

2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT
Serving Humanity for 25 Years

Dear Friends of KHEL,

The United Nations Children's Fund states that infant mortality rates worldwide have shown a dramatic decrease since 1999. In India, the improving economy is given credit for this wonderful news; specifically, 'More girls are getting education and jobs, they marry later and they have fewer children...' (New York Times, 9/13/07). At KHEL, we've known for a long time that education is key to improving the chances a person will survive childhood and for 25 years we've done our part to make a difference. It has been sometimes daunting and frustrating, but the happiness on a child's face when they have a full stomach and can read a book makes the effort worth it. Apparently, we're not the only ones who think so; according to the Corporation for National and Community Service (info@cns.gov), 'Over the past two decades we have seen a growing body of research that indicates volunteering provides individual health benefits in addition to social benefits. This research has established a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates...and lower rates of depression later in life...' Individuals and companies are discovering the joys of helping others, from medical professionals who take time away from lucrative careers to multinational corporations who find that their employees and customers like them better when they donate (Time, 9/17/07). From the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to Geekcorps to the One Laptop per Child initiative to 'service learning' requirements in American schools, people are waking up to the fact that every act of volunteering and every dollar (or rupee or euro) helps to improve the life of someone at risk. In the increasingly small world we're living in, this can only be good for everyone.

In the 25 years KHEL has been working in the Shiv Puri Colony, we've seen astounding changes and have adapted to the new faces of the same challenges many, many times. 25 years ago educating a child meant coordinating the school year around planting and harvesting cycles since so many kids worked in the fields. It meant giving them a cup of milk so they had the energy to think. It meant our teachers sometimes bathed the children when they came to school. Now, it means adding grades to better serve the community. It means making sure we know what bureaucratic hoops we have to jump through. It means further education for our teachers so they can do their jobs better. In the area of health, we continue to host government medical camps but these camps aren't just for evaluating the risk to our kids for leprosy, TB, or malnutrition. AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases have become prevalent in India and we must address these issues as well. Progress doesn't mean we've resolved all the problems; it means we've resolved the old challenges and moved on to new ones.

KINDNESS



LDA School Children
Photo Dharani Persaud 2007

Thursday, November 8, 2007: Following a busy year of working in India and traveling, Ammaji will be at the Meditation Center in Minneapolis to speak about KHEL. She will be joined by two more generations of



‘Arya’ women, all of whom volunteer for KHEL. KHEL will be selling beautiful textile products designed by Shalini Persaud and created by the women of KHEL’s Artisan Project. This is a great opportunity for you to do your holiday shopping AND help support an impoverished family!

KHEL’s New Status: After two years of intense administrative work, KHEL has achieved independent charitable status in the US!! We are now a registered 501(c)3, non-religious organization. If your employer matches donations, this is a wonderful opportunity for you to increase your contribution to KHEL! We are in the process of taking over our financial and legal obligations from the Meditation Center. From January 1, 2008, donations sent to the Center will be deposited directly into KHEL’s new account. Of course, you’ll still receive a letter for tax purposes, but from 2008 these will come directly from KHEL. Nothing else is changing; your donations will still be used for the same purposes as before. Effective immediately the new mailing address for KHEL is:

KHEL
1161 Wayzata Boulevard East
#215
Wayzata, MN 55391 USA

Mail sent to the Center will, of course, still be received by KHEL. There’s not enough thanks in the world for the wonderful staff and volunteers at the Center who have been very helpful during this transition. KHEL Charities will continue to sell artisan products through the Meditation Center’s bookstore and maintains a close relationship with the Center. Swami Veda Bharati remains on KHEL’s Board of Directors in India. Long time Center members Gretchen Bonham and Scott Schroeder as well as Ammaji are the Board members for the new KHEL.

As part of our commitment to health and education, KHEL donated \$500 to MCTC, a Minneapolis based inner city college, and \$100 to the MNAids Walk. **\$600**

There were major changes in India, too: Mrs. Manmati Subba, LDA’s devoted Headmistress, was promoted to LDA Administrator. Replacing her as Headmistress is Mrs. Bindra Rana, LDA’s most senior teacher. They both bring many years of experience to their new positions. We wish them every success and know that they will help LDA to continue serving the Shiv Puri Colony and environs. Beni Bhatt, who has been KHEL’s Manager for many years, was promoted to General Manager and Bhagwat Prasad was promoted to Assistant Manager.

Other employee changes: We recently hired Shazad, a college student and KHEL scholarship recipient, as a part-time administrative assistant. Sushma Rana, a long time LDA teacher, resigned for personal reasons. We’re sorry to see her leave, but wish her good luck with her new position. Anita Sharma, a classically trained vocalist, was hired to work part-time after school with a dedicated group of LDA and scholarship students. Shaad Kumar, a tabla player, works part-time at LDA during performances, assisting Divender, who teaches music and folk dance.

KHEL has three types of employees – general, administrative and faculty. This year we were able to give salary increases to all employees of KHEL. It takes an enormous amount of dedication on the part of all of our staff to remain with KHEL because there are better paying jobs available. Their dedication is truly admired and appreciated. **Salaries: \$15,400. Benefits: \$1,750. KHEL’s portion of retirement fund: \$2,100**



Web news reminder: Over the next few months, we'll be updating the website with a link for photos and video clips. Friends of KHEL will be able to submit photos of their visits to LDA. We'll let you know via the Meditation Center's newsletter when there are fun photos and entertaining videos to view!

Volunteers at KHEL: Shalini and Dharani Persaud have been volunteering informally for KHEL for many years, in India and in the US. Their grandparents, Dr. Usharbudh and Lalita Arya, are KHEL's founders and their mother, Stomya Persaud, is the current Director. KHEL is, in many ways a big family, and so we welcome these two as they begin to volunteer in a more formal manner.

Artisan Project Sale, November 2006, by Shalini Persaud, age 15, KHEL volunteer: The sale at the Meditation Center last November was very rewarding; Dharani Persaud, Priya Tuttle and I raised just over \$1,000! I was able to talk to our customers who gave me their views on the Artisan Project regarding finish, design, appeal to different age groups and ideas for new products. Armed with this information, I was better equipped to help the Artisan Project choose textiles and design items. I was gratified to be able to contribute to KHEL in a very concrete way and **I look forward to hosting the sale again this year on November 8th at the Meditation Center after Ammaji's talk.** I hope you all will be there to buy the new items I designed with the Artisan Project while I was in India this summer!

Rotary Club donation: After many stumbling blocks through which he persevered, John Stutt, KHEL's friend and donor in Wisconsin, arranged a grant for KHEL through the Racine Rotary Club of \$15,000. With this generous donation, the Rotary Club gave 149 KHEL students financial aid for further studies. The Rotary Club provided KHEL with many items for LDA such as a drinking water purification system, toys for the little children, teaching tools for the teachers, a stage for performances, office and classroom equipment, two desktop computers and peripherals, and other electronic equipment. In addition, the donation paid for the renovation of the sanitary facilities. The Artisan Project received much needed sewing equipment to help improve the finish of their products. A laptop was purchased for Beni, to assist him in all the administrative work he does and last but not least, KHEL now has a digital camera, which will help to streamline adding photos to our website.

Construction at LDA: In preparation for the new 6th grade, KHEL has added an office and remodeled two classrooms and two offices. More classrooms will be needed over the next four years as we add a 7th and 8th grade. **\$5,000**

HEALTH



Ram Mandir Leprosy Patient
Photo Shalini Persaud 2007

HIHT: The Himalayan Institute Hospital Trust arranged for Neelam Pandey, her assistant, Digvijay Singh and Dr. Markata from Canada to speak with our 4th and 5th graders on general health topics. This was a different program than the average 'health' class, utilizing the kids' surroundings to talk to them about their habits. She discussed and interacted with them on many topics including hygiene, diet, and several common illnesses and how to recognize them. The students were very happy with the presentation and took part enthusiastically! The LDA teachers were also present for this class.



KHEL continues to host **government health camps** on the LDA grounds. Every month, people from all over Shiv Puri colony are able to get free advice and general checkups. If there are more complicated cases identified, they are referred to Doon Hospital, which is the local government run hospital. Mostly women attend these camps, looking for advice on general health and the health of their children. Although there is no cost involved for KHEL, our teachers often help with vaccinations.

Muni Devi, who has worked for KHEL for a long time, needed surgery on her stomach. We were able to help her with some of the costs. After she recovered, she developed an infection and had to be readmitted to the hospital. She's feeling better now and is fully recovered. ***\$125***

Medical aid was given to **Sazia**, a 4th grade student at LDA suffering from Hepatitis B. She was admitted to the hospital and remained there for treatment for more than one week. ***\$25***

Salman Khan continues to receive aid from KHEL. In 2003, KHEL arranged for him to have an angioplasty in Delhi. He now needs a heart operation. This is not a surgery that KHEL can afford, so Beni introduced Salman to Alpana Mukherjee, who heads the Delhi based NGO Adopt. Adopt will give the Khans \$5,000, but the surgery and recovery will cost an additional \$2,500, so the family is trying to arrange this amount on their own. Salman is now in 4th grade at LDA. Salman's father sells vegetables at a road side stall. The likelihood of Salman's family being able to raise the necessary funds is practically nonexistent. Salman's brother, Faizan, was helped by KHEL about 10 years ago but he is unable to complete school due to medical problems. Salman has two other siblings, both of who are studying at LDA. ***\$150***

Shiba Parven needed an eye operation. She is a KHEL scholarship student studying in 9th grade. ***\$25***

In addition, KHEL continues to supply a variety of medications to many children of LDA, without which some children will die. ***\$450***

Indresh Leprosy Colony has been receiving aid from KHEL for more than 20 years. There are currently 27 people living in this colony who suffer from many leprosy related illnesses. When KHEL started helping this colony, it was in very bad repair – there were no proper houses, toilets or bathing facilities. KHEL's initial foray into aiding this colony was to provide toilets and bathrooms. From 1991 to 1997, KHEL integrated water and electricity into the Colony. KHEL then added a dispensary and started buying medications for the residents. Later, a storage facility and a community hall for gatherings were added. A boundary wall was built in 1997 to protect the residents from people in the community who came in to steal items. In 2000, we laid a path for the residents and started building cement homes for them because the monsoon rains would wash their homes away every year. Drainage, chimneys, and proper water storage facilities were built in 2005. In 2006 KHEL provided a new gate, repaired some of the homes and treated the toilets so they would remain sanitary. Ammaji and Stomy visited Indresh over the summer. It is apparent that even with the paved pathways, the standing water and mud from the monsoon rains is still making moving around the Colony difficult for the physically challenged. KHEL will continue to improve the living conditions of this Colony. ***\$300***

KHEL provides Indresh Leprosy Colony with food rations of rice, legumes and cooking oil as well as medications for their dispensary, which is shared by all the residents. ***\$2,760***

Ghanshyam, Indresh Leprosy Colony's President, is very ill with leprosy related medical problems. He is being treated in Delhi at a charitable hospital so the treatment is free, but there are many other expenses such as medications and travel. ***\$200***

KHEL also provides sweets to our friends at Indresh on holidays and other miscellaneous aid throughout the year. ***\$90***

KHEL has been giving aid to **Ram Mandir Leprosy Colony** for more than 15 years. There are 37 residents and many of them suffer from leprosy and leprosy related illnesses. Currently, we are building a clinic with the generous help of the Italian group led by Ruth Schmidt. ***\$12,000***

KHEL provides rice, legumes and cooking oil as well as medications for the Colony's dispensary. On holidays, KHEL sends sweets. During the summer Stomy, Ammaji and Shalini visited and brought sweets, fruits and clothing to the residents. ***\$3,600***

Rakesh, a resident of Ram Mandir Leprosy Colony, receives \$10 every two months for leprosy related medications. ***\$60***

Bhadar Singh of Ram Mandir Colony was hit by a motorbike. It was several hours before anyone noticed him lying in the road. He was unconscious when he was admitted to Doon Hospital and it was 5 days before he regained consciousness and was able to tell the hospital staff who he was. During this time, his family was searching for him. He will recover fully from his injuries. ***\$75***

KHEL provides aid to Kirti Singh's son, **Sandeep**, for medical treatment, school books and other education. ***\$125***

The **Rotary Leprosy Colony** is mostly supported by the Rotary Club. KHEL helps with a few donations. There are 70 residents of this Colony. Among the items KHEL provides are food rations, sweets and fruits for festivals. ***\$3,600***

EDUCATION



Dharani and Keshav Teach a Class at LDA

We're gearing up for another 25 years of service to Shiv Puri colony by adding 6th, 7th and 8th grades at the request of our new Parent Association. It makes sense to do this; instead of paying tuition to other schools to take our kids after 5th grade, that money will be used to hire and train new faculty members as we slowly add grades. Construction work on the LDA building has already begun to accommodate more classrooms and will continue over the next few years, as funding allows. The parents are thrilled by this new development; it means they won't have to pay for transportation out of Shivpuri colony for their kids. It also allows LDA to develop into a community school; we'll be able to add after school classes and eventually open our library to older children who don't have a place to study at home. After school classes at a community school are very important to girls, since they are not allowed to travel after dark. By providing these additional classes close to their homes, they will be able to take part in more activities and possibly acquire English language and computer skills, when we add these classes.



LDA and Scholarship Students Financial Aid: Normally, financial aid for our students is substantially higher, but due to the generous Rotary Club donation, KHEL was able to keep this cost low for the 150 LDA students and the 149 scholarship students in grades 6 through college that we support. **\$4,700**

KHEL assisted Manmati with the cost of taking a computer course. **\$60**

Rajeev, who used to be KHEL's administrative assistant and is now studying for his MBA, asked us for a loan to help pay for college, in addition to his grant. **Personal loan from Ammaji: \$500. Grant: \$150. Loan: \$675**

Sarita Shekhar, a nursing student, has taken a 2nd year of loans from KHEL to continue her education. **\$385**

Chhaya Gupta completed her MA with KHEL's help. After that, she trained as a beautician and has not yet attempted to repay her loan. She will be getting married later this year and we are hoping that she will repay her loan soon so we can lend that money to someone else. **Grant: \$75. Loan: \$75**

Sunita Bhadri also received aid to complete her MA and then took a fashion course. She was married in February and as yet has not repaid any of her loan. **Grant: \$75. Loan: \$150**

It is remarkable that over 90% of the loans KHEL gives are repaid in a timely manner, but it is virtually impossible to collect loans from people who are unwilling or, more likely, unable to repay them; there is no collateral required for a loan from KHEL because the people to whom we lend funds normally don't have anything to offer. After a young woman gets married, it becomes even more difficult to collect an outstanding loan. We are working on ways to remedy this situation, but it will continue to be a challenge for KHEL because we believe that the education we're helping a young person to gain is worth the risk; a young woman with an education is more likely to make sure her kids are educated.

Every year, the **Government of India** rewrites the textbooks for Hindi medium schools. Beginning this year, the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT), the central government agency responsible for researching and updating educational syllabi, will be standardizing all Hindi medium textbooks throughout India. The added cost for this will be passed on to the students in the form of higher prices for the textbooks.

Final exams, May 2007: The 2006-2007 academic years culminated in the annual 5th grade national final exam as well as final exams for the other grades. The average passing grade for 5th class students in the state of Uttarakhand (previously called Uttaranchal) is 50%. In the Dehradun district there are approximately 18,000 5th graders and statewide about 125,000. LDA students passed with an average of 55%. In addition, LDA teachers must test the children monthly and submit the test results to the Department of Education. LDA educated 192 students from kindergarten through 5th grade. Of all these students, only one failed the exams. The student with the best test results was **Rahul Kumar**, a bright 3rd grade student. Congratulations, Rahul!

Dharani Persaud, age 12, KHEL volunteer: This summer I went to India to work with the 5th grade KHEL kids. The encounters I had there were unlike anything I have experienced in my life. I've been to India before, and lived there with my mom while she was running KHEL and I helped with an art project that turned into the KHEL holiday cards, but this time I was working more independently. Before I got to India I thought that I would read the kids a story like The Chronicles of Narnia or Alice in Wonderland but when I got there I could tell that wasn't going to work; the English books were too complicated for translation into Hindi. I finally decided on compiling some National Geographic photographs and asking

them to give their opinion on what they thought each of the pictures were. My friend Keshav translated for me. It was a very interesting experience because the kids expected me to know what the pictures were about, when in truth, I had no idea just like the rest of them. I think that was a hard concept for them to grasp. They also didn't quite understand how there wasn't an actual teacher and any answer was a right answer. I could tell they had fun though and that was important! I also taught English to one little boy named Debo. There were a lot of challenges in doing that, but it was especially hard that I speak barely any Hindi, and he didn't speak a lot of English, so when I was trying to teach him, it was difficult to get my point across because I was speaking one language and he was speaking another. But we managed to make sense of it, and I think I helped him feel more confident speaking English. Overall, the trip to India was very productive for me and I felt very good about the volunteering I did for KHEL.

LAUGHTER



LDA Student Performs a Vigorous Dance
Photo Shalini Persaud 2007

In addition to special events like this year's Silver Jubilee or a visit to Swami Veda's ashram, there are several celebrations that LDA hosts for the community every year, including Independence Day, Sports Day, Republic Day, Teachers' Day and Children's Day. **These are not just celebrations but part of our ongoing community outreach that cement the relationships in Shiv Puri Colony.** The benefits to that are both impossible to measure and impossible to do without, such as the lack of violence in Shiv Puri. This is due at least partly to our multi-everything (culture, religion, ethnicity, caste) approach. At these events the children usually give a performance, garland the guests and are given treats. Often, the adults will gather after the performance to talk about issues at LDA or in the community. **\$620**

Drawing and Writing Competition, October 2006: In October we had a drawing and writing competition with the help of the Indian pencil company, Natraj. They provided stationery and coloring pens. Natraj donated some supplies to LDA such as pencils and erasers. The drawing competition's First Place winner, **Shadab**, was given a notebook and some treats, as was the winner of the art competition, **Amir**.

The LDA staff was treated to a Hindi language film, Lage Raho Munna Bhai. This comedy showed how Gandhian principles can be used today to promote nonviolence and peace.

Holiday Programs, November and December 2006: This year, Diwali (Hindu New Year) and Eid (a Muslim holiday breaking one month of fasting) were only two days apart so LDA celebrated these two events together. Prior to winter break, there was a Holiday Program to celebrate the diverse religions represented at LDA. The children performed several songs – Vedic mantras, Christian Holiday songs, mountain folk songs and Muslim songs, to represent the many cultures of North India. The children enjoyed toffees and other treats after the program. School was then dismissed for the two week winter break. **\$170**



Ammaji's Birthday, New Year and Eid Program by Scholarship students, December 2006: For Ammaji's birthday, New Year's and Eid-ul-Ahza, the Scholarship students gathered to enjoy some festivities. With the help of Kamli Bhatt, Saizad and Sadhana arranged a fun and entertaining program of songs, dances and comedy shows. Anita's classical music group also performed. Ammaji was presented with a big card and a shawl. The students contributed some of the funds for this program themselves! KHEL's contribution was **\$25**.

KHEL Program at SRSG, February 2007, by Manmati: 59 students and all the LDA teachers went to the Ashram to celebrate the grand finale of the Ashram's programs. We traveled by bus, singing and beating drums and the children were full of happiness, cheering and enjoying a lot. During the drive there was a competition between the college girls and the LDA students, singing movie and folk songs. We performed mantra chanting and a dance called Nanda Raj jaat yatra, and the classical singing group led by Anita performed Saraswati vandana. Chocolates donated by Swamiji were then distributed to the children.

We were all very happy as it was our good fortune to have a glimpse of Swamiji and the Shankaracharya both on the same stage, our soul was blessed to see them together. **\$600**

First Prize Student Essay: Visit to SRSG, by Nazneen, Class 5: I was very happy to go to Rishikesh. We met many foreign guests there and were glad to see them and talk to some of them. It was the first time I got to see Swami Veda Bharati and I was very pleased to meet him. In the Ashram we walked in the fragrant flower garden where among the flower beds were signs that read, "Let the flowers bloom". I was also glad to perform our local folk songs and dances on the stage. The honorable Shankaracharya was there on stage with Swamiji and others. We received a lot of applause for our performances and these gave us a lot of encouragement to perform well. Thanks to all for their cheers and praise. After our performances we had lunch of daal, rice, chappatis, vegetables, raita and delicious carrot halvaa for dessert. We then posed for pictures with our teachers in front of the main building. We were sad to leave but Ammaji gave us chocolates donated by Swamiji. I found that it was very peaceful at the Ashram. We hope to be given another opportunity to perform there again. **Nazneen received Rs100 and a gift.**

KHEL Visitors to Lakshmi Devi Academy and Leprosy Colonies, February 2007: There were hundreds of visitors at the SRSG Ashram in Rishikesh to celebrate Swami Veda's sixty years of global work. Many of the visitors to SRSG are KHEL donors who took the opportunity to visit LDA and the Leprosy Colonies. They were garlanded with marigolds on their arrival at LDA and the children performed local dances and songs for them. Ammaji was unwell at this time so her sisters who were visiting from Canada, Sharada Bhajan and Shanta Sawh, hosted the guests at Ammaji's home. Among the guests were Wolfgang, Swami Tat Sat and the group from Germany, Alex and our friends from Trinidad, Christina and our Italian friends and many visitors from Minneapolis. Some of the guests like Bonhams have visited KHEL many times. Others, such as Georgeann and Jean visited KHEL for the first time. Our youngest guest, Leela from Minneapolis, was about 10 years old. Also visiting from Minneapolis were Monica, Sharon, Shuli, Lois, Veena, John and Warren. **\$100 plus contributions from the groups.**

Silver Jubilee Program Report, March 2007, by Manmati: The Silver Jubilee program was held to celebrate 25 years of KHEL's service work and to honor Ammaji, the Founder Director, for her contribution in changing the face of the colonies where KHEL operates, educating the poor and raising the standard of living. There were many guests present as the lamp of knowledge was lit. The KHEL Youth Classical Music group performed, to the delight of all present. The children of LDA sang a nazma (Muslim prayer) and Amazing Grace, a Christian song. Several vibrant Garhwali dances followed. Ammaji thanked everyone and said how overwhelmed and proud she was that the entire evening's proceedings had been a



surprise and arranged by the staff. She also took the opportunity to thank all those who helped KHEL over the years, including the gracious blessings of Swami Rama, the guidance of Swami Veda, management and fund raising efforts in the US by her daughters Stomya Persaud & Saumya Haas and her son Angiras and other family members for moral support, her sisters, Sharada Bhajan and Shanta Sawh, for promoting KHEL in Canada, the KHEL board members, and all donors globally.

Awards and many thanks were given to Mr. Sajwan, a dedicated KHEL supporter, Mr. Ahluwalia, a KHEL Board member, Mr. Maini, KHEL's accountant and the senior faculty and staff who have been with KHEL for 15 years or more, Manmati, Bindra, Manju, Rajkumari, Rajeshwari, Beni, Bhagwat, Manohar and Raghubir.

Mr. Joshi, the Chief Guest, then presented gifts to Nazneen of the fifth grade for the best essay on the visit to the SRSG Ashram, and the best female student of the year, while the best male student was Rahul Kumar of the third grade. A final song brought the program to a close. All present were invited to partake of snacks to end the memorable evening. **\$900**

Faculty trip, July 2007: KHEL sponsored a trip for the LDA teachers to the memorial of Kalidas, a renowned Indian poet, and to the Tehri Dam, a large, controversial dam in the mountains. The following report is by Ramesh Chandra, a long time LDA teacher.

When we reached Tehri we saw a very big lake with many big rusted machinery [abandoned after the building of the Tehri Dam] and a big cement wall on both sides of the Dam which is filled with mud and stone. This Dam stops the Ganges River to make it a big lake. Tehri Dam is built at Tehri which was the capital of the old Tehri state. It was a historical place but now has become history. Hundreds of villages went down under the water. We met some people who were very emotional about losing their villages, although the Indian government gave compensation and land to all the people who were victims of the building of this Dam. There are a lot of controversies against it but we [the teachers] feel it is good for the country to progress. It helps with the problem of electricity in the country and will be able to solve the problems of drinking water and water for irrigation. We liked the view very much.

After viewing the Dam we visited HNB Garhwal University in Shrinagar, which serves a population of 6 districts. At Rudraprayag we saw the meeting place of the Alakananda and Mandakani rivers. We saw some beautiful places on the way and it was very green along the river. At some places the road was very small. That evening we reached Kalimath. Ramesh Bhatt, the priest of Kalimath Temple, was waiting for us.

Kalimath Temple is very nice and we feel it is a very powerful place. Then we saw the place where Kalidas prayed to gain knowledge. Later, four of us climbed for 5 hours to 8,000 feet and visited Kali Sheela Peak. There is a small temple and the view is very nice. On our way back we saw some village women. Their clothing looked very strange because they are very poor and sew everything themselves out of blankets and sheets. Life for these people is very hard; there is no transportation or proper schools.

The next day we paid our respects to Kalidas who was a great poet and scholar of India about 500 years ago. Pandit Ramesh told us that Kalidas was born here and he told all the history about him. We also met Pandit Satyanand who is trying to stop animal sacrificing in the temples.

We are all very grateful to Ammaji and KHEL for sending us to this wonderful place. It was a wonderful experience for us, with a spiritual touch and positive energy. Also thanks to Beni for making all the arrangements for the trip! **\$400**



Inauguration of new offices and classrooms at LDA, July 2007: It's always exciting to see progress at LDA! New offices are needed since LDA now has an Administrator, as well as a Headmistress. KHEL's General Manager, Beni, also spends a lot of time at LDA and needed a proper office. Ammaji and Stomy inaugurated the offices with the help of Beni, Bindra and Acharyaji, LDA's Sanskrit teacher. In addition, the old offices have been expanded into classrooms that will be used by the new 6th class next year. These two rooms were inaugurated by Shalini and Dharani.

Dance Competition, July 2007, by Stomy: At the end of our summer trip to India, we attended a dance competition at LDA. Since I wasn't able to be in India for the Silver Jubilee celebration, the teachers and staff presented me with flowers and gifts to honor my contribution to KHEL. Ammaji, Shalini and Dharani were also given gifts and many thanks for their contributions to KHEL and Ammaji spoke briefly on what Saumya and I do in the United States to keep KHEL running.

The commitment of the students, parents and KHEL and LDA staff far surpasses mine. Many of them have had to overcome obstacles I can only imagine - poverty and starvation, child marriages and child labor, homelessness and illiteracy, social stigma and lack of medical care – in the face of many hardships these children, their families and the community have found a way to remain committed to education. The work done by the teachers and other KHEL staff is remarkable and they have remained dedicated to the mission of KHEL to educate children and give aid to leprosy patients. Truly, my administrative contribution pales in comparison, and I was overwhelmed by their gratitude.

The dance competition was very entertaining and the winner was Asif, who performed with unbridled enthusiasm. **\$100**

Community News: Congratulations to Sunita Bhadri and Geeta Joshi on their marriages! We wish them all the best as they begin their new lives.

The saying goes it takes a village to raise a child. In today's climate of globalization, it takes a global village, and that's who we have to thank for helping KHEL achieve 25 years of service: everyone around the world who supports this vital work, donors, teachers, management and other staff, the Meditation Center and its volunteers, Marcia Larson, Patty Hickey, Mayanne Kresch and the extended families of Ammaji, Stomy and Saumy. Special thanks go to the Humes, John Stutt and the Rotary Clubs in Racine, Wisconsin and Dehradun, India; without these two donations, KHEL couldn't have done all the work it did this year.

Please join us as we embark on another adventurous 25 years!

In Service,

Stomy Arya Persaud
Saumya Arya Haas

