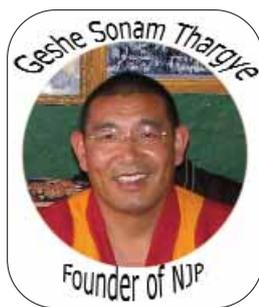


Nying-Jey Projects
625 Nortons Rd
Paraparap VIC 3240

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Email: njprojects@gmail.com
www.njp.org.au



On behalf of Geshe Sonam Thargye and the committee, I would like to wish everyone a safe and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

This year has seen many changes. We acknowledge retiring Treasurer and Secretary, Colin and Janeece Kelsall for their outstanding contribution to Nying Jey Projects. Many sponsors, Nuns, Monks and Students have benefitted from their time and effort. We would like to thank them for their dedication, hard work, and commitment as Treasurer and Secretary over many years now, and look forward to Janeece continuing her support as a committee member. We wish Colin and Janeece good health and happiness in the future.

I would like to introduce our new committee members: Helen Wright who takes over the Secretary role and Vikki Gage who has agreed to take on the mammoth task as Treasurer.

Plans for the future are very exciting as we look to the expansion of the scholarship program. We are also awaiting the graduation of our first scholarship tertiary student.

This year our communication with Tibet was tested and for a while it was difficult. I am pleased to say things have improved, and we understand that life goes on as usual for the students and Nuns.

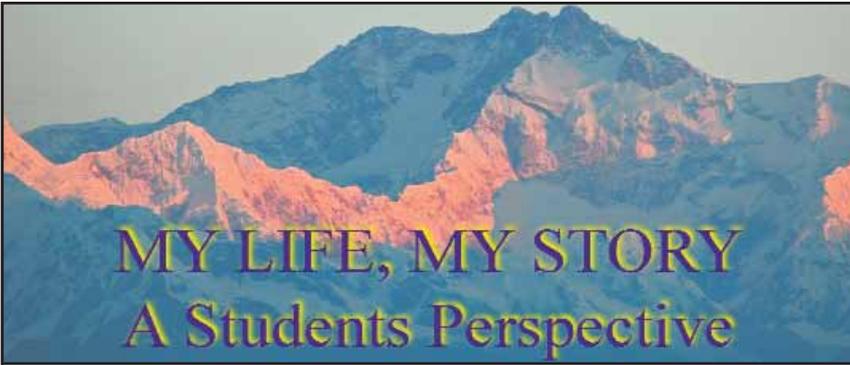
It is possible that some sponsored Nuns have been arrested and/or have gone missing. We are still waiting more information. We continue to send the money as usual to their nunneries, because it will continue to support all the nuns.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our overseas committee's in Sera Jey Monastery/India and Ganzi/China for their assistance and support in what has been a challenging year.

As we have changed our postal address, please note that when sending a letter for translation, can you please write translation required on the front of the envelope. This year we understand many sponsors received letters for the first time, so I would like to say a huge thank you to our translators because sometimes, it can become a massive task.

We look forward to 2009 and your continued support.

Susan Dixon
Vice President Nying-Jey Projects



Life is full of interesting experiences and is a long journey from beginning to end. My life began in Eastern Tibet being born the youngest girl in a family of nine and also the youngest sister of Geshe Sonam. I now find myself a committee member of Nying-Jey Projects working to help fellow Tibetan's achieve a better life. Sadly, most of my brothers and sisters are uneducated. While we have schools in Tibet, it is hard for parents to send their children to them due to the fact that families are so very poor and unable to afford the basic need of life which is an education.

When I was 16 years old, my brother Geshe asked me to go to India to study. I really needed to learn to read and write, so I decided to take this opportunity that was offered. I went to Dharamsala in India and studied at the Tibetan Children's Village which is a school that is run by the Dalai Lama's sister. The school where I studied had about 1500 students, 99% being from Tibet. The rest of the students were mainly teachers' children. The students ranged in age from three being the youngest, to twenty eight being the oldest when I was there. The teachers were all so kind to us and did their best to make sure we were all well looked after. But childhood without a parent's guidance is hard and so desperately lonely. Although I wasn't a young child I still missed my family terribly. Life without your parents is very empty.

As I write this, I still feel the unhappiness that I suffered inside. I used to miss my mum's cooking and my parent's compassion. Sometimes I would dream that my parents were dead and then the next day I would cry imagining someone had died in my family. I couldn't ever find out if they were alright as they had no phone and we had no way of contacting each other.

While it was so hard for me, I know I was better off than many other children. I had three nephews aged five, seven and eleven who also came to India to go to school. They were so young and had no idea how to look after themselves. They didn't understand such simple things as how to dress for weather changes or how to look after themselves on a daily basis. These were things a mother would normally take care of for her children. They were so young when they left their home in Tibet that even their memory of being brothers faded as they all were separated and went to different schools. They missed their parents a lot.

Life was very difficult for us all but we knew that gaining an education would give us the best prospects in life. Although it was hard for us to leave our parents behind in Tibet, we knew that in the end we would have more opportunities to help them and our community later on in life if we made this sacrifice.



Now my nephews are in their twenties and the three of them are now studying in Southern India. Two are studying Buddhist Philosophy and the other one is in year 12 at school. They have adjusted to their life now in India and while they don't miss the hardships of Tibet anymore, their parents still miss them greatly.

I stayed at the school in India for almost eight years and now have been in Australia for 6 years. I was unable to go back to Tibet until I gained my Australian citizenship and it was only last year that I was finally able to return to the land of my birthplace. It had been 14 years since I had seen my family and my childhood friends but they were in my mind always. How I had missed them all so much.

My return brought up so many mixed feelings. The saddest thing was I felt I could not be myself in my own country, even with my family friends I couldn't discuss Tibetan issues. My brother reminded me what things I shouldn't talk about as there are strict bans on mentioning anything to do with the Dalai Lama in Tibet. My proudest moment came when I handed the sponsors' money to the children and their family members. Being a committee member of NJP meant it was a great moment. The parents gave me kartas (white scarves) to take home to their children's sponsors, I received so many I just couldn't carry them all so I ended up bringing one back and dedicating it to all the sponsors as a symbol of gratitude from all the families. It was a wonderful feeling to be able to do this on behalf of our sponsors. Everyone was so happy and smiling and said, "Could you please say thank you to my sponsor."

Tibetan children still keep coming from Tibet to get an education in India because the schools in India are free as well as the education system being much better than in Tibet. However, it would be better if they could stay in Tibet with their parents and go to school there. I think that it is so important to have family's love and support while you are young. So I would like to say thank you so much to all the sponsors. It is because of your generosity and kindness that your sponsored students can attend school in Tibet and stay in the community with their families.

Your compassion helps sustain their Tibetan culture and allows them to grow up knowing who they are. Communicating with Tibet has been difficult this year. I heard nothing from my brother for five months. So if you don't hear from the children and nuns that you sponsor would you please be patient? I personally would like to say thank you to all the people who are sponsoring a child anywhere in the world.

Once I was one of those children and it was through the kindness of my sponsor that enabled me to grow into the person I am today. I now live independently, have employment and support myself here in Geelong thanks to having a generous sponsor who gave me the chance to have a better life. I am now committed to returning this opportunity to other fellow Tibetan's so that they may also have an interesting and expanding journey too. It is through my work with Nying-Jey Projects that I can offer other Tibetan's the same opportunities I received.

Many Tashi deleks,
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year to all
of you.

Sonam Yangtso
(Soyang) 19/12/08



Soyang offering the Kata she received from the families to all sponsors who are supporting the children in Tibet



A Message from the Committee

It has been brought to the attention of the NJP committee that some sponsors of Monks have from time to time, received a request from their beneficiary for some extra funds to assist them to pay for a party that they give to celebrate them attaining their Geshe degree.

We have investigated this request and have found that this is a genuine request and that this is an occasion in a monks life that is of great celebration. It is customary for a monk to have a day of celebration where they provide meals for all the monks in the monastery. This can mean many hundreds of people, so it is an expensive exercise and it is the monks responsibility to pay for the meal for everyone. As many of the monks don't have much money, they sometimes ask their sponsors for some extra money to assist with paying for this event which can cost several thousand dollars.

The committee wish to advise all sponsors that should they decide to contribute to this request, it is their own decision. We are very grateful to all our sponsors for what they do now with their sponsorships and don't want anyone to feel obligated to contributing further funds as we know many sponsors are on limited incomes.

If a sponsor receives this request and wishes to assist their monk, they can let the treasurer know and the extra money can be sent along with their regular sponsorship payment. Please contact the treasurer to make the arrangements.

If sponsors ever receive any requests from your beneficiary whether they be a monk, nun or student, and you are not comfortable with their request, please don't hesitate to contact us for advice. If the request is appropriate, we can follow up on these matters for you.



Sacred Footsteps Tour 2009

sponsored by the
Drol Kar Buddhist Centre

April – August

*Travelling throughout Victoria, New
South Wales and South Australia*

*For itinerary and details see the Sacred Footsteps Tour
event news on the Drol Kar Buddhist Centre
website: www.drolkarbuddhistcentre.org.au*



STUDENTS & NUNS SEEKING SPONSORS



S114
Khedup



S116
Tenzin Choedon



S121
Dawa Tashi



S124
Kelsang Gema



S211
Tsetrim Gyama



S215
Palden Tashi



S242
Jantso



S245
Jampa Dandup



NNY307
Cheshi



NNY398
Lhamo Yangtso



NNY399
Tsesu Lhamo



NNY400
Tashi Lhamo

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE



We are proud to announce that we have achieved our target of supporting TEN students with their University studies.

If you wish to sponsor one of these students please contact NJP

Photo's of the 10 Scholarship Students are on our website in the Student Sponsorship area.

NUNS & MONKS SEEKING SPONSORS



NBA410
Yang Den



NBA414
Khaga



NGA417
Choetso



NGA429
Gopo Doma



M286
Tenzin Tashi



M291
Dakpa Sonam



M301
Dawa Gyatsen



M305
Yaima Norbu



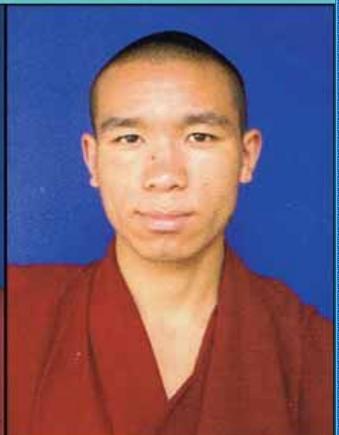
M313
TENZIN LOBSANG 2



M316
LOBSANG TSUNDU



M321
NAGWANG LOBSANG



M327
RINCHEN SHERPA

Your
Return Address

Nying-Jey Projects
625 Nortons Rd
PARAPARAP VIC 3240
Australia

Nying-Jey Projects New Postal Address

Please address all correspondence
to our new address - on the left

Treasurer's Trivia

TO ALL SPONSORS OF STUDENTS & NUNS

It has come to our attention that some sponsors are using the wrong address when writing or sending gifts to their Students or Nuns in Tibet. Please use the following address label below or you can download a page of six labels from our website on the following link:

www.njp.org.au/images/Ganzi%20Committee%20Address%20Labels.pdf

(Copy and paste the above link into your browsers address bar and click search)

NAMGYAL
EAST TOWN 33
GANZI COUNTY
BISCHUAN PROVINCE
P.R of CHINA

中国四川省甘孜州甘孜县东大街 33 号
洛 呷

ཧཱུའུ་གཡུ་ལ་སྐོར་ལྷོ་ཧཱུའུ་གཡུ་ལ་སྐོར་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་
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Example Only **S531 - DAWA DORJE**

EXPLANATION OF LABEL

The label has three parts and is used when writing to Nuns & Students.

1st part is the address in English.

2nd part is the address in Chinese.

3rd part is the address in Tibetan.

Write the ID and Name of your beneficiary underneath the label.

NJP can also mail you a copy of the labels if you do not have access to a computer.

CHANGES IN THE WAY YOU SEND LETTERS TO NUNS & STUDENTS

Writing to Your Beneficiary: We suggest you make several copies of the address label above or download a page of them from our website. These can be used as mailing labels to address your envelope to Ganzi. Be sure to write their ID and Name below the address label.

Letters: Most of your letters to your Student/Nun will need to be translated into Tibetan by NJP. We ask you to please send your letter into NJP with a stamped self-addressed envelope. When your letter has been translated it will be sent back to you with your original ready for you to post off to your beneficiary in Tibet.

Some Students/Nuns can read & write English or have access to someone who can, but until you establish that within your letters to your student/nun, we suggest you send them to NJP for translation.

Letters from your Student/Nun will usually arrive back to NJP where they will be translated and then mailed to you along with the original. Those students/nuns that can read and write English may write directly to you. Please be patient as this process can take some time..

It is best to keep your letters short and simple and please do not mention the Dalai Lama as the Chinese Authorities may confiscate or censor the letter if it is inspected. Send them photos of yourself, family and pets and ask them for their photos and birthday.

Parcels can be sent directly to your beneficiary using the address label above. We feel that it's not necessary to register your mail, as our sponsors haven't reported any problems with their items going missing to us. Our committee in Ganzi Tibet have given us an undertaking to record all parcels received before distributing them to your beneficiary. They are to send us this log on a regular basis so we can advise you that the parcels have been received by your beneficiary.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RECEIPTS & REFERENCE'S

As previously mentioned in past newsletters, I want to reiterate the importance of ensuring you put your reference with your payment and check your receipts. Your reference is usually composed of the Sponsors Surname followed by your nominated Beneficiary.

For example: SMITH-S567&MEF (*This example indicates sponsor Smith has enclosed a payment for student S567 and a Donation to our Medical Emergency Fund*).

Bank Trace Fee:

If we cannot identify a payment we receive because the reference is either missing or invalid, we request our bank to trace the payment. This can result in a \$20 fee which gobbles up most if not all the sponsors payment leaving the beneficiary little or nothing. If it turns out the error was with the bank failing to input a reference, then there is no charge.

Receipts:

If you do not receive a receipt either by mail or email, get in touch. It could mean that I have not been able to identify you and therefore your payment may not have been allocated to your nominated beneficiary. The receipt is your guarantee that we have received your payment and allocated it as per your wishes. Please read and check your receipts for errors or I sometimes add little notes to them to see if you're awake. If you have email I usually email your receipts within a week of receiving your payment. Mailing your receipts will take longer.



NJP Membership Reminder:

It's that time of the year when we ask all of our sponsors to please renew your Memberships. Only \$2 per year for a family or single membership. If you have paid the \$2 in the last six months, consider yourself paid up. We welcome payment in the form of postage stamps or you can send your payment by your usual payment method.

(Reference = SURNAME - MEM)

Vikki Gage
Treasurer NJP

**DOWNLOAD THE NEWSLETTER IN GLORIOUS
COLOUR DIRECTLY FROM OUR WEBSITE**

www.njp.org.au

Nying-Jey Projects
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AUSTRALIA