

Newsletter 6 2003

Dear Friends!!

10-9-2003

It is Wednesday evening, the kids have just gone to bed....We just finished our evening ritual with the prayers, songs and prostrations and I read them a story.

After that the kids jumped into their beds in their payamas. They look so happy and they are so pleased to live here.

"Good night miss!" "See you tomorrow!" Especially the first night when I was part of it again it touched me deeply. This is such a unique place and a unique family!

Right now I enjoy working on the laptop to write this mail and save it on floppy....

I am home again!!

It was so wonderful after more than 4 months to come back to Sikkim, to come back to the school, to come back to 'our family'.

I had forgotten a little bit how peaceful it is here

Forgotten a bit how unspoilt and enthusiastic the kids

Forgotten a bit how radiant their smiles

Forgotten a bit how impressive and pure nature on this piece of earth

Forgotten a bit how I had missed it.....

But I am back and i am allowed to stay for two months (untill the 5th of november)!

Lots of things have happened and developed in the meantime...so good to see!

- Several people sent us lots of english picture and story books! Thank you so much!!
- The newly built swing and see-saws are bright blue and well used
- Some improvement in the kitchen
- The office which was just a room in a big mess turned into a real office
- The washing machine is a great improvement
- There is more structure on several levels
- The school is almost officially registered
- And most of all: the children speak so much more english!! We went for a walk and they kept on talking and pointing at things: " Look miss, a beautiful flower!", "Look miss, a big tree", "Miss, look a dirty pig". It is so beautiful to hear!

Unfortunately one of the students did not turn back after the last holidays. Apparently he had to help his family on the farm....these kind of things happen in Sikkim. And you cannot just give the parents a call for none of them has telephone....

Right now i do not live in the school itself anymore but am staying with a nearby family where i've made myself a home for the next 2 months. A bit of a silence and some distance is welcome.....it is so quiet...The only thing I

hear during the night is the whisper of the river and when i look out of the windownothing but green and flowers surrounding me.

It feels so beautiful and rich to be able to live here again....to share and to receive.....

It is heartwarming and very touching....i can hardly give it words but feel it all the more....

Thank you universe!

To all of you...many blessings and all the best!

With love Hedwig

"Take me to the places on earth
that teach you how to dance
the places where you can risk
letting the world break your heart

And I will take you to the places
Where the earth beneath my feet
And the stars overhead
Make my heart whole again and again and again..."

"Miss, miss, Pema is back!!"

And indeed, there he is...the boy who did not turn back after the last holidays finally showed up again....I am so excited...because he deserves it so much (like all the others by the way....).

He tells that he was ill and that's the reason he could not come back earlier. In the beginning he is a bit shy again. His hair is long and full of lice. So somebody puts him down on a chair outside and takes the raiser....all his hair disappears including all the lice....."Look miss, potatoe cutting!!" Indeed, with his bold head he looks a little bit like a potatoe....

It does not take long and then he shows his radiant smile again. He is so pleased to be amongst his friends again. "Are you happy...?" is my question. "Yes miss, very happy!"a smiling face...so beautiful!

On Saturday we went for a 10 km walk, the kids love it. At a certain stage one of the little ones hits a stone with his big toe and it starts bleeding. Immediately one of the bigger kids runs into forest to collect some leaves, squeezes them and pours the juice over the cut. "Miss, this is medecine" and indeed, it doesn't take long and the bleeding stops. Here am i...only thinking of betadine and a plaster.....

Every Saturday and Wednesday i am doing yoga with the children: some breathing exercises, a wee bit of meditation, some postures and relaxation. They are very enthusiastic about it and it was also one of the first questions they asked me when i came back: "Are we going to do yoga again, miss?". And it is so good to see that the children are so eager to learn....it doesn't matter what you teach...whether it is English, Maths, games, art, sportthey are so pleased and so responsive....It makes teaching absolutely very rewarding!

Somehow everyday feels a bit like a party....even when it is rainy. The monsoon is still not over and we still spend many days with our heads in the clouds.

But it is the beauty of simplicity that brings the sunshine in.....a little hand in mine, a shiny face, a radiant smile....

It touches my heart.....

Much love from all of us in Sikkim Himalayan Academy!