

## Upcoming Events 2011

### Benefit Concert of Loten Namling & Teachings by Dolpo Tulku

Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2011, 7:30-9:30 pm  
Haus der Religionen, Laubeggstrasse 21, 3006 Bern

### Dolpo Tulku – a Visit in the Songtsen House

Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011, 7:30 pm, talk/discussion  
Tibet Songtsen House, [www.songtsenhouse.ch](http://www.songtsenhouse.ch)

### Discover Nepal through the Eyes of a Volunteer

Doctor presentation by Ruth Gonseth  
Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2011, 7:30 pm, Tibet Songtsen House

### Nepali-Film Forum: Numafung

Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2011, 7:30 pm, Tibet Songtsen House

### The Gotthard-Yaks

Presentation by Andrian Regli & Hans Murer  
Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2011, 7:30, pm Tibet Songtsen House

### General Assembly Tapriza – with recent pictures from Dolpo (non-members are welcome)

Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2011, 7 pm, Quartiertreff Hirslanden  
Forchstrasse 248, 8032 Zürich, Tram 11 to Burgwies  
[www.tapriza.org](http://www.tapriza.org)

### Bon-master Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

**Weekend course:** The Clear Light of Awareness –  
The Practice of the Six Lamps (Dzogchen teachings)  
Sa-Mo, 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> June 2011, whole day, Easter weekend  
Volkshaus Zürich, [www.garudaswitzerland.org](http://www.garudaswitzerland.org)

Thank you for your support!  
We wish you all the best for the coming iron rabbit year

Marietta Kind, Jenny Bentley  
and the Tapriza Team



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## NEWSLETTER 2011

«On the Road in Dolpo – a Visit at the Tapriza School» by Agatha Fausch

*Agatha Fausch and Veronika Koller, friends of the Tapriza NGO, travelled to Dolpo in summer 2010 and visited the Tapriza School. Impressions of their trip.*

A last time Rasu, our horseman, straps the bulky duffle bag packed with Spyri- and Cariget-books, photo calendars, skipping ropes, French elastics, basket balls, solar lights and the recommendation letter of Marietta Kind on the back of the strongest mule. We have been trekking through Dolpo in western Nepal since three weeks. It is Friday morning, the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2010. Along with our cook and seven mules Rasu sets off early in the morning towards the Tapriza School. He is going to announce our arrival there, while we stroll behind at our own pace carrying our daypacks. We wonder, how the students cope with the path from Ringmo to the school, which in parts follows the river along exposed places and a waterfall? But we know that children here move within the rough mountain terrain unassisted, nimbly and safely – sometimes even with heavy loads on their backs. After three hours we meet a group of children down by the riverbanks. They are kneeling at the water and washing their clothes. When done, they wring them out and lay them over rocks and stones, or hang them over trees and bushes. Will they dry in spite of the dark monsoon clouds closing in? After finishing their chores the children grab their soap dishes and go to the nearby bath- and showerhouse. Here they shower, wash and comb their hair, and brush their teeth. A small girl tames her wild hair with a slide. A boy gazes at his cleaned face in the small mirror. Every Friday it is household day at the Tapriza School. Children, clothes, rooms everything is cleaned.

A curious swarm of children chaperone us to the entrance of the large schoolyard. Ram Chandra, the subsidiary school manager, welcomes us warmly. We are invited into the teacher's kitchen, to the table beside the warm fireplace. Butter and green tea are served. All are delighted about our visit.



Ram Chandra shows us around the school and working rooms. Dedicatedly he tells us about school and everyday life with the children. He describes how they manage with the limited resources and the large demand for school admissions. A new kindergarten building is being built. In order to receive state funding building regulations regarding earthquakes needed to be followed.

At the Tapriza School many children from economically disadvantaged families are admitted. It is paid heed that girls can visit the school and continue their studies. Ram Chandra regrets that most of the teaching staff is male. It is difficult to convince female teachers to work in such a remote region. At present only four women are working at the school, one young teacher and three caretakers (*Amas*).

We notice that the school and teaching material is treated with care by those responsible. The library and the teacher's rooms are quiet working spaces – a retreat for preparation and reflection.

### *Playing and eating under the open sky*

The rooms are tidied and cleaned. The children read, play, chat and enjoy themselves inside or out in the schoolyard. During the weekly household day at the school gardening is done, and the surrounding and the

rooms are cleaned up. Some teachers are standing in the yard, overseeing what is going on; two other teachers harvest lettuce from the garden and bring it to the kitchen. Both *Amas* are sitting in front of the bedrooms. Children come to them and lay their heads in their laps. The *Amas* lovingly comb the hair and squash the nits and lice.

In the teacher's kitchen and in both school kitchens rice is sorted out and dhalbhat (rice with lentils) cooked. The first children are hungry, they bring their plates from the bed rooms. The stroke of a gong calls for dinner. With discipline the children stand in a long line outside the kitchen, the small ones in front, while the older ones wait behind. No one pushes, shoves, or fights. The cooks serve rice, lentils, and garden vegetables onto the plates. Some children group on the construction site where the new kitchen and dining rooms are to be built. They sit on the ground in the yard, in the garden, or in the arcades. They eat, chat, and laugh. When the plates are empty, they are filled again. No food is left over or wasted. Every child cleans the own plate at the watering place close-by, dries it with the jumper sleeve, and stows it away with the other utensils. 182 small and big kids share an evening meal in the open. There is no shouting, pushing, or arguing. We think about it – in our country the occasion would be louder and there would be more hassle. What is done differently here?

#### *Children pray themselves to sleep*

Darkness has fallen. Without light in the yard and the rooms the games get quieter. The gong calls all the children to evening prayers in the large oratory of the new multipurpose building. Huddled close together the girls sit on one side and the boys on the other. They sing and pray mantras, sway to the ground with the melody and sit upright again. Lamas and teachers accompany them, here and there they gently stroke a sleeping child over the eyes. After a while the small ones drop off to sleep. The older children clasp the sleeping children into their



arms. After an hour the sound of prayers and instruments fades away into the night. The children quietly walk to their bedrooms; the elder children carry the sleeping kids to their sleeping mats.

We sit at the warming kitchen fire together with Ram Chandra and the teachers and speak about life at the school. We brought postcards with us. The city-views, animals, flowers, mountains and trains from Switzerland attract interest. Many questions are asked, explanations are given, and we all laugh a lot. Finally, we unpack the books and games we brought along with us and give them to the staff.

#### *We trek down the valley through woods*

At eight o'clock on in the morning the following day we stand on the schoolyard, all packed and ready to leave. The children discovered the balls and skipping ropes. They jump and hop. Veronika shows how to play with the French elastics. All are exited. Peacefully the children take turns in playing and share the toys and games among each other.

The farewell is touching and cordial. Children and teachers pose for a farewell picture in the schoolyard. Veronika shoots the photograph. Thankful for the hos-



pitality, we say goodbye to the children, teachers, cooks and *Amas*. A hearty thank you to Ram Chandra, the staff and all the children. We gained and learned a lot.

*Agatha Fausch*  
translated by Jenny Bentley

#### News from our School and Projects

In 2010 the school manager Semduk Lama received the *National Education Award*, a renowned national award for outstanding achievements in the field of education. We are delighted and congratulate him! The children of the current senior class performed greatly at the final exams. They performed even better than the students did the year before. All seven graduates come under the ten best of Dolpo. We congratulate them too! This year we could collect sufficient scholarships to also support our second round of graduates from the Taprizia School in their first year of further education. Thank you to all the donors!

For the first time the government contributed to a building at the Taprizia School. The rooms give space for the kindergarten classes. In the mean time, the second floor of the west wing was also completed.

From October to the beginning of December the president of the NGO Marietta Kind and her daughter Lili visited Dolpo and the Taprizia School. Together with the school manager Semduk Lama and his substitute Ram Chandra school issues were discussed, the pending construction projects at the school were planned out and meetings were held with the local supporting association TASHI-D. With delegates of health and advanced training projects ideas were exchanged and a possible future cooperation



was discussed. Marietta Kind will give more details at the general assembly in May.

We have sad news from Dolpo. Two of our students wanted to help their parents pick the precious caterpillar fungus Yartsa Gumbu on the school-free weekend. Unfortunately, they went missing on the way to their parents. We grieve for them together with the entire school.

#### Announcement General Assembly 2011

##### **General Assembly Taprizia NGO**

Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2011, 7 pm, Quartiertreff Hirslanden, Forchstrasse 248, 8032 Zürich, Tram 11 to Burgwies

#### Pictures

- 1 Taprizia students.
- 2 The students patiently stand in line for their dinner.
- 3 Taprizia school compound with kindergarten building under construction.
- 4 Our cook Soshi and the Pugmo *Ama* look after the children and teachers.
- 5 French elastics on the schoolyard – also the older students are having fun.
- 6 Semduk Lama after receiving the National Education Award.
- 7 Games during the annual celebration of the Taprizia School.

Pictures: Veronika Koller, Marietta Kind, Semduk Lama