



THE BULLETIN

THE UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VANCOUVER FEBRUARY, 2007

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CHURCH SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

Gimme Shelter!

Sunday, February 4, 11 AM

Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson

Living in Vancouver? Great if you can afford a decent roof over your head! How did we get to where we are: several thousand homeless, untold thousands one pay cheque away from the streets, property assessments going to the moon, worries about whether our young people can afford to live here. What's going on and what can be done to secure shelter, this human right, for ourselves and others? Join us.

A New Visitor

Sunday, February 11, 11 AM

The Worship Committee

Join us for this week's sermon presented by a visiting UU minister. We don't know what the subject is ... a surprise?

Reconnecting with the Sacred

Sunday, February 18, 11 AM

Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson

Human religiousness arises from an encounter with abiding mystery, with the holy. That encounter can be both blessedly transforming and profoundly disturbing. Let's take a look at this perennial human phenomenon; its allure, its challenge, its promise of an extraordinary way of living

Black History Month in Canada?

Sunday, February 25, 11 AM

Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson

That's what I am told: a history that coincides with Champlain's first voyage down the St. Lawrence River in 1603 and that is as current as the work embodied in our Governor General, Michaëlle Jean. What do we know about the history and experience of African-Canadians? What can this history tell us about this community and the Canadian experience? I hope you are as excited as I am to learn more.

Memorial Service for Organ Donors

The Organ Donor Memorial Service is hosted jointly by the Spiritual Care Chaplains of the Vancouver and UBC Hospitals, the BC Transplant Society, and our Unitarian Church of Vancouver. This beautiful service will be held at 7 pm, March 11 in the Sanctuary of the Unitarian Church.

This is the eleventh year of our involvement in this very important pastoral care outreach. The Memorial Service is open to all individuals and families in British Columbia who have lost an organ donor in the past year. It honours their loved ones who donated their bodies, so that others might live. We'll need five volunteers to help set up refreshments before the service, serve and clean up afterwards (from 6:00 - 9:30 pm). If you can help by bringing snacks, help serve or clean up, please contact Lay Chaplain Wayne Ulian through the church office (604-261-7204) or directly by email: wulian@vsb.bc.ca.

HUMANIST GROUP

Humanist Discussion Group Programs

Tuesday, February 13, 1:30 to 3 pm, in Budny.

We will watch and then discuss Bill Moyers' interview with Sir John Houghton. A committed evangelical Christian, Sir John has often voiced the belief that science and religion, rather than being opposing forces, actually complement one another: an idea that has rankled many conservative and fundamentalist religious groups. He also had been a leader in the warning about global warming. We will also consider and discuss Dawkin's explanation as to how believers in God can still be outstanding scientists.

Tuesday, February 27, 1:30 to 3 pm, in Budny.

We will watch and then discuss Bill Moyers' interview with Margaret Atwood. Atwood considers such questions as:

Do you think atheism is a religion? Do you see a clear distinction between agnosticism and atheism? We will consider how Dawkins' and Atwood's views on such questions coincide and differ.

For more information phone Conrad Hadland at 604-526-8186 or email him at: conh@shaw.ca

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Second Fridays
7 PM
Film TBA

Social Justice Committee of UCV

From the Minister's Workshop

“As I contemplate a tree...”

In December, a massive wind storm destroyed an estimated 3000 trees in Vancouver's Stanley Park, closing roads, our Seawall, and scores of park trails. The work of clearing the wreckage, of cutting up and removing uprooted and devastated trees is still going on. Dozens of recommendations from residents have poured into the Mayor's office about what should be done. (My own would be that all of the trees being cut and hauled off should be used exclusively for new municipal social housing construction. Don't hold your breath on that one...)

The storm and the havoc wreaked on trees in the Park and throughout the city remind me of feelings I (and we) can experience about the value of the great, silent, healing presence of trees in our lives and our urban landscape. Empirical studies show not only the amazing ability of trees to sequester CO2 (one acre of trees absorbs CO2 over a year's time equal to the amount of carbon dioxide produced by a car driven 26,000 miles), as well, the presence of trees (visible from patients' hospital rooms) speeds up postoperative recovery, and decreases post-op stress, anxiety, and surgical complications. A massive study in Chicago demonstrated that the presence of trees in urban housing projects promotes stronger social interaction and

community, and contributes to significantly lower incidents of domestic violence. Frances Kuo, the author of the Chicago study, concluded: “trees are really an important part of a supportive, humane environment. Without them people are very different beings.”

I keep reading that 3000 trees in Stanley Park were wiped out, and that they included red cedar, Douglas fir, etc., which reminds me of these words by Martin Buber: “I contemplate a tree...I can assign it a species and observe it with an eye to its construction and way of life...I can dissolve it into a number, into a pure relation between numbers.” But he goes on to say: “But it can also happen, if will and grace are joined, that as I contemplate the tree I am drawn into a relation, and the tree ceases to be an It. The tree becomes a Thou.”

It may be this intimate recognition of our potential and healing relation with trees that inspires Aboriginal spirituality to see this season as *Buxwłaks*—the “season of blowing needles” when the wind shakes loose the foliage of frozen evergreens, and Jewish liturgical celebration of *Tu B'Shevat* (this year it's February 3rd)—“the New Year's Day of Trees”: a day for environmental awareness and tree planting.

The “new year” (that is, the turning from winter to spring) approaches; and with it, opportunity for self-renewal of body, soul, and relation; relation to what is deep and abiding in ourselves and others, and to the daily, quiet life of dialogue that exists (or could/should exist) between us and trees. Without them we would, indeed, be very different people.

Steven Epperson
Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson

UCV's Market at the CUC AGM

If there are any UCV'ers who may not be planning to register for the whole Canadian Unitarian Council Annual Conference and Meeting at UBC on the May long weekend (May 18-21), here's a chance to “hang out” and support Vancouver Unitarians. Could you commit to working a four-hour shift (or more) at our UCV sales table in the Exhibit area?

The location is the large concourse on the main floor of the Student Union Building at UBC. Our market hours are from Friday afternoon to Monday morning. To reserve a time slot, please contact me as soon as possible. Thank you.

—Franci Louann, fouann@telus.net,
phone/fax 604-731-0228

The Bulletin

is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver.

Submission deadline is:

The first Tuesday of the month preceding the month of issue. All submissions must follow standard guidelines used in the publishing world, a copy of which is available in the church office or from the editor.

Gerry Hayle, Editor

Ph & Fax: 604-322-1644

E-mail: ghayle@telus.net

MINISTERS AND LAY CHAPLAINS:

Rev. Dr. Steven F. Epperson: Parish Minister
Rev. Dr. Phillip Hewett: Minister Emeritus
Laura Friedman: Ministerial Candidate
Lay Chaplains: Dan Enright, Katherine Roback, Shoshanna Wiley Solest, Wayne Ulian

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DAYTIMERS**Cure for Winter Blahs**

Why does February, the shortest month of the year, always feel like the longest? If you need some congenial company and a brisk stir to the old brain cells, join the rest of the Daytimers on the first and third Thursdays of this month. You can be our valentines. We meet in the Fireside Room, Hewett Centre, for both morning and afternoon sessions, with a break for conversation and lunch (bring your own; coffee and tea available for a modest sum) in between. Newcomers and old hats are always welcome.

Thursday, February 1st:

11 AM, Merva Cottle will describe noteworthy Canadian, William (Bible Bill) Aberhart, his life and work to the gathering. Following lunch, at 1 PM, Luthier Michael Dunn will share with the Daytimers his passion for strings.

Thursday, February 15th

11 AM, T.D. "Duff" Patullo will be the subject of John Church's presentation. After lunch, at 1 PM, another in our Passions Series, Noel Armstrong will share his passion for a particular set of strings: the cello.

—Wanda Justice, 604-327-1851,
clj@sfu.ca

Mark it on your calendar...**Endurance, Hope and Joy**

Wednesday, March 7, 7:30 PM
The Sanctuary,
Unitarian Church of Vancouver

A moving and warm celebration of **International Women's Day** in song and spoken word, featuring **The Elektra Women's Choir, Chalice Choir and The Shirleys**. By donation, with funds going to local and international women's organizations.

Don't Myth Summer Eliot at Naramata

It's cold outside, so picture yourself in the sunny Okanagan, warming yourself by the lakeshore, feeding your body with great food and your spirit with great fellowship at an oasis of peace. That's part of the Eliot experience and it can be yours this summer at the Eliot Conference at Naramata. This June 30 - July 7 camp features affordable family fun in the sun, food for the soul of the solitary truth-seeker and a musical fellowship of hope and healing. Held at the Naramata Centre in the heart of Okanagan wine country, this year's camp also boasts the **legendary storyteller-educator Will Hornyak**. A **master of myth**, Hornyak can conjure anything from an Irish legend to a Native American tale as he demonstrates the power of storytelling to educate, enchant and inspire.

The three deans for 2007 are Beacon Church's Don Hauka, Donna Hamilton and Donatella Clignon, so you know you're in for some pun in the sun. Book soon, as spaces are going fast. For more information, www.eliotinstitute.org; registrar@eliotinstitute.org; phone 206-374-2497.

MUSIC CLUB**Sweet Music**

The February meeting of the Unitarian Music Club will be held on Monday, February 26 at 7:30 in the sanctuary. The evening will consist of a short informal concert with performances by Harold Douglas Brown, Gary Bluhm, Jeannie Corsi, Brandon Heung, the Grupa Dunbarov, and Gerard Satamian.

Everyone is welcome and there is no fee. When you come, please bring a contribution to refreshments.

The Music Club welcomes all styles of acoustic music. Performances are arranged in advance. If you would like to perform, come and we will set a date.

More information: Jeannie Corsi at nichorsi@interchange.ubc.ca or 604-224-1040; David Donaldson at 604-224-6010 or dvdd@telus.net.

LIBRARY**Book Bash!**

There will be a Book Bash on February 18th from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM in the alcove of Hewett Hall for the benefit of the church library. Please bring in your books on or before February 17th so they can be sorted for the sale.

New Additions for the library are: *No God but God*, recommended for the library by Steven Epperson and contributed by Karl Perrin, on the subject of Islam.

Consumer Reports Buying Guide 2007 is available for reference use in the library.

Enough Blood Shed by Mary-Wynne Ashford, listing 101 solutions to violence, terrorism and war, is a gift of Dorothy Goresky.

The following titles are fiction: *Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai; *Half of a Yellow Sun* by C.N. Adichie; and *Shalimar the Clown* by Salman Rushdie.

The following taped sermons are ready to be picked up at the Literature Stall:

Religion the Root of All Evil? by Steven Epperson for Sandor Helbresky and Hans Elfert.

Knowledge: an Island in a Sea of Mystery by Steven Epperson for Mason Harris.

If you have a taped copy of *Wal-Mart 'n' Us* by Steven Epperson, could you please bring it in to the Literature Stall so that it may be copied for Bob Woodham.

—Nancy Lagey, Library,
604-669-4455

Midlife Cat Crisis

Two loveable indoor/outdoor felines are urgently seeking adoption: intelligent, affectionate and clean, in good health and secretly Unitarian. Poipu is tuxedo black with white spats and bib. Her gorgeous sister Fujit is portie and white (calico). Please be in touch with Shelagh Lindsey at Cavell Gardens (604-873-3141), or Casimir Lindsey (604-263-7559). You will not regret you did.

The Wally Cottle Memorial Services Auction Is Coming!

Mark your calendars (Saturday, March 3rd, 5:30pm) for an evening of fun, frivolity and action. On Sundays after the service, visit the Services Auction table in Hewett Centre and pick up forms to submit services you would like to donate. Reasonably priced tickets are available for the auction evening. Remember the ticket includes a supper as well as the right to participate in both the silent and live auctions.

The concept is simple. Donate a service like: making a meal, offer gardening with zeal, give a lesson on skis, teach how to make cheese. Or, donate an item of value like a gift basket or sweater. Come to Hewett Centre on auction night where there will be great company, a silent auction and a live auction with a very charming and talented auctioneer.

If you would like a form emailed to you, or would like more information, please contact Deb Henry at 604-877-1070, or John and Rae Smith at 604-732-0100.

REFUGEE COMMITTEE

The Karen from Myanmar

The first 115 Karen refugees from Myanmar have arrived, and are currently living in Surrey, dealing with their first-ever snow, learning English, trying to settle in at school and to adjust to a bewildering new culture. At least 100 more Karen will be arriving in the Vancouver area this winter. Many of them have lived their entire lives so far in refugee camps. They are being assisted by Candy Marvel, who is herself a Karen refugee, working now with Immigrant Services Society. They need help in integrating, and if you can help, call ISS at 604-684-7498 or email hostprogram@iss-bc.org.

Amir Kazemian is a young Iranian refugee asylum-seeker who now has the dubious distinction of having endured the longest time living in a church sanctuary in Canada, for 2 years and 7 months, in East Vancouver. Currently, a Winnipeg United Church harbours the Razas, a Pakistani refugee family of 8, four of whom were born in North America.

The issue of church sanctuary highlights problems with Canada's refugee determination system. "Church officials wouldn't have to get involved if the refugee vetting process were truly fair and transparent... (and included) a refugee appeals division that would reconsider decisions made by the Immigration and Refugee Board."

"The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, passed in 2002, contained provisions for such an appeals process but the former Liberal government shelved the idea. The Conservatives have given little indication they will implement it." (*Vancouver Sun*, December 23 /06)

"Some churches, such as the Presbyterian Church in Canada, have an official policy of providing sanctuary to rejected refugee claimants who risk persecution or torture if returned to their home country" (as in the cases of Amir Kazemian and the Raza family).

"The church has always had an uneasy role with government. On one hand, we try to...support the laws", said Barb James, a minister at the church housing the Razas. "On the other hand, we're also called to be...the conscience...and raise questions when we feel things are unjust." (Ibid)

For more information on the Refugee Committee, contact Co-Chairs Fiona Graham, 604-886-4810, or Virginia Crabill, 604-731-9393. If you wish to assist the Refugee Committee, you can donate by writing your name, address and "For Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund" on the envelope containing your gift. Cheques payable to "Unitarian Church of Vancouver" should have the memo "For Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund". Our meetings are at 12:30 on the fourth Sunday of each month, in the Board Room. We plan several fundraising lunches throughout the winter. Deep, *deep* thanks to this congregation for the support we receive from you!

—Virginia Crabill, 604-731-9393,
Refugee/Social Justice Liaison

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Winds of Change

In *Evening Thoughts*, eco-theologian Thomas Berry writes, "The newly energizing Earth community needs a mystique.... This can be found in celebrating not simply the seasonal sequence but also the irreversible transformational sequence, as this has taken place in the evolutionary story of the universe."

Is he asking us to celebrate the extreme weather events known collectively as "climate change", to accept the *Revenge of Gaia* as Lovelock entitles his latest book?

Change is difficult for us, but inherent, in the cycle of life and death, of which we are a part. Change is accelerating, meaning more wind storms, hurricanes, whole ecosystems with the humans they carry, dying before our eyes, under our feet.

George Monbiot in *Heat*, Al Gore, and (Unitarian) Thomas Homer-Dixon say rapid and massive change in human behaviour just might allow civilization a soft landing, not a collapse (even with the death or displacement of billions). Certainly we must struggle for that soft landing, even as the wreckage mounts: with eyes open, we will suffer. But Unitarians can be useful to others. We get past the denial, and accept the dynamism of evolution. We cope with suffering honestly, and do it well.

While we fight climate change, while we grieve, let us also face the awesome power of evolution, which, after all, brought us here. The winds of change will blow away the familiar. Let us celebrate not just what blows in. Let us also celebrate Berry's "irreversible transformational sequence" even when it wrecks our seasonal expectations. Thoreau wrote, "In wildness is the preservation of the world." Get ready for wild. The news of the "end of nature" may be premature indeed.

The Environment Committee will meet at 12:30, Sunday, February 11, probably in the Board Room. All welcome

—Karl Perrin, Chair,
604-872-7326

FOSTERING COMMUNITY**Goodbye, Dear Friends**

Once again, we must say goodbye to some dear friends. Eileen Fletcher died December 12 after a long illness. Those lucky enough to have known Eileen will cherish the memory of a warm and fun-loving person with a serious side, and a passion for social justice. Her memorial service was held December 28.

We also had to bid adieu to Dr. David Bates, November 26, a UCV member with a distinguished career as a physician, researcher and author. Also, Peter Aaloe, former husband of the late Ingegaard Aaloe and formerly a UCV member, and Betty Covernton left us recently. Condolences to all who knew and loved these people.

Gail Dickson, an active UCV member for about five years, was recently appointed to the BC Supreme Court and was sworn in on January 8. Gail has recently completed a two year term on our Board, while chairing our Human Resources Committee. This busy lady, who says she finds her work deeply fulfilling, is also mother to 13-year-old Alec Rascob and 10-year-old Emily Dickson, who attend our R.E. program.

Some of you may remember Margaret Dietrich, a delightful lady who moved several years ago to Penticton to be near her daughter, but still keeps up her UCV membership. Margaret keeps in touch with a young former neighbour back in her native Germany, who has be-

BOOK CLUB**Challenges**

The UCV Book Club meets from 1 to 2 pm the first Sunday of each month, in Budney. Because there is no one contact person or coordinator for the group, any member whose book is chosen for discussion is expected to facilitate discussion and to publicize the book in the printed Order of Service announcements (which should be submitted weekly to allow time for people to procure and read the book) and in the monthly *Bulletin*. Submission deadlines: Order of Service announcements 12 noon Wednesdays; *The Bulletin* first Tuesday of the month preceding the month of issue. All interested are welcome.

February 4: *Snow*, fiction, by Orhan Pamuk, Turkish born, Nobel Prize Winner. Facilitator, Gail Thomson. The book is available in paperback for \$21 at one large book chain. Gail Thomson (email

come an accomplished, prize-winning concert pianist by the name of Christiane Klonz. Christiane hopes to do a concert tour in North America in the next few years, and include Vancouver in her itinerary. If anyone reading this knows of some useful contacts for Christiane, please get in touch with Margaret, Francie Louann or Harold Douglas Brown, who, by the way, is extremely impressed with Christiane's tapes.

Finally, Ruth Shaw, along with Olive Stewart, enjoyed their recent visit with Bettina Ptolemy at Blenheim Lodge. Ruth strongly encourages others to do the same, as Bettina enjoys these visits.

Don't let the winter blahs keep you from Fostering Community!

—Ann Foster, 604-736-2117,
afos72@vcn.bc.ca

gailtho@vpl.ca) is on staff at Vancouver Public Library—interested readers who cannot obtain the book at their local library should contact her, preferably by email or otherwise by telephone (604-665-3957).

From the reviews: “*Snow* is a tragic love story, a thriller and, more broadly, a dark journey into familiar Pamuk territory: faith, identity, betrayal and solitude. One of the achievements of *Snow* is to look beyond the tired arguments about why so many Turkish women cover their heads.” “In the excellent sardonic Pamuk, (Western readers) have a first-rate guide to the social tensions of provincial Turkey”.

March 4: *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, non-fiction, by Jared Diamond. Facilitator, Rob Dainow (604-523-0123). More on this next month.

—R.K.

FUFO: First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo Hello!

We at Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo are very grateful to First Victoria for the generous and outstanding support we have received from its congregation and minister, both in agreeing to a yoked internship (Marian Stewart, our Intern Minister, is amazing) and the dynamite speakers we shall enjoy in the coming months.

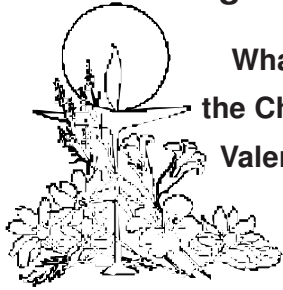
Please spread the word regarding our **need for a religious education teacher.** Perhaps you know a former member who is now living in our area or a UU student at Malaspina University College who might like some experience, extra cash and a religious community to belong to!

Come up, come down or over and see what we are up to!

Regards,
Martha Cosco

First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo

Planned Giving Advisory



What about
the Church at
Valentine's?

As a gift of love, instead of simply remembering the Unitarian Church of Vancouver in your Will, consider purchasing a life insurance policy for the Church. This could make an enormous difference to the health of the Church. Any premiums you pay qualify as a charitable donation, provided the Church is the owner of the policy.

For more information, call the Planned Giving Committee; Rainer Borkenhagen, 604-221-6631.

PHILOSOPHERS' FIRESIDE CAFE

Third Friday of Each Month, 7 - 9 PM
Unitarian Centre, 949 West 49th Ave (at Oak Street)

Everyone welcome. Pre-registration not required. Admission is \$5.

The evenings are as warm as our fireside, as welcoming as our carpet, as comfortable as our new chairs and as interesting as the diverse, intelligent people we attract. There is a supportive, friendly atmosphere to encourage you to participate actively and share your unique and interesting thoughts.

Friday February 16th at 7 PM: Poetry—Love it? Hate it? Have to do it?

Why do we react so strongly, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively, to this ancient form of human expression? And how might the writing of poetry be related to Daniel Goleman's theories of social intelligence, the structure of the brain, and Jung's archetype of the Lover?

Keith Wilkinson, presenter, earned a PhD in interdisciplinary studies at UBC, is a past president of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver's Council, and a poet.

Moderator: Randall MacKinnon has a Master's in Social Policy and Planning. He is an "IDEASage" with MacKINNOVATION: a service consultancy.

Blog: <http://oakridgephilocafe.blogspot.com>

FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE JAVANET

These "mostly-Unitarian" events with our Javanet hosts, Suad and Futuwi, at 7:30 pm at 3436 W Broadway (between Waterloo and Collingwood) have resumed. Thank you to UCV's Jane Slemon, who brought us amazing performers over three years! Jane has retired, and we are now working with co-hosts for each evening.

There will be a one-half hour open mic at 7:30 where guests may perform one or two pieces. Music, song, poetry, stories, all talent is welcome, even visual art!

The format is to have a co-host who will bring us the main act or acts. There is a suggested donation of \$5 and this goes to the main performer(s). Be an impresario for an evening! I live upstairs and can come early to help with set-up. We plan to have a mic and amp for each event.

In December we had fine bluegrass with Catherine and the WhiskeyJacks (proceeds were donated to the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre). January's event has caused a lot of excitement, with story-teller Bill McNamara hosting, featuring Mosha Folger and Brenda Brink (see www.myspace.com for information on the last two).

On February 2, our co-hosts will be Bonnie Nish and Sita Carboni of Pandora's Collective. (This group has received such status for their charitable work around writing, including international work, that contributions are now tax-deductible.)

Featured will be poets Fran Bourassa, Trina Ferguson and Bonnie Redekop. Our guest musician will be Kempton Dexter (AKA High Rise Dex), bringing us roots music.

On March 2, we will feature Ariadne Sawyer, with her Use Your Dream World to Enrich Your Writing! (30 minute) workshop. (Free. Donations accepted for World Poetry.) Co-host/musician(s) to be confirmed.

On April 6, John Hough returns to the Javanet. He was a very popular feature in the past. Co-host will be Andrea Law Hough.

May 4 and June 1 are open at this time. Give me a call to offer to co-host an evening. Franci Louann 604-731-0228 flouann@telus.net

Three Worlds of Music: Renaissance, Classical and Jazz

Benefit Concert for Trans Himalayan Aid Society
Wednesday, February 7, at 7:30 PM
The Sanctuary, Unitarian Church of Vancouver
949 West 49 Avenue (at Oak St.)

\$10 adults, \$8 students/low income/seniors

Tickets: Available at the door (7 PM)

Three Vancouver musicians present a wide-ranging evening of music. Grant Tomlinson, master lute-builder, will play French and Italian lute music from the early 16th century. Alan Matheson (trumpet and piano) will play some of his own jazz compositions, as well as standards by Ellington, Beiderbecke, Rodgers and Hart, and music by Torelli. Jan Rooks, classical pianist, will play solo piano music by Shostakovich, Chopin and others.

All proceeds go to the Trans Himalayan Aid Society (TRAS), a Vancouver-based NGO that supports the health and education of children and youth in the Himalayas. Info: www.tras.ca, 604-224-5133, tras@portal.ca

—*Riina Tamm*