

First of all I wish to thank everyone involved with Pahansila for their efforts in helping to create what I consider a very successful trip. Although short in time, I think we accomplished everything we hoped to. The two main focal points were meeting with the Polgollawatte School Principal and Sarana Sevana Management. With both parties, we focused on previous efforts, plus future needs. This first I will focus on Polgollawatte School and next Sarana Sevana.

Polgollawatte School

We met with the Principal and several staff members for a walk through of the school and the facilities. The library purchased by Pahansila was in good order, and appeared to be properly used. It consisted of approximately 250 books in Sinhalese and English. We reviewed the standardized national tests results of the Polgollawatte School and found them to have advanced to nearly the national average, from substandard numbers several years ago. I consider this a measurable success story for Pahansila as the students are from a disadvantaged background, which like elsewhere generally leads to substandard results.

My impression of the Principal is that he is totally focused on the success of this school, and in turn making the school one of the positive aspects of this poor community. The stated observations from the local Pahansila staff affirmed this view.

With the belief that Polgollawatte School has been a good custodian of Pahansila funds, we discussed current and future needs. The below list is simply the order which I wrote them down, not perceived importance.

- 1) Additions to library: Our original discussion was to purchase 250 books. Observe usage, then decide on another 250 books. I believe the books to have been a great investment, and recommend to purchase of another 250 books. This would bring us a little over 3 books per pupil. (EST cost \$700)
- 2) Educational CD: The school does have one old computer, with no educational CDs. I propose getting a couple simple math/English learning CDs just to see if worthwhile. (EST cost \$15)
- 3) Science lab: The Science room really has nothing for the students other than a couple of posters. I think some basic supplies for the teacher to give hands on experiences to the students would be beneficial, and add to the classroom environment. (EST cost \$300. A total guess on my part)
- 4) Cricket team for boys: Everyone agreed this would be good for the school in its role of helping to strengthen the local community. Kyle's and my father was a High School football coach. We appreciate sports as a part of a young mans life. Structured with proper incentives such as classroom attendance, good marks etc the Principal can use as a positive tool in the students life. To my understanding, wealthier schools in the Kandy area does have such programs. (EST cost \$300. Not sure if need to provide transportation to certain events. Or two teams of higher and lower ages)
- 5) Net ball or equivalent for girls: We would like to also create a positive activity for the girls of the school. Will fund to match that of boys. Several ideas kicked around, but nothing definitive. Goal is to create positive incentives for the girl students, while strengthening the sense of community. (EST cost \$300)

6) Technical/Vocational students: We all agreed one of the key programs we should focus on for '09 is the transition from Polgollawatte School to Vocational/Tech training. Principal showed me a graduation picture of one his students from culinary school. Student subsequently hired by good hotel group. To me this is end game. The transition from classroom schooling to training for a good occupation. The challenge for Pahansila is to;

A) To identify worthy and needy candidates

B) Secure them space in vocational training

C) Monitors their progress through securing a job.

A step up in complexity from previous programs, but the results from the first year appear to make this program a success.

7) Vocational training on site. Principal and Pahansila staff discussed bringing vocational trainers on site to the school. This would consist of very basic carpentry, masonry etc. Again we are looking at creating more than a school, but a place in the community where the youth can get broad positive life experiences. We would need to purchase tools (EST cost \$150) and compensate tutors at proper local wage.

8) Playground equipment: Schools need play grounds. Some structures exist, like swing sets, but need new seats etc. Local MP has arranged for landfill to be delivered to build land for new playground. Once Principal as land situation sorted out, possibly local Pahansila staff can work with him on accessing playground equipment needs for his school. (EST cost \$300)

In this review I did not discuss our current tutoring programs at Polgollawatte School. They appear from test results to be very successful. Something for everyone to be proud of. I choose not to discuss them as they are working as planned. The local Pahansila staff has a great handle on the situation.

Sarana Sevana Orphanage

On the afternoon of Aug 22, I along with the Pahansila staff visited the Sarana Sevana orphanage. Prior to going to the orphanage we purchased SL national cricket team jerseys for the inmates. Once at the orphanage we distributed the jerseys to the inmates. Needless to say, they where very delighted with the gift. We were short a couple of large sizes, which Pahansila staff will get for the larger boys later. We also purchased additional jerseys so as new inmates are assigned to Sarana Sevana they will receive a SL national cricket team jersey. This is to assure a positive item in their lives as they move into their new home.

Once at Sarana Sevana, we met the Kandy Buddhist Association personal, plus they new matron. We have heard nothing but positive things about the new matron. She seemed very warm and appreciative. After a tour of the facilities, we then proceeded to create a list of needed items for Sarana Sevana. The below is the list with comments.

1) Sickroom: The Dr. from the Kandy Buddhist Association (I apologize, I am looking for her name can not find it. Totally wonderful person that I meet every trip.) stated the need for a separate sickroom. Last year one of the boys got the mumps, and being unable to isolate him, they rest go the mumps. An expensive item but a basic quality of life issue. (EST cost \$3000).

2) Chimney in kitchen: Meals prepared on wood burning fire. Smoke isn't being properly ventilated causing smoke to fill the room and soot to form on the ceiling. When it rains, the soot then falls from the ceiling across the kitchen. Since the rainy season is approaching, I told Nande

and Sube, this is an immediate need I would fund. There were several solutions kicked around on how to redo the chimney. Nande and Sube said they would work on it, and get back with us. (EST cost \$500?).

3) 5 Kilo Electric Rice Cooker: Simple item that will make every ones life easier. (EST cost \$150).

4) Heavy Duty Blender: Again simple item that will make every ones life easier. (EST cost \$100)

5) Three big cooking woks. (EST cost \$30).

6) Permanent front door with bars: Staff is able to secure front of building by lowering heavy blinds at night. However, this no way to secure front door space. Through the open space, bats fly into the building at night to nest, and wild dogs enter looking for food. The solution is to have formal door for lower half, and spaced bars to ceiling for keeping bats out. Sleeping in open space with wild dogs looking for food, not good. I will fund. (EST cost \$700)

7) Cricket Team: We seem to have come to a meeting of the minds, that now is a good time to consider sponsoring a Sarana Sevana Cricket team. This will give the inmates a little slice of the normal life of a boy in SL. Arrangements could be made for teams to visit them, as travel is difficult to arrange. (i.e. Polgollawatte). We were informed that they did play with a team from the UK last year at Sarana Sevana. For many of the same reasons as Polgollawatte cricket team, give the lads one pure enjoyment as a part of there lives. (EST cost \$200?)

8) Music Tutor: It was brought to my attention the importance of music in SL lives. Which led to the idea of having a music teacher come once a week for lessons, and practice. It was discussed as another way to enhance there lives. I certainly would consider sponsoring. (EST cost \$25 month)

Which now leads us to a subject I did not discuss at the orphanage with the Kandy Buddhist Association, but with Nande, Chandra and Sube, the evening before. The question was adequate nutrition at Sarana Sevana. With the soaring price of foodstuff, there is concern of inmates receiving enough food for a proper diet. The item in question was funds for powered milk. If this is the case, then obviously something we need to look at. If found to be needed, I will fund through '09. The concern is that the local donors to the Kandy Buddhist Association might find it harder to raise funds for on going food, if the belief is that I will take additional responsibilities at Sarana Sevana such as feeding the inmates. If the local Pahansila staff believes this to be a basic unmet need, then we need to figure a way to address the problem. The first 8 items I think are relatively easy to access and resolve. The last item could be the most important of all, but the trickiest one to find an optimal solution.

My plan is to return to SL during the Jan/Feb time frame to monitor our progress on the above. The situation on the ground appeared to be very peaceful, so I'll probably spend more time in SL at that time.

Kelley Davis