



India Newsletter

By Dolores Stykel - October 2009



DOLORES STYKEL (DODO) – (present editor)

Presuming that it is the editor's prerogative, I am again making some changes. I appreciate the work that George Althouse did in sending the newsletter by e-mail. Thanks, George. There were some e-mails that couldn't be sent through him and a few who preferred having them sent direct rather than through him. As a result, I have set up an address book and will be sending out the e-mails directly.

You may have noticed that we did not have a July issue. The reason being there was "no news". Virginia used her e-mail listing to inform everyone about Bob Cunningham. I shall do the same, even though it is not time for a newsletter, if there is a notice of a death in our missionary family or a request for prayers for someone who is seriously ill.

I will plan to send mailings in March, July, and October if I receive news from you. Each of the dead lines would be the 15th of those months, so mark your calendars!

GEORGE ALTHOUSE – Oct 5 – Anne and George Althouse celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June. Their 4 children, Mark, Deborah, Kurt & Aric feted them with a party with many family and friends at the Sawaii Indian Restaurant in Red Hill, PA

Belated Congratulations, George and Anne!

ROSELLA KAMEO – Oct 5 – I am doing just fine in retirement, although not having a set schedule does take some getting used to. I've been typing up hundreds of letters I wrote to my parents from India and Indonesia, and that has given me a lot of ideas for a couple of books I'd like to write. One is a series of meditations or devotions gleaned from overseas experience. I've written 43 so far and have many more to go. The other has to do with cross-cultural understanding. Anyway, it keeps my mind working!

I hear from Shirley (Franklin) practically every week and from Anne (Fichthorn) at least once a month. Both are doing well. Hope to see them all at the May reunion.

I'm doing o.k. after hip surgery. I have been walking normally without a cane since August. I am always aware of the artificial hip, but it doesn't give me pain. Dani and I often go on a 30 minute early morning walk.

BERTHA LANGE sent the following article from the Edmonton Journal -

Nilokeri India – Oct. 13 - Indian brides won't be Blushing without Sanitary Flushing - An ideal groom in this dusty farming village is a vegetarian, does not drink, has good prospects for a stable job and promises his bride-to-be an amenity in high demand: a toilet.

In rural India, many young women are refusing to marry unless the suitor furnishes their future home with a bathroom. About 665 M people in India – about half the population – lack access to latrines. But since a "No Toilet, No Bride" campaign started about 2 years ago 1.4 M toilets have been built here in the northern state of Haryana, some with government funds.

"I won't let my daughter near a boy who doesn't have a latrine," said Usha Pagdi, who made

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sure that her daughter Vimlas 18 finished high school and took courses in electronics at a technical school. “No loo? No ‘I do,’” Vimlas said, laughing as she repeated a radio jingle. Pagdi said, “My father never even allowed me an education. Every time I washed the floors, I thought about how I knew nothing. Now young women have power. The men can’t refuse us.”

“I will have to work hard to afford a toilet. We won’t get any bride if we don’t have one now,” said Harpal Sirshwa, 22, who hopes to marry soon. Neem tree branches hang in the doorway of his parents’ home, a sign of pride for a family with sons. “I won’t be offended when the woman I like asks for a toilet.”

With economic freedom, women are increasingly expecting more, and toilets are at the top of their list. The lack of sanitation is not only an inconvenience but also contributes to the spread of diseases.

“Women suffer the most since there are prying eyes everywhere,” said Ashok Gera, a doctor. “It’s humiliating, harrowing and extremely unhealthy. I see so many young women who have prolonged urinary tract infections and kidney and liver problems because they don’t have a safe place to go.”

“The ‘No Toilet, No Bride’ program is a blood-less coup,” said Bindishwar Pathak winner of this year’s Stockholm Water Prize for developing inexpensive, eco-friendly toilets.

HEATHER LANGE – I think you know I am Emile and Esther’s daughter and that we lived 6 years in India, so this project is very close to my heart, as I hope it will be for the expats who lived there and did so much valuable work to improve life in rural India:

My Dear Friends from India:

I know you have all lived in India and have deep attachments to it, and that you have done so much good work there, and so I wanted to write you about a program that will be close to your hearts.

As you’ve been reading in the newspapers, climate-driven drought and flooding have been delivering severe and withering blows to much of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It has been so hot and dry in India this year that farmers have nearly no water to drink or to provide to their cattle. Drought has forced Indian farmers to sell their wives to brothels and stampedes for food have killed women and children in Pakistan. A growing number of farmers have committed suicide.

Economists predict that India will have to import over 250 million tons of rice and wheat this year. With the prices of lentils and rice higher than ever before, any further rise will affect many destitute Indians already living below poverty level. It will be a year of starvation, and millions will be forced into a debt trap. Thousands will resort to distress sale of land, animals and other belongings. In the last weeks, yet another story has unfolded – just as harsh for India to bear. Incessant heavy rains with thunderstorms and flash floods have had devastating results. Nearly half the state of Karnataka is reeling with floods, and over 200,000 houses have collapsed. In Andhra Pradesh, nearly 200 villages are under water. The flooding has destroyed thousands of hectares of paddy ready for harvesting.

What the Purpose Group is doing to help: In most parts of the world, poultry has emerged as one of the most critical steps to food security for the poor. For millions of people, mainly in rural and remote areas, poultry provides employment and income, a buffer against soaring food and fuel prices, and brings agriculture back to its basic function.

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Poultry has been part and parcel of the lives, health and wellbeing of the poor for centuries. It needs little in terms of infrastructure and investment as it contributes to the food security of a family.

Industrial agriculture has over the past 50 years brought to India lines of poultry that can't adapt to its harsh environment, and that have poor resistance to disease. The flocks of entire villages were destroyed during outbreaks of avian influenza, leaving small farmers without a source of food and employment. Add this to the blows of drought and flooding, and it has become a death trap.

The purpose group is bringing back strong, healthy lines of poultry to small back yard farmers and teaching them how and raise productive flocks and market them – the chicken is a credit card with feathers that can be sold to pay for doctor's bills, for school books, and for unexpected expenses. It provides subsistence food in times of drought and flood right in a small farmer's back yard. The price of heritage Indian chicken and their eggs is three-fold compared to that of industrial poultry – a few birds is a guaranteed source of additional income.

Within two years, small backyard flocks of 10-15 birds can multiply to 200 and provide not only for the needs of one family, but for many in a small village!

There is also an urgent need to reduce the impact of climate change in India. We are working on a diversified program of livestock and drought-resistant plants, crops and pasture that can give a buffer to a farmer's vulnerability. Part of this program is a plan bringing strong, healthy genetic lines of plants and livestock back that can adapt better to climate change.

This is a precedent-setting program that will improve hundreds of thousands of lives and provide food security for poor rural villages struggling against climate change for basic subsistence.

Your generous contribution would support our efforts to expand our program in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, states that have been hit hard. A small donation of \$50 can bring disease-resistant, long-living poultry programs to three rural families; a donation of \$5,000 can bring chickens that can be incubated and raised by an entire village, with good hatching equipment, trained vaccinators, specialists who can develop marketing programs to sell high-priced eggs in urban markets, and staff to help plant nutrient-dense grains, shady bushes and trees that protect and curb soil erosion and combat climate change.

The worst drought and floods in 100 years in India are a wakeup call that urgent action is needed. Without support to help farmers and small adapt to the changing climate, the effect is a downward spiral into deeper poverty.

We would be very grateful for your help with this program in Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Your generous help will improve the livelihoods of many, many families and help them fight for their right to food and a livelihood starting today! Tax-deductible charitable receipts are given for all donations. <http://www.purposegroupinternational.com/index.html>

In solidarity for India, and with warmest regards,

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NEWS FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE SENT BY MARCH 15, 2010

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