

JULY 2008



CARE FOR COWS

I N V R I N D A V A N



Hope for Sanjivani

Two Months Early

Our Herd in Vrindavan

Holy Car Casualty

Nitya Kisor's Ordeal



Care for Cows in Vrindavana
is inspired by
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acharya International Society for Krishna

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CARE FOR COWS
IN VRINDAVAN

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

Dear Friends,

This month was marked by unusual weather patterns. The hot dry summer began but ended abruptly by a frightening and violent wind storm followed by stinging rain. Homes of the poor were ruined and their meager belongings drenched. Important crops were damaged and many trees snapped leaving ugly stumps to survey the destruction.

Then the monsoon intruded unexpectedly paralyzing traffic and flooding many homes. More winds blew and signs flew dangerously like frisbees while billboards were shredded or bent. When people met in public the talk centered around the hardships nature was dealing and losses they suffered in their respective businesses. It was sobering but we all tried to dismiss the nagging suspicion that Mother Nature was angry at us.

While the humans suffered, the street cows danced joyously waving the tufts of their tails in the wind. They became brightened and polished by the rain and enjoyed feasting on a buffet of leaves of all variety. As the empty fields and roadsides sprouted fresh grasses they grazed almost as delightfully as in times past.

Mother Nature punishes us but blesses them. Could it be that those who live in harmony with her are blessed, while those who insist on living in contrast are doomed? I think so... Will we heed the warning?

The CFC Staff

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

~ PORTRAIT OF THE MONTH ~



~ MADHUMANGAL & VRINDA ~



Hope for Sanjivani

Sanjivani being consoled by her bull calf Jiva.



Sanjivani, after being fitted with the first version of a prosthetic limb still in progress.

Sanjivani and her infant bull calf were taken to the Mathura Veterinary Collage Hospital by their owner after her front leg had been crushed in an accident. The veterinarian decided her leg had to be amputated and since her owner could not afford to purchase the medical supplies required for the post operative care, he never returned to retrieve her. Dr. R.P. Pandey requested Care for Cows to host her and she has been with us since December 2006.

It took her stump several months to heal but she learned to walk by hopping step-by-step. Before each step, she reaches her stump out as if she still has her leg, but when it fails to offer support, she hops.

We are now working on building a prosthetic limb with the hope she will learn to use it and thus prevent her spine from gradually becoming deformed by the twisting that occurs from standing on three legs.

The artificial limb is made of welded steel rods fashioned by a local craftsman/blacksmith/mechanic and then wrapped in cotton webbing. A carpet-like cotton boot fits around her stump to protect her from chafing and a canvas halter reaches around her torso to keep the limb in place.

The sample shown here does not fit snugly enough and will have to be modified before we begin training her how to use it. So far she is being quite cooperative.



Chopped wheat stalks (*busa*)

Life in Vrindavana

A Constant Battle of Wits

During April and May the wheat and barley fields are filled with villagers to include toothless grandmothers and 8-year-olds collectively cutting the stalks and thrashing them to get the grains. Once the grains are removed, the stalks are stacked in the field and then pulverized to serve as the main staple for the cows during the rest of the year.

Sometimes the golden mounds of thrashed stalks (*busa*) lay in the fields before being stored in straw silos or transported to the

goshallas. This year, while the bulk of the *busa* lay in the fields, the most violent wind storm in twenty-five years scattered the harvest in all directions reducing the golden dunes to mounds one-half or a quarter their original size.

We approached an old farmer standing next to his diminished mound who was anxious to sell it before the next wind storm appeared. After the standard back and forth we reached an agreement that the *busa* was worth Rs.25,000 and promised



The old farmer

to pay him that amount upon delivery the next morning.

The agreement was made in the afternoon and that evening and angry wind again blew and perhaps 30% of the *busa* was carried off.

In the morning we met at the dune which was visibly reduced. The farmer said that he was sorry that *our busa* had been carried off by the wind. We responded that it was not *our's* but *his*.

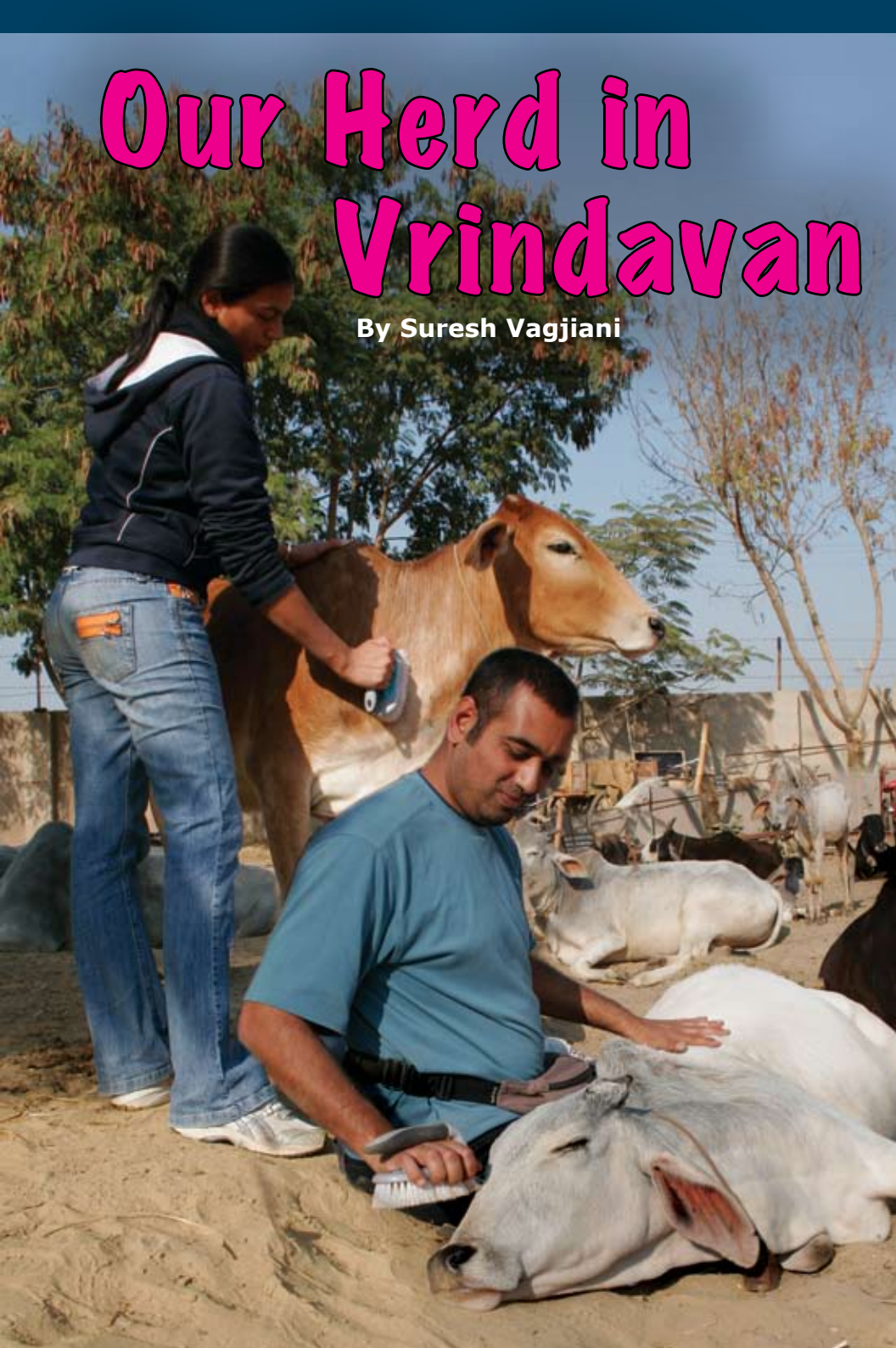
He argued that we had made an agreement and that oral contracts

are binding and that if we did not pay the amount agreed upon he threatened to take action.

Finally we said, "TK. We accept that the *busa* was ours and we have to bear the loss caused by the wind. But you should know that last night when I was enroute to pay you the Rs.25,000 the wind blew so furiously it carried off some of *your* notes. Since by your logic, it was *our busa* that the wind carried away, you have to agree that it was some of your rupees that were carried off!

Our Herd in Vrindavan

By Suresh Vagjiani



Suresh Vagjiani and his wife Eana brush cows basking in the Vrindavan winter sun

After finishing my degree at City University (UK) in 1998 I landed a job as a trainee actuary. However, before starting to work I made a pilgrimage to India to see all the places I had heard so much about namely, Mayapur, Jagannath Puri, Dwaraka and Vrindavan. Since I was starting a new job I had decided to donate my first month's salary to some noble cause so while travelling I was on the lookout for worthy projects. Unfortunately, everywhere I went I mostly encountered money hungry *saddhus* and institutions.

Back in the UK I had made acquaintance with several Gurukulis and was impressed with their ability to penetrate the surface of things... to see beyond appearances. They were streetwise and able to see things from the inside out. Not being concerned about protecting their social image or material wealth, I found many of them suitable to take advice from in the matter of finding a worthy recipient to hand over my valuable first month's salary.

During my visit to Vrindavan my enquiries led me to Kurma Rupa Dasa, a former Gurukula teacher who the students trusted and confided in. I was informed by a Nepali Gurukuli named Arjuna that he was taking care of abandoned cows and I was curious to meet him.

Upon arrival we saw Kurma Rupa feeding a four-day-old orphaned bull calf with a baby



Baba drinking milk from a bottle

bottle. He told us that his mother died shortly after giving birth and that he was purchasing milk to keep the baby bull alive. It was obvious that the calf thought Kurma Rupa to be his mother as he followed him all around punching him with his nose trying to inspire him to give more milk. Somehow, I was convinced Krishna wanted me to offer my first month's salary here as Care for Cows was just blossoming with their first five residents.

Being a Gujarati I felt the need to confirm my intuition so I double-checked by inquiring from other sources regarding Kurma Rupa's reputation and was informed that my donation would be wisely put to use at Care for Cows.

I was told I could send my donation for Care for Cows through Vrindavan Food for Life which is a registered charity in England. Later, I discovered that the bank I worked for passed on donations without deducting taxes. Not only that, but the bank

actually tripled monthly donations to UK based charities!

It seemed to me that Krishna made a better plan than we could have imagined and arranged for my donation to be paid in full and

to further my participation in cow protection. I feel strongly that in Sri Vrindavan Mother Cow should be honored and respected instead of exploited and abused.

Last year, I asked Kurma Rupa



Suresh's donation built the first shed at Care for Cows

then tripled! Later I learned that my first month's salary was used to build Care for Cows' first shed to host 25 abandoned cows and I felt fortunate.

Consequently as I moved to another job I followed the same procedure of donating my first month's salary to Care for Cows. I am convinced that cow protection is a valuable and worthwhile service and I feel connected to Vrindavan even though I was stuck in the UK in a typical nine-to-five job.

As time went on I started my own firm and since it has done well I consequently felt the urge

to send me the names of all the cows who had no sponsor and was given a list of forty-eight. After some consideration, we decided to take on the responsibility of sending monthly donations to sponsor all of them. We are happy to have a herd of forty-eight cows and bulls in Vrindavan.

The hardships the abandoned cows have been through are painful to hear about and I am determined to do my part in making Vrindavan a place where the cow is protected and honored.

All the residents at Care for Cows have names and they are treated like family members.

During my subsequent visits to Vrindavan I feel my conviction deepening. I have spent hours in the *goshalla* brushing the cows, serving hands-on and feeling great pleasure through this little service. I even got to participate in digging the *samadhi* for Raju, one of the retired oxen I sponsored who passed away from old age. These memories and the monthly newsletters keep me in touch with Go Seva and Sri Vrindavan.

The protection of cows should be expanded until the suffering of mother cow is eradicated in Krishna's holy land. I hope to always be in a position to not only render but increase my service and feel much satisfaction in knowing that my contributions are being used in a way that pleases Lord Sri Krishna.



Eana finds Gaurangi's magic spot



Suresh brushes Janardana the Nil Gai



Right: Suresh mourns the loss of Raju

Ganga Delivers Her Calf
Two Months Early





The calf was nicknamed Muchukunda as he slept most of the time

One morning before sunrise we noticed Ganga did not come to her designated spot to have her first meal of the day. She was pacing back and forth in front of the parked truck lowering her head looking underneath it. When she bellowed loudly, Nirmal curiously went to investigate why she was neglecting her breakfast. In the faint morning light he saw under the truck a small calf struggling to get up and realized that Ganga had calved prematurely.

He pulled the small bull calf out from under the truck so Ganga could clean him up. His eyes were barely open and his hooves were soft and spongy like a rubber ball. His coat was intact but it was clear that he was undersized. Upon opening his mouth we could see his teeth had not yet protruded the gums. He was too weak to get

up and when raised to a standing position, his legs were too wobbly to support him. Nirmal held him to Ganga's teat and though he took it in his mouth, he was too weak to nurse. He was clearly unprepared to withstand the demands of life.

We carried him into one of the recovery pens with Ganga training behind calling to him visibly worried. He laid flat with all four legs extended breathing normally. We milked Ganga and put some of the colostrum in a baby bottle and managed to get the calf to drink some of it. Later Dr. Lavania examined him and told us that he may be inactive for ten days or so but there was every hope he would get stronger and survive.

Three times a day the cowherd men would feed him with the baby bottle and after four days he was strong enough to suckle and



Nirmal helps the premature calf to nurse

stand for a few minutes. Ganga would call to him and encourage him with constant licking but he would fall over and lie flat and fall asleep. Indeed, he slept about twenty hours a day.

The weather was as harsh as it had been all year... wind storms,

heavy rains followed by hot humid steam-bath-like days. Though he was well-sheltered on his tenth day he developed a constant fever that slowly consumed him.

On his twelfth day, though he fought the fever, he was strong enough to get up by himself and





Muchukunda at 12-days-old

nurse from his mother. He was more alert and would sit with Kiran the deer for a few minutes before trailing off to sleep.

On his fifteenth day Dr. Lavania saw him shivering and suspected that he had developed pneumonia. We began a course of medication and he showed improvement even though the fever persisted.

On his nineteenth day, the fever broke and we were hopeful he would now progress faster. It looked promising but on the morning of his twentieth day, he could not get up, nor could he stand while assisted, nor did he have the strength or interest to nurse. He laid flat and at mid-day breathed his last.



Holy Car Casualty

It was raining mercilessly when they unloaded the two-year-old bull and brought him into the recovery ward. He was covered with sewer mud and barely conscious. He had a nasty gash on the left side of his head which made his mangled ear hang much lower than normal. His right front leg was broken at the shank. They had found him laying flat on the side of the road... another casualty of the Holy Cars speeding in the monsoon rain.

(But what to do when the windshield wipers are defeated? Easy...press your thumb on the horn, foot to the floor and cackle like a witch. After all, caution is for cowards, right?)

Fortunately, the bull was completely docile and of course easier to attend to. First we brushed the black mud off of his face and neck and then went to work on cleaning the gaping gash which spread about four inches wide and five inches long. About one-third of his ear had been



The bull is dazed from the head injury



The gash was about 4 by 5 inches in size





Dr. Lavania examines the wound



and begins to suture the gash



Sixteen stitches in all

ripped off. The absence of necrotic tissue and maggots indicated it was a recent wound.

We made a temporary splint from PVC pipe, lined it with cotton and tightly fastened it to his leg with gauze bandaging thus immobilizing it. With the first aid finished, we propped him into a sitting position with a cushion and offered him a bowl of wheat straw with porridge. He ate slowly appearing still dazed from the blow to his head.

Dr. Lavania arrived shortly thereafter and decided to suture the wound. First he applied a local anesthetic around the perimeter of the gash and then carefully knitted the torn flesh back into place....sixteen stitches in all. The operation took almost an hour and to signal its success, the bull started waving his ear. The muscles still worked.

He examined the fractured leg and made sure it was set properly and strengthened the cast with two bamboo slats. Nine days have passed and the bull can get up and walk around by himself. He is eating

well and in good spirits. His leg has begun to mend successfully and the stitches will soon be taken out of his wound.

Owing to his gentle nature he has been named Om Shanti and has turned out to be one of the best patients we have attended to. He understands that we are trying to help him and is fully cooperative, peaceful, well-mannered, grateful and affectionate. Thanks to all concerned, it seems he is well on his way to recovery.



Om Shanti stands after the treatment



He is one of the most cooperative patients we have treated



Nitya Kisori came to us from Barsana more than eight months ago. She had been grazing in a farmer's field who decided the best way to discourage her was to smash her hind shank with a solid bamboo staff. It worked.

A Baba from Vrindavan noticed her sitting on the side of the road unable to walk and arranged to transport her to Care for Cows at his own expense. Her testimony can be read in the Care for Cows November 2007 Newsletter.



Nitya Kisori's Ordeal

It took several weeks to remove the hidden bone fragments from her leg and gradually the open wound began to mend but a considerable gap with no bone made her leg unable to bear weight. We kept her in a PVC cast changing it every three or four days for eight months. Gradually fibrous tissue began to join the fracture and she could bear some weight on it while walking.

Recently one of the cowherd men mentioned that her udder was starting to swell which is a sign that the cow may give birth within a week. We were all surprised as we had not allowed her to mate and her torso did not indicate that she was carrying a calf. Of course she could have arrived pregnant but we were doubtful as she was not showing.



Nitya Kisori's swelled udder



The calf stood up immediately



Vijay massages her legs

A few days later her udder became glossy and swelled further making her completely uncomfortable. Dr. Lavania was out of station so we called his senior student Dr. Dvivedi who promptly arrived with an assistant. After a cursory examination they both doubted that Nitya Kisori was pregnant and thought her udder was inflamed due to an infection. But after a thorough examination they announced that she was ready to give birth but that her calf was not in the proper position.

They induced the birth and after some struggle a full-sized calf emerged and promptly stood up and walked.



Nitya Kisori's licks her calf affectionately

Nitya Kisori was unable to get up to allow her calf to nurse so we extracted a full bucket of colostrum and bottle fed her and all the other calves as well. Though exhausted Nitya Kisori recovered quickly and within two days things got back to normal.

We changed her cast and agreed that within a month she would be able to walk without it.

Things were normal for another ten days except for excessive rain fall. Then one evening she sat down in her pen and refused to eat. The next morning her breathing was shallow and despite much encouragement would not get up to let her calf nurse. Her

temperature was normal but she laid flat and breathed quickly until noon and left her body.

Dr. Lavania told us that several *goshallas* were reporting deaths due to a deadly virus called HS which arrests the respiratory system. He advised us that we get the herd vaccinated for HS as well as FMD and we are in the process of doing that.

It is possible that Muchukunda died of the same virus and his passing has put his mother Ganga in distress. Interestingly enough, Nitya Kisori's calf naturally adopted Ganga as her surrogate mother and both of them are consoling each other.



At three-days-old

Thank You From the Cows



The cows send their heartfelt thanks to those who assisted during June 2008

Alessandra Petrassi
Ananda Dasa
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Anonymous
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Atmaram dasa
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Candramukhi Dasi
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Thomas Wazney
Varun Juneja
Vishvambara Priya Dasi
Vyasapada Dasa
Vyassadev K Munidas

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