



# Bali Children's Project

September, 2009

[www.balichildrenproject.com](http://www.balichildrenproject.com)

## Newsletter 2009

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The opening of a second BCP Office to serve the mountain communities around Munduk is an indication of the Children's Project vitality in these difficult times. Managed by Iluh, under the direction of our regional director, Nyoman Witama, this marks a significant milestone in the Children's Project's continuing evolution, for it was the inspiration of Iluh and her sister that originally prompted its creation.

A star high school graduate, Iluh besides managing the office, now corresponds with volunteers, orients them on arrival and acts as interpreter to teachers visiting schools in the area. We are immensely proud of her.

Our special thanks are due to Kathi Dillinger, our dedicated accountant of many years, who recently retired. We welcome Board member Pam Weatherford, who has taken over the post, in addition to her many other contributions to the BCP.

## Children's Gamelan Orchestras



Last year John Stannard and Hammerax, his specialist percussion instrument company, donated the funds to build a custom gamelan orchestra, designed specifically for children. This is housed in the village of Penestanan near Ubud, and both girls and boys have studied and developed their musical skills. They have performed to much praise at local hotels and at temple ceremonies. For the girls especially this is a wonderful and unusual opportunity.

This year Hammerax has made another donation for the building of a second orchestra to be located in impoverished Klung Kung Regency. We are looking forward to the time, hopefully not far away, when John Stannard will have the pleasure of playing himself with the gamelan orchestras that he has helped create.

## Volunteers Program

The program has proved particularly successful over the past year as we have been honored to welcome some exceptional volunteers. Experience and enthusiasm have proved a winning combination. Some teachers taught in the preschools and kindergartens, others trained Balinese teachers, taught English at all levels, and established gardens at schools so the children had their school subjects enriched through the gardening projects. To all our volunteers we offer thanks, and in particular:

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*“Skilled, outgoing,  
generous of time and  
spirit, independent and  
able to teach.”*

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### Rosalie

Rosalie returned for her second year as a volunteer, bringing inspiration experience, gifts and teaching skills. She also brought donations from her community in Australia which enabled teachers to buy furnishings for the school.

### Rima

As a teacher in Bali and much more, Rima has helped the BCP in endless ways. For years she has sponsored a little girl from kindergarten on through primary school. She has raised money by making and selling greeting cards with children's art, constantly promotes BCP and finds new sponsors.

### Michelle Soares

An experienced Montessori teacher from Canada, Michelle says: “the first classroom that I visited was the Pre-K class in Penestanan. I was quite impressed by this well established class. The children were well behaved, had impressive attention spans, and were very motivated and enthusiastic about the lessons presented by the teaching staff. The teachers, who had no formal training, were as effective and enthusiastic as many teachers that I have worked with (if not more so!). I can see that much time and care have been concentrated into the development of this class. The organizers of the BCP have done wondrous things with limited, funding, space and materials.” Michelle is the personification of the volunteer that BCP needs – skilled, outgoing, generous of time and spirit, independent and a gifted teacher.

Oli Jacobs, another treasured teacher, writes of his four months volunteering: “I have been able to experience real Balinese life and culture, and thrilled to work with children again: the wonder, curiosity, playfulness, joy and lightness of it all. The children have acquired the basics of the English Language - an indispensable skill for the Balinese people as they continue to encounter the effects of globalization and the need to find higher paying jobs to provide for their families.”

### Elizabeth

“Before coming to Bali, I said I really wanted to dig deep and give as much of myself as possible. I found this in Munduk. My days are full, I teach at almost every level. I love my work, and the family that looks after me is amazing. I don't see how I can leave.”

## Wwoofers (“willing workers on organic farms”)

This year we have had several dedicated WWOOF volunteers whose focus has been teaching children gardening and environmental awareness.

Alejandra Domenzain writes of the hugely successful program in Wanagiri:

“The children were very excited to build the garden and plant it. They were so friendly and happy and eager to learn English words for things as we went along. They were a really nice balance between being silly and fun-loving but then when something was being explained they were instantly attentive and respectful.”



*Helping to plant a school garden*

## BCP Sponsorships

The Bali Children's Project currently sponsors some forty children in several different regions of Bali, including the Ubud area, Gianyar, Bangli and Klung Kung, as well as in the mountain communities around Munduk. The number is only limited by the funds we have available

Although we support children of all ages, we have been focusing attention recently on those young people, particularly girls, who are about to enter secondary education. This is a time when promising students often drop out, mainly due to financial pressures, and we get many requests for help from desperate families anxious to see that their children receive an education and have opportunities in life which were never previously available to them.

The children we sponsor are usually recommended to us by respected members of their community. Before a child is sponsored, a BCP staff member visits the family to make sure that their needs are genuine. Funding goes either to the school or the family, but only under close supervision and in the amounts specifically needed month by month. We are particularly sensitive to the trust put in us by sponsors in supervising and encouraging students in their education.

We very much hope that when sponsors come to Bali they will visit their sponsored child and family as it is a very meaningful experience for both.

## Pencils for Kids

Loretta Jitner has come again to Bali with her amazing **Pencils for Kids** program. This time she distributed more than 377 backpacks filled with notebooks, pencils and other essential learning materials, benefiting five communities. In addition she distributed vouchers for the supply of school uniforms. We are extremely grateful for this generous and innovative support, which has proved extremely popular. Thank you Loretta.



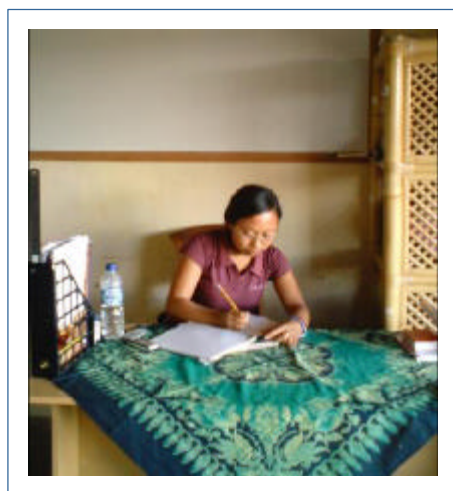
*Jacques, with his sponsored child, Iluh .*



*Loretta helping to fit a backpack.*

## Women's Programs

Under the leadership of Kadek, BCP has been creating programs aimed at helping women to improve their income and self-esteem. In addition to our popular yoga classes, we have established Craft Programs, teaching knitting, crocheting and sewing skills. The aim is to produce a line of quality products under the Pelukan-Ibu-Pertiwi (= Hugging-Mother-Earth) label that can be sold in local hotels. Part of the program includes teaching the elements of running a small business. The program has been greatly helped by thirteen-year-old Julia Lisi's gigantic contribution of yarn.



*Iluh in our new Munduk office*

## Special Announcement

Joyce, our founding director, has finished, *EnTWINed*, a book about herself, and her sister, who, after years of isolation, became a world famous artist. A portion of the proceeds will go to benefit BCP. If you would like to learn more, please, visit Joyce's web site: [www.joycescott.org](http://www.joycescott.org)

## Micro-Investments

Recognising that children do better in school when their stomachs are full and their homes are stable, the BCP has been running a successful micro investment program to help poor widows with young children. By donating calves that can be raised without cost on the roadside and later sold at substantial profit, the family can significantly improve their living conditions.

## Kindergartens

The Bali Children's Project has now established eight kindergartens and pre-schools, with the intention that they will eventually be taken over and run by their communities within the government educational program.

We have been wonderfully helped by the dedication of our volunteers, who bring supplies, train teachers and help in teaching early childhood skills and English language classes.

Kadek, our administrator deserves special mention. She started the pre-schools in both Penestanan and Katik Lantang, taking upon herself to become trained in early childhood education, working closely with every volunteer in the field and reading widely. She has trained the teachers, set up the curriculum, and learned to use all new materials.

**The Bali Children's Project**  
**"Escaping poverty through education"**  
**a non-profit corporation**

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**100% of all donations go directly to benefit**  
**the children of Bali**