

MUDHIYOR BALAR KUDUMBA GRAMA PANNAI
FAMILY VILLAGE FARM
Kasam, Tamil Nadu, India

NEWSLETTER

December 2003 - February 2004

Dear Friends,

It was fantastic to receive so many greetings and warm wishes from our sponsors over the Christmas and New Year period. We are very grateful for your response to our sponsorship appeal, which has allowed us to cater for so many of our children's needs. Thank you for your continued interest in Pannai and in our children's development.

We are so grateful to all our sponsors who have remembered us over the past few months. We are thankful to God for providing us with donors for our needs, almost all of which have been met. Your prayers have brought us many blessings.

Special thanks to Clyde Work and his granddaughter Kendra Atlee Work for their donation, which enabled us to buy a desk and a table for the children's study hall. Thanks also to Lynette Pickering and her friend Judith Laing for their gift of desks and tables. Their continued support and encouragement is much appreciated.

Heartfelt thanks to Barbara Derflinger for her gift in memory of her son; and especially for remembering us at this difficult time for her and her family. We pray that her son's soul may rest in peace.

Pannai over Christmas and New Year

The Christmas season is always a time of fun and joy for our children and this Christmas was no exception. The children were thrilled to receive gifts from Santa Claus, including dresses and crackers. The children staged a Christmas play and performed a variety of other entertainments too. Thank you to our well-wishers and sponsors who joined us in our celebrations. Special thanks to Simon Kirby and his family who came all the way from England to spend Christmas with us. Our children loved spending time with their five sons and Eva Kirby taught them how to make friendship bracelets, which they found great fun.

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Furthermore, our children greatly benefited from the spiritual camp conducted by the Myrtle Children Ministry group and we would like to thank them for their help in using the children's holidays in such a productive manner.

A thanksgiving service for all the staff took place on 31st December 2003. We gathered at Pravaham to start the New Year walking in the light of God. It was a great start for all of us and gave us new energy to work together to continue our work at Pannai.

News from the King's Matriculation School, Kasam

We would like to welcome Mrs. Sheila Mahimai Rufus as the Vice Principal of the Junior School, which is now housed in the old school building at Pannai. Our children's basic primary education is of vital importance and we know that she will bring out the best in the children.

Sponsorship Appeals

School Children

KMS is the only English school of its kind in the surrounding area. The school receives no Government funding or assistance and relies solely on donations from individuals and charitable trusts. There are currently 669 children at KMS: 92 reside at the adjoining Pannai orphanage and the remaining 577 are day students from 25 local villages. The majority of these day students come from very poor families. Their parents are mostly laborers and are often illiterate; however they want to provide their children with a good education and give them all the chances they themselves were never given.

Unfortunately, for the past five years the state of Tamil Nadu has been suffering from a severe drought. This has resulted in crop failure and has caused widespread unemployment and poverty. We are looking into ways of supporting the children of such families so they can continue their education at KMS. Of the 149 children at Pannai, only 98 are currently receiving sponsorship.

To sponsor a child's education at KMS for one academic year (June through March) costs an average of \$80 for a Junior School pupil, \$100 for a Middle School pupil and \$130 for a Senior School pupil. This works out at just \$8, \$10 or \$13 per child, per month. This price includes tuition fees, administration charges, stationery, transport and school uniform.

The new academic year starts in June 2004. In order that we can inform our children whether they will be able to attend KMS in June, we would be most grateful if sponsorship could be confirmed before 15th of May.

Grandparents

There is currently no financial provision for the elderly residents of Pannai (the grandparents) who help us care for the children. At the moment, we are one lakh rupees

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(100,000 rupees) short of the amount needed each month and are struggling to make ends meet. The only way we are able to continue is by using money intended for other purposes.

In light of this, we are now developing a grandparents sponsorship program. It costs USD \$300 to sponsor a grandparent for one year, which provides shelter, food, clothing and recreation. For further details please see our website.

News from the Supporting Units

Now that our bakery has a kneading machine, the quality of our products has improved significantly and we can make many new varieties of biscuits and puffs. We give our warmest thanks to Lynette Pickering for her continued help with this project.

We are very grateful to Mr and Mrs Brown for their donation of sewing machines to our Garment Making Unit. Some of our older children are benefiting greatly from the tailoring training we can now give them.

Prayers

Our older children are taking their final exams in March. Please remember them in your prayers.

As always the Lord has been very good to us and has helped us with our essential needs. We want to thank the Lord for his miraculous help.

We proceed forward assured of the Lord's constant presence beside us at every step of the way towards the improvement and advancement of MBKG Pannai and King's Matriculation School.

Thank you again for your prayers and support.

Tharyan K. Koshi,
Honorary Secretary and Director