

OCEAN STARS TRUST

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Registered Charity
1110022

NEWSLETTER 9

2009 JUNE



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Key Highlights:

- Launch of EOSt Jan 09.
- Two new Lunch Projects at Thuraineelavanai and Mandoor.
- Ten people from "Team 09" UK to visit OST projects in October 2009.
- 20 teachers are being funded by OST.
- Over £100,000 raised so far and currently funding over 25 projects.
- Ocean Stars operates 3 child sponsorship programmes which directly benefit over 90 families.

AYUBOWANG VANAKKAM HELLO

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our ninth newsletter. The focus of this newsletter will be to inform you about EOSt (East Ocean Stars), to bring you progress from the launch of our first ever gift catalogue and to update you on projects visited by Dilanee and Natalie in April 2009. Natalie is studying for a MSC at Royal Holloway College and is basing her Thesis on Post Tsunami sustainable development work in Sri Lanka focusing on small charities like Ocean Stars Trust. Natalie commented after her visit " I feel the charity is really listening to the local people and asking what they need rather than assuming"

We would like, as always, to thank our donors and supporters. Without you we could not carry out the work we do. We continually receive positive feedback from Sri Lanka.

As the ethnic conflict comes to a conclusion and investment in the east is sparse, the people we support are truly grateful for our help.

" You make such a difference to the lives of poor children and we thank you for all you do for our people"

Ranga, OST driver.

Ranga right with Team 08



Current Wish List:

- Five more sponsors needed for 5 families in Batticaloa a cost of £10 per month.
- Sponsors required for 4 teachers @ £15 per month.
- £200 for a Computer for Grace Enterprises. They seek to provide jobs for children from Grace children's home once they have left the home aged 18.
- £35 For a water pump for Kurumanvelly playgroup.
- £5 for a bag of cement for playgroup extension. 20 bags needed.

SRI LANKA IN THE NEWS...

The situation in Sri Lanka between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government has recently been making headlines as the conflict has been brought to a conclusion. As a result, many of the areas and people that Ocean Stars is working with have been affected by increasing levels of displacement.

Through close contact with the people in places such as Vavuniya and Batticaloa, Ocean Stars is doing everything it can to support these people. Through the establishment of EOSt, ground workers are regularly visiting the devastated areas to support communities and ensuring that there are nurseries for the children to attend and livelihood opportunities for the residents, for example sewing and craft groups. Grace Children's Home in Vavuniya has had to find room to accommodate an extra 10 displaced children, which means that the boys are living with constant restrictions ...Ranchan Chairman of EOSt has had requests to help out with playgroups in Jaffna, a town at the heart of the conflict. We await further details of these requests.





GIFT CATALOGUE 2008/2009

The Trustees of OST welcome Mrs Bron Lambert as OST Fund-raising Officer. Bron was a member of Team 08 and after having visited the projects of OST she decided to launch a Gift Catalogue in order to raise funds for our work.

Our first ever catalogue was a great success and has enabled Ocean Stars to give over £1000 worth of gifts to the people of Sri Lanka. The gifts of bicycles, school uniforms, tables and chairs, to name a few, have been received with much happiness, and we hope that the Gift Catalogue will continue to be a way of meeting the needs of the Sri Lankan people that we support.



Sugumar receives his first bike through the OST gift catalogue

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT



New Playground Equipment funded through the gift catalogue at Kalkudah nursery and Urani nursery.

Ocean Stars pays the wages of over 20 teachers in Batticaloa and Trincomalee. The teachers receive a wage ranging from £15- £25 a month according to experience. Dilanee had a meeting with all the teachers when she visited the area in April 2009. All the teachers commented on how happy they are to work for Ocean Stars. They feel valued and proud to be able to contribute to their family incomes, and to be involved in the community.



Thank you Ocean Stars. The children are very happy they now have a playground to play in"

Premalatha from Kalkudah

Premalatha, in the green t-shirt, is doing a teacher training course to extend her skills and knowledge, funded by the Gift Catalogue donations.

EAST OCEAN STARS: EOST

As Ocean Stars grows and our work increases, the Trustees decided to support the formation of a self governing local NGO in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Ranchan, our Chairman on the ground, decided to name the satellite branch East Ocean Stars. EOST has been in place since January 2009. There is a committee with Chairman, Vice Chairman, Accountant, Public Health Inspector, a Field Worker and 2 other committee members. They monitor the projects on a weekly basis, and Ranchan sends us weekly reports on the progress of all our projects. Through EOST, Ocean Stars are able to effectively monitor all their projects and can ensure, for example, that the meals received by the children through the lunch projects, are of high nutritional value and in good quantity. Dilanee visited Batticaloa in April 2009 and was happy to see EOST in action. All the project workers are content to work for EOST and feel that the organisation treats them with respect, and gives them an opportunity to work and earn a living. Through EOST, Ocean Stars is aiming to introduce an opportunity for sustainable development, as Ranchan and his team seek charitable status in Sri Lanka and establish themselves with a livelihood and an income. Natalie commented " EOST is a very good example of how important it is to have people on the ground, as they can deal with problems and solve them as soon as possible which in the long run is beneficial to OST, as money is not being misused and it is beneficial to the people."





Thuraineelavanai Playgroup Update

A little hut in the middle of nowhere is home to 16 children at the Thuraineelavanai playgroup. Bron who attends Hartley Wintney Methodist Church has linked her church up with this playgroup and the local Methodist Church. They have sponsored a lunch project which was launched in January 2009 and a teacher's salary. The parents each take it in turn to cook for the children and bring the lunch to the playgroup. The parents are all grateful for the opportunity to work together as a community and make sure that the children get at least one nutritious meal every day.

EOST is in the process of seeking alternative premises for the children at this playgroup as there is no room in the hut for tables for the children.



"It's amazing what a small charity like Ocean Stars can achieve" remarked Natalie in April 2009.

Gift Aid

If you are a new donor please contact us about receiving a Gift Aid form. If you are a taxpayer, we are able to claim tax back on your donation.

Gift Aid is an extremely important form of finance to OST. It should be noted that if you are a higher rate tax payer, you may be able to obtain further relief on your Gift Aid donation in your tax return.

"Last year Ocean Stars received over £5000 in Gift Aid"

Ocean Stars Web-shop

www.buy.at/Oceanstars Web shop

We would like to remind you to shop at www.buy.at/Oceanstars. All you have to do is log on to our web shop at www.buy.at/Oceanstars and select the retailer that you would like to shop from. You will then be directed to the normal on-line web shop of your choice. Any purchases you make from the retailers will generate commission for Ocean Stars - at no additional cost to yourself. Many of the big -name on-line retailers feature on the web shop e.g. Amazon, Marks & Spencer, John Lewis etc and many have **free postage**. The commission they pay Ocean Stars is our reward for promoting their retailer.

Spicy Potatoes
Ingredients
1 lb potatoes
1 onion
2 teaspoons chilli powder
2 tablespoons oil
1 clove garlic
1 tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp mustard
2 small green peppers

As Served at OST Curry Evening



Boil potatoes. Peel skin and cut into cubes. Slice onions and green pepper. Add oil into a large pan and heat. Add chilli powder, garlic, salt, sugar and mustard and mix well for 2 minutes. Finally add potatoes and green pepper and mix well and cook for 5 minutes. You can now enjoy spicy potatoes with rice and mango chutney.

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Images from Projects:

Blog: ostinsrilanka2008.blogspot.com

Children from Mandoor Play-



group now enjoy a hot meal every day thanks to the support from Ocean Stars. Sponsored children from



Vellaimanal sing a song for us during our visit in April 2009.



The children at Kurumanvely playgroup send their thanks to Ocean Stars for all their help and support.

Vellaimanal Health Clinic

The first Health Clinic took place in January at the Vellaimanal School. Two Doctors travelled from Anuradapura to run the clinic and see all the families of the community. The children were given vitamins and their blood- sugar levels were tested. Three children were referred to the hospital in Trinco for further treatment.



Ocean Stars funds a sewing project at Vellaimanal playgroup for mums while their children are at Playgroup. In the orange sari is the sewing teacher with two of the mums who attend the sewing class. Their products are sold at local markets.



PILLAKANDA: Post -Tsunami village inland from Galle Pillakanda, a Post -Tsunami settlement, about 10 miles away from the main road. The children are very isolated. OST funds English and Maths classes for the children from the village.

VELLAIMANAL SPORTS DAY

The children at Vellaimanal enjoyed their first ever sports day during our visit in April 2009. The teachers worked very hard to organise some very creative races for the children. Here the children are making a crown out of leaves and twigs.



Other races included a balloon race, filling a bottle up with coloured water and running races.



The winner of the crown race

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We hope you continue to support our work in making a difference to the lives of the people of Sri Lanka. Donations made payable to "Ocean Stars Trust" can be sent to us at the above address. We will continue to keep you updated with our work.

May God Bless you. Budhu Saranay.

From left to right

Janaki Jayasuriya
Trustee

Shona Holroyd
Treasurer

Dilanee Bunter
Founder

Jo Barton
Secretary

John Bunter
Chairperson

Bron Lambert
Trustee

