tenpa TK** (hospitals, Kharyak Aid Society), **Mr. Jigme Namgyal** (Dre-Gomang School, monk sponsorships), and **Mrs. Sonam Dolma** (SOS Tibetan Children's Village Schools -- no photo), and **Mr. Lobsang Monlam**.



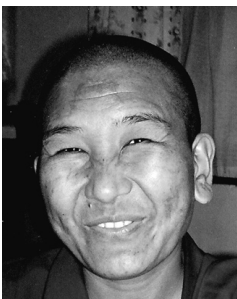
Lobsang Ngawang



Migmar Tsering



Ngawang Tsondu



Tenzin Norzom



Nyima Lhamo



Tenpa TK



Lobsang Monlam

Trip to India and Lots of Help from FOTSI Donors

Both Chela and **Greg Hunt**, a long-time FOTSI donor making his first visit to India, could not believe the blizzard building up in Denver the night of December 26, as they finished packing for the long trip to the Tibetan settlement near Mundgod. As they feared, the next day 62 planes flying from Denver to California were cancelled. Amazingly, their plane *did* fly out that night (4 hours late, after an hour of de-icing). They made their connection for Asia in LA by 10 minutes. Jigme Namgyal, our Tibetan colleague who met us at the airport in India, was in an accident in which the motor-rickshaw in which he was riding swerved and ended up upside



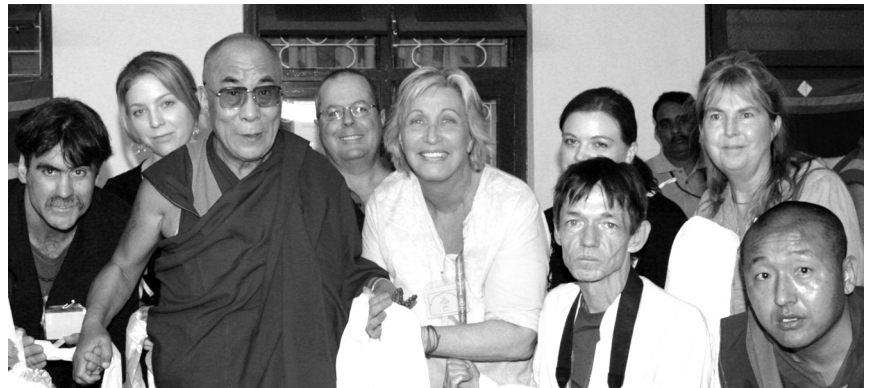


Jigme Namgyal

down in the midst of fast multi-lane traffic in Bangalore. He was pinned under the vehicle with trucks and buses barreling towards him. Amazingly, traffic was quickly stopped, and he and the driver were pulled out surprisingly intact. So, with only a skinned elbow, Jigme met Greg and Chela at the Bangalore airport as if nothing had happened. How fortunate!

Thousands of visitors from 28 countries appeared in the Tibetan camp within days of Chela's and Greg's arrival December 31 as the Dalai Lama was about to speak there for 10 days. They had an unforgettable time in India. **Greg wishes to share his experiences:**

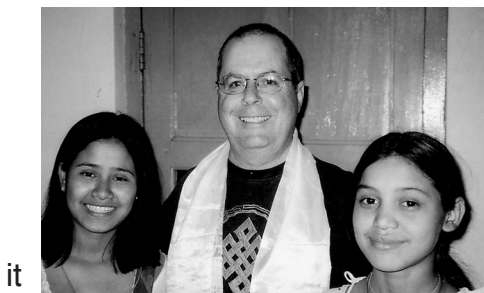
"I went to Mundgod primarily to see the two Tibetans I sponsor through FOTSI and to attend teachings given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. It is a long and arduous journey to south India, but we finally arrived and settled into the accommodations generously provided by the Gomang monks.



Greg is behind just right of HH the Dalai Lama, Chela to far right

Mundgod is normally a quiet community but, when His Holiness arrived, it became incredibly busy as travelers came from all over the globe to see him. The main road running through the settlement was transformed into a busy and chaotic avenue full of vendors, beggars, monks, and Buddhist pilgrims. Chela and I attended most of the teachings and were fortunate enough to have a group photo taken with His Holiness. After he left Mundgod, Chela earnestly began her FOTSI work.

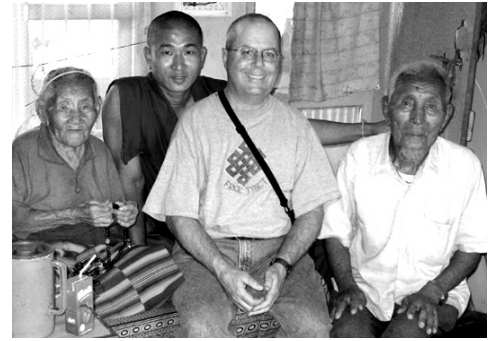
Because of her dedication to the Tibetan community there, she is greatly revered and loved by the Tibetans and is affectionately called Ama (mother) Chela. After seeing her in action it is easy to see why. On a typical day she will meet with the monks and nuns who work with her on various projects, receive numerous requests to fund new projects, juggle FOTSI funds to meet new requests, and deal with emergencies that arise. It would be great if we could clone Chela!



*Greg Hunt with sponsored girl
Tenzin Dadon and sister*

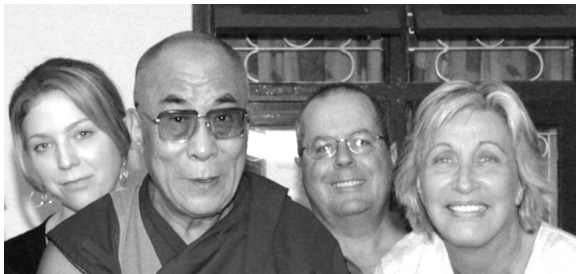
One morning Chela and I met with all of the FOTSI sponsored Tibetans at the Central Tibetan Administration Office. She spent all morning greeting everyone, patiently listening to the latest accounts of their lives, providing them with letters and gifts from sponsors, and giving counsel to those with special needs. It was quite compelling. One young girl related that her father had died that very morning, yet she somehow made to the meeting. Without exception every person expressed deep appreciation for the help that Chela and FOTSI sponsors provide.

There are other, larger charities helping in the Mundgod community, and they do an excellent job. However, FOTSI manages to “fill in the cracks” by helping many missed by the bigger charities. For example, one young Tibetan boy needed a tonsillectomy. After listening to his mother’s impassioned plea for help, Chela found the money to fund the operation. This illustrates why it is so important for Chela to travel to Mundgod. When she is there, Chela discovers those with special needs and can better distribute FOTSI funds. Without this personal touch, some Tibetans would not receive desperately needed help.



Greg at the Home for the Elderly

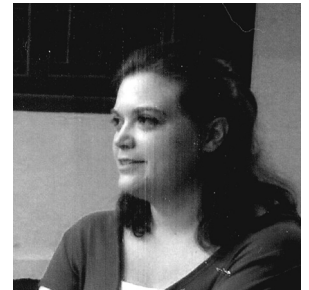
As a result of my trip I have even greater admiration for the wonderful and compassionate work that FOTSI performs. Please be assured your generous donations directly help the Tibetans and your charity is deeply appreciated. I want to thank Chela and all of the FOTSI sponsors for their generosity and compassion. Your continued support of FOTSI will ensure that those Tibetan refugees will have a better quality of life. Tashi delek!”



*Jennifer Antti, H.H. the Dalai Lama,
Greg Hunt, Sandra Esner*

Sandra Esner has done more than anyone else Chela knows to help Tibetans. She is also a great friend of animals and everyone on the planet. This year she was a great friend and help to Chela when they were in India this year. A true “sister” and companion through many a “challenging” moment in India, 2008! **Jennifer Antti** is the President of the Canadian Friends of Drepung Gomang Monastery and **Laurel Antti** is the coordinator of a coming Canadian tour. These sisters are tireless and creative friends of Tibetans who have also jointly sponsored one of our

neediest Tibetan women this year. Their kindness really breathed hope and life into a person who has suffered terribly.



Laurel Antti



Phoenix Artemisia

Phoenix Artemisia continues leading yoga workshops in California, as well as retreats and inspiring journeys to India and elsewhere. She has helped FOTSI’s health projects for years, and in 2007 **sent FOTSI funds from a series of yoga and Sanskrit chanting workshops**. These donations healed and helped Tibetan refugees. FOTSI is especially appreciative of **Ms. Sherri Betz of Thera Pilates Physical Therapy** in Santa Cruz who offered Phoenix the use of her site for FOTSI fund-raisers, which makes a significant contribution. Phoenix’s website, <http://www.phoenixyoga.net> has a link to our FOTSI site and other service-oriented webpages (see “Inspiration and Links”).

Lap Top Donation needed for FOTSI

This would help us take notes in India. Any reliable laptop or donations for computing would help!





Tsering Lhamo

Sponsorships and Direct Individual Aid

Programs through the Mundgod Office of the Representative of HH the Dalai Lama



Kunsang Wangmo

We now sponsor **46 people** -- 17 children, 19 elders, and 10 middle-aged through the Representative's Office. Chela met almost all of them in India in January, 2008. She often visited the Home for the Elderly, where five of our elders live, including **Kunsang Wangmo**. Kunsang was well-off in Tibet, but later became poor, using all her funds helping destitute children. **Tsering Lhamo** lives in a room in her sister's simple home and owns almost nothing. She has suffered the loss of a toe, spent

most of a year in the hospital with diabetes and sores on her leg and foot. She lost her home due to a disaster, her mother died, and her son is not well. Yet, she is coming out of all this with huge effort and a wonderful smile. This year we found permanent sponsors for her -- Laurel and Jen Antti, (from Canada) mentioned under the "Donors" section of this newsletter. She wrote heartfelt letters to FOTSI and her sponsors, saying she is "very lucky to have people like you in her life" and "will never forget your kindness in her life". Other sponsored elders include Dhawa Bhuti, and Tsultrim Sangmo, who is bedridden.



Tsultrim Sangmo + daughter



Dawa Bhuti

In India this year, Chela discovered major problems facing some of our sponsorees and many others.. These included a "**Health Insurance Problem**", and a "**Subprime Mortgage Problem**". Sound familiar?

Because of concerns about possibly not getting repaid, the Office of the Representative stopped giving out financial advances for major surgeries and medical treatments. They applied this rule to our FOTSI funded Emergency Fund for families of our sponsored people. Chela found that **Phurbu Tsering**, (10), son of sponsored **Tsering Dolkar**, couldn't get a throat surgery he'd badly needed for 6 months.

Meeting with Dr. Passang Norbu at the DTR Hospital, we learned Phurbu's throat was very infected and getting worse. Antibiotics had not helped. Phurbu was unable to eat properly.

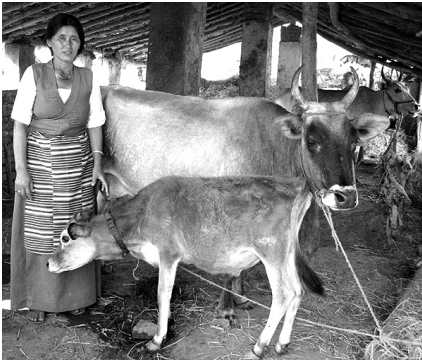


Phurbu Tsering with Puppy



Partial Tsering Dolkar Family

Tsering's family had had a terrible year -- she herself had had a recurrence of tuberculosis. She was quarantined and had to rest for months. Two of her three children also contracted TB. To pay for the medicine they needed, they had to sell their farm animals. They couldn't get much work done as a family due to the illnesses. Tsering's husband, Dhondup, worked day and night, but they still had a hard time, with only himself and one child well. It was amazing that in the midst of her own illness, Tsering's 15-year-old



Tsering with cow and calf

daughter, Penpa Dolma, managed to win the “Best Girl” award at school for her academics and overall.

Fortunately, after many difficult walks on hot, dusty roads, Phurbu, Tsering, and I managed to arrange for a doctor in Hubli to do the surgery and it was successful. Chela visited Phurbu her last day in Mundgod and saw he was recovering, playing with a puppy in the yard. Tsering wrote that the whole family, including the new cow FOTSI bought them, is now doing fine.

Several donors funds paid for Phurbu’s surgery; two sponsored Tsering and daughter Penpa Dolma, and others replaced a cow and calf. We got rupees quickly by borrowing some from the monks who manage our Monks’ Emergency Fund and other means. You cannot quickly change money in the refugee area, especially not the \$200 needed for the surgery. The family is beyond grateful. A few days before Chela left, Tsering came to say goodbye, with tears of thanks in her eyes for the many FOTSI donors who stood with them and helped them survive. In India Chela used appropriate donations to assist FOTSI sponsored families who suffered a death. Our sponsorships and aid make a difference, and all sent their deepest thanks! Sponsorship is \$10/month.



Tenzin Khando and sister



Tenzin Sonam and Sister

Donors who wish to help but not sponsor can send funds to our Emergency Fund.

Subprime Mortgage Problem

Chela discovered many Tibetans are suffering under the burden of very large loans impossible to repay. Some of these, no doubt, are due to simple ignorance or folly. Others are due to very suspect banking practices by Indian bankers in big cities, or due to disasters resulting, sometimes, in the most naive party being saddled with a huge loan.



Dhondup Lhamo



Tenzin Tseyang

The Tibetan Government-in-Exile has tried, through its Cooperative Societies, to establish a way for Tibetans to intelligently share the rental of farm equipment, seed purchase, etc. In cases of disasters, many loans have been handled gently by the co-ops. However, when some nefarious Indian bankers have become involved, things became worse. Some of our own sponsorees, we discovered, have huge loans (e.g. \$10,000!) from Indian banks. We are not talking about microloans. One young woman had constant threats from a Bangalore bank. She got TB, stopped eating, and died. Her mother and young daughter miss her very much. On this page, out of respect for all their difficulties, we are not naming those whose had problem loans, but rather share general photos of some other sponsored people.

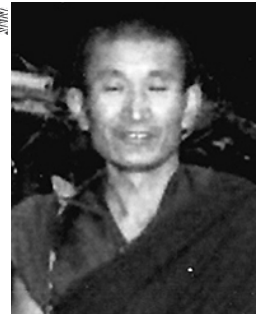
Using our “Leadership Funds”, the Representative’s Office will hold “Loan Awareness Meetings” for those in the community seeking loans. This Office has also met with bank officers on the hardest cases, but so far only a little progress has been possible. This is a very difficult problem.

Sponsoring/Helping Tibetan monks

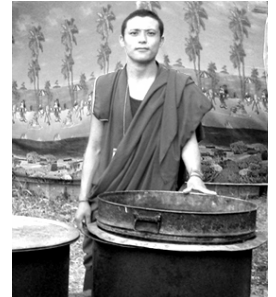


Lobsang Samphel

In 2007-8 we sponsored **37 monks** at 3 Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, but primarily at Drepung Gomang Monastery in Mundgod. A newly sponsored monk is **Lobsang Samphel** who helps care for an elderly teacher and studies well, surviving with very little. We helped the needy monk, **Lobsang Chodup**, from a monastery in Tibet, currently temporarily in India. We help Thoeling Monastery and many other monks through our medical aid programs. Our photos include the two Lobsangs above and sponsored **Lobsang Dhondup, Gungru**, shown near a temporary restaurant set up during the Dalai Lama's visit. Many sponsorees have suffered serious illnesses, and some have recently arrived from Tibet.



Lobsang Chodup



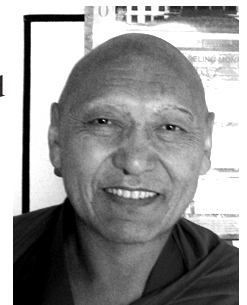
Lobsang Dhondup

Several sponsored monks have finished their studies and are about to celebrate their "PhD"



Thubten Dhargyas

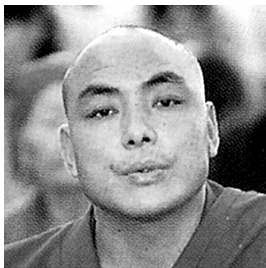
in religious studies, called a "Geshe" degree. Raising the funds to give a little to all the other monks and offer them tea and food can be daunting, but it is partly how many unsponsored refugee monks survive. Sponsored monk **Thubten Dhargyas** of the Drepung Loseling Monastery is from an ethnic Tibetan family in Ladakh. People from his village have saved and will fund the upcoming celebration. To thank and help them, Thubten spent much time there. Unfortunately, he contracted a nasty case of TB, which he discovered when he reached Dharamsala, India, on his way to Loseling. He is still in the Delek Hospital, but



Ngawang Choesang

recovering with help from his FOTSI sponsor and friends. He hopes to complete his ceremony in November, 2008. Two other monks we sponsor, who have been key FOTSI health workers, are **Lobsang Ngawang** (see photo under "Tibetans Who Make FOTSI's

Programs Happen"), and **Ngawang Choesang**. They have sacrificed a lot for others and we celebrate their upcoming special day. Chela is hoping to attend that ceremony, starting February 3, 2009. **Donations to our new "Geshe" ceremony fund helps all the monks in the monastery. Please help if you can.**



Phuntsok Ngoshes

One long-time sponsored monk, **Phuntsok Ngoshes** (Drepung Gomang Monastery), has been sent to help in the **Kalmyk region of Russia**. This region has a remarkable history strongly connected with Tibet. There is now freedom of religion in Russia, and many Kalmyks are returning to their ancient cultural and religious traditions.

Genghis Khan 's grandson declared Buddhism to be the national religion of Mongolia. In the 16th century, Altan Khan, following this lead, invited a well-known lama, Sonam Gyatso to become his religious teacher. Later Sonam Gyatso was given a title by the Mongolians, "Dalai Lama (the Ocean of Knowledge)". The bond between the Mongolians and the Tibetans has remained strong since that time.

Kalmyks are western Mongolians who moved to Russia around the end of the 16th century, keeping their traditions and religion while agreeing to Russian Tsars' requests to guard Russia's borders. By the early 20th century there were about 92 temples in Kalmykia. The head of the large Buddhist community was the Shadjin Lama of the Kalmyk people. The temples were the center of the cultural and spiritual life of the people. After the 1917 Communist revolution in Russia, the authorities had no use for traditional religion in their Kalmyk



Shadjin Lama, Telo Tulku Rinpoche, in Kalmykia

region. By the 1930's they began closing temples and destroying Buddhist art and culture. Despite this, Kalmyk monks left secretly to study in Tibet, with the now well-known Geshe Wangyal making it to the USA, where he founded a Buddhist center. The Kalmyk people were exiled to Siberia, their homes and belongings were destroyed, and they suffered unimaginably.

This is a long, brave, but very sad history, not unlike many stories of Tibet. However, thanks now to a supportive government in Kalmykia and Russia, the original Kalmyk culture is being reborn. Two temples have

been built; one was dedicated by the 14th Dalai Lama. Following a tradition that grew during the hard and secret times, the monks not only teach and perform ceremonies, they serve as counselors for everyday problems. Our sponsored monk, Phuntsok (photo on previous page), is now a counselor in Kalmykia, where he is supported by the Buddhist center there. His sponsor helps when Phuntsok returns to India and is still there for him. Chela met Telo Tulku Rinpoche many years ago when he was studying at the Drepung Gomang Monastery. He has been a friend and kind supporter of FOTSI in many ways, as he works hard to help not only Kalmykia, but also Tibet and Tibetans. He is always kind and helpful to many of us westerners, especially when he is in Mundgod and we are there.



Kalmykian Sacred Dancers



New Temple



Old Temple



Tenzin Tsering

One sponsored monk wrote to us about **relatives who recently escaped from Tibet**. **Tenzin Tsering** (10) and his father both managed to get entrance to schools but had to pay a large fee (\$750) to be guided out of Tibet (which includes bribes on the way out). They are having a hard time, so in 2007-8, we sent some one-time assistance. If you wish to send further funds to such refugees, let us know. Tenzin's grandfather was jailed for years because of his support for Tibetan religion and culture. He finally died, still imprisoned.



Tenpa Tsering#2

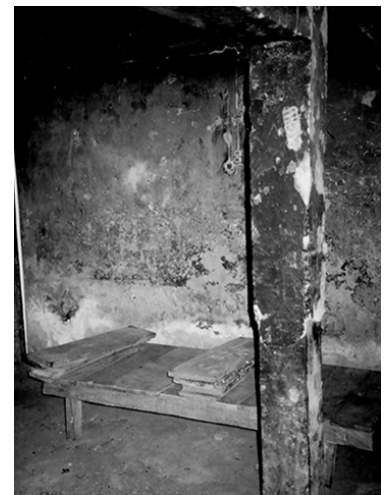
We are looking for **sponsors at \$90/year for several needy monks**, such as **Tenpa Tsering #2**. The situation in Tibet is very difficult now. It is hard to get in or out, especially legally. **Our monk sponsorships vary from \$90/year to \$180/year, depending on the situation. New arrivals from Tibet find the Indian climate and bacteria a challenge!**

Sponsoring Tibetan Nuns (+ Helping with Shelter)



Pema Choeyang

We sponsor 19 nuns of 238 in Jangchub Choeling Nunnery (Mundgod), and we also send medical and dental aid, which helps all members of this nunnery. Our latest sponsoree is newly arrived **Pema Choeyang**, who, with her friend, **Kalsang Palka**, is among 66 new nuns living in the abandoned rooms of the old Home for the Elderly. Our medical fund helped Pema with an infected sinus before we found a sponsor for her. Nuns such as Pema cannot officially get on the nunnery rolls until a regular room is available. The nuns clean the abandoned sites as much as possible, but the old rooms leak and have no water. Nuns must go to the main building where they can use water, which puts a strain on all the facilities. **We sent \$200 to improve the temporary rooms; more would be welcome.** We found a new sponsor for nun Tenzin Deetaen who has brain lesions and we continue sponsorship for **Ngawang Jampa** who has a difficult hernia. More photos and details are in the "Leadership" and "Health" sections of this newsletter. **Most sponsorships for nuns are \$70/year, with extra okay too.**



Nun's Poor Room



Kalsang Palka



Ngawang Jampa



Sonam Dorjee

Sponsorship at Tibetan Children's Village Schools

We continue sponsoring **Sonam Dorjee (16)**, now in Class 8 at the **Chautra TCV School**, north India. Sonam is happy there with 1000 other students. When Chela was in India this year, she met with Sonam, who had traveled south to see the Dalai Lama and his family in Mundgod. He is very thankful he can attend this good school as his home life is stressful and the school is excellent. At the TCV School

in the Bylakuppe Settlement, we sponsor Sonam Dorjee's brother, **Tsering Samdup (12)** in Class 5, as well as **Tsering Choedron (13)** in Class 5, and **Karma Tashi** in Class 2. See www.tcv.org.in

Nursing and other College Scholarships

FOTSI supported 6 nursing students who have graduated, and all are working in hospitals in India, or in transition to new jobs. In 2007, through the Office of the Representative of the Dalai Lama in Mundgod we supported **3 general nursing students -- Tenzin Choedron, Tashi Dolma, and Pema Dolma #3**, as well as **Tenzin Tashi** and **Pema Gyaltzen**, young men studying business and computer skills.

Tenzin Choedron and Tashi Dolma graduated in 2007. Our scholarships don't pay full tuition/expenses, so families are also heavily invested in these students. Due to difficulties in Mundgod, our new scholarships were not granted as planned in 2007. After a discussion in India, FOTSI added a 3rd nursing scholarship, and the plan is for **3 new nursing school students to start very soon.**



Tenzin Choedron

Tenzin Choedron (24) graduated from her college in Mangalore, India, and is continuing her training as a nursing intern. She has 3 brothers, all selling sweaters on Indian streets. To express the family's gratitude, Tenzin's brother Tashi Tsering frequently carried fresh milk from the family's two cows to Chela in India. Tenzin said the most difficult aspect of her chosen career was the sadness she feels when, unavoidably, some patients die. Tenzin met with me in Mundgod during a break she took from work. Tears ran down her face as she shared her feelings. She says that helping those who recover is a great reward, and she is very happy about her work. and **extremely grateful for everyone's help, as were all the students and their families.**



Tashi Dolma

Tashi Dolma (22) has just graduated from Belgaum's K.L.E. College of Nursing. She is now a nurse intern in the hospital associated with the College. She lives in a hostel, sharing it with 3 other nurses. There and in the hospital, she speaks 4 languages -- Kanada (Karnataka State language), Marati (Maharashtra language), Hindi (official language of India), and English. She has spent a lot of time with elderly patients. **Pema Dolma #3 (21)** is the third of three sponsorees all with the name Pema Dolma!



Pema Dolma #3



Tenzin Tashi

FOTSI helped **Tenzin Tashi (21)** pursue a Bachelor of Commerce degree at Aurora Degree College in Hyderabad, India. Tashi will be doing extra work to complete his 3rd year and graduate in 2008.



Pema Gyaltzen

We also co-sponsor **Pema Gyaltzen**, a young man pursuing a difficult business and computing college program at an SOS TCV Vocational Training Center in Dehradun, India. He finds courses such as C and C++ Programming quite hard. We find **Tibetan men** are having a harder time than women finding their way from traditional Tibetan livelihoods and competing with eager young Indians.

We aided **Tenzin Kalden**, who completed her 4-year nursing program at Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences in Bangalore in 2007 first in her class. She worked at Sterling Hospital in Ahmadabad, Gujarat State, for 6 months but has just switched to K.L.E. Hospital in Belgaum, an excellent hospital much closer to home. In past years



Tenzin Kalden



Phurbu Dolma's father

we sponsored **Phurbu Dolma** at a TCV school because she'd had polio as a child and had difficulties walking to schools in Mundgod. She is now studying for a B. Comm. (business) degree at Teresian College in Mysore. We help buy leg braces and necessities her Tibetan Children's Village School scholarship does not cover. Our nursing student **Konchok Wangmo** graduated a few years ago and, while working at MAX Hospital in Delhi, passed the nursing (NCLEX) and English (IELETS) exams this year to qualify for a "nurse visa" to emigrate to the USA. It will take years for her to be able to come to the USA, so she is interviewing for jobs in Chennai (Madras) India.



Konchok Wangmo

Through the **Kharyak Charitable Society (KCS)**, we aided **Tenzin Choezom**, paying towards her first year of college as a computing science major at the St. Agnes Collage in Mangalore, India. We plan to support **more college students through KCS this coming year**. One outstanding prospective nursing student from Bylakuppe worries about losing her dreams and having to sell sweaters on the street for the rest of her life.



Tenzin Choezom

Through the Dre-Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association, we helped **Pema Dolma #2**, who graduated this year from a 3-year program at the CARE School of Nursing in Hyderabad. This year she began her internship at the CARE Hospital associated with the nursing school. Pema is from a very poor family, with only an elderly mother as a relative. Chela saw her in India, very thin after a bout of ill health, but now recovered. She wrote, "Really without you I would not be here in this profession. You are the ones who help me when I really need it. Thanks once again. You will always be there in my HEART."



PemaDolma#2



Dukmo

Other Education Efforts

We sent educational and health aid to **Dukmo**, the young niece of **Ak Pema** at the Home for the Elderly, the blind former translator to the Dalai Lama through the DGBCA. Dukmo, recently out of Tibet, has suffered from painful ulcers and is trying to go to school.



Ak Pema

We heard from a man in Alaska who'd been helping a **pre-primary school teacher in Camp #1, Tsering Dolma**, independently from FOTSI. This donor helps Tsering herself and sends funds and items for her classroom. On his behalf we visited Tsering and her students and were impressed with her efforts for the children. Her benefactor wanted our help in visiting the school, getting photos, and learning about Mundgod's bigger picture.

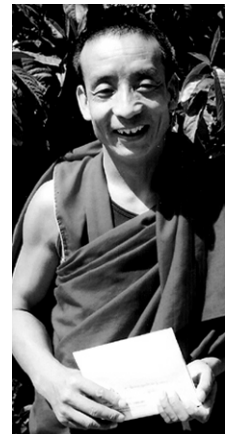


Preprimary School



Nursery School

Some FOTSI donors have contributed to the **Library at Drepung Gomang Monastery** and funded **publishing special books** containing treasures of Tibetan culture and philosophy.



Library thanks us

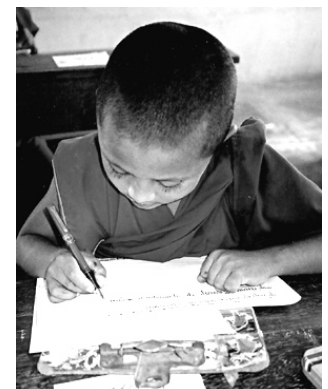
Drepung Gomang School

In the regular school year, most Tibetan children in the Mundgod settlement attend schools run by the Indian Government (in coordination with the Tibetan Government in Exile). From fall through spring, the **Drepung Gomang School** serves boys escaping from Tibet and ethnic-Tibetan Himalayan areas wishing to study basic subjects,

including Tibetan cultural traditions, in a monastery school. In the summer, the school serves all boys and girls of Mundgod who can study Tibetan cultural subjects not taught or sparsely taught in the settlement school system. These classes free working parents and rest the grandparents. This year Chela visited the DG School often. She was grateful that when her foot accidentally got trampled in a crowd (not at the School), the smallest DG School students appeared out of nowhere and came to her assistance faster than anyone else. They sat with her and protected her until it was clear her foot was not broken. This was one of her most heartwarming experiences this year. She enjoyed seeing the **first and second grade classes** receive **toothbrushes** donated by her Boulder dentist, who also volunteers dental work in the Amazon jungle and elsewhere.



Toothbrushes



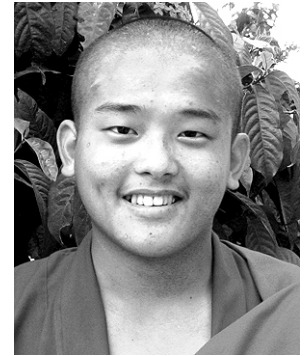
Student





Lobsang Khenchok

One day Chela ran into a young monk we helped in the past -- **Lobsang Dorje**, who had left the School at 15. It turned out he'd left to make sure his mother, whom he'd not seen since he was 4 and who had remarried in Sikkim, was okay. He had worried ever since his father had died when Lobsang was 9. Now he studies and works at another monastery school in Sikkim, near his mom. He was in Mundgod to see the Dalai Lama and also his own brother. Our Class 5 student, **Lobsang Khechok (14)**, from the "Kingdom of Mon", is well and happy that he now has a better room and only one roommate instead of 7. He gave Chela a special bag made in Mon for his sponsor. FOTSI sends general funds to the school, sponsors a student and helps 4 teachers. Sponsorships range from **\$22.50 to \$45 per quarter**. **One time help for the teachers or school needs is also needed.**



Lobsang Dorje

Health and Emergency Projects

Kharyak Charitable Society (KCS)

Last year, when KCS was founded by long-time Tibetan hospital and legislative leader **Mr. Tenpa TK**, we began aiding poor patients through this non-profit in Mundgod. We sent KCS \$2430.00 in 2007 and more in 2008. From May, 2007, to the present, we have sent KCS **\$1250.00 for needy patients**, helping 10 Mundgod patients in 2007 and more in 2008. KCS is also facilitating our aid to poor patients living near the **Tashilunpo Clinic run by the Tso-Jhe Hospital in the Bylakuppe Tibetan settlement**. Mr. Tenpa TK has personally taken our funds there and taken particular interest in our chosen patients, most recently an elderly woman and a nun.



Patient Phuntsok helped through KCS



Lobsang

Medical Aid for Tibetan Monks

In 2007 we sent **\$2,170.00** to Mundgod for Tibetan refugee monk health projects through our GK Health Fund and general Monks' Emergency Fund. We sent \$3,182.00 directly as extra help in one-time situations, such as that of Lobsang (see below), and to help sponsored monks with special needs. A significant fraction of that aid is for health maintenance or medicine.

Lobsang is a monk who was principal of the Drepung Gomang School from 2001 to 2004. He does not speak English but is educated in the Tibetan tradition. He had

a horrific time with a botched kidney stone operation and big medical bills. He had to travel in a very weak condition to north India where it took a long time to finally get proper surgery in Amritsar. We are leaving out a long history of trying not to die and having no money. After 4 months in a Tibetan Government Hospital for the poor, he made it back to Gomang Monastery. Other monks helped Lobsang a lot but there were still loans to be paid. After Chela saw his reports, records, and bills, she agreed to help with funds a donor had given for “Monks’ Health” and later the small amount left was paid. He is hugely grateful to all who helped him.



Palden Gonpo

The **GK Health Fund** helps Gungru Khangtsen, in Drepung Gomang Monastery. We helped them build bathrooms and showers in the past. We also help monks in other monasteries and other living groups within Drepung Gomang through our general **Monks’ Emergency Fund**.



Lobsang Jamyang surgery



Lobsang Tendar

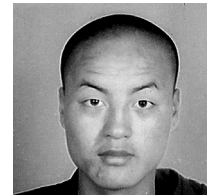
Some of the many monks we helped in 2007 include **Palden Gonpo** (diabetes and hepatitis), **Lobsang Tendar** (tuberculosis and heart disease), and **Lobsang Jamyang** (appendectomy). We helped **Tsondu Gyamtso** of **RapTsa Khangtsen** who needed funds to diagnose his abdominal pain, **Lobsang Tashi**, who had a major intestinal surgery, and **Tulku Tenpa Shakya** who has had recurring “water on the lung”. Tenpa was very ill during his escape from Tibet and in a hospital for several months in Nepal on his way to India. After 4 years, we celebrated the **recovery**, in 2007, of the monk we helped who had **leprosy**.



Health committee



leprosy patient 4 years ago



Tsondu Gyamtso



Lobsang Tashi



Tenpa Shakya

Medical/Dental Help for Tibetan Nuns

This year we continued to send funds for the Jangchub Choeling Nunnery’s medical and dental needs. They do have other groups helping them, but our fund has covered many needs not otherwise met, especially for the newest refugee nuns who are not integrated right away into their rolls, and who often have the greatest need. In our sponsorship section we wrote about shelter fixed up from rooms in an abandoned building and shared a photo. In 2007 we sent \$2,250.00 to the nuns for medical needs as well as \$2,072.00 for sponsorship and direct help. We sent more in 2008.



Gyaltsen Choedron



Tenzin Sonam

This year nun **Tenzin Sonam**, who had a childhood disease that hurt her face, came down with TB and stayed for a time in Delek Hospital. We helped her with funds for medicine, etc.. She has escaped from Tibet twice, the second time after she went back



Tenzin Dolkar



Lobsang Drolma Gapa

to nurse her very ill father. **Gyaltsen Choedron** and **Tenzin Dolkar** also benefited from our health fund. Gyaltsen Choedron has fibrous tumors requiring on-going treatment, and **Trinley Tsomo** had Hepatitis B. **Ngawang Jampa**, who has a difficult-to-treat hernia, stayed near the hospital in Dharamsala for a year but is now back in Mundgod (see photo under sponsorship). **Lobsang Drolma Gapa** has a growth in her throat. **Kalsang Palka** (photo in Sponsorship section) had sinus problems. Dentistry is needed by many. **Tenzin Norzom** continues special ear training (photo in Tibetans Who Help section). Chela was given a huge bundle of medical bills with details of everything FOTSI covered for many nuns, most not mentioned here. These nuns were busy getting ready to host HH the Dalai Lama, who visited their nunnery in the same time as Chela, who had a wonderful front row seat at their ceremonies.



Trinley Tsomo

Emergency Fund and Special Aid

Our Emergency Fund through the Office of the Representative continues to help with **emergency transportation, medicine, glasses, eye exams, doctor bills, etc.** We are trying to deal with large expenses through this fund as well (such as for major surgeries).

Tibetan Volunteers for Animals



TVA Animal Help

Tibetan Volunteers for Animal (TVA) was founded in the Tibetan communities in India by a special young Tibetan, **Lobsang Monlam**, who was joined by many other young Tibetans. They have pursued aiding animals and humans



TVA workers

in many beneficial ways. They launched their first animal welfare program, WeCARE, in 2007 in the Hunsur Tibetan settlement, where they vaccinated dogs for rabies and provided care for sick and injured animals. Rabies has long been a significant problem in the Tibetan settlements. The group is also working in Mundgod and other settlements. They educate young people and adults about the treatment of animals. Even for non-vegetarians, TVA's vegetarian restaurants and push towards vegetarian diets is helpful, as electricity and refrigeration in rural India is frequently off, making meat a dangerous food. The local Indians are mostly vegetarian. Often the animal situation is worse than the human one in refugee camps. Chela was moved by the dedication of her friend, **Sandra Esner** (see Trip to India and Donors section) in searching for help for animals. We were so lucky to discover TVA. FOTSI donated \$250.00 to this group in 2008. One of the monks of Drepung Gomang Monastery, Sonam Dawa, is on the Board of Directors of this group. TVA is always non-violent. See www.semchen.org.

Community Outreach Part of FOTSI's Mission

On October 27, 2007, FOTSI's president, Chela Kunasz, made a presentation about Tibet and the Tibetan Settlements In India at the **Frasier Meadows Nursing Home Residence in Boulder**. She shared items such as the Tibetan flag, Tibetan clothing, musical instruments, yak horn and stones from the base of Everest to enhance her "you-are-there" multi-media slide show. A primary reason FOTSI was invited was that Namgyal Dolma and Phuntsok, two Tibetans now in Boulder county, work at this facility. They are known as "Nam" and "PD". Phuntsok used to be a school principal at a TCV School in Dharamsala, and Namgyal is a nurse. Frasier Meadows' residents and staff love and appreciate them. The management feels it is good if residents learn about the cultures and recent history of the native countries of their staff. Phuntsok spoke during our presentation. He thanked the people of Boulder, including Paul Kunasz (FOTSI's secretary), who had helped them here as part of the official Tibetan Resettlement Project in Boulder.



Chela and "PD" at Frasier Meadows

Stories!

Tsering's Story

Tsering told me the following history while we were waiting in the DTR Hospital. Her parents were farmers in the village of Doepa, in central Tibet. They also had animals such as yak, dzomo (female crosses between yaks and cows), sheep, goats and seven horses. When they left Tibet, they gave those animals to their relatives. Fearing the Chinese government, the family left Doepa in 1959 and trekked and hitched rides for two weeks to the town of Rongjung, near the Indian border, where they lived for 3 years. In 1970, when Tsering was 8, they left and crossed the border into India. It took them two days to reach Tashi Jong in Himachal Pradesh, India. They had warm boots and yak-hide chuba cloaks to stay warm. The whole family, including her parents and 3 brothers, were jailed for one month when they arrived in Tashi Jong. After they were released, they went to Simla where they lived for 3 years. Tsering's brother Sonam Gyalpo had tuberculosis there. Finally, they reached Mundgod in 1973. They stayed in the Home for the Elderly (just for a place to live) for two years and finally got to the home in Camp 7 where they are now. Brother Tashi Topgyal died the next year, in 1977, and the last brother, Migmar died in 1982. After that, Tsering's mother just snapped and had mental problems. She died in 1984 at a young age. In 1985, Tsering Dolkar got tuberculosis for the first time. In 1990, Tsering Dolkar married her husband Dhondup in Mundgod, and her daughter, Penpa Dolma, was born in 1992. They worked in the field together (when everyone was well); they grew rice, cotton, and corn. Tenzin Gelek, her first son, was born in 1995, and Phurbu Tsering, her youngest, was born in 1997. That year Tsering got tuberculosis again, the more antibiotic-resistant kind. She took medicine for a year and recovered. In 2000, Tsering Dolkar's father, Norphel, got throat cancer and died. Tsering says it seems that she has had so many problems in her life. She has worked hard and tried to be careful of her health. There was one year when there was a freak flood and the only family whose crops were destroyed was their family. Yet, she and her family are again recovered, and again working hard.

