

The Roundtable

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H.E.L.P. climbs higher Driven to his passion

Pudge Harrison and colleague Ethan Evans lifted us to a higher plateau in this morning's meeting as they described the work of the High Elevation Lives Project. Its goal is to establish and equip medical clinics in Nepal.

Pudge told of the million babies who die annually and of the poor conditions in clinics that lack new or even the latest medical equipment. Poor roads hinder travel. He described one trip in a Jeep designed to hold four people but in this particular journey held five. The 22-year-old driver seemed to zoom along the two-lane curvy road as Pudge looked down the 4,500-foot abyss. "I unfastened my seatbelt because if we were going to fall, I was going to jump rather than die in this tin can."

Nepal citizens who yearn to train as medical personnel often go to school outside of Nepal. When they graduate, they have had a taste of life outside of the poor conditions of their home and are reluctant to return. Active recruiting efforts try to bring in more physicians.

Therefore, it was a blessing that Pudge met Dr. Manish Bayracharya, an MD/OBGYN oncologist. She did stay in Nepal after her training and proved to be of great value in helping Pudge in the clinics.

Pudge says it well on the Project Baby Born Facebook page:

IT ALL STARTED WHEN...

I was in Kathmandu Nepal sometime in 2006, and I was visiting a friend, after our medical team was wrapping up another successful mission. His daughter just gave birth to his grandson. He was so very happy that the birth went well. During our discussion the subject of the number of young pregnant girls and/or infants that die during the birth.

When I asked why, he simply said there just isn't enough time to get them to a hospital, doctor or



Ethan Evans, Pudge Harrison, Larry Diehl

elder in the village that has experience to help with the birthing, especially if there are complications.

Upon reflection of all this and realizing that unless you live in or very near a larger village chances are much more slim to childbirth resources. I wondered if there were any non-profits or non-governmental organizations that focused specifically on this one particular issue. So I did some research and found out that very few organizations focus on this issue. I also found some statistics on infant mortality rates and Nepal ranks 53rd worst out of 222 countries with a death toll of 40.43 out of 1000. These figures do not include the death rate of mothers birthing. H.E.L.P. Missions has made it a priority to help bring down the number of infant mortality rates in 3rd world countries. Upon our return from Nepal recently we learned a great deal of where the true needs are regarding infant mortality and infant/mother well being. Understanding these needs will hopefully allow us to bring the education and necessary tools to allow remote birthing centers to deliver miracles into the world in a much healthier manner.



Pudge described the Embrace Baby Warmer. A steady supply of electricity is lacking in many areas of Nepal, adding to problems of limited resources and overcrowding. Premature infants, lacking the ability to maintain their temperature, must be provided warmth for them to survive. The Embrace Warmer is a low-cost solution that maintains the body temperature of premature and low-birth-weight babies at the desired level even with intermittent access to electricity. The Embrace Warmer can also be used for transporting hypothermic newborns.

“The cost of the Warmer is about \$406, 1/10th of the price of an incubator,” Pudge said. Three clinics could be equipped with Embrace Warmers for about \$2,100. Each clinic has about three births per month.

“My goal is to equip every remote clinic with all the technology that it needs.”

While the project seems like a natural fit for Rotary, Pudge spoke with the president of the Nepal Rotary that showed little interest in helping. “It’s a different kind of club,” he said. Organized crime is non-existent, but drugs- mainly heroin – are a problem. Human trafficking is also serious.

Pudge’s next trip to Nepal is in October for two weeks.

“Faith drives you to your passion,” he said.

The morning’s news

The club’s annual winter fundraising events are kicking into higher gears. **Kendra Speed** seeks sponsors for the 11th annual Veterans Day Pancake Breakfast. November 11 falls on Sunday this year; the pancake breakfast will happen on Monday, November 12 at Jeff’s Catering. **Paul Miragliuolo** will handle business card ads and urges those who want to advertise in the in the breakfast’s booklet to give cards to him. Kendra said she needs volunteers. She can provide job descriptions.

The *All That Jazz* committee is sending school and non-profit applications to be considered to receive the program’s proceeds. **Ken Kimball** said the committee will review nonprofit applications on November 1. The toe-tapping, finger-snapping event is

March 28, 2019. His happy dollar provided his description of biking up and down and around Cadillac Mountain and MDI.

He furlled his sails for the last sail of the season: **Greg Urban** tucked his boat away until next year.

Les Myers- September 20, 2018



Not in Nepal, but Old Town. September 20, 2018