

**Friends of India Newsletter**  
**Website: ganga633**

**Vol. 32 December 2018**

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Tis the Season of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy. A time to reflect on what you have and a time of giving. I suggest you (India RPCV's) take action.... There is no one better to respond.... to FOI's five charities by writing a check now to FOI indicating which charity you prefer to help. It definitely makes a difference, even a millimeter, to the person receiving the charitable benefit. FOI has zero overhead, what is given goes directly to the charity.

Thanks.     George, FOI treasurer. *George*

**Donation Form**

**"Friends of India" non profit 501(C)(3) exists because of your support**

***Contribution: \$***

Five wonderful FOI causes for the needy:    check your preference

1. **Sanjeevini Trust** in Karnataka: medical care, ambulance, AIDS care, self help\_projects
2. **Father Fleming Foundation** in Orissa: assistance to 3 leper colonies, self help projects
3. **Pure Water Initiative** in Karnataka: making affordable house water filter units for needy
4. **Lucky Dozen** in Tamil Nadu/Kerala: education sponsorships for deserving impoverished girls
5. **Hassan Homes of Hope** in Karnataka: assist very poor orphan girls at boarding school, ages 6-16

**Contribute by check or money order, payable : Friends of India**

Address: George Nepert, 34915 Gordy Rd., Laurel, DE 19956

Your name:

Email:

PCV group no.

India location

FOI Contacts: Jack Slattery, President ([slattery33@aol.com](mailto:slattery33@aol.com))  
George Nepert, Treasurer ([gnepert@hotmail.com](mailto:gnepert@hotmail.com))  
Maureen Nichols, web master ([mnichols@austin.rr.com](mailto:mnichols@austin.rr.com))

## 2017 Friends of India Donations report

George Nepert, FOI treasurer

Friends of India contributors gave **\$46,809** to its five sponsored charities in 2017. The beginning of Friends of India charity giving started in 1995. **The total given since 1995 is \$420,397 to charity work.**

**Charity #1: Sanjeevini Trust.** Founded by Joe Emerson, India 38 group, is located in Sirwar, Karnataka. Managed by Mr. Gamitra Jettapa, it promotes AIDS education, preventive health care, free dental and eye clinics, medical treatment cost assistance, promotes ecological agriculture, pre school lunch program, AND has an ambulance service to transport the sick and injured to Raichur hospital. FOI has donated a total of **\$33,116** since 1995.

**Charity #2: Father Fleming Foundation.** Founded by RPCV's Tom Brayak and Gerry Nelson, is located in Bargarth, Odisha (formally Orissa). The goal is to empower the three leper colonies to become self reliant. FFF operates a revolving loan program, has a handicap children's training center, has a water well and pump program, has commercial fish ponds, and constructs new leper housing. FOI has donated a total of **\$26,921** since 2005.

**Charity #3: South Asia Pure Water Initiative (SAPWII).** Founded by Mike Lipman, India 89, and Cathy Forsberg. It is managed by Mr. RamaChandra in Kolar, Karnataka. SAPWII makes low cost home bio-sand filter water units below \$50. The unit supplies clean, safe drinking water for the family. The goal is to provide thousands of water filter units, supplying a quarter million people with safe drinking water. FOI has donated a total Of **\$22,304** since 2007.

**Charity #4: George's Lucky Dozen.** Founded by George Nepert, India 26. The goal is to provide educational opportunities for the very poor giving hope for the marginalized students. Lucky Dozen has helped more than 250 students in elementary/high school and in college studies. It is coordinated by Sister Mary Therese, principal of St. Xavier's School in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu. All money is for the students, Sr. Mary Therese receives no monetary compensation from Lucky Dozen donations. FOI has donated **\$256,141** since 2008.

**Charity #5: Hassan Homes of Hope.** Founded by Paul Wilkes, India 3, and introduced to FOI by Jack Slattery. Located in Hassan, Karnataka. It is a boarding school for 90 girls, ages 6 to 16, living together and receiving academic opportunities. The girls are from broken homes with financial problems and unsafe places for young girls. The Selesian Sisters of Don Bosco and lay teachers provide education and life skills. The funds go for school supplies, desks and benches, matriculation fees and uniforms. FOI has donated **\$12,107** since 2012.

### FOI 2017 Report of Donations and Expenditures

**Income: \$47,820 in donations**

Expenses: \$925 Charity #1, \$925 Charity #2 , \$2055 Charity #3, \$38,940 Charity #4, \$1725 Charity #5,  
\$140 NPCA memberships from FOI, \$500 Rotary Club, Pattamai, Tamil Nadu toilet project

**Total Expenses: \$46,809**

## **Ed Willett Remembrance**

### **Friends of India President 1995-2002**

Ed Willett passed away October 27, 2017. Under his leadership as FOI president in 1995 the FOI charity giving started. Ed was a PCV, India 21 group to the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in Rural Public Health projects. An interment service was held on August 24, 2018 at Arlington National Cemetery. Former India 21 colleagues, Ann and Larry Rinaldi and Patty Connelly attended and felt honored and humbled to be there. Below is Ed's obituary.

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### **Edward Joseph Willett Jr. August 19, 1939 – October 27, 2017**

Ed was a compulsive traveler going everywhere/anywhere when he had the opportunity. It started in June 1958 at age 18 when he enlisted in the U. S. Army. He was sent to Korea, Japan and Okinawa. After his discharge he returned to the University at Buffalo to continue his studies. In 1965 he joined the Peace Corps and was assigned to India. He worked and lived in the Rajasthan Desert in a village of 400 people with no electricity or running water.

Upon returning to the U.S., he completed his undergraduate and a master's degree. After graduation he was employed as a Program Manager at the University of Missouri; eighteen months later he was off to Washington for federal employment. While working for the federal government he traveled to and visited or lived in 45 countries. Upon retirement from federal service, he continued to work as a private contractor traveling as opportunities arose. In 2004 he began a 2½ year tour as a Peace Corps Country Director in Central Asia (Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan). On his way back to the U.S. he visited all the countries in South East Asia, eventually working his way to New Zealand. From there he traveled to Peru where he met his son, Chris, for a 20 day trek on the Inca trail staying with families on Lake Titicaca and Machu Picchu. Upon his arrival to the U.S. in late 2006, he worked as the Executive Director for the Department of Defense overseas Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). He traveled to military installations around the world confirming CFC program operations. In 2010 he retired once again and moved with his wife to East Aurora, NY. Three years later he traveled through Europe with his son, Trey, on a tour of battlefield cemeteries and the Baltic and Nordic countries.

Until his untimely death from glioblastoma brain cancer, he had his bag packed and was planning a return trip to Korea with Trey. Unfortunately, he was unable to make this trip. He is survived by his wife, Cassie, sons Trey and Chris (Judy), and grandchildren Benjamin and Isabelle.

TWO WONDERFUL READS

By Kaye Stone – India 26 PCV

And

By Ken Kerkhoff – India 60 PCV

# A Life In Time



A Woman's Journey  
from Orphanage to Peace Corps

Kaye Stone

U.S. \$14.95

Memo

*Kaye Stone, at six years old, went to an orphanage with her sisters. She lived there until she was 18 years old when she went to college. In Part One of A Life in Time, Kaye reports how orphanage life was for her during those years. Part Two discusses the early days of a new government program started by President John F. Kennedy, the Peace Corps. Kaye's sisters saved eighty-seven letters she wrote from India as a Peace Corps Volunteer; they are the basis for Part Two.*

*"Kaye Stone's book about her early life and service in the Peace Corps is especially interesting to me because she served in India in the same group as my mother. A much younger Volunteer, Kaye's perspective is quite different, but is an intriguing supplement to my mother's observations about an adventurous, challenging, but gratifying experience."*

— President Jimmy Carter

*"A Life in Time personifies the sacrifice we as a nation and a people are willing to make to help others. Kaye's story exemplifies the true meaning and spirit of John F. Kennedy's original vision of the Peace Corps. Her first person account of that experience - and as a child of the NC Methodist Children's Home - is a must read for anyone interested in this era of our history and the program that changed the United States' impact on the globe forever."*

— Mark Stone Collins



Kaye Stone

In 2001, Kaye Stone moved to Helena, Montana, where her sister Ann lives, to write this book. She now substitute teaches, manages an apartment building, works at Oil and Gas Conservation, and continues her writing.

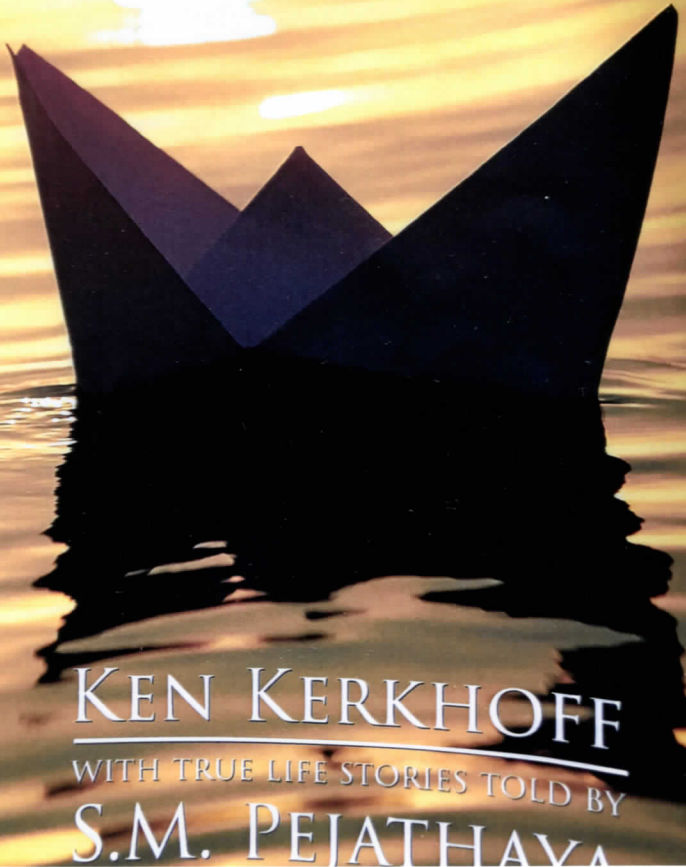
ISBN 978-0-9835610-0-0



5149

# PAPER BOAT

DISCOVERING INDIA  
WITH A MASTER STORYTELLER



KEN KERKHOFF  
WITH TRUE LIFE STORIES TOLD BY  
S.M. PEJATHAYA

# PAPER BOAT

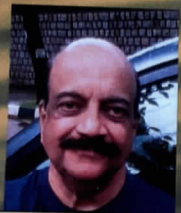
Appreciate the incredible history and culture of India through the fascinating tales of Kerkhoff and Pejathaya. Both write with remarkable feeling as they interweave Indian experiences. Their stories offer a refreshing look at a remarkable country, its people, customs and its maze of religious proclivity.

Smell the spicy curries, hear the rattle of the bullock cart and the cries of the street vendors, and feel the dust on your teeth as you encounter the sensations experienced by young Americans being introduced to village life.

Pause, to delight in Pejathaya's stories about the elephant that played cricket, or the man they called the "Known Delinquent," or blind Diwaker who was given the best gift of all, and many more.



*With a passion for travel and adventure developed at an early age, Ken Kerkhoff traveled much of Asia, Europe and Africa. In India he employed his agriculture skills to assist the Government of India win its Green Revolution. Ken holds a BA and an MBA. He won his first short story contest at the age of ten. His correspondence from India was printed in his hometown newspaper. He writes both creative non-fiction and fiction.*



*Born in a remote village on the west coast of India, S.M. Pejathaya wrote about the wild tigers, buffalo and boar that roamed his coconut farm. Pejathaya's many experiences include managing an inland dry land farm for a major Indian bank and working on a coffee farm in the highlands of South India. He wrote short stories during the prolonged monsoon rains, and eventually published four books in his native language.*

## INTRODUCTION

There are two enduring memories that stand out from the days of my travel and adventures in India. Above all, India is where I met Dee, the love of my life, my wife, my friend and constant companion for going-on five decades. The second is the friendships that evolved and the people with whom I worked in agricultural development, and especially with one man, S.M. Pejathaya (pronounced *pay-ja-thai-ya*). It is largely because of that man that this book was conceived.

The American Peace Corps program was established by Executive Order 10924, issued by President John F. Kennedy on March 1, 1961, and authorized by Congress on September 22, 1961. The program's purpose is to promote world peace and friendship through a corps of willing men and women who work with the peoples of interested countries in meeting their needs for trained manpower. Since 1961 over 215,000 Americans joined the Peace Corps and served in 139 countries. This true narrative chronicles how one group of Peace Corps volunteers (PCVs) in India learned to understand the lives, customs and religions of their host country citizens, and came to appreciate and love the people they worked with.

Photos taken in Bangalore, 1968:

Jack Slattery, Helen Clark, Alice Slattery, Baraniah, and dance instructor



*(The Father Fleming Fund is a USA-registered charity that provides funding to an India-based charity called Vikas Deepti in the western town of Bargarh, Odisha.)*  
Friends of India charity #2

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

## VIKAS DEEPTI



2016-2017



VIKAS DEEPTI  
C/O - VIKAS BHAVAN  
ODISHA, INDIA, PIN 768028  
E-mail: [vikasdeepti@rediffmail.com](mailto:vikasdeepti@rediffmail.com)  
Web site: [www.Vikasdeepti.org](http://www.Vikasdeepti.org)

**VIKAS DEEPTI** is a home to nurture a section of the society which is limping due to negligence, injustice in the social structure and less attention shown. Boys and girls of differing abilities are motivated to strengthen their belief system that they can do wonders in their life and build a better future. Ample opportunities are provided for the same. Here is a short journey of Vikas Deepti in 2016 – 2017. The focus was three fold as shown below;

## **1. Institution based Rehabilitation ( IBR):**

### **A. Main Focus:**

Vikas Deepti added 8 new disabled children for rehabilitation bringing our in-house total to around 75. More and more, CP and MR children are on the increase. Our prime focus continues to be children of age 5-14 and their holistic growth. Children are housed at our facility here, and most are bussed to local schools to provide interaction & integration with 'normal' children. Some older students who are able go by themselves on special tricycles devised for the disabled. The opportunities provided are orthopedic operations, physiotherapy, education, tuition, extracurricular activities such as drawing, singing, dance etc

### **B. Festive moments and celebrations:**

There are several festivals and joyful occasions we celebrate at Vikas Deepti. The significance of each is made known to the children by some local people. The occasions include National festivals, Deepawali, Christmas, Holi, Vikas Deepti day so on. Our children get an opportunity to bring out their talents and grow in confidence. They also join competitions at the district and school levels. It makes them competitive and inclusive in the society.

### **C. Orthotic workshop:**

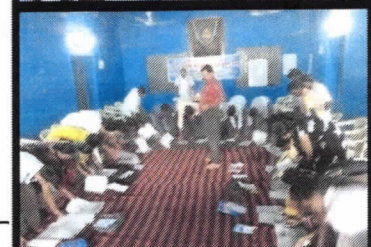


The Orthotic and Prosthetic workshop at Vikas Deepti provides mobility aids to the disabled in the institution, disabled in the villages and leprosy patients. Some local people around also make use of this opportunity. Products like A.F.O, Knee Brace, Knee Getter, K.A.F.O, L.S. Brace, Taylore Brace, Hand splint, A.K. Prosthesis, B.K. Prosthesis, corner seat and crutches prepared with proper measurements give excellent

support for their mobility.

## **2. Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR):**

CBR consists of raising awareness on disability, health, prevention and care for the disabled in the villages of 5 blocks. The parents along with the disabled are taken into all the programmes so that disability is taken care. Today 236 villages





are extended services for the disabled. The involvements include:

- ❖ schools for CP & MR children (7 units)
- ❖ SHGs and their monitoring (123 SHGs)
- ❖ Vocational trades (mobile repairs, dish TV repairs, tailoring, Grocery shops)
- ❖ Health awareness programmes (For adolescent, girls, pregnant women, children etc)
- ❖ Provision of Aids and Appliances

### 3. Leprosy patients and their dependants:

It is a great joy that our leprosy patients are becoming much better placed in society. Our care, initiatives and generosity has made their lives a joyful one. Today the initiatives include;

- ❖ Educational help
- ❖ Medical attention & medical clinic
- ❖ Housing facilities
- ❖ Care of old age people



A nurse (Sr. Dona Maria) from Vikas Deepti along with mission hospital sisters keep track of medical needs and clinics. Aids and appliances from Vikas Deepti are supplied for their mobility. We presently are working in five different leper colonies. With the latest medications and treatments, new leprosy cases are now rare and most of our care goes to existing cases.



Our thanks to Leprosy Guild, Society of the Divine Word, Mr. Tom & Friends of India for their help and encouragement.

### 4. Appeal:

Vikas Deepti is committed for the cause of providing dignified life to the physically challenged. This includes the activities mentioned above. You can be part of us in various ways. Besides monetary help you could also contribute in kind like;

- Books/ school materials for the children
- Uniforms/ Dress materials/Clothes
- Grocery items (rice, dal, biscuits etc)
- Supply of meals, snacks at different occasion etc

**For more details you could refer our website: [vikasdeepti.org](http://vikasdeepti.org)**

## **5. Gratitude**

Our sincere gratitude to all those who were part of us in our journey with the disabled in the year 2016 – 2017. If not for your generosity we would not have been able to reach out to so many physically challenged. The relentless hard work of the staff, Fathers, Sisters and well-wishers is praiseworthy. May the good LORD Bless them all and strengthen their hands to continue the journey with our disabled. **THANK YOU ALL.**

*With sincere wishes,  
Yours in the Divine Word,*



**Fr. Joseph Pais, SVD  
Director, Vikas Deepti.**

**Friends of India** has supported Homes of Hope India (FOI charity #5) since 2012 and this vital organization continues to build orphanages in India. They have completed six orphanages and as you will see below, they are building and building. They now have 1,000 girls under a Home of Hope roof. Here is an update on their latest projects.

- #7 Devanahalli (Bangalore), a former grape vineyard, near the airport, is ready and will allow us to take in many more street children and provide a rural setting.**



- #8 Mercy Home in Churachandpur, Manipur will be home for AIDS orphans, some of whom are HIV-positive. The building will be ready by the end of the year.**



Dear Friends of India,

September 16, 2018

South Asia Pure Water Initiative, Inc. has been very active in the past several years. We have put on training camps in several Indian States to train NGO's to duplicate our methods of manufacturing and distributing BioSand water filters. To date we have trained 115 NGO's and have followed up with and nurtured their programs with additional training and field inspections.

Our village partnership program has been fundraising and placing filters in rural villages and hamlets to bring clean water to the most underserved populations in India. This year we have concentrated our efforts in the Mysore forests and jungles. Working with the Pragathi Foundation and our generous donors, we have completed projects in Anne Katte, Chikkamma Katte, Devamma Katte, and Dhamma Katte. These villages were formed by the Karnataka Government after declaring these areas National Parks in an attempt to control the indigenous people who lived off the land as hunter/gatherers.

The tourism board describes the area:

*Spread over an area of 571 square km in the districts of Coorg and Mysore, the Nagarahole sanctuary is 68 km from Virajpet and 94 km from Mysore via Hunsur and Murkal and 236 km from Bangalore. The Rajiv Gandhi National Park is flanked by Karnataka's Bandipur National Park and Kerala's Wynad Wildlife Sanctuary. These three parks, together with Tamil Nadu's Mudumalai forest and Kerala's Silent Valley National Park, constitute the Nilgiri Biosphere reserve.*

*Visitors to the park can spot majestic Asiatic elephants and graceful spotted deer moving in their natural surroundings. The lucky ones can even spot tigers and panthers. Most of the south Indian species of animals could be found in the park. They include besides elephants and tigers, leopard, wild dog, sambar, barking deer, sloth bear, wild boar, bison, mouse deer, slender loris, jackal, langur, porcupine, Malabar squirrel, striped hyena and the four-horned antelope.*

The villagers who live in these areas are in constant danger from the wild animals listed above which excludes cobras and vipers that hide in the leaf litter on the forest floor. They have to walk through the forest to gather water from the same ponds and rivers that the animals frequent. I have spent days in these forests walking to the villages and their water sources with the Pragathi team. Transporting filters to these areas is challenging since they are in remote areas far from the Pragathi manufacturing facility and need to be hand carried from the nearest road to the villages.

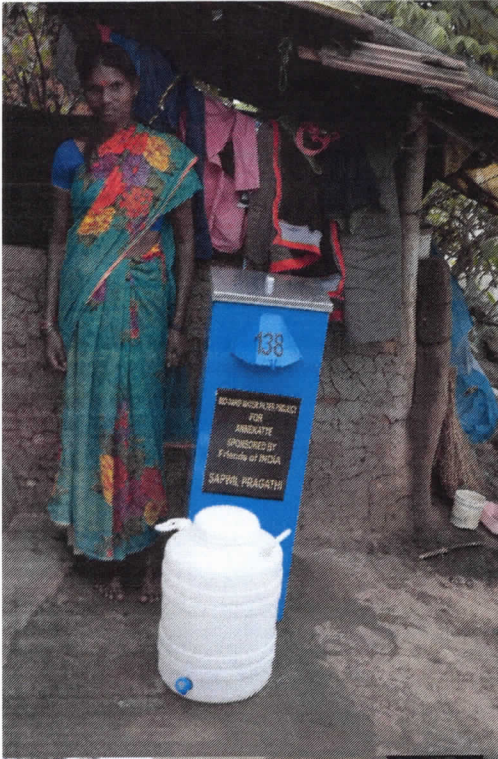
Sanitation facilities are non-existent in these areas and Pragathi's village level health workers spend hours training villagers in basic hygiene to keep the filtered water clean. Infant mortality is at 50% with virtually all births taking place in the village on mud floors of huts. The nearest clinics and hospitals are far away from these areas, leaving seriously sick and injured villagers on their own for critical time periods where life and death are in the balance.

Clean water from the BioSand filters has made a significant impact in these areas. We have anecdotal reports of a drastic reduction of gastrointestinal disease and skin rashes. We encourage the villagers to bathe their children with the filtered water and use it to cook with as well as drink. Word has spread from village to village about the benefits of the filters. We have thousands of villagers who want a filter, more demand than our funding can accommodate. We are grateful for the generous donations from The Friends of India.

I have included some photos of the villagers from the Village of Anne Katte which was funded by The Friends of India donations. Please note we supply a proper water storage container with each filter since the villagers lack the resources to provide one for themselves.

Thanks again for your support and interest in our project. Your service and dedication goes far beyond the years you spent in India making that country better.

Mike Lipman, India 89, President, South Asia Pure Water Initiative, Inc.



## **“Lucky Dozen” Story**

Lucky Dozen Charity (FOI charity #4) was started in 2008 to financially help deserving poor students continue studies in the high school or college level in Tamil Nadu, India. The number of students that have benefited has now reached more than 250. We are now celebrating over ten years of providing educational sponsorships funded by 40+ sponsors and have exceeded over a quarter million dollars in funding. Now through WhatsApp, the sponsored students who have completed their college studies and now working can experience a belonging to the “Lucky Dozen family” for a lifetime.

There are two types of sponsors for “George’s Lucky Dozen”:

1. Take on a student who has completed school education and goes into the college level studies. This sponsorship is required for two to four years of commitment. The 12<sup>th</sup> standard (age 17) will start college in the month of June. The needy students are chosen to avail the kind help from sponsors. The range of sponsorship is \$400 - \$2,000 per college year.
2. The second type of sponsors who come forward to help any students in need for a particular time. This is not time bound. They just share some amount for the welfare of a needy student. There are many students who could not afford to pay for their uniform, notebooks, school needs even though the amount required is less than \$50 to \$100 per year.

Lucky Dozen works at the grassroots level touching a specific deserving girl student (boys also) to provide hope for a better future through education. A life can be change with relatively tiny amount of financial help from all of us. The first Lucky Dozen in 2008, helped eight poor deserving girls to do college level studies. They now have jobs and some are married and are able to help their family financially. Most of the girls do not pursue college education because of financial restraints. This also results in early marriage.

Lucky Dozen was successful in doing a special project in 2016. Sr. Mary Therese presented a need to have the marginalized elementary students that come a long distance to school by walk up and down hills to be transported by bus to encourage them to go to school and arrive safely. Enough sponsor interest was generated to purchase a new 20 plus passenger bus (Swaraj Mazda Limited) good for hill travel. Amazing. The funding needed came in.

Lucky Dozen is operated with no overhead costs. Sr. Mary Therese gives of her time to coordinate with the needy students on the ground in Tamil Nadu. George Nepert gives of his time on the state side to collect from the sponsors, send IRS tax deduction receipt, and electronically transfer funds to Lucky Dozen account in Tamil Nadu.

**Sponsorship donation can be sent anytime. The bulk of donations are collected in March – June.**

**Donation check payable to : Friends of India . Under memo write Lucky Dozen. Friends of India is a non profit 501(C)(3) and its tax ID number is 52-1496391. Mailing address: George Nepert, FOI treasurer. 34915 Gordy Road, Laurel, DE 19956.**