

## TRIFC Launches Sister Organization

On May 26<sup>th</sup> the Ability Development Society of Nepal, ADSoN, was officially registered by the Government of Nepal! ADSoN is a direct relation to TRIFC and will be our in-country partner within Nepal. Our office is located next to the TRIFC Braille Library within the Nepal Association for the Welfare of the Blind (NAWB). ADSoN's office space is being provided at no cost by NAWB.

ADSoN has a stellar Board of Directors including four Rotary Club past presidents, the creator of Nepali sign

language, a young woman with disability who is a leader for disability rights, and other dedicated individuals. TRIFC.org director Mr. RR Pandey has been appointed as board chair for ADSoN.

Having ADSoN as a stand-alone non-profit organization will allow for better and more responsive oversight for our growing list of high-impact projects, grant applications and funding that are available for application only from within the project country.



## Disabled Newlife Centre Surgeries



TRIFC funds the surgeries for the children with disabilities at DNC. The children with recent surgeries pictured here are, from left to right, Kumar and Bakesh, Aiog, and Sunita. Thanks to our donors, eight children from DNC will have critically-needed surgeries this year.

# Closing the Circle

By Robert Rose

In April we had lunch in Kathmandu with Olga Murray - 89 year-old founder of Nepal Youth Foundation (NYF) based out of Sausalito, California. Volunteering for NYF was my first experience in Nepal way back in 1997. I had read about Olga and NYF in an article in the Seattle Times. What a compelling article it was!

On that first trip Olga introduced me to Rotarian RR Pandey and thus started a cascade of interesting and engaging events, introductions and projects that have impacted tens of thousands of people with disabilities here in Nepal.

I met sisters, Nirmala and Sita Gyawali on that first trip to Nepal. They had received a loving home and education via Olga's organization. Later in their lives, Sita became the first Nepali woman with blindness to earn a master's degree and her younger sister Nirmala (also a woman with blindness) was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to attend Colorado State University. Nirmala later spent 6 years as a cultural trainer for Bhutanese refugees for the IOM (International Office of Migration).

In late May, the government of Nepal officially registered TRIFC's 'sister' organization, the Ability Development Society of Nepal, or ADSoN. Can



you guess who our executive director will be? Ms. Nirmala Gyawali, of course! The same Nirmala whom I first met back in 1997 when she was 14 years old and lived at Olga's NYF home!

This is a truly amazing story. However, my hope is that this is only the beginning. As this particular

circle (or ring) closes, many other rings have begun to forming, linking ring-to-ring, creating an ever-stronger chain of support to assist people with disabilities here in Nepal. My personal life-goal is to grow a chain strong enough and long enough to sustain the inevitable loss of 'rings', when the old 'guard' is replaced by the new as our lives move toward their inevitable conclusion.

We are looking forward to having Nirmala visit Seattle in September to attend our fundraising dinner event! Don't miss this opportunity to visit with her!



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"My goal is to **grow** this chain strong enough and long enough to **sustain itself**."

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From left to right, Nirmala and Sita Gyawali and Olga Murray, circa 1997.

# Meeting Bishnu



*By John Chouinard*

In late March of 2014, I had been in Nepal for about 10 days of my 3-week long trip. While traveling with Rose Stevens and later with Rob Rose, we visited many schools for the deaf and hearing-impaired, blind and visually-impaired and the differently-abled.

By the time we visited DNC (Disabled Newlife Centre), I had already learned how to control my emotions and just be in the moment. It is important to accept the children just as they are, to show love and caring regardless of their often-difficult life journeys. On this day, Bikash, a wonderful young man, was showing me around the facility and talking about how he came to be here with his terrible burns. On a second floor verandah, we came upon a table with about 12 kids seated around. They were all studying for the Nepalese national testing that happens every year and is so important to their future education. This was not a surprise, but the 22 year old in a wheelchair who was tutoring them for the test, was. It was Bishnu, a young man I had been sponsoring and following for 3 years and had never met. As a college student, I had never expected him to be at this school and my carefully controlled demeanor was no more. Perhaps it was the many children I had already met, so joyful and full of life in spite of everything, but I think at that moment the whole trip took on a new perspective.

We hugged each other like long lost friends. We told anyone who would listen just how amazing it was to see each other. It was a wonderful and emotional experience that I will always treasure.

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## Celebrating our College and University Students

TRIFC helped arrange a gathering of our sponsored college and university students at the Tamas Laya restaurant in Kathmandu. Rob Rose and Nirmala Gyawali gave speeches along with sponsored students, and TRIFC board member Rose Stevens and sponsorship coordinator John Chouinard recorded videos of the students to show to their sponsors. Though the road to each of the students' futures will be theirs and theirs alone, Rob on behalf of TRIFC put it best: "You will always be part of our lives!"





TRIFC, The Rose International Fund for Children

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