

People Are Born To Shine!

A newsletter rooted in the Christian faith created to inspire and support all people, irrespective of nationality, race, and religion.



ACTS OF KINDNESS

It is with great pleasure that the NCF has been bringing to you inspiring stories from around the world in each edition of 'People Are Born To Shine.' Acts of Kindness is one of the most read sections, and one on which we receive a great deal of positive feedback. We continuously search many sources to bring you the most touching stories of hope and encouragement, and we want to thank you all for your continuous support. We are committed to bringing you more and more inspiring stories full of love, giving and sharing in 2013.

HuffPost Greatest Person of the Day: Maggie Doyne Builds Orphanage and School for Kids in Nepal

After finishing high school in Mendham, N.J., Maggie Doyne wasn't sure what she wanted to do. She'd been an ambitious and driven student—the editor of her school yearbook, a varsity athlete, and the class treasurer—but

“The effects on the whole area were very, raw, but I immediately felt attached to the region, like I was supposed to be there.”

as she weighed her options for college, she felt increasingly burnt out, and decided that she should take some time off.

“I took what's called a gap year,” Maggie said, speaking to The Huffington Post from her family's home in Mendham. “I was about to make this investment in my life, but I didn't have a strong direction. I wanted to figure that out.”

For the first semester of her gap year, Maggie traveled with a backpacking expedition program called LeapNow, which leads students on service missions and cultural projects across the globe for a semester. And when it came time to decide on her Spring plans, Maggie asked a mentor how she could best “have an impact.”

“I said I wanted to be of use and I wanted to work with kids,” Maggie recalls. “So I headed off to India to work for an organization there.”

In Northeast India, she met countless young Nepalese refugees who had



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WAIT until the bus stops and the door opens before stepping onto the roadway...

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NCF is sponsoring a Visual Arts class through the Ayadina Association to underprivileged children.

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fled the country after the recent Maoist uprising and civil war. One teenage girl she met had escaped Nepal six or seven years earlier, and hadn't returned since. So she and Maggie decided to take a trip together—back to Nepal, to look for the girl's family.

The two teenagers sat on a bus for two and a half days, then trekked for two more days through the Himalayas, ultimately finding the girl's former village. They received details about her dissipated family, and where many of her relatives had ended up.

"The effects on the whole area were very, very raw," Maggie said, remembering the experience. "But I immediately felt attached to the region, like I was supposed to be there."

Maggie grew enamored of Nepal's natural beauty, as well as the sense of community and optimism in its people, but she was also deeply affected by the orphans she met in the villages. She often saw one young Nepalese girl breaking rocks on the side of a dry river bed. The girl had no school, no family; she had nothing, but she still smiled and waved every time Maggie walked by. The girl's name was Hema.

"It was really this rude awakening," Maggie said. "I thought, it only takes \$5 admission and \$5 for a uniform to put her into school. Why can't I do that?"

So Maggie did. And then she put a few other young girls into school, too. And she realized she could do so much more by staying in Nepal and dealing with the refugee problem at its source, rather than waiting for these kids to flee to India, or, worse, get stuck at the border and find themselves victims of human trafficking or domestic servitude. She realized she wanted to give these kids a real, permanent home.

That was when Maggie called her parents and asked them to wire over to Nepal, her life savings—\$5000 she'd earned from babysitting in high school.

Maggie bought a piece of property in Surkhet, Nepal,

and assembled a team from the local community to help her dig the initial foundation for an orphanage that would double as a home for herself. But soon, Maggie realized she'd need more resources if she actually wanted to get it built. So she flew back to New Jersey and worked. She babysat, dogsat, house-sat, held garage sales, bake sales, and anything else she could possibly do to raise more money. Local papers eventually picked up Maggie's story, and soon checks from admirers started pouring in. In five months, Maggie raised close to \$60,000.

With this added financial support, Maggie and her team in Surkhet were able to continue the construction and finish Maggie's home. She formed a Nepali board of directors and established her orphanage, which she called the Kopila Valley Children's Project. She registered as an NGO. She was only 22 years old.

Kids started moving in almost immediately and Maggie's vision was realized. "I could see exactly what I wanted," she said. "I had visited orphanages, I could create a model that works based on how I grew up. I want these kids to raise animals, to take care of each other."

But Maggie didn't stop with the orphanage. Last year she also established a school in Surkhet—the Kopila Valley Primary School—which currently enrolls 230 students and 14 full-time teachers. The kids eat a full, nutritious lunch every day, sometimes their only daily meal, given that they live in an area where 50% of kids under five are malnourished and malnutrition is the cause of 70% of deaths under the age of five.

Maggie's work is all done under the banner of her non-profit, BlinkNow. Its mission is to "empower young people to become pioneers in developing their own solutions to world poverty."

"I feel there's a big shift going on in the world, and people are not okay with the way kids are living," Maggie said. "I think people are really starving for hope."

Today, Maggie is 24 years old and has formal custody of 40 Nepalese children, all of whom originally came to her

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The Circle of Angels Project

The *Circle of Angels* is a project initiated by Patricia Cherfan after receiving a donation to help someone with a physical injury needing a prosthesis. The idea is to directly link the donor to the beneficiary, one case at a time, without incurring extra management costs on the donor.

This project targets cases whose lives can be changed through a before and after intervention such as providing a prosthesis. The *Circle of Angels* members are invited to meet the person being supported in his/her environment in each case addressed. In 2011 and 2012 this project has helped three cases, one adult and two children, providing a particular prosthesis based on their needs.

Donations are gathered through the *Circle of Angels* email network which has so far succeeded to raise \$24,000.

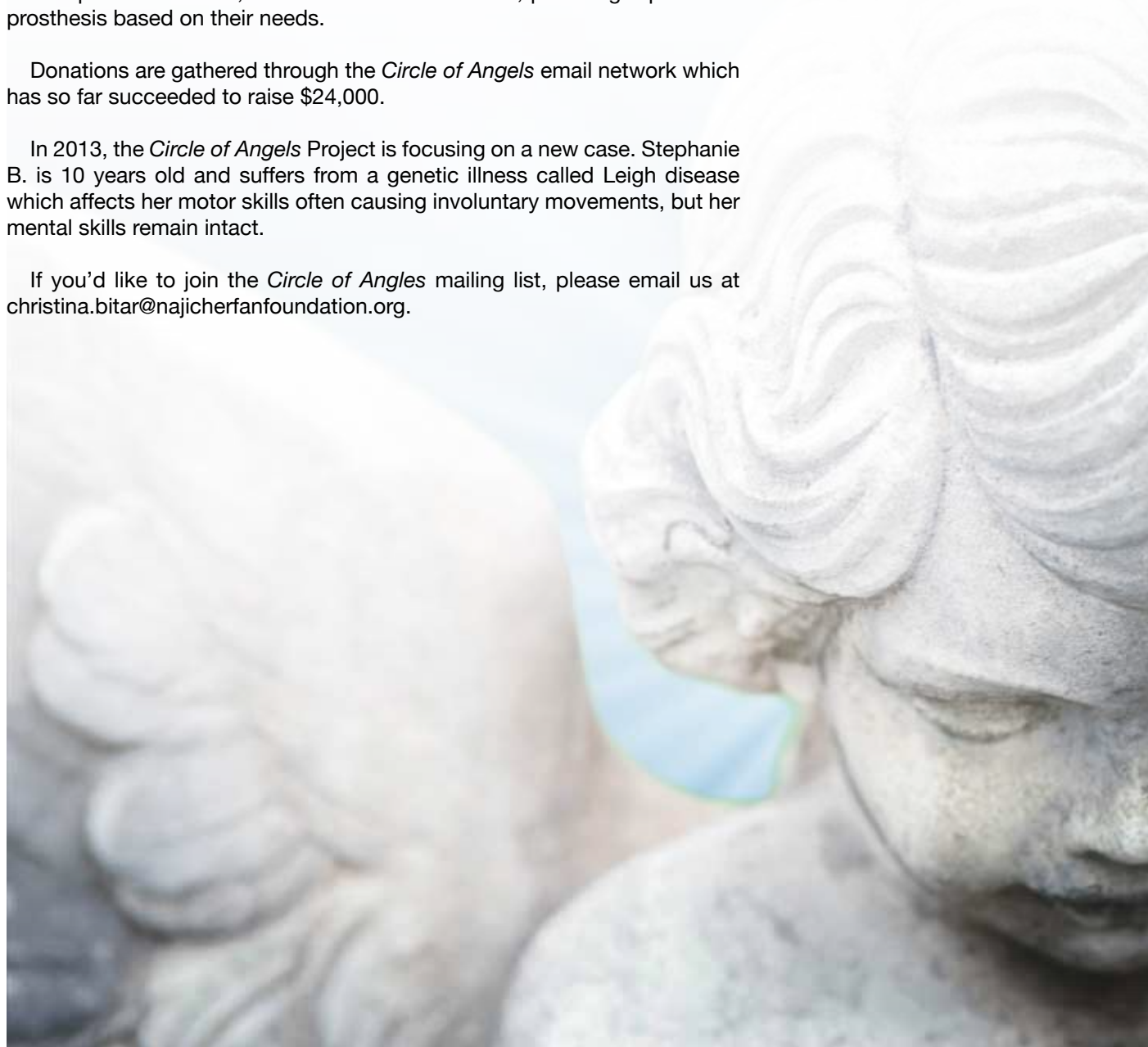
In 2013, the *Circle of Angels* Project is focusing on a new case. Stephanie B. is 10 years old and suffers from a genetic illness called Leigh disease which affects her motor skills often causing involuntary movements, but her mental skills remain intact.

If you'd like to join the *Circle of Angels* mailing list, please email us at christina.bitar@najicherfanfoundation.org.

PRAYER CORNER

*Let nothing disturb
you,
Let nothing frighten
you,
All things are passing
away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all
things
whoever has God
lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.*

— *St. Teresa of Avila*



NUTRITION

Healing Spices That Are Perfect for Cold Weather

Adding spices to your meal can add balance to your diet and health to your life! Here are some healing spices that are perfect for winter:

FRESH GINGER

Ginger breaks up congestion, improves circulation and burns toxins. Add fresh ginger to juices, teas, and pretty much any vegetable dish.

CUMIN

Cumin supports healthy blood sugar levels and is an antioxidant. It has a relaxing effect. Use it in chutneys, salad dressings, herbal teas, curry dishes and sprinkled over foods.

CINNAMON

Cinnamon is an antioxidant that supports healthy blood sugar levels. Add cinnamon to flavor desserts, teas and savory Indian curry dishes. It can also be used for pickling.

TURMERIC

Turmeric invigorates the blood and stimulates blood formation. A small dose will clean the liver and blood. Turmeric also has anti-inflammatory properties, which can reduce arthritis and inflammation, alleviate pain, and strengthen joints and tendons. Use turmeric in broths, teas, curry dishes and to spice up vegetables.

ROSEMARY

Rosemary is an antioxidant and has anti-cancer properties. Rosemary has a warming and relaxing effect. It can help cure headaches and improve memory. Add it to teas, soups and tomato-based dishes.



NUTMEG

Nutmeg helps reduce pain and inflammation. It also helps to clear the respiratory passage and normalizes the digestive system. Sprinkle it over soups and warm drinks or mix it into teas and stews.

CARDAMOM

Cardamom clears food cravings and refreshes the palate. It destroys mucous in the stomach and upper GI tract. Use in after-dinner teas, soups and curries.

GARLIC

Garlic helps lower blood pressure, reduce cholesterol, control triglycerides, and thin the blood, reducing clotting in high-risk heart patients. It also supports general immune function, has a natural antibacterial and antifungal action, acts as an antiseptic, fights infection and contains chemicals that help to prevent cancer. It's great in almost anything you cook!

SAFFRON

Saffron is a nourishing purifier that invigorates and moves the blood while cooling it. Saffron breaks up blood clots and clears liver stagnation. It is said to improve eyesight and enhance digestion. Use it in desserts, curries, mughlai dishes and paella.

Source: Ashley Pitman, mindbodygreen.com

Will You Further NCF's Work?

The Naji Cherfan Foundation was founded after the passing away of the beloved Naji Cherfan. Our main goal is to praise the Lord through community work. The foundation works to improve the quality of life of the poorest of the poor of people, especially those affected by brain injury, while promoting Christian values.

If you like the work NCF is doing and wish to participate, we invite you to become a member of our Board. The goal is to share our inspiration and activities in your country. Please contact us for more information.

info@najicherfanfoundation.org

Quoteable!

It is hard to give a hug without receiving one in return.

—David DeNotaris

School Bus Safety



BEHAVIOR ON THE BUS

- WAIT until the bus stops and the door opens before stepping onto the roadway.
- NEVER put head, arms or hands out of the window.

MOVING AROUND THE SCHOOL BUS

- WAIT for a signal from the driver before beginning to cross the road.
- Stay AWAY from the rear wheels of the bus at all times.
- NEVER try to pick up something that drops next to the bus because it's likely the bus driver can't see you.

BEHAVIOR IN VEHICLES

- NEVER do anything that may distract the driver – it might cause a crash.
- NEVER put head, arms or hands out of the window.
- Use a booster if you are less than 135cm tall so that the seat belt rests on your shoulder, NOT your neck!
- ALWAYS use the seatbelt in the back.
- NEVER sit on the lap of the driver or anyone in the front seat.
- ALWAYS get in/out of the car opposite to the road side.

BEHAVIOR ON THE ROAD

- ALWAYS stop on the pavement, look, listen and think!
- DRESS in light colored clothes at night for drivers to spot you.
- NEVER play or pick up something that drops next to cars because it's likely the drivers cannot see you or do not have enough time to stop.
- ALWAYS walk opposite to vehicle directions.



Kunhadi is a non-governmental organization founded after the passing away of the beloved Hadi as the result of a car accident. Kunhadi's mission is to introduce a new driving culture among youth to keep them safe on the roads. Their goal is to reach a better community understanding of road safety issues, and to find solutions for underlying problems and factors leading to road deaths and injuries. For more information, please visit Kunhadi's website at www.kunhadi.org.

Imitate The Good



Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God. —3 John 1:11

Most people would agree that life is a painful mixture of good and bad. It's true in marriage, friendship, family, work, and church. Yet we are surprised and disappointed when self-centeredness takes the stage within a fellowship of those who seek to worship and serve Christ together.

When the apostle John wrote to his friend Gaius, he commended the truthful living and generous hospitality of those in his church (3 John 1:3-8). In the same fellowship, however, Diotrephes, "who wants to be head of everything" (v.9 PHILLIPS), had created an atmosphere of hostility.

John promised to deal personally with Diotrephes on his next visit to the church. In the meantime, he urged the congregation: "Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God" (v.11). John's words echo the instruction of Paul to the Christians in Rome: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21).

In a heated conflict, we may be tempted to "fight fire with fire." Yet John urges us to turn away from what is bad and follow what is good. This is the pathway that honors our Savior.

with the desire to restore erring fellow Christians.

*As light overcomes darkness,
goodness can overcome evil.*

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with no family, no money, and no education. Many were abused. She has provided all of them with basic medical care and food, and she has taught them to read and write. "The first little girl I took in is a genius," Maggie said. "She learned English in only a couple of months and she reads every book I give her. I could see her going to Harvard or something."

When Maggie's own parents visit her in Nepal, her kids refer to them as "grandmother and grandfather." They continue to help her out as much as they can along with her sister, especially with organizing board meetings and dealing with tax receipts.

"A lot of people think I grew up in a teepee or some crazy out there family, or I was raised in a hut in Africa," she said. "But I just tell them I'm a regular girl from Jersey."

Source: dailygood.org, Lucas Kavner





AYADINA | Naji Cherfan Visual Arts Class

The Naji Cherfan Foundation is sponsoring a Visual Arts (painting and drawing) class offered by Ayadina Association to 30 underprivileged children for the year 2012/2013.

Ayadina is a Lebanese NGO dedicated to community development with a focus on children and senior citizens. Among the organization's main goals is the prevention of juvenile delinquency through arts education, which provides opportunities for channeling emotions into creative expression, cultural and artistic exposure, talent development, improved academic achievement, and economic empowerment.

This new partnership emerged from the shared passion and belief both organizations have for art in its therapeutic and preventive impacts of at risk children. The class started in October 2012 and it entails learning new skills and techniques, learning about the history of

art, and visits to various art exhibitions. At the end of the year, an exhibition of the children's work will be organized.

Please visit www.ayadinaassociation.com to learn more about the different programs and projects Ayadina Association offers.



HOW I REMEMBER NAJI...

I remember the excitement both Hicham and I felt when Naji was born in 1978 in Jordan.

We played with him, cared for him, watched out for him so that he didn't fall out of the crib and just enjoyed him.

Since a very young age, Naji was popular. He had many friends and acquaintances. The girls loved him. He was funny, handsome, and intelligent. Everyone said he looked like me. What a compliment to get since he was, in fact, better looking than me!

Sometimes he was naughty but deep down, he had a wonderful heart. I recall he had a good business sense. From a very young age, when we travelled abroad with the family, he used to buy things that were not available in Greece and would manage to sell them at a profit (chewing gum; chocolates; skateboards etc...) He also loved real estate and was always passionate to buy old properties, then get them restored.

Despite the unfortunate accident and challenges he faced in his short life, he remained strong in character and faith.

Although he was a wonderful child/teenager before his accident, he became an even better person afterwards.

I will always remember him for his good, loving, tender & generous heart. For his unconditional forgiveness, positive attitude, inspiration, strength and endurance. How can I forget my wonderful, funny, charming, handsome, uplifting and courageous young brother? And what about that beautiful smile, especially when he asked me "Maher what do you think of my teeth? They are nice; do you think I could do an advertisement for Colgate or Crest? Ha!"

Naji exemplified patience and perseverance. When many would have given up, he chose to be active after his accident, continued his education, exercised every morning, went on to work & assumed many responsibilities, maintained friendships and developed new ones. He could bike and waterski, he cared for others, made time for God & had ambitious plans for the future...

One of the best ways to become the person you want to be remembered for is to imagine your own funeral, who will be there and



what people will say about you. I wish I did not have to live this moment at my brother's funeral at SUCH a young age. But I can never forget how many people showed up to his memorial on August 3rd in Athens and the beautiful words that were said about him. Many more came to his funeral in Lebanon. He was truly loved.

To conclude, someone (who too had lost his brother years before) told me that one day you will forget and at some occasions you will remember that you had a brother. I have no doubt he meant well. But that person was wrong; I think of Naji every single day and those beautiful memories are so alive and so is he. Yet I miss him a lot.

Maher Cherfan

People Are Born To Shine!

People are Born To Shine is a bi-monthly, electronic newsletter owned by The Naji Cherfan Foundation focusing on spirituality and health. The objective of *People are Born to Shine* is to raise awareness among our readers on health challenges and disease prevention, while inspiring them to live a fuller, more abundant life guided by Christian values. This newsletter is dedicated to those affected by brain injuries including the injured as well as their family members, caregivers and friends.

The content has been carefully selected from internet sources considered reliable and accurate to bring you good news of health and spiritual well being, however The Naji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information.

The NCF would like to recognize the devoted work of its volunteers mainly Isabelle Boghossian, Marianne Debs, Me. Kamal Rahal, Me. Harold Alvarez, Zeina Costantine, Joyce Abou Jaoude, Rita Kassis, Marleine Nassrany, Diala Ghostine Nassrany, Dima Rbeiz, Father Joseph Abdel Sater, Father Joseph Soueid, Reine Kassis, and all the field volunteers who are supporting NCF in spreading the words of Jesus through their institutions, churches, hospitals, establishments...etc.

For subscriptions and comments, please contact us: info@najicherfanfoundation.org

Publisher: CCM Group; Editorial Consultant: George C. Cherfan; Editor in Chief: Christina A. Bitar; Layout: Art Department, CCM Group, USA; Contributors: Sana Cherfan, Kelley Nemitz, and Patricia B. Cherfan.

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