

September 2012

Dear Friends,

Although here in the United States school is just getting underway, at Asha Deep our first term will soon be at an end. School began on the first week of July, and first term exams will be administered later this month. Some topics already studied include our body, colors, monsoon, India since independence, and diet.



Celebrating Independence Day, August 15th

This year we have 230 enrolled students studying in kindergarten through 8th grade. We have had some staff changes (two of our long-time teachers are away for the year getting further education before returning to the school after they earn their degrees). We also have a new volunteer, Meg Borah. She is helping teach English and will soon be starting music classes for our older students. She will be with us through the end of the school year. To see some fun photos of some of our students working with magnetic letters, go to Meg's blog at: <http://anutmegnarrative.blogspot.com/2012/08/magnetic-letters.html>.



आशा दीप विद्याश्रम

A group of high school students, led by Laurel Kietzman, worked in our school for a week in July teaching about health and the human body. Having a group come in to teach a specific topic always brings a lot of excitement and energy to the school! We appreciate our volunteers so much! Our school would be so bland without them.

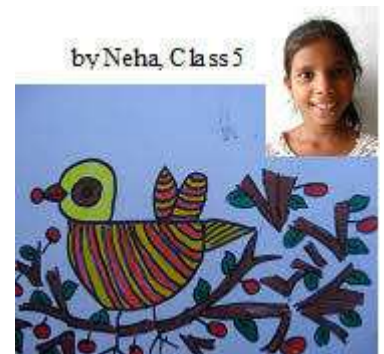
Sarah Hivner, our volunteer English teacher from last year, is with us for one more year. She has taken on increasing responsibilities, including helping our Indian English teachers improve their English and teaching methods. In addition to teaching English

and training teachers, Sarah has begun teaching drawing to most of our children. I thought you would enjoy seeing some results of her recent "bird" project. You can see a few more of Sarah's "favorite birds"

at: http://namastesate.blogspot.com/2012_09_01_archive.html.



by Ashish, Class 5



by Neha, Class 5



I'm sure many of you are wondering what happened to the students that graduated out of our school last year. Thankfully, enough people stepped up so that each child has a sponsor to help pay for their ongoing school expenses. We also had special donations to help cover these children's uniform and textbook expenses. They are all enrolled in a good, local, private school. **A big "thank you!" to all those who pitched in to keep these**

children in school. None of these students expected that they would be able to go to such a reputed school. It is such a big opportunity for them.

The teachers are working hard to keep the school running smoothly. One of their most important jobs is keeping students in school. Sickness or a change in family situation can cause students to drop out. One of our 3rd graders, Rohit Sav, is one smart cookie, the kind of student that makes teaching easy. His father owns a small, roadside restaurant. It's a rickety affair made of bamboo poles and covered with a plastic sheet. He sells meals mostly to cycle rickshaw drivers and to people just arriving in town (the restaurant is on a main bus route). Profits from this restaurant are barely sufficient for the family, and they are constantly in danger of being evicted from their makeshift restaurant/home. Earlier Rohit and three of his brothers studied at our school. His oldest brother Ajay was with us for only one year before his father pulled him out of school and sent him to Delhi to work (he was about 15 at the time). Last year, the next older brother (Sanjay) was pulled out of school to help work in the family restaurant. We tried to dissuade the father from this action, but the needs of the moment won over future considerations. Sanjay was also very

intelligent and should have stayed in school. This year, Rohit had stopped coming to school, but one day he saw one of our teachers in the market and begged the teacher to come talk to his father. "Please come," he said, "I want to stay in school!" This time, the father relented and Rohit is studying, for now. We hope that he will be able to continue his studies. He is so bright; he could eventually be in university if he gets the chance.

The last few months our income has not met our expenses. Our rent went up this year; we gave our teachers a well-deserved raise; and food costs have skyrocketed in the last year. Our current monthly needs total \$3,000. We could really use a few more people to donate \$50 - \$100 per month. We don't want to let these children down! If you can help with this, we would be so grateful.

Thank you for your support of all kinds!
love,
Connie