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Newsletter October 2026
CWA Kinderheim in Pokhara, Nepal

Dear Friends and Supporters of CWA Children's Home

We are delighted to use this newsletter to share news about our visits to the CWA Children's Home this year



We arrived in Pokhara at the beginning of February. As always, the children and team gave us a warm welcome – Manisha presented us with a plant she had crocheted herself.



We received beautiful cards from all the children once more, and a 'Welcome Home' from Agina.



Finally, we could pass on the letters from the 6th grade in Wassi, which had been stored in our bus in Pakistan over the winter. The package also included answers from sponsors and drawings by a 2nd-grade class that had collected donations for the home with a sponsored run.

All the children were thrilled to receive their cards, letters, and drawings. As Barbara no longer teaches, finding classes for the pen-pal exchange has become a challenge – but fortunately, it worked out this year.



To secure the children’s home's water supply in the long term, work on the deep well began in mid-February. At first, brown water spurted from the borehole, but after two weeks, the water ran clear.





After drilling down to a depth of 100 meters, a thick layer of sticky clay covered the area around the borehole. On a Saturday, all the children and staff helped clear the mud from the site. Using wheelbarrows and old rice sacks, they hauled the material away to build a ramp leading to the garden.

In the process, some of the younger ones, like Babita here, discovered the mud as a fascinating toy.





The wall at the back of the home was in danger of collapsing. Fifteen years ago, only thin stones had been set upright.

Because heavy water pressure comes from above during the monsoon, a new wall had to be built. It already looks much sturdier now and will hopefully withstand the water pressure.





At the same time, we renewed the drainage channel in the driveway, which handles the large volumes of water during the monsoon season. The supports for the metal grating had broken in several places, making the crossing hazardous.

With the repaired, heavy-duty covers, driving over it with the school buses will no longer be a problem.





As boarding schools operate for profit, we once more evaluated the balance between school fees and the quality of education and infrastructure this year. Feedback and reports from the kids also alerted us to issues at their present school.
Consequently, this past spring, two board members, our manager Bijay, and we visited seven boarding schools in Pokhara. These schools are potential alternatives to the Little Step School, considering their distance from the home and their fee structures.
Being foreigners, we instantly drew the curious gaze of an entire schoolyard filled with children.





Some schools looked impressive from the outside, but had dark, small classrooms and offered little playground space; other schools were very small, and the spatial conditions were just as cramped. At one school, the midday snack had to be eaten in the classroom because not all the children could fit in the schoolyard at the same time.



After the visits, we agreed that the current school, the Little Step School, offers the best value for money and sufficient space at this time. During our meeting with the management, we were promised further improvements regarding cleanliness and classroom equipment, the installation of new drinking water filters, and better hygiene in the restroom facilities.









"We are delighted that the art class with Shiva, one of our former home children, continues to take place every Saturday. All the children thoroughly enjoy it and are making great progress.

Some of the older girls, like Rejina and Manisha, are very talented. Agina and Anjali are also highly gifted and love to paint in their free time.

The new techniques were immediately put to use when crafting response cards for the children at the Niederholz schoolhouse and Christmas cards for our sponsors.

The juniors love hanging out in our room, enjoying the attention and help. We rotate between helping them write, correcting, cutting, and pasting in our overcrowded room."











Excursions are always a highlight for the kids! After a 30-minute drive in a hired bus, we started our hike to Nirmal Pokhari. Each child carried a backpack filled with water and a packed lunch.

The full route covered about 17 km of rolling trails through scenic woods. Simran and Anjali came across impressive, large red silk-cotton tree flowers.

Even though the Annapurna Range was hidden from view, all the children

enjoyed the walk and the beautiful panorama of Pokhara.



After five weeks at the children's home, it was time for us to say goodbye for the first time. We first flew to Kathmandu and then via Bangkok to Lahore, where our bus was waiting for us.

Before our departure, we waited for the school bus together with the children and promised them that we would be back soon.



As mentioned in the previous newsletter, we launched our overland journey to Nepal in spring 2025 in our old fire brigade transporter. Carrying roughly 600 kg of aid materials, we only made it to Lahore because the Pakistan-India border was shut down.

With the border still closed, we continued our route from Lahore at the end of March, taking a major detour via China to get to Nepal.

Along the Karakoram Highway at Attabad Lake—around 150 km from the Pakistani-Chinese border—we hooked up with a group of fellow overlanders who journeyed through China alongside us.

Also joining us was the YouTuber Gustl, who subsequently paid us a visit in Pokhara and made a video report about the CWA home.







Here are a few photos from our journey from Lahore to Pokhara.

Our group, with whom we traveled through China, met at the Khunjerab Pass—the highest border crossing in the world, at 4,700 meters above sea level.

In eastern Xinjiang, we encountered the two vast deserts, the Taklamakan and the Gobi.

(Links to travel reports and photos can be found at the end of the newsletter.)






We traveled through beautiful landscapes in Pakistan, Xinjiang, and Tibet. In Lhasa, we looked out over the golden roofs of the Jokhang Temple.




During a side trip near Everest Base Camp, we had a brief, clear view of the summit of Everest.



We passed through the border region between Tibet and Nepal twice, where the massive flash flood had inundated the entire valley in August. Thousands of people are still missing there.





After 40 days and 7,105 km through Pakistan and China, we rolled through the entrance gate of the children's home in our bus. Destination reached!

Herbert had also transported many valuable aid supplies in his trailer.





We were warmly welcomed for the second time this year, and the children rushed to our bus. Curiosity was high, and three of the stuffed animals we brought along were claimed right away.









Among the 600 kg of relief supplies we brought with us were many games. Before the children received them, Barbara explained the rules to our staff members, Saraswati and Sunita—learning by playing.

The donated Rummikub game was a absolute hit and loved by both young

and old.

Many of the games came from Barbara's former classroom. The interest and enthusiasm for so many new things were huge, and everything had to be tried out right away.






Different puzzles brought over from Switzerland are always a hit with all ages.
Arun and Aroshi loved the farm animal sets and the geometric matching game.
As for the boys, the table football game redeemed through Migros collection stamps was in high demand."






Once again this year, we brought along many knitted cardigans, sweaters, hats, and even leg warmers crafted by Irene for the children and staff. This was already the second delivery.

Everyone was thrilled with the cozy, soft merino cardigans—the children could even request their favorite colors!

Irene knitted a total of 63 cardigans and sweaters for all the children, staff members, and several former home children. We will bring the third shipment next year, which will include additional cardigans for the new children as well as requested accessories like scarves, fingerless gloves, and leg warmers.





Every Saturday at 5:00 PM, the karate teacher continues to come for lessons. Manisha is often asked by the trainer to lead the warm-up.

Many of the children have already reached the first degree of the black belt.









Music lessons also continue as before on Fridays and Saturdays for two hours each. Amber, the music teacher, practiced the accompaniment of a song with a group. Yujan and Prabin practiced together on the guitar. Even the little ones are included in accompanying songs with just a few chords.













Inspired by Gustl's painted camper van, we asked Shiva (our art teacher) if he could paint the bright red stripe on our bus with colorful designs. He was thrilled and turned it into an art project. Together with us and some of the older girls, we brainstormed ideas, and then it was time to get to work.

Soon enough, the first splash of color was applied—Manisha painted the peacock, while Shiva painted the Annapurna Range and Phewa Lake.

As a thank you, the girls received small gifts and extra pocket money.

We are all absolutely delighted with their artistic work!







Traveling on the roof of our bus were also 45 air-filled Sissel seat cushions. They were sponsored by Irene, who had already knitted the many wonderful jackets. Prakash translated Barbara's instructions on how to use them. For their birthday celebration, all the children received one of these seat cushions—a truly meaningful gift, since the children spend a lot of time sitting on a chair doing their homework. Every child immediately tried it out. Everyone thinks it's super cool to sit on these wobbly cushions.









Afterward, the birthday program naturally featured delicious ice cream with cones to fill themselves, as always, along with some treats brought back from China—dried fruits, camel and yak milk candies, and chocolate balls. Everything was a hit, and not just with the children.

In the evening, the traditional birthday cake ceremony took place. The children always make wishes for themselves and others, sending them up to the sky as they blow out the candles.

Shiva, as the guest of honor, and Manisha (who became the first CWA child to graduate 11th grade with an A+) cut the cakes.



A chocolate cake like that simply tastes divine—Babita and Sagar couldn't agree more.









Since we had little time to prepare for the birthday party this year due to our travels, we took a few shortcuts—yet there were still presents for everyone.

The children were allowed to pick out gifts based on age group and instructions. Stuffed animals for both young and old, keychains, felt animals as good luck charms, and various toys were laid out. Everyone made their choices with great excitement.

For the children who love to paint and draw, there were acrylic and oil pastel paints as well as new colored pencils. Stuffed animals quickly found happy new owners as well.





From the 5th grade onward, the children received high-quality geometry compasses brought by Herbert from Faber-Castell.

At the end of the day, everyone enjoyed a delicious meal of Daal Bhaat. Happy and with beaming eyes, the children expressed their gratitude for the wonderful birthday celebration and the fantastic gifts.







In mid-May, 3.5-year-old Saniya arrived at the children's home. Her mother passed away after a long illness from untreated typhoid, and her father suffers from severe tuberculosis, leaving him completely unable to work.

Once all the official formalities were completed with the authorities, Bijay

brought Saniya to the home. She quickly settled into the big CWA family and made new friends.

Aroshi is no longer the youngest at the home now—she loves helping and supporting Saniya. Full of energy, little Saniya is enjoying her new home and the loving care she receives from everyone.







On Saturdays, the workshop is a favorite place for creative crafting. Right now, the older children are making marionettes. Agina, Prabin, and Yujan shaped a rounded head out of a square piece of wood with a file.

Since round timber or wooden beads are not available to buy in Nepal, every single part—like limbs, hands, and feet—has to be filed into shape by hand.









Barbara helped with shaping and designing the heads and faces. Noses and eyes were formed using sawdust and glue.

The wigs were crafted from pieces of fur that Barbara had found in her mother's attic. The clothes were made from an old pair of trousers and leftover fabric scraps, or were crocheted by staff member Sunita.








The little ones continue to learn precise sawing with the fretsaw, as well as sanding and painting. Staff members Sunita and Saraswati guide the woodwork classes for the juniors.

Rabbits are currently a big favorite—especially with Ramesh, Laxman, and Babita. Crafting in the workshop brings great joy to everyone!





As a farewell gift each year, the children receive photos from the time we spent together, including their individual portraits and group pictures. For the first time in her life, Saniya received photos of herself along with a photo album.

A misunderstanding when printing the portraits led to the children receiving enlarged photos. We had requested 10x15 cm—but the photo shop in Nepal understood 10x15 inches, which is roughly A3 size! Unfortunately, we couldn't cancel the order, but we only had to cover the cost of the photo paper.







Toward the end of May, our second and final goodbye of the year drew near. As always, the children organized a small farewell party.

On the evening before our departure, various groups performed dances, and the children thanked us for the time we shared and all the great presents.

The next morning, we were presented with flowers, blessing scarves, and farewell cards. Filled with wonderful memories and after many warm hugs, we set off in our bus on the journey back to Switzerland.





At the end of June—just as we had entered Kazakhstan—the siblings Sabina (7) and Sabin (6) were welcomed into the children's home. Their father passed away five years ago in a work-related accident. A year later, their mother abandoned the children, leaving them behind at home.

Most recently, the children were being cared for by their grandfather. However, he is very old and has no income. There is no financial support from the government to cover the children's basic needs.





The two of them have settled in well with the children's home family. They are healthy, cheerful, and enthusiastically learning fretsaw woodworking in the workshop.

Thanks to your support, they are able to attend school, grow up within a loving family, and experience a deep sense of care and security.



Currently, 27 children and teenagers (16 girls, 11 boys) live at the home. Before winter sets in, we plan to welcome more children who lost their parents during the floods in August.

The children at the home receive a solid school and vocational education, balanced nutrition, and good medical care. In addition, they are lovingly looked after by trained staff members and therapists.

All of this is only made possible through your wonderful and diverse support. For this, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts—also on behalf of all the children and our entire team.

We wish you a wonderful autumn season, good health, and all the best.

Warm regards,

Barbara and Peter

Informationen und Links:

- Wir freuen uns auf deinen Besuch auf dem Petersplatz während der Basler Herbstmesse vom 24. Oktober bis 10. November.
- Am 6. und 13. Dezember findet ein kleiner Adventsbazar in der Predigerkirche statt, von ca. 11 bis 13 Uhr.
- Eine Auswahl unserer Filztiere ist neu im Onlineshop der Duftschloss AG erhältlich.
- Link zum YouTube Video von Gustl über seinen Besuch im Kinderheim
- Link zu unserer Reise von Riehen nach Lahore
- Link zu unserer Reise von Lahore nach Pokhara
- Link zu unserer Reise von Pokhara nach Riehen

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