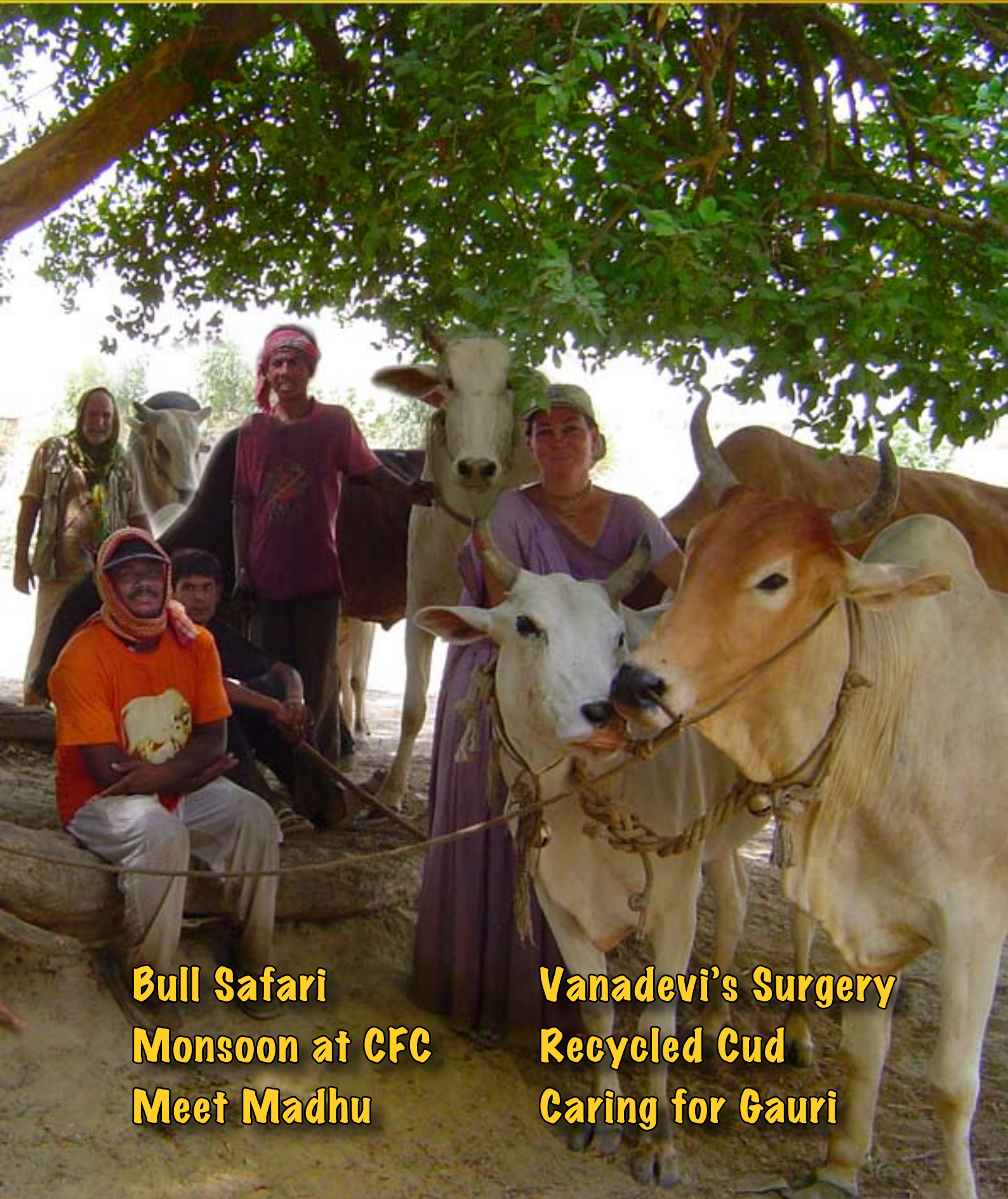


July 2007



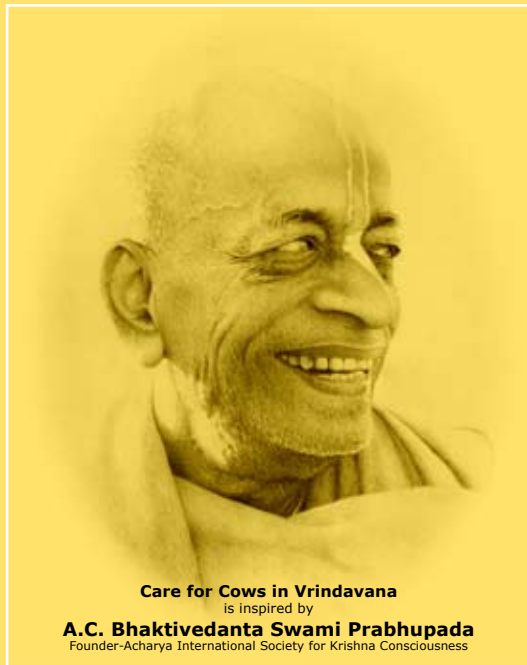
CARE FOR COWS

IN VRINDAVAN



Bull Safari
Monsoon at CFC
Meet Madhu

Vanadevi's Surgery
Recycled Cud
Caring for Gauri



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CARE FOR COWS
IN VRINDAVAN

Jaya Sri Guru!
Jaya Sri Gopala!
Jaya Sri Go Mata!

Dear Friends,

This month was eventful despite being the hottest one of the year. We had a rewarding ten-day visit from Wenda Shehata, the well-known *go sevak* from UK. We thank her for her advice and generosity. With great happiness we announce that for the first time all of the 174 residents posted on our web site are sponsored! Our special thanks go to Suresh Vagjiani of Sow & Reap, U.K. who holds the record of sponsoring forty-eight! The closest runner-up, who wishes to remain anonymous, sponsors twenty.

For those of you who want to be connected to Go Seva in Vrindavan, this may be unwelcome news. But don't fret. We still have forty more residents in Belvan who will soon be featured on the web site for you to browse through and find the one who suits you best.

In this issue we direct your attention to some of our wonderful bulls and oxen, to more interesting and informative medical reports and to the eight new residents admitted this month.

We hope this finds you experiencing the happiness and inner satisfaction that accompanies Go Seva.

We remain, your servants in caring for Sri Gopal's abandoned Cows in Vrindavan,

The CFC Staff

careforcows.org

Care for Cows in Vrindavan is a Charitable Trust registered in India, USA, Holland and Switzerland.



GUNJAMALA

A photograph of a flooded area, likely a farm or a rural setting. In the background, a group of white and black cows are standing in the water. A small, dark, round boat is floating in the water. The water is murky and reflects the surrounding trees and sky. The scene is framed by green trees on the left and right sides. The overall atmosphere is one of a recent heavy rain event.

The
first glimpse
of the monsoon
arrived nearly a month
in advance this year, with
torrential rains flooding low
lying areas. The much welcome
rain brought relief from the
scorching dry months of
summer to everyone in
Vrindavan. By June end
moderate rainfall was
received daily.

Monsoon at CFC



Radhika welcomes the first rain drops



Jatila kicks up her heels

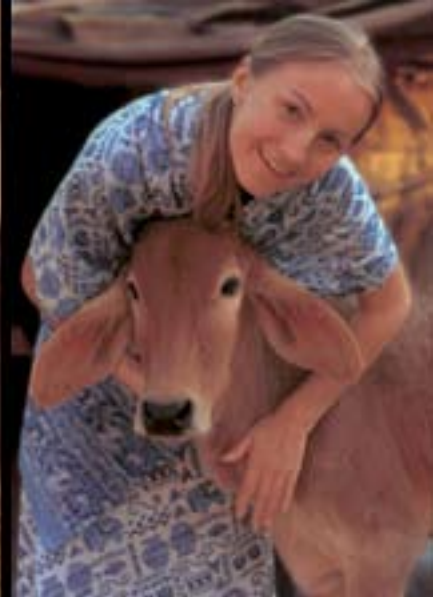


Janardana plays in the puddles



Meet Madhu

One of the founding members of Care for Cows



Since joining us Madhu has displayed a gentle and protective nature

One cold winter morning in 2001 Mahananda devi dari from Italy frantically knocked on my door to alert me that a young bull had been injured on the street and was walking unsteadily on three legs. We went to fetch him but he was not to be found. After an hour we gave up.

The next morning I sighted him shivering behind one of those portable wooden shops that sell tea and biscuits on the side of the street. As I approached he fearfully

retreated expecting more battering for unknown reasons. I gently coaxed him and within a half-an-hour we reached our crude facility. He was frail, trembling, hungry, full of ticks and had a nasty gash on the inside of his rear right leg.

We cleaned him up, Dr. Lavania dressed his leg and Mahananda fashioned an old blanket into a winter coat and Madhu was on his way to recovery.

He remained slim and a bit wobbly for two years

and then started to get stronger. He was always gentle and obedient and was easy to train. We all noticed he had a lazy streak in him but he was cooperative.

Now he is six years old and weighs about 600 kg's and is still growing. He has joined Padma Lochana, Bharata and Rama in pulling the two Sandipani Muni School buses carrying about 75 students to school and back daily. The children often bring old chapatis for the bulls and sing songs

Madhu in training with Chandrasekara ...

trailing behind the school bus...

and reciprocating with his sponsor





Madhu in training with Mohan (foreground), Bhima and Bura



with Padma
Lochana, our
seniormost
working bull and
leader of the herd



Padma Lochana and Madhu taking the children from Sundrakh to the Sandipani Muni School

along the three-kilometer journey to school.

Rupa Raghunath dasa of Vrindavan Food for Life and the founder of the Sandipani Mini School says he looks forward to

the day that he can have fleets of bull-driven school buses meandering all over the streets of Vrindavan. We have begun a training program in Belvan to prepare our more than

eighty handsome bulls for draft and ploughing. You can help with this project by offering one or more of our bulls a scholarship so they can receive training. Bulls are the basis!

Vanadevi's Surgery



Vanadevi with one back leg broken, stands supported in a cow sling



Local anaesthetic is injected around the tight swollen rumen prior to surgery



A small incision is made into the rumen and the fluid drained through a flexible tube

Vanadevi arrived with a fractured back leg – a break in the femur that could not be treated, and she was unable to stand up on her own.

Shortly after she suffered from gastrointestinal problems, was off feed for days at a time, developed severe lactic acidosis and tested positive for a blood parasite. Acidosis affects the rumen micro flora and it was evident all the enzymes had died as her rumen became fluid filled and tight. In very severe cases, such as Vanadevi's there is no passing gober because of total gut stasis. As the mounting pressure of the fluid filled rumen pressed upon the diaphragm her breathing became labored and Dr Lavania prepared her for a rumenotomy, a common procedure for severe acidosis, in which the rumen is surgically emptied out.

Initially a small incision was made into the rumen and a tube inserted which syphoned fluid into a collection bucket.



More fluid and busa is drained out into a bowl



Tilting her to aid outflow of rumen contents



Four buckets were filled, half her rumen quantity



Dr Lavania feels for any foreign objects in the rumen



Vanadevi's incision is closed

After some time the tube became clogged with increasing amounts of particles of roughage from busa and the Doctor opened the incision up more to drain the content out without the tube. Four buckets of fluid were emptied out and as the quantity in the rumen decreased Vanadevi was tilted to the side to drain more fluid, leaving half of her rumen full.

Dr Lavania then explored the rumen, reticulum and omasum, three of the four digestive compartments that make up a cow's stomach, searching for foreign objects or blockages. All clear the Doctor then closed and

set up Vanadevi's post-operative care. Over the following days Vanadevi was changed sides regularly, her lung and digestive areas rubbed with liniment to stimulate circulation, and a variety of herbal Ayurvedic remedies were administered to try and start her rumen working.

She showed some signs of improvement with regular passing of gober and urine and even attempted eating after a fifteen day fast. However the improvement was short lived and surrounded by her Carers who were chanting the Lord's holy names she peacefully left her body after a one month ordeal.



Vanadevi at the completion of her operation, thinner and breathing easy



Padma Lochana



Bharata



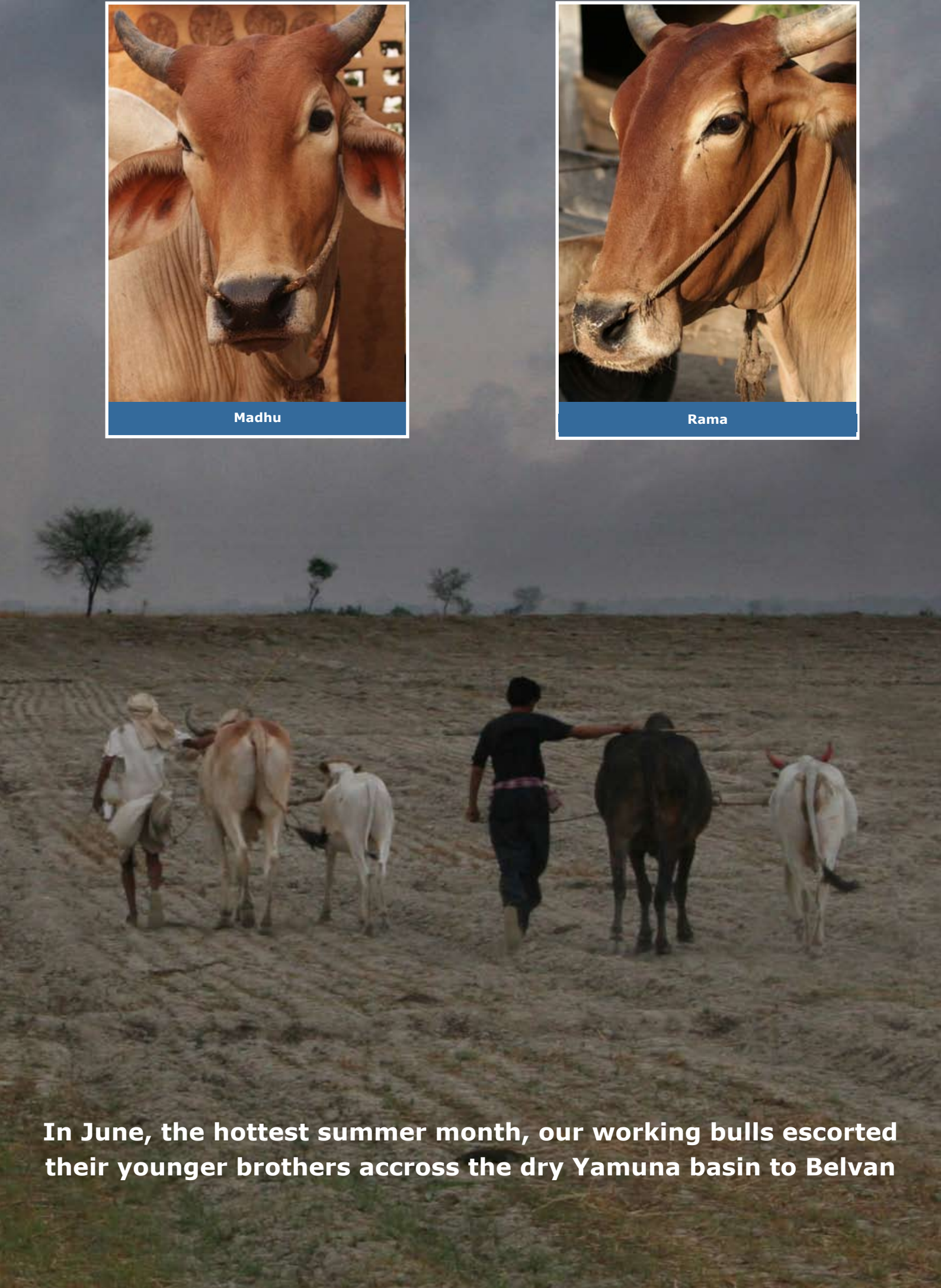
Bull Safari



Madhu



Rama



In June, the hottest summer month, our working bulls escorted their younger brothers accross the dry Yamuna basin to Belvan



The bulls rest before descending into the lower basin

ABOVE: The cowherd men cheer as they guide the bulls into the lower Yamuna basin

We have moved more than thirty of our bulls to Belvan by truck and have found it troublesome and at times dangerous. We decided to use our trained bulls to escort the younger ones across the Yamuna

basin which lies barren all summer. This has proved to be a safer and more pleasing method and we plan to continue until the farmers' again seed the fields.

The untrained bulls are

reluctant to leave the CFC compound and venture into the unknown, but when tied to their elder brothers who navigate the busy and hectic Vrindavan streets daily, they gain confidence and after the initial



BELOW: The gopas drive the bulls along the high sandy bank of the Yamuna viewing Belvan in the distance.





nervousness they become cooperative.

In contrast to the blaring loud speakers that rudely disrupt one's every thought in the streets of Vrindavan, all that can be heard in the vacant Yamuna basin are melodious calls of peacocks, saurus cranes and the breeze whistling through the tall bunches of grass the villagers harvest and fashion into thatched roofs for their dwellings.

At times the sand is so hot that even the bulls must hurry from patch to patch of grass to prevent the tender tissue between their cloven hooves from being scorched.

The lower basin ends with high sandy





cliffs descending into the cool, slow flowing water.

We have crossed the river with three groups of bulls and the water has not been more than chest deep though now that the monsoon has come, the water can rise tremendously at any time.

Despite the sad fact that the Yamuna River is substantially polluted by industrial



Our handsome Kishor



waste from Delhi, those who bathe in it can testify that even taking a brief dip relieves one of all fatigue and anxiety.

The bulls raise their tails as they enter the water and sip it repeatedly as they

cross. The three-kilometer journey takes about an hour and the many graceful trees surrounding the Lakmsi Devi Temple next to the *goshalla* offer cooling shade as a reward. While sitting under

these wonderful trees and watching the bulls ruminating with half-closed eyes, we silently wish we can spend the rest of our days tending to Sri Gopal's wonderful cows and bulls in Vrindavan.





Left:
Madhu, gentle,
affectionate,
innocent and well-
manered.



Right:
Rama, unassertive,
massive but timid
as a mouse.



Padma Lochana — heroic, proud, assertive, powerful, dutiful, fearless
and domineering.



Bharata — strong, obedient, hard working, and aloof



Cowherd girls Wenda Shehata (visiting from UK) and Syam Gauri delight in bathing Madhu in the refreshing waters of Sri Yamuna



Caring for Gauri

When we first saw Gauri out on the street, it seemed she was a lifeless body, perhaps a victim of a road accident, surrounded by a small group of local Vrajabasi's as the morning commuters on motorbikes, push bikes and occasional tractor passed a glance as they rushed by.

But then the calf sat up and we inquired what had happened. Gauri's owner told us that she had been sick for five days, and was weak from not eating or drinking. We arranged for her to be admitted to CFC as an outpatient and she was seen by Dr Lavania within the hour. Gauri's condition was serious, apart from dehydration her symptoms included high fever, blindness, twitching, partial paralysis of the throat, head pressing, staggering, and over the following days of her stay at CFC recumbency and seizures.

She was diagnosed with cerebrocortical necrosis (CCN), an induced thiamine deficiency. The treatment of choice is thiamine, but therapy must be started early in the disease course for benefits to be achieved. If brain lesions are particularly severe or treatment is delayed, full clinical recovery may not be possible, and unfortunately despite all attempts to save her, Gauri sadly passed away after five days of care.



Gauri is collected by CFC Carers nearby her owners home



Wenda, a visiting go-sevaki from the UK, patiently feeds Gauri a litre of cow electrolyte syringe at a time



In her last days of care Gauri was unable to take fluids by mouth, and was fed intravenously



Prana

I was born in Vrindavan city where people keep us in their house at night and in the day tie us to a street lamp post where we sit on either bricks or blacktop next to the open sewer and watch bicycles, rickshaws, motor scooters, three-wheelers and cars whiz past all day. It is far removed from a pasturing ground... Actually the streets of Vrindavan are quite hostile for cows. Nevertheless, because we are sattvic by nature, we can tune out all the turmoil around us and be peaceful. One day as I was sitting on the street ruminating I became oblivious to my surroundings. Suddenly I was jolted back into external consciousness and felt great pain in my front right leg. I had been injured and since then I have not been able to walk properly. My owners turned me out as they didn't want to pay for my medical treatment. A few weeks later a cowherd girl rescued me and brought me to Care for Cows. I am recuperating and getting stronger now.

June Admissions



Bakula

One day our owner loaded my mother and me on a truck and took us to Govardhana for the animal fair. The name Animal Fair gives one the impression that it is a place where animals gather for recreation but I tell you it is not at all like that. It is a place people come to sell animals for profit. They were so careless while unloading us that my mother fell and broke her leg and could not stand up. Since no one would buy a lame cow, at the end of the day our owner abandoned us in the empty fairground. By chance someone notified Sudevi who saves abandoned cows in Radha Kund and Govardhana and she came to pick us up. Later she asked Care for Cows to look after us as my mother's fracture was quite complicated. The bad news is that my Mom never got up again. She developed internal problems and despite all attempts by the vet and her carers she left this world. The good news is that I got to meet Svarna who is a couple of months older than me and he invited me to nurse from his mother Kancana. So I not only have a surrogate mother who is very affectionate towards me, but I have an elder brother too!

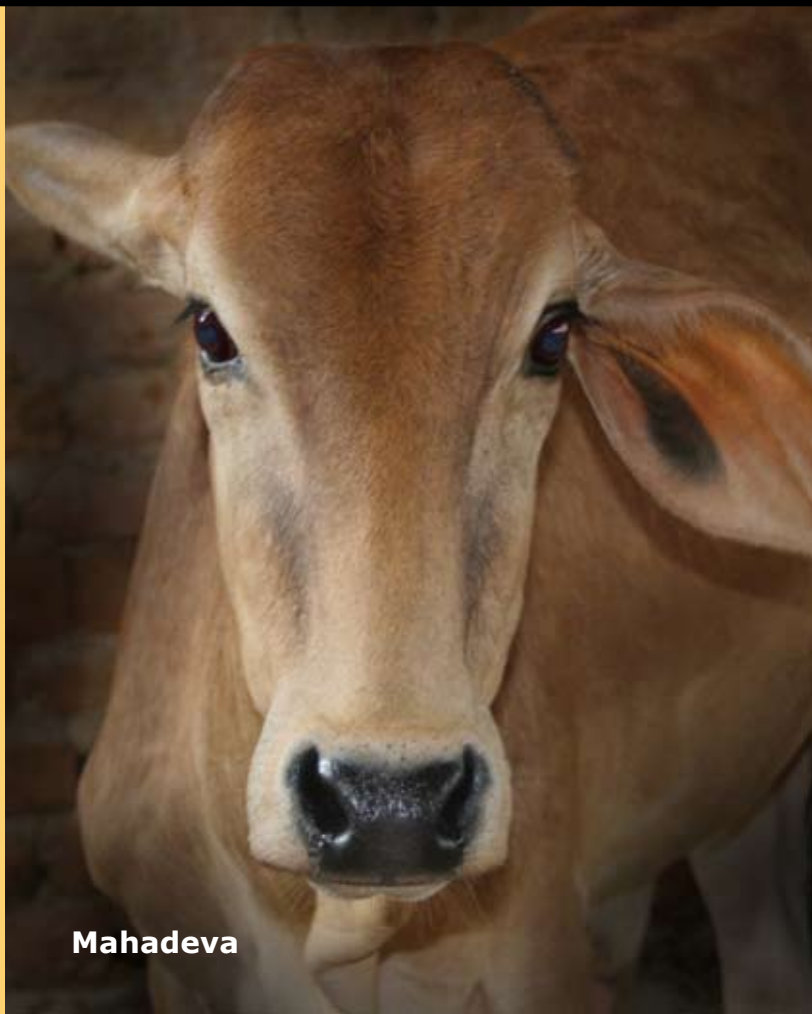
When we are abandoned in the street we learn to survive by following a bigger cow or bull around. They teach us where food is available and gradually we can take care of ourselves. In this way I found a vegetable market where the vendors frequently throw in the street all the produce they cannot sell. That's how I was maintaining myself. One day a cowherd girl came to buy vegetables and noticed I had an injured leg. After getting her *sabji*, she held me in her lap and we were off to Care for Cows by *rickshaw*. I felt like Garuda had lifted me out of the ocean of material miseries! She named me Priti and I am already putting on weight. I spend a lot of time licking the cowherd men and women who take care of us here.



Priti

to Care for Cows

One day a neighbor began driving his bullock cart towards Vrindavan. As he passed, my owner called to him and they had a conversation. Though I couldn't understand their language, I knew they were talking about me and started to get nervous. Suddenly, my owner seized me and tied me to the back of the cart forcing me to follow it along the 12 kilometer road to Vrindavan. It was hell to be treated like that. I was resisting with every step but feared if I fell, I would just be dragged. Soon the driver stopped to try to sell his hay to a *goshalla* on the road. A cowherd man came to the rear of the cart where I was tied and noticed that I was distressed. He asked why I was tied to the bullock cart and was told that I was going to be dumped in the streets of Vrindavan. The cowherd man abruptly untied and took me in the barn yard. The driver followed behind and quickly took off my neck rope and returned to the cart to drive off. He valued the five-rupee rope more than me. I soon learned I was at Care for Cows and because of the respect they show here for bulls, I am slowly feeling more worthy.



Mahadeva



Saci

By nature we cows are givers. We want to give milk to our calves and to those who feed us and treat us affectionately. Unfortunately, I had an owner who refused to feed me adequately and treated me with such disrespect, the last thing I wanted to do is give him milk. Hence he labeled me *badmas gai* (rascal cow) and turned me out. I must say, the one good thing he did is bring me to Care for Cows instead of putting me on the street. As he was leaving, a cowherd man asked him what my name was and he told him I had none...

At present I am a bit distressed because of the abrupt change in residence, but I will soon settle in as I can perceive this as a place where cows are respected. They have started to call me Saci and are letting me wander as I like. It is nice to be able to walk around freely. We cows have four legs for a good reason.

"If one delivers a cow from a dangerous situation, from being stuck in mud or from being attacked by a tiger, one attains the result of performing a horse sacrifice."

Nowadays there is a prejudice against bulls in Vrindavan. Though the scriptures declare the bull to be religion personified, it is interesting that hardly anyone will make the sacrifice to maintain us. Hmmmm... makes you wonder, right? When my mothers milk decreased, I became most unwelcome. Not by my mother, mind you, but by my irreligious owner. When after milking he found less than a liter in the bucket, he stared at me with angry eyes as if it were my fault. As soon as the sun set, he took me a good distance away from home and dumped me in a ditch of sewer water. Being away from my Mom, lost in the dark, covered with human waste, naturally, I was distressed. All I could do was bellow in the dark hoping my Mom would find me. No such luck... Later though, I ended up at the Care for Cows gate and a compassionate cowherd woman let me in and when she called me Parasmani (Touchstone), I knew I was home.



Parasmani

My owner brought me to Care for Cows and told them that ten days ago I was gored by a bull and suffered from some broken ribs. I can walk, but only with great difficulty. The concerned medical staff, being sadly experienced with how two-legged Vrajabasis lie compulsively, called Dr. Lavania to get an expert opinion. After a thorough examination, the Dr. confirmed that my former owner was such a one and announced that I had a fractured femur and seeing the fibrous tissue that had formed, deduced that the injury was at least two-months old. While I can't claim to know much about anatomy I tend to believe the Dr. who strikes me as having much greater integrity than my former owner. So I have to eat heartily, rest on a sandy bed, take some special vitamins and such and I should be OK in a couple of months.



Aruni

"If one treats a sick cow with medicine, one can become cured of his own sickness. By protecting the cow from fear, one also become fearless. One should treat the cow with great respect.

Visnu-dharmottara-purana Part 3, Chapter 291



Hanuman

Saci's owner is poor and can't afford to maintain a cow who gives no milk. So he requested Care for Cows to take her in and brought me along saying that I was her son. The fact is we hardly know each other. I can't understand what inspires one to deceive the very people who can help them. What kind of reciprocation is this? As far as I can figure, the poor are so oppressed and disempowered that they can barely live with themselves. They desperately need to prove their self worth and mistakenly think that by cleverly deceiving someone, they establish themselves as superior. And I'm seen fit to be a pawn in this mental chess game. What an outrage! In any case the cowherd men admired how my long ears reach the tip of my nose and when they saw my stout legs they claimed I would be a prize draft bull. They arranged some milk for me and are encouraging me to become strong by calling me Hanuman.

Recycled Cud



Raju, an unsuspecting donor, contributes a good quantity of cud

Cud is a portion of food that returns from a ruminant's stomach in the mouth to be chewed for the second time. More accurately, it is a bolus of semi-degraded food regurgitated from the reticulo-rumen of a ruminant. Cud is produced during the process of rumination, or 'chewing the cud'.

The process of rumination is stimulated by the presence of roughage in the upper part of the reticulorumen. The chest cavity is stretched, forming a vacuum in the gullet that sucks the semi-liquid stomach content into the esophagus. From the esophagus it is taken back to the mouth with retro peristaltic movements. When the stomach content, or the cud, arrives in the cow's mouth, it is pushed against the palate with the tongue to remove excess liquid, the latter is swallowed and the solid material is chewed

thoroughly. The function of rumination is that food is physically refined to expose more surface area for bacterial working in the reticulorumen, as well as stimulation of saliva secretion to buffer the rumen pH.

The reticulorumen has an optimum pH of 6.5 for the microbe population to live and function. Consumption by cows of an insufficiently fibrous diet leads to little cud formation and therefore lowered amounts of saliva production. This in turn is associated with rumen acidosis, where the rumen pH can fall to as low as pH 5 or lower. Rumen acidosis is associated with a lowered appetite which leads to still lower rates of saliva secretion. Eventually, a collapse of the microbial ecosystem in the rumen will occur because of the low pH. Acute rumen acidosis

can lead to death of a cow, and will occur if the cow is allowed to eat a diet with no roughage but high levels of highly digestible starchy concentrate.

Part of the supportive therapy required for a cow suffering from acute acidosis is to reintroduce enzymes back into the stagnant rumen. The best way to do this is through rumen transfaunation, or rumen juice collected from a healthy cow. And how is this done?

A quick and painless way is to take it straight out of the cows mouth – that is when she's been ruminating for some time and has a nicely chewed cud in her mouth, scoop the cud out and rinse her mouth to wash out the healthy saliva and cud remnants. Cud may be collected from several healthy herd members, poured into a bottle and administered to the patient.



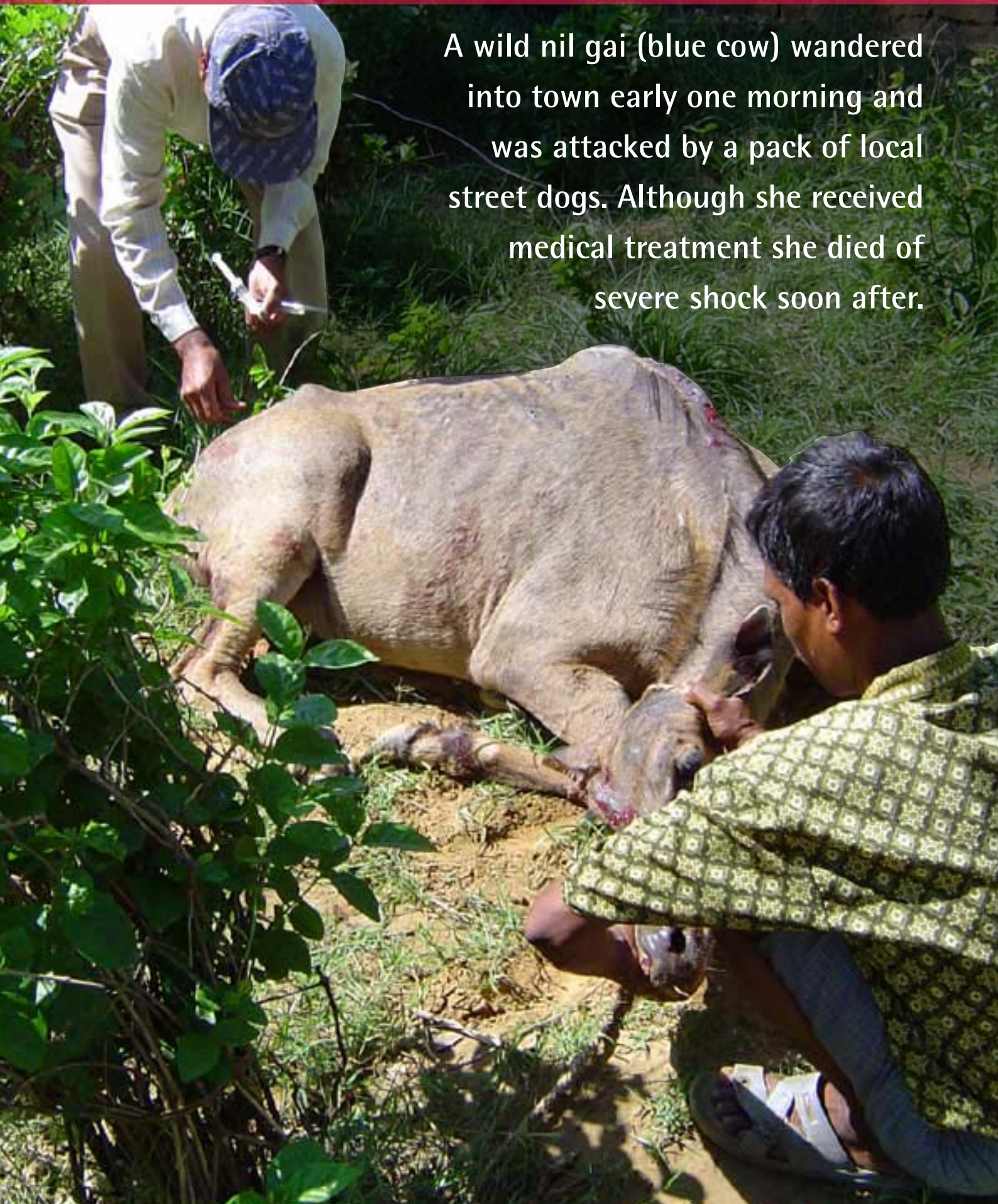
Little Visvanath donates what he can



Vanadevi is bottle fed the collected cud to reintroduce the enzymes into her rumen

Life on the Streets

A wild nil gai (blue cow) wandered into town early one morning and was attacked by a pack of local street dogs. Although she received medical treatment she died of severe shock soon after.



Thank You From the Cows



The cows send their heartfelt thanks to those who assisted during June 2007

Alessandra Petrassi, Italy

Janet Urbanczyk, USA

Pursottam Dabasia, India

Alla Nikolayeva, USA

Jean Farrow, UK

Purnamasi Dasi, Portugal

Ananda Morataya, Guatemala

Kamalini Dasi, USA

Radha Jivan Dasa, India

Ananda Subramanian, USA

Kantilal Shivilal, Singapore

Radha Mohan Sevak, India

Anastasia Tsitsishvili, India

Katyayani dasi, USA

Radhapati Dasa, India

Anon, Singapore

Lisa Kubisz, USA

Radhika Desai, USA

Bonnie Hamdi, USA

Mahanidhi Swami, India

Sevapriya Barrier, USA

Buddhimanta dasa, NZ

Marianna Polonski, USA

Stephen Raisz, USA

David Kasanow, USA

Mariya Genina, USA

Suan Ng, UK

David Thornton, USA

Matija Grom, USA

Suresh Vagjiani, UK

Devender Kumar, USA

Michael Meshuris, USA

Tom Cotter, USA

Dhruva Maharaja Dasa, India

Mohan Narain, Canada

Vaninath dasa, USA

Dr. Rakesh Agarwal, India

Nikhil Chugh, India

Vera Elizarova, USA

Hülya Erdem, Turkey

Padma Sambhava, NZ

Vilim Bertosa, India

ISKCOWP, USA

Pranil Bharath, SA

Vishvambhara Priya dasi, USA

May cows stay in front of me; may cows stay behind me; may cows stay on both sides of me.
May I always reside in the midst of cows. — *Hari Bhakti-vilas* 16.252