



EDUCATE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL

Loss and Change: Appreciating Phyl Wynn Christopher London, Executive Director

Loss has played a powerful role in the history of Educate the Children. ETC's founder, **Pamela Carson**, struggled mightily with stomach cancer but finally succumbed in 2000. **Joy Rushfelt**, a committed supporter of our Private Sponsorship program and **Louise Regan**, aunt of former Executive Director Susanna Pearce, both passed away in 2005. Now we have lost one of our longest serving board members, **Phyllis Wynn**, who died on September 30 from breast cancer, a disease she had beaten before.

We profiled Phyl and her New Year's Day Women in the Spring 2005 newsletter. But that note barely scratched the surface of the impact she had on ETC, her family, friends and the world. While reflecting on how to write succinctly, yet deeply, about someone so dear to all of us at ETC, I began to think about the word *charity*. Sometimes, *charity* evokes an image of beggary in which the recipients are somehow lesser beings for being needy and the givers self-aggrandizing. This is not the kind of charity that Phyl evinced.

Charity is derived from the Latin *caritas*. In Christian theology it is the highest virtue because it reflects God's love for creation. So acts of charity are acts of love, they are



Phyl Wynn in 1997 visiting a women's group she sponsored in Nuwakot District

humble attempts to bring some grace into this life. Charity in this sense is a commitment to our human kind, an expression of faith and hope that our nobler inclinations can overcome our baser impulses. It is also a commitment to making the world a better place, one where 'love for creation' is not an empty slogan but a foundation of living.

Phyl's dedication in working with ETC to create opportunities for women and children in Nepal was this deeper kind of charity, as

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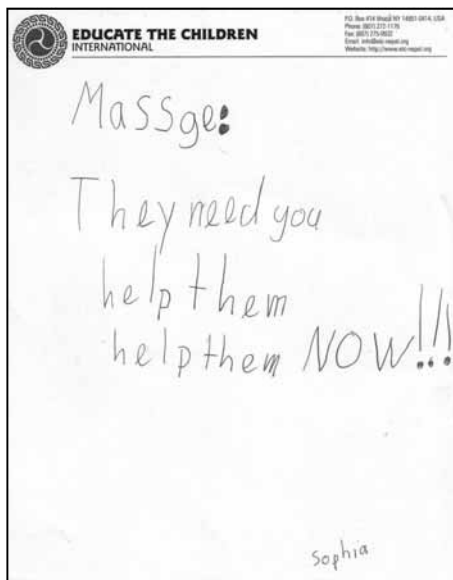
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Get Involved with ETC

Kathy Woodcock, Development Director

I derive great satisfaction from working at Educate The Children (ETC). It has been one of my passions to help women realize their full potential, so they can improve the quality of their families' lives. Providing Nepali women with the tools they need to learn how to read and write, manage money, provide nutritious meals and improve the health of their communities is a worthy cause.



Chris London's 8-year-old daughter Sophia visited our office and, without any encouragement, wrote an appeal letter.

Did you know that 142 countries are better off than Nepal, but 35 countries, mostly in Africa, are poorer? Why is it that Nepal attracts so many tourists to Mt. Everest, yet Nepal does not seem to benefit in terms of wealth? These are the types of questions that motivate me to work to find solutions for this dilemma. I want a more equitable, fairer world, one that displays social justice.

Despite political turmoil, Educate the Children has continued to administer its 5-year Integrated Community Development model without interruption. This has been possible because ETC has gained the trust and respect of the community through the hard work of our committed staff. But none of this work can happen without your support, and that is why we rely on your partnership.

I was very amused when Sophie London, our executive director's daughter, wrote her own fundraising letter during a recent visit to our Ithaca office. I never asked her to write this letter; she did it on her own initiative. This little 8-year-old girl already seems to understand why we need your gift today. We hope you will consider Sophia's gift plea and give to help create social change in Nepal.

You may never be able to climb Mt. Everest, but you can attain great heights by giving!

Ten Easy Ways to Give!

1. Tell friends and family about ETC.
2. Have a party with an ETC gift basket.
3. Set up a *Firstgiving* web site for your event.
4. Give ETC alternative gifts to friends and family.
5. Internet shop at amazon.com or mycause.com.
6. Ask your Church to take up a collection for ETC.
7. Donate your vehicle to ETC.
8. Recycle toners, ink cartridges and cell phones.
9. Volunteer your time and/or service.
10. Include ETC in your will.

www.etc-nepal.org/getinvolved.php

ETC Board and Staff Corner

ETC Welcomes New Staff Members

Two staff members have recently joined ETC. In the U.S., Kathy Woodcock is our first Development Director, coming to ETC after 17 years with the Ithaca Planned Parenthood, including five as their development director. In Nepal, Ganga Gautam signed on as Assistant Director. Ganga has substantial experience in program design, evaluation, and English language education. He holds a Masters Degree from the University of Lancaster, England. ETC is lucky to have such experienced and wonderful people on staff. Welcome aboard Kathy and Ganga!

Board Member Profile: Don Russell



Donovan Russell has been an ETC board member since 1997. After finishing his Ph.D. in Education at Cornell University, Don worked in various government education departments in the US and Canada. He got his start in international development in 1979 when he happened to sit next to an officer from the Institute of International Education on a plane ride who was looking for a person just like him. Since then he has built a distinguished career in international development, including assignments in Nepal, Bangladesh, Lesotho, and Jordan. In 1984 he was given an award by the Kingdom of Lesotho for Outstanding Service to the Nation. He is regularly called upon to consult on education programs in different parts of the world. Don got to know ETC while serving as the Peace Corps director in Nepal from 1994-1997 and joined the board after he returned to Ithaca. His development expertise and managerial skill have served ETC well.

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An Appreciation of Phyl Wynn

were the diverse commitments of Pamela, Joy and Louise. Personally, I am not a religious man, if by that is meant adherence to a church or orthodoxy. But the lesson I take from Phyl's life is that *caritas* is a virtue we can all subscribe to: simple acts of charity better equip us to live in this world, not just with ourselves, but with each other.

The title of this dedication, *Loss and Change*, comes from a book of that name by Peter Marris. In it, he makes the case that in coming to grips with grief and mourning we better understand social change, which is exactly the kind of work we do at ETC. Marris writes: "if we do not know how to mourn, we cannot know how to live; and the diffuse distress of unacknowledged grief will destroy our liberalism and our respect for life." My hope then, is that through our loss, we will come to a deeper understanding and live up to the charity Phyl showed in her life. We loved her and we will miss her; but we are stronger for having known her.

Public Health:

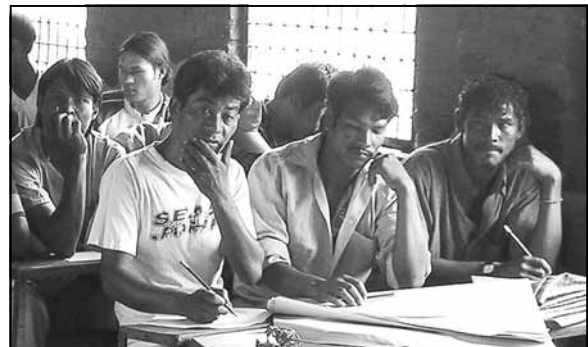
Educate the Children has long considered public health to be a key expression of its mission to help improve the lives and livelihoods of women and children in Nepal. The public health project is an essential part of our Women's Empowerment Program; our Children's Education and Agricultural Development programs also have activities in this area.

Engendering Safe Motherhood

Nepal has a very high maternal mortality ratio. Worldwide, for every 100,000 children born, 325 women die as a result. But in Nepal the figure is double: 740 women die during every 100,000 childbirths. In rural areas of Nepal barely 10% of childbirths are attended by skilled health professionals and only 22% receive some kind of prenatal care. Because of this situation, ETC participates in the global Safe Motherhood Initiative.

Through partnerships with organizations that work primarily in the maternal health field, but also in our own training programs, we provide our Women's Groups with essential knowledge and pragmatic skills to improve understanding of the need for prenatal care, simple things that women can do to reduce the risks of pregnancy, including when and how to get help from professionals. As role models for the broader community, Women's Groups help ETC spread this know-how to other women and even other communities.

For maximum impact ETC strives to include men in Safe Motherhood trainings as well other health trainings. It is essential that maternal, infant and child health is no longer treated as solely the responsibility of women. For this reason ETC includes men in activities that inform women's groups about Safe Motherhood as well as family planning initiatives, HIV/AIDS awareness and the prevention of violence against women and children.



Men participating in one of ETC's gender trainings in Ichangu Narayan

In recent trainings that took place in our Godavari and Ichangu Narayan project areas almost all of the men that were asked to attend did so with several taking time off from their jobs. This demonstrates the high esteem in which ETC's work is held in the community. We always solicit feedback from participants in our trainings. Here are some of the comments we received:

"If I had the opportunity to participate in the Safe Motherhood orientation before, I would have treated my wife better during her

A Cornerstone of Development

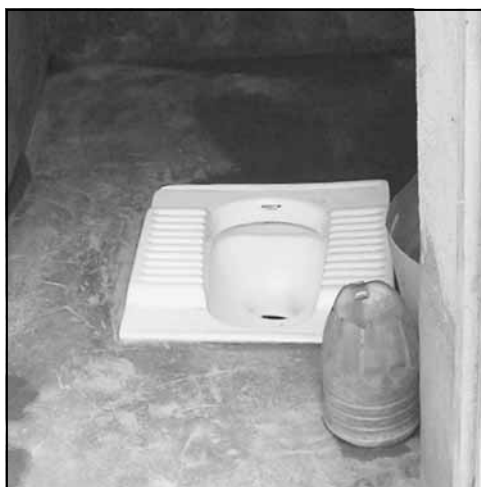
pregnancy and delivery period. I am feeling guilty now."

"Whatever I have learned from this orientation, I will share with my son, daughter, daughter-in-law and neighborhood."

"I had heard that after vasectomy, there is less chance of sperm survival. But after learning more about this procedure from ETC's trainer, I changed my negative thoughts into positive ones and now I will go for the operation." (A few days after the training, ETC's learned that his operation was successful.)

Improved Sanitation

ETC's wide variety of health-related activities such as adequate animal housing, Natural Health training, better drinking water facilities, nutrition, and student-run community clean-up projects all help improve the health of the communities we work with in Nepal. ETC staff is especially proud of the success of our toilet construction work.



The simple squat toilet makes a big difference in rural hygiene

Many agencies in Nepal and elsewhere have failed when it comes to toilets. Quite often, because of cultural taboos toilet rooms are used to house animals, store supplies or are simply abandoned. In the past we have had difficulties winning grants to help cover the cost of this work because institutional funders have no faith that toilet projects will be successful. In fact though, ETC has been quite successful, not only in getting toilets built, but in working with the community to ensure that they are properly used.

Former ETC board member and Cornell University anthropologist Katherine March in her recent book about a community in Nuwakot district remarks that, because of ETC's work "almost every house has built an outhouse; even more remarkably, the outhouses are being used." An impact evaluation conducted in our former work areas in Rasuwa and Nuwakot found that many women have invested their own scarce resources to repair or otherwise maintain their toilets. As prosaic as it may seem, what this shows is that the patient, intensive work that ETC does with communities leads to lasting changes in attitudes and actions.

Help ETC with a *Firstgiving* website!

Do you have a special event coming up such as a wedding or a graduation or a bicycle race? You can turn that event into support for ETC with a Firstgiving website. Go to www.etc-nepal.org and click on the Firstgiving button. Easy instructions will show you how to turn your event into support for ETC!

ETC Collaborates with Japanese Development Agency

ETC recently began a collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). JICA was founded in 1974, as an agency offering technical assistance to developing countries. JICA's programs focus primarily on institution building, organization strengthening, and human resource development. A key feature of JICA is the Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. Much like the US Peace Corps, this program provides volunteers to work with local institutions for two years.

Under the auspices of JICA's *Quality School Project*, 6 volunteers have been placed in schools where ETC is currently working. The Quality School Project shares with ETC's Education Program a commitment to student-centered classroom management, pragmatic teacher training that makes use of local resources, and increasing community support for, and involvement in, improving the quality of education in government schools.



A JICA volunteer works alongside primary school teachers participating in an ETC teaching materials design and production workshop.



JICA volunteers meet with ETC staff to initiate collaboration.

The principle goal of the JICA-ETC collaboration is to reduce dropout and repetition rates among 1st through 3rd grade students. Annually many students in Nepal fail to advance to the next grade. The ability of children to succeed depends on many factors including family economics and education levels, school resources and the skills of their teachers. At ETC we work on all of these factors through our Integrated Community Development model. The JICA volunteers will strengthen our work by acting as a constant positive reinforcement over the next two years. In particular, the volunteers will be focusing on improving mathematics education. We are very proud that of all the organizations that JICA might have worked with, Educate the Children was chosen. We look forward to much success in collaboration with our new partner in Nepal.

Thank You!

Special Thanks to Our Volunteer Fundraisers!

- ~ **Mama Goose**, a gently-used Children's Clothing Store in Ithaca, *is selling Ergo Baby Carriers and donating 15% of profits to Educate the Children*. Please visit and buy an Ergo Baby Carrier for your next baby shower gift!
- ~ **Master Craft Custom Framing & Fine Arts** framed two Nepal maps for our display.
- ~ The **Delta Kappa Gamma Alpha Rho Chapter** held a raffle to benefit women and children in Nepal.
- ~ **Ithaca volunteers, Trang Nguyen, Annie Hunziker, Lynde Klein, Karen Schantz, Margaret Myers, Eun Il Bae, Maria Seely and Dhanashree Bellur** helped raise funds by writing potential donors about ETC, stuffing appeal mailings, encouraging toner/ink cartridge and cell phone recycling, doing grant research and helping to develop a marketing plan. **Maira** also steadfastly worked to organize our photo archive.
- ~ Students at the **American School of Dubai** work to raise funds for ETC and since 2002 have contributed over \$11,000.
- ~ Since 2001 the **First Congregational Church of Ithaca Christian Outreach Committee** has raised nearly \$9,000 for ETC.

ETC has received several grants within the past 12 months

- ~ **Dorothea Haus Ross Foundation** awarded \$13,889 to support our Scholarship Programs.
- ~ **Everest '96 Memorial Fund** gave \$10,000 in support of our *Integrated Community Development* model.
- ~ **Rotary International** will fund \$10,000 for educational programs.
- ~ **Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust** awarded \$2,000 to support ETC's Kindergarten Program and Children's Clubs.
- ~ **Engineering Information Foundation** gave \$1,600 for ETC's "School-to-School" project in which students in Nepal and the USA correspond through e-mail.
- ~ **Elephant Rock Foundation** awarded \$1,000 for ETC women's development programs.
- ~ **The Global Fund for Children** awarded a \$1,000 tracking grant to ETC and \$4000 to fund ETC's collaboration with the *Nepal Bhotia Education Center*.
- ~ **Onaway Trust** is providing \$7400 a year for three years and the **United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues** \$10,000 for one year in support of our work with the Thami Education Project.

Get a Jump on Holiday Shopping!

Use Educate the Children's Alternative Gift List in this issue or online



You can make a difference in many lives by becoming a Sponsor!
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