

Braille Without Borders

Quarterly newsletter 4 -2016



Wintertime, which is harsh on the Himalayan Plateau in Tibet, has come. So it is time for the 4th quarterly newsletter of 2016. Gyendsen, Nyima, Adrun and Mike have shared an overview of the highlights of the past quarter at the Braille Without Borders projects in Lhasa and Shigatse.

Lhasa

In September 2016, the new semester started with two additional new students. Yeshe Dolkar is 7 years old and comes from Shigatse. The other girl, Kalsang Choedon comes from Chamdo and is 13 years old. She is quite tall and is partially sighted. Both of them are attending the Mouse class.

The BWB team helped a girl from Gantse to do eye surgery, the girl is from a poor family who has not enough money to afford the medical fee. Therefore, through a BWB visitor, sufficient funds were raised to do the surgery.

The Tibet hospital had offered support to check the health of all students and also the dentist from their hospital checked the student's teeth. Many of the students required treatment and now Lobsang takes students to hospital on a weekly base.

Tsering Dondup is one of our Rabbit class students, who is 15 years old. He has a problem with foot and cannot walk normally. The doctor said that he required surgery. With help from several people, we managed to send him to Chengdu to do the surgery. Jampa driver has volunteered to take care of him and went to Chengdu twice already. Tsering Dondup is now back in the school in Lhasa and doing much better. He is using crutches to walk and after two months he will need to do another checkup in Chengdu.

The 2016 white cane day was celebrated together with the Tibet blind Association. All students went to a playground where they demonstrated their capabilities of how to get around with the use of the White Cane. Also they visited the Tibet library.



Students of the Mouse class with their white canes

Nyima has visited the USA where he gave many speeches in different places amongst which were: George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, Harvard Department Disability Justice Caucus, Carroll Center for the Blind, Overbrook and Perkins.

Beishung, Shigatse

Adron together with two of our primary students and Sumdrup, our assistant music teacher, left for the mainland in December. They were invited to attend, and perform at the SunRain annual company meeting in Tianjin. Sunrain has been a project supporter for a long time and the director Mr Xu has promised to support BWB also in the future.

Because of extreme cold, the government primary school has closed early for the long Tibetan winter holiday.

Most of the students have already returned home to their families; however some will stay at the BWB farm. The students will make the two weeks up by foregoing two weeks of next summer's holiday.

Shigatse TV featured our handicraft component trainees in a short documentary televised last week and gave BWB credit for the four independent companies that have branched off of it, owned and operated by handicapped entrepreneurs.

Sonam Wangdu, our music teacher, has begun a weekly computer class for the blind on We Chat. It is the only such class available in Tibetan. We hope to set up a computer class here for a more hands-on approach for those interested locally.

A movie will soon be released in which several of our students as well as some of our colleagues play the major roles. The name of the movie is "The Sound of a Dream". The Sound of a Dream follows the story of four visually impaired children who embark on a life changing journey to escape the hardships of Tibet. Led by Thubten, who is determined to enjoy life to the full before his vision deteriorates completely, the group begins on a daring quest to perform at a televised singing competition in Shenzhen. Along the way the unlikely Tibetan pop group is aided by a nomad family, a fleet of bikers, and a desperate TV producer who, upon learning the remarkable challenges these young singers can face, begin to feel the world as the children have seen. The film is planned to be screened at several international film festivals. We wish the film and its director Mr Zhang Wei lots of success.

*On behalf of all our students and colleagues, we say thank you to everyone for your continuous support and wish you all a successful, healthy but most of all peaceful new year!
With warmest regards,*

sabriye and paul



Our handicraft department



Scene from "Sound of a Dream"

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