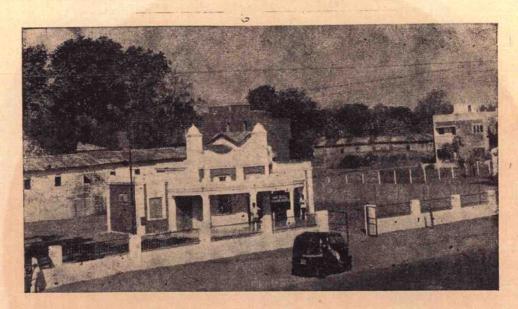




1969-1979

'INVOLVE' SPECIAL ISSUE



Operational base of Friends Society popularly known as pretty " Petit Library " situated opposite Parsi Agiyari on Fatehganj main road. It houses the public reading room and library, FS office and Typewriting Institute for the Phycically Handicapped and Women.

> Office Address: Petit Library, Fatehgunj Main Road, Baroda-390 002. (India) Phone: 66429

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LOOKING BACK...

Ten years in the life of an organization may not be a long time, yet for an institution which has shown an abiding faith in young people and is given to periodic retrospection of its activities, a decade of service does bring forth a definite trend of policies and projects; realization of tangible and intangible benefits to deprived groups, a direction for future programs.

During the last ten years, Friends Society has been implementing fourteen need-based projects (or 'groups' as they are called in F. S.)—each group serving the needs of certain vulnerable sections of the society: handicapped children and youth; predelinquent adolescents; infants and preschoolers; school going children, the Fatehgunj Community where FS is located, poor patients of SSG Hospital, the University youth and finally the FS members themselves.

This special issue of 'Involve' focuses on the origin, development and operations involved in the running of these projects.

As these activities go on record on the occasion of completion of ten years of service, let us remember that each activity has behind it a story of endless planning and tireless efforts...experimentation...successes and failures...satisfaction.

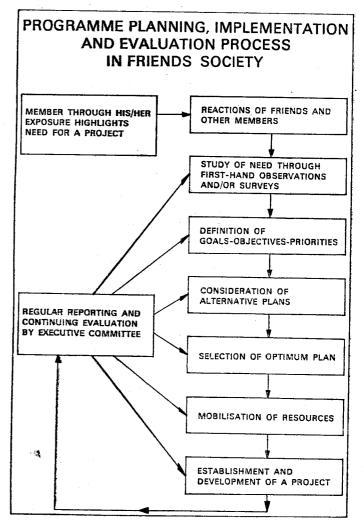
And let us strive to improve.

The Process of Growth

How does a project begin and grow in FS? Perhaps the process flow chart given here will provide an answer.

The projects' growth as outlined, coupled with motivation of active volunteers and continuous

guidance from the senior members, has enabled FS to achieve its primary objective, which put concisely is "self development through need-based services." However, this is not to say that FS has found all the answers; has treaded all the possible pathways to reach its goal. No doubt, FS has achieved a lot in the past decade as the following pages will show, but there still remains a lot to be done.

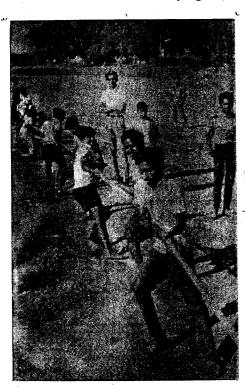


SPECIAL ISSUE

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

For those of us who have got used to the complex organisation that FS is today, it is difficult to imagine that the Society had a very modest beginning with just a handful of students. These students wanted to do something useful in their leisure hours and began visiting the handicapped children staying in the Home for Crippled Children, the School for Blind Children and Home for Retarded Children. More than any material help, these youngsters wanted friendly people to talk, play and sing with them.

This was how the Cheer Up group of FS



"Who says we're not strong!"
Tug-of-war by the blind.

came into being. We can be proud of the fact that FS showed concern for children long before the International Year of the Child. Even today, the Cheer up group visits the handicapped children and organises entertainment as well as educative programs like puppet shows, magic shows, outdoor trips to gardens, visits to circus, sports meets and contests in handwriting, painting and personal hygiene.

Today, the Cheer Up group covers nearly 150 children every year. Among others, it covers the spinal and children's wards in the SSG hospital. Special mention must be made of two activities which FS members look forward to every year: Raksha Bandhan celebrations when our girls tie rakhies on the wrists of the children in the various institutions, and the gala Santa Claus Act on Christmas Day in the pediatric wards which has been a source of great mirth for the sick children for the past many years.

Thus the opening chapter of the FS book of activities is devoted to handicapped children and so is its most recent chapter: The Mobile Recreation and Medical Aid Program for Physically Handicapped Children. This project was launched in September 1979, with a view to identifying and providing recreational and medical services to severely handicapped non-institutionalised children staying with families all over the city. The twin purposes of this project are to increase the mobility, self-confidence and zest of living of these children through contacts with the world outside their homes, and secondly, to reduce their disability while at the same time increasing their residual abilities at an early age. This is being done by motivating them to undergo medical check up, surgery, physiotherapy or use of appliances, if necessary.

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SPEICAL ISSUE

Every Sunday, the group members in a bus provided by Rosary School or Chetan Balwadi pick up 34 of such registered children from their homes. Their maiden activities have been: trips around Baroda City and to Sayaji Garden, a picnic to Nimeta, film shows and explorations in painting and music. For a group still in its infancy it is really active and on the go. Having begun with recreational activities, the second phase, i. e. medical check up, and follow—up has started. At the moment, four children have been taken for intensive medical check up at the SSG Hospital, out of which three have undergone surgery.

PRE-DELINQUENT CHILDREN

While coping with a physical handicap has its own problems, a young boy in his teens, attempting to cope up with an idle mind backed by abundant energy presents an altogether different picture... vulnerable to delinquent tendencies, simply because he finds nothing constructive to do. The Youth Club of Friends Society, instituted in 1978, therefore aims at reducing such tendencies in the adolescent boys of Fatehgunj community by organizing for them interesting activities in the sports and cultural sphere and creating an atmosphere conducive to wholesome personality development.

Before the cohesive Youth Club was formed, the FS members established personal contacts with the adolescent boys staying in Fatehgunj slums and identified activities which interested them. Those who enrolled soon became regular evening visitors to FS and the 40 member club has now regular cricket and football teams which play against other teams. Group discussions, informal entertainment programs and outdoor games take place twice a week; occasional trips are made to the Sayaji garden,

museum or other places. This year an overnight camp for them was arranged at Samiala, which was a thrilling experience for the participants. The boys often join other FS groups in their activities either as receptive audience or willing helpers. The group members of FS and two students deputed from Faculty of Social Work help them in organizing activities.

The club has registered itself with the World Wild Life Fund and plans to increase its area of activities by arranging more overnight, group-living camps; health check-ups for members; drawing/handwriting competitions and non-formal educational activities.

INFANTS AND PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

A notable project involving the Fatehouni community is the Mother Child Health Care Centre which was established in 1977 in view of the fact that the existing health services for poor families in Fatehgunj were inadequate, especially in the area of preventive health care. A child born healthy through proper antenatal care of the mother and given the benefit of regular medical services and immunization stands better chances of survival and growth in a hostile, poverty-ridden environment. The MCHCC, whose aim is preventive health care of children and mothers residing in Fatehgunj, has developed in two phases: In the first phase (1977) services were offered for children in the 0 to 5 year age-group, and the second phase, which has commenced in 1979 with the Ante Natal and Post-Natal clinic (ANPN), offers medical services to pregnant and lactating mothers. Together, these two wings, which function every Saturday afternoon, complement the services of one another. Their activities involve-

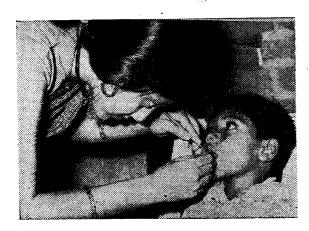
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- ☐ Regular health check-ups of children below 5 years of age by doctors deputed by the Department of Pediatrics of the Medical college.
- Health Check-ups of expectant/lactating mothers by gynaecologists from the Dept. of Obstretics and Gynaecology of the Medical College.
- ☐ Immunization program for children.
 - Treatment of minor ailments and referral services to S.S.G. hospital.
- ☐ Routine laboratory investigations of blood and urine of mothers in the ANPN wing.
- Play centre for those children who do not attend any Balwadi.
- Health-nutrition education to mothers regarding proper child care.



Say, 'Aa...!' Health check-up in progress.

At present 500 children and 36 mothers are taking advantage of the MCHCC. 82% of the children are completely immunized. About 25 children regularly attend our play centre. Health education programs organised by the group include film shows, healthy—baby competition and health exhibition, puppet shows, recipe competition on

foods suitable for toddlers and preschoolers; demonstrations and so on. There is seen a growing awareness among the mothers in health care of children and more mothers than in the past turn up regularly on scheduled dates without being reminded through home visits. However, follow—up has been and will remain an integral part of the functioning of the centre. The group now plans to focus more on the health education component of its services in the next few years.

SCHOOL CHILDREN

While vulnerable infants and preschoolers are looked at with concern by the health authorities, the school-going children pose an entirely different challenge, for they need meaningful education for their intellectual development; they are potential leaders and they need to prepare themselves for the turbulent adolescent years ahead. In Indian families, they are generally over protected by 'anxious' parents. Moreover, urban children have limited exposure to adventure and nature. Therefore. to provide outward bound adventurous, non-formal educative experiences to these school children and to give them necessary training in developing leadership qualities-the Program For Future Leaders appeared on the FS scene in 1971 In that year it had 100 beneficiaries. After eight years, its beneficiaries add to 1000 who in one way or the other, participate in PFL's following activities:

The Sanskar Quiz Contest:

This annual general knowledge contest attracts about twenty-five schools from Baroda while the first contest brought forth only seven schools. Two children from each school participate for the Sanskar trophy. Questions are asked both in Gujarati and English.

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"I know the answer." Attentive children at the Sanskar Quiz contest.



"Between the earth and the sky."

An OB participant at Deolali.

Outward Bound program:

The prospect of participating in our yearly OB program at Deolali thrills the children for they know it involves adventurous activities like gliding, canoeing, rock-climbing, obstacle test, cross-country hikes as well as sessions on topics like leadership, team work, 'know yourself' and others related to personality development. Every year, thirty 8th and 9th Std. boys and girls from different Schools of Baroda selected through an interview and health check-up, are taken to Deolali where the OB program is organized in collaboration with the Leslie Sawhney Institute and Army personnel. In this 10th year we took two batches to Deolali at different periods, one of English medium school children and the other of Gujarati medium school children.

Library for children

In our Petit Library, we have started a children's books section which is equipped at present with 600 books and in the next few years we hope to have an exclusive Children's Library.

Children's Film Club

Started in 1978, CFC has 700 children (7-15 years) as members, and it screens six children's films

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"COUNT YOUR LIFE BY SMILES, NOT TEARS,"
COUNT YOUR AGE BY FRIENDS, NOT YEARS."

U

1)

in a year at a theatre in the city. The films are of interest to children combining education, adventure, entertainment, cartoons, feature films, documentries and fairy tales.

Leadership Camp for Class Monitors

We have devised a special two-day program for monitors of schools so that they can perform this role more effectively. For the last few years we have not been able to organize this camp due to paucity of trainers. We hope to revive this program soon.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN

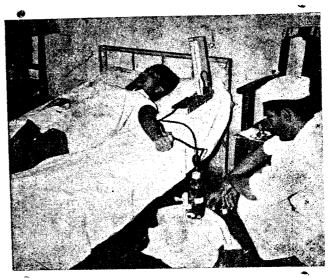
The problems of orphan and delinquent children are quite complex and all along the approach has been to give them institutionalised care which in many ways isolates them from the main stream of the society. In 1970 our members therefore hit upon a novel non-institutionalised project known as "Adopt A Family Friend Program" for the orphan boys of the Government Certified School so that some of them could get a feel of family atmosphere. Every year, through our advertisement in newspapers, 10-12 families enrol in this program. Each family semi-adopts an orphan child and invites him home on Sundays and holidays. FS members leave and bring back the children from their respective families. Thus a trio of family-child-volunteer is formed which operates throughout the year so that a harmonious relationship is established and developed.

The matching of families and children is made with the assistance of Certified School authorities and students from the Faculty of Social Work. Besides the placement of children on Sundays, the group organises a get-together of all the families and children at Sayaji Garden and an annual sports

meet at the Certified School. This year the program has been extended to orphan girls of Remand Home. At present 12 children (8 boys and 4 girls) are being placed in their respective families. The follow-up with families reveals positive changes in the children's behaviour. This program has tremendous scope for expansion provided a van is available on Sundays to leave the children in families spread all over the town.

POOR AND NEEDY PATIENTS

A few months after the establishment of AFF program, in 1970, a new group took shape, namely, the Voluntary Blood Donation Program based on the needs of the Blood Bank of the SSG Hospital. In 1970, the Blood Bank of SSG Hospital was receiving only 500 bottles from voluntary donors every year against its requirement of about 3,000 bottles. The contribution of the student population was almost nil. Today, students constitute about 40% of the total voluntary donors. More and more students are coming forward willingly every year to donate blood, as their fears associated with blood



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In organizing camps regularly in the university hostels and faculties, convincing the students about the need for their blood in saving fellow human beings, educating them about the absolute safety of blood donation through talks in classrooms, attractive posters and sometimes, film shows. Camps are organized in accordance with the needs of the Blood Bank of the SSG Hospital through the joint efforts of the Blood Donation group, the Blood Bank and the city-level Nagrik Raktadan Samiti.

The table below gives in brief the progress of the Friends Society Voluntary Blood Donation Program.

Year	No. of Camps orga- nised	No. of Bottles colle- cted
1970-71	12	630
1971-72	9	836
1972-73	17	975
1973-74	12	518
1974-75	12	696
1975-76	13	662
1976 77	17	783
1977- 78	22	1033
1978-79	18	739
1979-80	23	1,016
Total	165	7,888
Average	16.5 Per Year	47.8 Per Camp

Since 1978, the group has started maintaining a Cardex system which contains in a systematic order, a complete list (with address) of donors willing to donate blood in case of an emergency.

Seeing that quite a few students coming forward to donate blood (especially girls) are disqualified because they are anaemic, the group has recently brought out an attractive pamphlet on 'Anaemia-its causes, prevention and treatment'. This pamphlet, along with iron tablets, is handed over to such anaemic students, with a request to get their blood haemoglobin checked periodically at our Health Centre on Saturdays. The group will soon bring out a pamphlet on "Finger Tip Facts About Blood Donation" and will consolidate the total program.

Three years later, in 1974, FS started another project for poor patients of the General Hospital. The project is a medical store named Sheth Khushal-chand Charitable Medical Centre, started after considerable spadework and preparation of a detailed project report. The project got financial support of Rs. 80,000 as revolving fund from Sheth Khushalchand Charitable Trust.

Situated opposite the out-patient department in S.S.G. hospital premises, the store provides medicines, orthopaedic appliances and daily use articles to needy patients of S.S.G., Jamnabai and T.B. hospitals on "no profit no loss" basis. At present the sales turnover of the Store is about Rs. 7 lakhs annually compared to a yearly sale of drugs worth Rs. 2.5 lakhs in 1974 Refer table over leaf.

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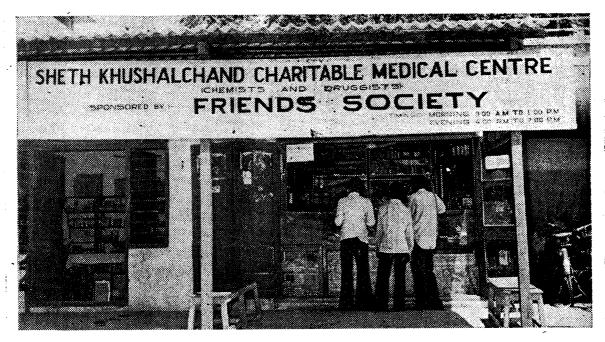
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Progress of Sheth Khushalchand Medical Centre

Year	Sales turn-over	No. of patients benefitted	Minimum savings to patients
	Rs.		Rs.
1974-75	2,58,000	30,000	25,800
1 975-76	2,91,000	39,000	29,100
1976-77	4,89,000	46,000	48,000
1977- 78	6,00,000	60,000	60,000
197 8-79	7,18,000	70,000	72,000
1 979-80	9,25,000	75,000	92,000

About 75,000 patients a year take benefit from our Centre. Most of these patients who visit the hospital hail from poor families either in Baroda city or its neighbouring district and they can hardly afford to buy drugs at the prohibitive market rates. Therefore, our store, providing drugs at concessional rates at the hospital premises itself, somewhat eases their financial burden. The store also supplies anticancer and other life saving drugs not usually available in Baroda, as well as drugs sent from abroad by former members who have settled in other countries. Volunteers at this centre maintain the store and its records; assure quick service to

patients, forecast demand of drugs and procurethese from pharmaceutical companies. Recently the timings of the Store have been extended from sevento twelve hours (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.). A water cooler for the public has also been installed.

* The third project catering to the needs of poor patients is the X-Ray Plate Project. Due to increased demand and budget constraints, there is a perpetual shortage of X-ray plates in government. hospitals. On the other hand the charges of private clinics for X-ray are taxing for needy patients. To help poor patients under these circumstances, FSstarted the X-ray plate project in 1971 by raising a sum of Rs. 5,000 through Re. 1/- contribution from individuals. Using this amount as a revolvingfund, X-ray plates are purchased directly frommanufacturers. Arrangement for their sale is made at the X-ray departments of S.S.G. and T.B. hospitals to poor patients at concessional rates. 10% of the plates are given completely free to very poor patients on the recommendations of the doctors. Till December 1979, 24004 plates have been sold and a sum of Rs. 3,84,064 of the patients hasbeen saved.

HANDICAPPED YOUTH

Above the door of a small room in the FS-campus, is a board saying: The Typewriting

Anstitute For the Physically Handicapped And Women. This project was established in 1974 after our market survey revealed that there is a growing demand for proficient typists. It is a well known fact that seminars or sentiments alone cannot rehabilitate the disabled. There is a crucial need for training them to become "employable": a vital step in the process of their economic rehabilitation. This institute provided a partial answer. To date 33 disabled people have secured employment in



"Disability is not the absence of ability."

the open market after being trained in typing. They are also helped in appearing for the Government Commercial Diploma Certificate tests. A few proficient ones also accept private typing work at the standard rates. Initially, the institute trained only physically handicapped people who could use their hands and fingers and were minimum SSC pass. The facilities of this Institute were extended to women in 1977. At present 40 beneficiaries are runder training.

In 1977, the physically handicapped youth with some FS members founded the Sunday Club For Physically Handicapped Youth mainly to get together and organize recreational activities. In Baroda City, there are about 1,000 physically disabled young persons but there is no place where they can meet socially. With the objective of increasing their mobility, social interaction and boosting their self-confidence through the organization of their own activities, the Sunday Club was formed. This 80-member strong club which began with 60 members, meets every alternate Sunday, It has to its credit various educative and entertaining sports and cultural activities. From a few indoor and outdoor games in the initial stage to celebration of Sharad Purnima nights; talks by experts, slide shows, parrot show, shayari program by well known poets; picnics, trips to interesting places in Baroda city and participation in a unique outwardbound adventurous camp in Deolali in 1977. A perceptible change is also taking place amongst the members...less shyness, more confidence to move around on their own, less sex inhibition. The group has plans to set up an art exhibition every year wherein articles or paintings prepared by the physically handicapped persons of Baroda will be kept for public view and sale. The first such exhibition, organized in January 1980 received an extremely favourable response from the public.

GENERAL COMMUNITY

Amongst the Fatehgunj community people, Friends Society is popularly known as 'the Library.' This is because the FS building was originally (and still is) the *Petit Library* which FS has developed since 1973 in order to promote reading habits among the residents of the community. The library

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has 2000 books to cater to various tastes and added in 1978, a section for children's books. 250 adults and 55 children are its members. We also operate a Public Reading Room daily for the people, which has different news-papers and magazines; as well as a separate Study Centre for those school children who have inadequate facilities or space for studying quietly at home. This study centre, which is also the venue of FS group meetings, is used by the children during late evenings and nights. The library room is also a multi-purpose room used for meetings and other FS activities like the Ante-natal and Post-natal Clinic on Saturdays; Sunday Club activities on Sundays and EC meetings. The beautiful garden we have developed around the building adds to the aesthetic beauty of the FS campus.

UNIVERSITY YOUTH

Many volunteers who have become active members in some of the above mentioned projects first came to know about Friends Society when they participated in its Orientation Program for New Entrants to The M. S. University. Every year about 500 new entrants to the M. S. University come to reside in the university hostels. Many of these students come from other parts of India or foreign countries and often feel lost, lonely and homesick. They do not know Baroda and have adjustment problems in the absence of competent and friendly people to guide them. Therefore to welcome them to Baroda and familiarize them with the city and the university campus, FS has been organizing since 1973, an annual "Trip around the Town". New students are taken around the city and the campus in a bus, in the company of FS volunteers. About 40 students participate in this trip every year.



□ We have also prepared a booklet titled 'Welcome to M. S. University' which we personally hand over to the freshers in their hostels. The booklet contains helpful information regarding facilities in the university, courses available, catering places, banks, scholarships, medical services and so on.

☐ A simulated employment interview clinic for the final year FS member students of the University is organized every year, which enables them to seek vocational guidance from experienced practitioners drawn from different organizations. This facility is likely to be extended to other final year students of the University.

By the year 1985, which has been declared asthe International Year of the Youth, we have plansto establish a counselling centre for young persons-

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and offer work scholarships, to needy university students under the auspices of Youth Opportunities Program.

Finally what about the FS members themselves, the most important resource of Friends Society? They are the ones who conceive, design, implement, coordinate and evaluate FS activities. The need to thelp them develop as individual personalities and refficient volunteers was recognized right in the beginning. Therefore the Self Development Program began with the inception of Friends Society. The salient points of this program are

- to ensure that the management of activities becomes the focal point of learning in FS,
- to identify needs of individual members and organization as a whole
- to arrange talks by experts in the various fields of art, science, commerce, education, religion and philosophy.
- to organize outstation, leadership and personality development camps for members and the Executive Committee,
- to procure books and literature pertaining to community service and development: how to tackle social and emotional problems; current ideas and trends in the country, to mention a few themes.
- to publish a quarterly bulletin "INVOLVE".

The group has a tremendous potential for development and hopes to add, modify its activities so that the FS members are more capable volunteers and thoughtful citizens.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

The Executive Committee

All the programs and their related issues are discussed and managed by the Executive Committee which meets usually once in two months. The committee receives group reports, evaluates the functioning of various groups and gives its suggestions. The day-to-day project work is managed by the respective group-in-charges who are EC members. These group in-charges have the operational freedom to plan and implement their group activities with their group members to the best of their own ability. with guidelines from the Executive Committee. The outgoing Executive Committee at the end of the year selects the next EC. We do not believe in elections. As far as possible 50% of members selected are those who are likely to remain in the M. S. University for the next two or three years. This policy has paid dividends since no vacuum is created when senior volunteers leave FS.

Sources of Finance

We raise roughly 15% of the yearly expenditure through our own membership fees, 35% through our organised fund-raising drives like charity film shows and raffles; and 50% through donations from individuals, trusts and other organizations. We do not receive any grant from Government or the University.

Once a Friend, Always a Friend...

...so we believe. Students who join FS and become involved in its activities sooner or later leave FS but a great many maintain contact through letters, greeting cards and re-live those 'good old days' when they visit Baroda and meet members. Besides regular correspondence, FS keeps all the

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258, GIDC Estate, Makarpura Road, BARODA-390 010. Phone: 4779-4267 past and present members informed of its activities and new developments through 'Involve', our quarterly newsletter. 39 of our past 'friends' have become our Life-members.

On our Annual Day which marked the completion of ten years of service, we organized a re-union of past and present members in which a meaningful, pleasant and nostalgic dialogue took place on the growth of FS-its activities, problems and future issues.

Unwritten Conventions of FS

The conventions mentioned below will not be found in any of our files, nevertheless they are followed.

 Publicity: We do not shun publicity, yet we believe that it should be in proportion to our achievements. No individual publicity and hence it: would be noticed that in any literature of FS nonames are mentioned.

- ☐ Finance: No donation to our society is toosmall to escape our acknowledgement and thanks. Each donation, whether a large amount or a small one, is equally important to us.
- ☐ Membership: Three members; if they are really involved, can do the job of thirty members. Therefore we do not go in for vigorous membership campaigns.
- ☐ The atmosphere of FS is semi-formal, informal enough to be participative, friendly and flexible, yet: formal as far as accountability.

Best Volunteer (s) of the Year Award

This award goes to that volunteer (s) who has made a commendable contribution and has been found by the EC members as being the most involved member during the year. The decision is based on evaluation criteria forms filled by the EC members which have been especially designed for the purpose. Ability to manage a group (project), leadership qualities, punctuality, willingness to shoulder responsibility, initiative...are some of the criteria mentioned in these forms.

Recipients of Best Volunteer (Friend/s) of the Year" Award

Year	Name	Faculty
1969–70	Yashshree Shembekar	Home Science
1970–71	Sagun Desai	Medicine
1971–72	Yusuf Bora and Villu Palia	Technology and Home Science.
1972–73	Nishith Desai	Technology
1973–74	Durgadas Chellani	Technology
1974-75	Munindra Kharod	Science
1975–76	Ashwin Dhabalia	Technology
1976–77	Shripal Shah	Technology
1977–78	Jaikishan Gianchandani & Shirish Shah	Technology
1978-79	Shubhada Gautam and Rahul Sharma	Home Science and Science
1979–80	Radha Misra	Home Science



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How YOU Can Help

Give blood at our blood donation camps.
Donate in cash and kind. A seemingly small donation means a lot to us.
Adopt a 'Family Friend'.
Purchase attractive Diwali and Christmas greeting cards prepared by our handicapped friends.
Give typing material to our trainees at the Typewriting Institute for the physically handicapped and women.
Buy raffle tickets, our charity film show or entertainment program
tickets to help us in our Fund Raising Programs.
Be our Life-member.
Release advertisements in our quarterly bulletin "INVOLVE".

Donations to our Society are exempted from Income Tax under Sec. 11 and 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Cheques may please be crossed and issued in favour of "Friends Society, Baroda." All contributions will be acknowledged.

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