



Beyond Tears Worldwide is a non-profit humanitarian aid and development organization that works together with various organizations to provide humanitarian aid and development programs in a selfless way.
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From the President's Desk (If the President had a desk...)

How are you doing this New Year 2021? This verse comes to mind as I sit down to write this update: Romans 13: 8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." We are certainly required to adjust to new-normal circumstances, and it is tough to live wondering what the future holds. But, our Lord remains the same and he is faithful.

Yesterday, February 10, 2021, the Beyond Tears Worldwide (BTW) Executive Board met and we decided that the May/June Project to Photoskar will have to be postponed again this year. The second time in two years. In response to that decision, we have decided that the following must be in place to host a project in July/August 2021: we need Indian visas, no quarantine periods traveling to and from India, and participants will need to be vaccinated. Having proof of vaccination to the Covid may become a new-normal international flight requirement. But God already knew these challenges would come. We will seek to handle the situation gracefully and trust the door to Ladakh will open for BTW projects again soon.

What can we do in the meantime? We are going to let the people in the Ladakh region know that we are still thinking about them. Although we are at the very beginning stage of working out the details, we anticipate sending our signature knitted hats to several of the villages and schools we have visited in the past. People all over the world knit these hats. You can see pictures of Ladakhi children wearing them. www.beyondtearsworldwide.com We will keep you posted. Postage may be expensive, but in spite of that, we hope to make some small gesture to these remote people groups to let them know they are not forgotten. The message to the remote peoples is this: God has not forgotten you! He never changes! Circumstances may change, but we can still trust in God. He is faithful and cares. We will do what we can to stay connected to you. We have not forgotten you!

Several years ago, while sitting in the office of the Educational Head in Leh, one of two heads, I sought approval and support to continue to do school projects in Ladakh and in nomadic children's schools. I was told that we could come. She said, "Not every nonprofit organization could come. But BTW is welcome because we know you are committed to coming again and again." Wow! As Pastor Lou would have said! What a witness!

What changes are taking place in BTW? We anticipate adding a young dynamic couple to the Board. Youthful energy is synergistic. This couple will also represent their church on the board. A new church supporter! New prayer supporters! This announcement is a bit early, but the Executive Committee will recommend the couple to the full board at the March 2021 BTW Quarterly Meeting.

BTW BOARD MEMBERS

Jay Comfort, President Ken Hunt, Vice President Dona Clair Kelly, Secretary Bob Miles, Treasurer
Mary Beerley, Member at Large Dale Dempsey, Member at Large Dave Kawata, Member at Large

There are more board positions available. We need people with legal talent to join us. And we would like to make a move toward joining the Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability (ECFA). We have heard from ECFA recently. Look at the offer they are extending to us. As President of BTW, I started to insert BTW's preliminary information into an application some time ago. The full application is yet to be submitted. It is a detailed and expensive vetting process, but an important and worthy process. Here is what ECFA is offering us...

1. **We are waiving the initial application fee for your ministry!** That is \$500 of savings if you submit by March 5, 2021.
 - a. Visit the [ECFA join page](#)
 - b. Enter promo code **S-----** on the application payment page
 - c. Schedule your onboarding meeting with a compliance team member
2. **Provide an opportunity for you to meet with a coach** to talk through the ECFA application and ongoing membership requirements. Please RSVP to this email if you would like coaching.
3. **Free ECFA Tax Guides** – ECFA is offering our tax guides at NO COST this year for you to download. This is a great example of some of the free resources we are offering to our members.

Please pray that we may soon be able to complete a membership application to this organization. We want to show our supporters that we want to be financially responsible and accountable. This process will take time as ECFA will want to verify all our accounting activities. Time implies expense as well.

We seek to honor the Lord in all our affairs. Your trust and support are most appreciated as you give unto the Lord.

Jay Comfort

Until all have heard...

Tangyar Village: A beautiful and remote village with a harsh climate in the Nubra Valley located at an altitude 3,982 meters. A 15th century monastery dominates the landscape. They grow barley and care for domesticated Yak, goats, and cows. This small village is populated with about 42 households. The primary school was established in 1959. They have three teachers. Tangyar is one of the closest villages to Leh at about 110 km away. Beyond Tears Worldwide (BTW) did a school roof renovation in 2019 at the request of the village elders and the PTA who visited a team working in Digger in 2018. The classes have been effectively closed because it is not possible to do online classes as internet is not available and the villagers do not have the latest technology. Before the team left after the 2019 renovation, the village elders and leaders visited us and asked us to return to help them. We said that we would seek to maintain a strong connection.

Digger: is a village close to Tangyar in the Nubra Valley but at a higher altitude of 4,100 meters. There is a castle ruin in Digger that is thought to be older than Leh. There are 53 households with a population of 192 persons. Their main source of income is from growing barley and caring for their Yak herd. Digger is mentioned in several traditional folk songs. The Digger school was established in 1958. They have four teachers and ten classrooms for grades 1 to 8. BTW has done several renovation projects over the years. The school is quite large and that implies that the student population was once larger than it is now. The roof renovation was done over two projects. The second project also engaged in some classroom renovations involving adding carpet, replacing drafty window frames, creating a dividing wall in the main school lobby, and replacing many panes of glass broken by children at play in the main school courtyard. Classrooms have been closed because of Covid. Teachers come once a month to collect homework assignment and to dispense the next set of homework for the coming month. The PTA and the village elders have asked BTW to help them find ways to enable their young parents and children to maintain a better life and education in the village. Many young couples move their families to Leh to get work and a better education for their children. I was shocked during the 2018 trip when one of the head teachers said to me during our mid-afternoon tea break, "You know I read the Bible." I replied, "No, I didn't know that. Please tell me what you have read." A long conversation ensued whereby I was able to tell him about how Jesus died for us all and we do not believe in reincarnation because as those who know Jesus we die and go to be with Him. A God-appointment!

Photoskar: is one of the most beautiful, but most remote villages in the Leh district of the United Territory of Ladakh. It lies on a historic summer trading route that links the Indus Valley with the Zangskar Valleys. There are 48 households. They subsist by caring for hundreds of Yak, sheep, goats, and cows. The wool from the animals is used to make cloth. Animals also provide meat, milk and cheese for the villagers who are largely self-sufficient at a basic subsistence level. Barley is the only grain that can grow in this remote area. The village is one of the highest villages in Ladakh at 4,200 meters. The winter nighttime temperatures normally fall to -30 degrees Celsius and daytime temperatures are below freezing. It is 165 kilometres from Leh and because of dangerous road conditions may take up to a full day to reach by off-road vehicle. The middle school was established in 2007 and has about 10 classrooms. Photoskar does not have a school library.

Puga: The Nomadic Residential School of Puga was Lou Felo's "baby." He loved the children at the school. This school was created in 2007 for the Kharnakpa and Champa tribes and is located in an area called Changthang. It is an area at 4,500 meters and has a harsh winter of between 4 to 6 months. There were almost 100 at the time Lou first visited. These are children of Tibetan nomads. Puga School is a nine-month boarding school. Children only spend 3 months a year with their parents. They range in age from 4 years old to 16 years old. The life of a nomadic herder is extremely harsh, and the nomads constantly must move their herds to find new pastureland full of small stubbles of grass for their animals. The Kashmir goat wool is famous for its softness which is a result of the slow growth of the wool because of extremely limited nutrition at an altitude of 4,500 meters and above. These tribes do not normally consider formal education as necessary. However, the world of the Ladakh, Jammu, and Kashmir regions is rapidly changing. The number of visitors to these areas is increasing year-on-year. If they do not adapt to the invasion of their remote regions, they could become overwhelmed by the onslaught of modern technology and ways of living.

The schools in these remote towns provide an important source of nutrition for their students. Mid-day lunches are served. At Puga, the only boarding school, the teachers and caregivers become their families for most of the year. Only Puga has a substantial playground. The rest of the schools have very little recreational space. The schools also lack up to date libraries and computers. An internet connection is almost non-existent. Most villages have one landline for making telephone contact with the outside world. However, Covid has been introduced in spite of the remoteness. The number of infections is not clear. To mitigate a full-blown pandemic, the teachers visit on a monthly rotation and conduct very limited classroom instruction.

Please pray for this area. It is highly possible that BTW will not be able to return until May/June of 2022. We feel the call to go and to maintain the strong connection that has been established over the last 15 years. Please stand with us in prayer.