

GONPA GAZETTE

The cold Oregon rain! How quickly I had forgotten the cold damp in Eugene this time of year! I so often feel water-logged: a huge, saturated sponge absorbing all the moisture in the air! Living in India has given me a reprieve...a chance to dry out! Yes, Oregon is verdant, fertile, lush...and yes, that is the direct result of the copious downpours, that make my joints literally feel rusty!



Iridescent emerald green moss covering everything that is not in motion!

This month I have been on the downside of my visit; with less than three weeks until I leave. It has been a wonderful, mostly restful and relaxing, much needed holiday. I have soaked up enough Western culture to last until my next visit, whenever

that may be; and have a greater appreciative for what Eastern culture offers.

Spending most of my time socializing has been perfect for a holiday, but would never meet my needs as a long-term retirement lifestyle. My heart has always been drawn to being 'on the front-lines and in the trenches'.

Often I have doubted my sanity about choosing monastic life with all its inconveniences. Now, I no longer feel guilty or apologetic because, as one friend aptly verbalized, "You have always liked to work and you have always liked structure." Although not true for most, monastic life provides a foundation upon which I thrive.



Liquid, life-giving droplets.

I can't say enough about my wonderful friends: their care, concern, kindness, generosity, acceptance, willingness to accommodate...the list is endless!

I can't say enough about the length and depth of many friendships spanning decades. Even if we live far apart, and don't have regular contact, we seamlessly pick up where we last left off.

I can't say enough about our shared experiences, many of which I don't remember, but they do with great laughter! Each remembered moment, when verbalized, stitches together a richly coloured and textured tapestry of overlapping lives and inter-onnected hearts.



One of several 'oldie but goody' friends.

Ashish had his 18th birthday rite of passage on 12 March. He will again travel to India this summer to see family and friends, only this time he will be travelling solo. I will not be going to Maine this year, and Ashish is too old for paid airline accompaniment. Please wish him well as he navigates international travel on his own.



Happy Birthday, Ashish!

Ashish's annual visit home is as important to his well-being, as it is to that of his extended family members. It's time to request sponsors for his plane ticket. Any and all donations are gratefully accepted. Checks can be made in my name and sent to my Eugene address; or international wire transfers can be sent to my Indian bank account. Please contact me for details.

Chauari Village Project is moving towards meeting its fundraising goals. To date, several sponsors have contributed non-specified funds, which will be used for the boundary wall construction; and one donor

is sponsoring all new school uniforms. A variety of additional sources are being explored to meet the project's needs.

Innumerable thanks to those who have contributed; and to those who would still like to!

• Boundary wall around school & clinic	\$ 5,341
• Free standing, self-contained kindergarten classroom	\$ 4,871
• Book bags	\$ 475
• School trip	\$ 176
• Hand pump repair (8)	\$ 206
• School roof repair	\$ 215
• Multi-vitamins for 1 year	\$ 2,377
• Menstrual pads for 1 year	\$ 115
• 3 sewing machines to learn self-sufficiency skills	\$ 257
• 1 lockstitch machine to learn self-sufficiency skills	\$ 103



Anirudh Prasad and Chauari villagers during my annual winter visit.

Thanks to Larry & Mary, Marlene & Floyce, Kent & Kacy, Joy & Martin,
Umpqua Sangha, Jo, Doug, Donna, Stef, Jennifer, Judy, Mika, Karen,
Cynthia, Phyllis, Eileen, Gina, Geraldine, Lynn, Sherrill, Andrea, Kiva,
Elaine, Sydne, Julie & Ken





