

Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children

# The Sharing Foundation

www.sharingfoundation.org

PO Box 600 Concord, MA 01742

Winter 2006

## 19 Full Scholarships for TSF University Students

Freshmen Students registering for classes.



Nine returning TSF University Students begin sophomore year.



The Sharing Foundation is very proud to announce that all ten of our sponsored High School seniors, many of whom have been supported by you, our readers, through four years of "private" [small group] classes in secondary school, passed the three day High School Graduation exams in August and have now begun their Freshman year at one of several Universities in Phnom Penh!

Three young men, Kong Maneth, Sin Vuthy, and Chan Phearum also have the honor of having been admitted to the International Foreign Language school [IFL], the most prestigious university, and the only one requiring separate entrance exams. Maneth and Vuthy were accepted for the four year course; Chan Phearum was accepted for the "bridging course", requiring an extra year for graduation. We are very thrilled with the success of all ten

students, and especially with these three, who all wish to pursue English language teaching degrees.

The other seven students are now enrolled at Norton University. Srey Vanny, Korb Srey Poch, Phorn Vandy, & Thong Buntheng are all aiming at degrees in Hotel and Tourism management, a very practical field with such a rise in tourism in Cambodia. Chhom Thavy, Heng Panara, and Nhoung Pheasa are all enrolled for degrees in Economics, with aims of being business people.

With eight sophomores also returning to Norton University, Nancy Hendrie formally requested a discount for our NGO, and we were happy to receive 20% reduction in tuition for our whole group of fifteen students. Nevertheless, the expenses for each student will be about \$1300 for each sophomore, and about \$1600 for each Freshman, reflecting the need to outfit each with bed, desk, bookcases, bicycle, textbooks, and new full uniforms. We really appreciate it that several donors, who had been footing the \$300 a year bill for high school, have now increased their support to cover their now college student. Several other groups, such as Sharing a New Song in Massachusetts [under John Watt's organizing], our Australian High school visitors from Sydney last spring, Tom Meyers of Branchville, NJ, and several birthday dedications have helped create a "gap fund" for educational expenses.

a second "dorm", about a block from last year's dorm, near the Russian market. While simple, it is clean and safe, with a small kitchen space, indoor bathroom and four bedrooms. The bad news for the boys—now ten of them total—is that we separated the boys' and girls' dorms this year, so the boys must now do their own cooking and housekeeping, something the original group [mixed boys and girls] leaned on the girls to carry last year! We are thrilled with the achievements of our students—and a little afraid of our four year commitment for their educations, plus, of course, the potential for having 40 students in universities at one time, since more are coming along. However we see education as the true path out of the profound poverty of their families, and are proud to work to make it possible.



Kong Maneth, Chan Phearum, & Sin Vuthy, our stars at IFL.

Elephant located, rented and equipped



University Students' Parents pledged emotional support for their students.





# Sponsors Needed for eight new Roteang Students joining TSF's High School Program

With the graduation of ten of our sponsored students from High School into Universities, we have interviewed and selected eight ninth grade students and are looking for sponsors for these youngsters so they can get good high schooling. Each is selected on recommendation of his or her teachers, for industry and eagerness to learn, ability, and need. Each student is interviewed by TSF after filling out an application, and Elephant then does a home visit to check

on need and be sure there is family support for the student to attend advanced schooling, instead of working. The average child, if he/she goes to school at all, gets only as far as 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and only if lucky.

This year we have chosen 6 girls and 2 boys—One boy already has a sponsor; we are looking for interested families to help the other 7 achieve their dreams. The cost of the program is \$300 for the year. The money pays for special, small group classes taught by the high school teachers during the high school day, where texts

are used, questions can be asked and discussion takes place. Regular high school classes are so large that there is just rote teaching, few texts are available, and there is no chance to question.

The "private classes" cost \$1.25 per class, and usually our students take 4 or 5 per day. Money also covers transportation by trailer to and from Roteang to the High School, 8 km away. Uniforms



Needing Sponsors; (L to R) Som Nara, Sao Chanda, Phoung Sokhen, Ros Sokunthea, Pang Sineth and Ly Sophea. (Not Pictured Makara and San Sokroth)



San Sokroth, ninth grader, wants to become an English teacher. None of Sokroth's family managed to make it past grade 7.

and books are also covered. The other part of sponsorship, as important to the students as the sponsorship funds, is the commitment on the part of the American family to write to "their" student four times a year. The students **really** count on these letters, and they always write back; ample notice is given when letters are due, and they are hand-carried from the USA. Please contact Education Sponsorship Coordinator Sally

Stokes [sstokes@roteang.org](mailto:sstokes@roteang.org) if you would like to fund and to write to a student, or to find out more about the program.

Patricia Ellis of Acton, MA, retired Head of Nashoba Brooks School in Concord, MA is the fortunate winner of Jerielle Young's exceptional framed photograph at Angkor Wat in our raffle drawn November 1st.



Ly Sophea, a ninth grader, the daughter of two unschooled farmers, wants to become an English teacher



Sao Chenda, a ninth grader, wants to be a journalist. Her parents stopped school in the 5th and 7th grades

**Where your money does not go:**  
**Did you Know...** The Sharing Foundation has no Americans on salary. Your money is not spent on executive pay; the Board members and the parents advisory council are all volunteers. Many parents and volunteers work hard selling crafts, planning and running benefit dinners and events and raising funds for the many TSF projects. The Sharing Foundation has no office suite to eat into your contributions, just rent-free spaces in various volunteers' homes. There are no paid fundraisers or soliciting staff and no paid advertising campaigns. Our only administrative expenses are the required CPA and legal expenses, phone and the printing and mailing of the newsletters. All of the rest of your donations go straight to helping the children of Cambodia! We have a great prepared slide show and DVD about Cambodia and the projects we'd love to show to your Church or community group. If your organization is interested, contact us, please!  
Thank you for helping us help the children of Cambodia.



## Visiting Professors spend 4 weeks working with our TSF English School Teachers

Donna Biscay and Bruce McCutcheon, Seattle teachers of ESL [English as a Second Language] came as volunteers to spend 4 weeks with us in October at the TSF English school, to see what we needed to do to make the program better, and to work with our teachers, none of whom ever had any actual teacher training. The English School needs revamping; we have let the previous Head and one of his teachers go and one other teacher has resigned for family reasons. So we are rebuilding, which you will hear about as we accomplish this. The school currently teaches about 520 students daily, five days a week. All come voluntarily after a day of regular public school; many students also are in English "study clubs" on weekend mornings. The following is Bruce & Donna's story of their experiences:



Bruce & Donna with TSF Teachers

The metal gate swings wide as we drive into the grounds of Roteang's elementary school. Children from the village are climbing and hanging off the playground equipment – a gift from The Sharing Foundation. Settling into blue plastic chairs in the library, we begin the afternoon training session with the eight teachers of The Sharing Foundation's English School. Our teachers' lesson begins with a greeting: "Happy Halloween!" A flicker of recognition crosses some faces. After a few comments about the special American holiday, we start reviewing a few language-teaching concepts from yesterday. They are getting more comfortable asking us questions when they don't understand --- a model we hope they will follow with their own students. In addition to questions about yesterday's concepts, teachers are wondering about the phrase "dissecting rabbits," a reference, which appears in their reading homework from yesterday. The writers (Michael Lewis and Jimmie Hall in *Practical Techniques for Language Teaching*) have explained that a language is dead, like a dissected rabbit, if it is picked apart and overanalyzed. The authors assert that children would rather play with live rabbits than dissect them over and over. We continue offering a few more metaphors to illustrate our point that Cambodian teachers should use activities with a communicative purpose, in addition to those that simply practice form. During our daily 1½-hour long teacher-training classes, we introduce some fundamental concepts familiar to educators and professional language teachers and tie them to demonstrations of specific teaching techniques. Today, our group of teacher's experiences a simple dictation exercise, one they could use in their elementary classes.

Our journey from Seattle to this rural school 40 minutes from Phnom Penh began in the fall of 2005 when TSF board member Liese Rajesh sent us an email with the subject line "Teach in Cambodia?" Liese knew us as teachers from several community colleges in the Seattle area, Seattle Central

Community College and Shoreline Community College (SCC), where we are both full-time professors of English as a Second Language. Liese's email encouraged us to pursue a sabbatical leave from SCC (a two-year academic transfer and technical/profession college). Since we had been interested in Liese's involvement with TSF for several years and knew of the foundation's good works and worthy goals, we were enthusiastic about helping to improve the teaching in a village school. It seemed to us an excellent project to present to our colleagues on the sabbatical committee. The committee members agreed wholeheartedly.

On Halloween night the focus is briefly on reviewing the concept of accuracy versus fluency. It is the idea that language teachers should identify their goal in a speaking activity so that they give students the appropriate amount and right kind of correction. Similarly, we review the concept of input versus intake, the idea that teachers can present a small amount or large amount of listening or reading material (input). However, what is more important is how much the students can grasp and incorporate into their learning (intake). Once again we have stressed the primacy of learning over teaching. After this review, the teachers compare and discuss a variety of reading questions. They are learning about the material in the Lewis/Hill text while simultaneously learning about how to teach and assess reading skills in their classes. We are attempting in such activities to model and draw the teachers' attention to effective teaching practices. Later we give a teaching demonstration showing how to use dictation to stimulate students' interest and to challenge their listening/grammar skills. On previous evenings we have involved them in activities that demonstrated effective use of pictures, creative communication, and pronunciation techniques. After a wrap up of tonight's session of teacher training, it is time to check the sign-up sheet on the library wall. Tonight Bruce will be visiting the classes of Sokhorn, Sovanak, Saram, and Danith while

Donna will spend a half an hour in the classes of Sary, Samphors, Sreyleak, and Nary. Each teacher will include us in some form of team-teaching.

It's 5:00 and as the teachers and we emerge from the library, we see children from Roteang and surrounding villages arriving on bicycles or on foot. As the children greet their classmates, the teachers walk across the red dirt courtyard to their classrooms. We find a few students sweeping out the dusty cement floors of the classrooms. As English classes begin, students stand and greet their teachers in chorus: "Good evening, teacher." All windows and doors

remain open for ventilation, so these enthusiastic greetings can be heard from afar.

We step into a classroom and see twenty to thirty students in the room. They are sitting at rough surfaced picnic-style tables, each table 15 to 20 feet long. The lighting seems dim to us, but students are focused on their books and teachers.

For the period Bruce is in Sokhorn's class, he informally tells the students of languages that he can speak, from English (very well) to Khmer (very little). He leads a brief listening activity in which students catch and write down a language he is mentioning in the context of one or two sentences. Then he models pronunciation of the names of the languages (Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, etc.) for choral practice and later interacts with individual students asking whether they can understand, speak, read, or write some particular language. Students laugh as they are introduced to a word or two in an unfamiliar language (*libro, chao, arigato*). The Cambodian teacher, Sokhorn, then instructs his students to work in pairs asking and answering questions about their abilities with various languages. Donna is in another class engaged in similar team-teaching.

We have found the teachers to be enthusiastic and open-minded about new ideas for teaching English. Gradually, they are coming to see the connection between underlying concepts of language learning/teaching and practical classroom practices. We are occasionally surprised when an activity or technique we have explored in training shows up in a lesson with the Cambodian teacher's own twist on it. It has been both rewarding and challenging for us to be involved in this project. We have sometimes wondered about the Cambodian teachers' true attitude toward our ideas and presence in their classes, but are reassured by their recurring question: "When are you coming back to help us?"

Donna Biscay & Bruce McCutcheon,  
Nov 1, 2006



Roteang Orphanage Brothers Sambath, Sambo, and Sronoh



(L to R) Pov Sotceat, Ly Yi Sophal, Touch Socheat at Roteang Orphanage



Panda at Roteang Orphanage



New Roteang Orphanage Playground



Vuthea and Nancy Hendrie



TSF's Khmer Literacy School



Farm School



Srey Touch



Playground at Roteang

Chan  
Piseth

Sok Neath



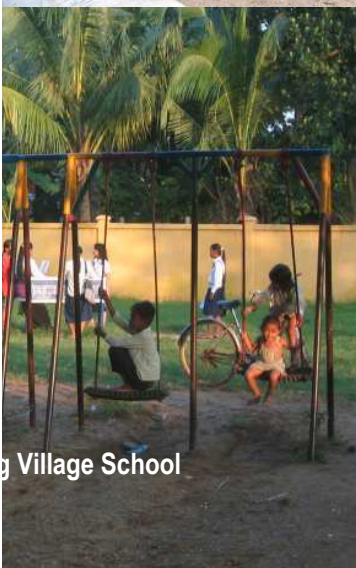
Twins Bori &  
Bora



New Roteang  
Orphanage  
Playground



American Spirit School



Village School



Channy on slide at  
New Playground at  
Roteang  
Orphanage



MEMORIAL FOR  
DONATION OF  
THE SHARING FOUNDATION

# The Sharing Foundation reaches out to multiple schools



TSF Board Member Sally Stokes presents Uniforms at Beng Krom School.

October is the month schools open in Cambodia, and we have had a busy time delivering school supplies and uniforms to three schools we support. We welcomed the help of several TSF volunteers, and enjoyed meeting the hundreds of children truly delighted by receiving new copybooks, pens and pencils. At Roteang Primary School, 250 sets of school uniforms, two white shirts plus navy pants or skirt, were given to the principal, Pov Sreng, for distribution to the neediest children. In addition, at a ceremony the school always requests, on the steps of the TSF- built One World School building, we presented representative children with 2 copy books each, plus pens and pencils for the first half of the year. A total of 1500 copybooks, 720 pens and 720 pencils were donated to Roteang Village school.

A trip across the

incredibly swift and swollen Mekong River, at flood stage in the height of the rainy season with chunks of trees constantly floating by, landed us almost in the schoolyard of the Beng Krom school. Three months ago TSF, through a donation of the Long Island Chapters of the American Association of University Women, had installed a rainwater collection system to replace the highly arsenic contaminated government well at this poor primary school for 800 students. At the time it was obvious that the school had few resources, and could use our help. Sally Stokes, visiting Board member, and her husband Bob Luoma and son Dan, as well as visitor Ruth Armknecht made this jaunt with Nancy Hendrie. Hundreds of school children were assembled in the front yard, squatting in whatever shade of small trees was possible. A banner with hand-cut paper Khmer letters heralded the arrival

of The Sharing Foundation. Principal Kong Kol expressed his thanks this way: "I would like to extend my deepest [sic] again for The Sharing Foundation which has honestly, spend the spirits, energy and equipment to fill the lack of school." We presented 200 school uniforms, 1600 copybooks, 760 pens and 760 pencils.

Volunteer Ruth Armknecht and I had a wonderful time at TSF's own small literacy school, a school that makes a big difference for the students who come to "head start" there. We brought 240 copy books, 140 pens and 140 pencils; the children were really excited as shown by their smiling faces and happy receiving of supplies.

Finally, we donated 260

school uniforms to the Maryknoll group home project for children from that NGO who go to public schools. Total cost of all the uniforms at \$5 per set: \$3550. Total cost of all the school supplies: \$509.04. Compared to costs in the USA, it is worth it many times over. And, of course, the school uniforms are really a win-win, as they are made in our sewing school, as early projects of our students learning a valuable trade. The students are paid from the first day while learning and the skill on treadle, and electric machines they gain over the four month's sewing course enables them to get quality jobs. We hope to be able to donate an additional total of about 1000 uniform sets to SCAD, the Cambodian Street Children's Assistance and Development project by the end of the year—so far we have sent 700 sets there.



Ruth Armknecht giving school supplies to the Literacy School

## TSF WANTS YOUR CAR!

When Karen Robbins of Arrowsic, Maine decided it was time to let go of her beloved 1999 Jeep Cherokee she called Judy Jones, founding Treasurer of TSF and Board member and asked if we could use the car as a donation. Judy promptly put her in touch with Cars Helping America, run by Marty and Kim Schloss, and they took the car, fancied it up a bit, sold it, and

provided all necessary tax papers for Karen. The result was a healthy donation for TSF, a tax credit for Karen Robbins, and much appreciation from us for Karen's thoughtfulness and the cheerful help of Kim and Marty Schloss. The Schlosses can be reached at 866-949-3668; cars from anywhere are acceptable; some restrictions on ancientness may apply. Or call Judy Jones at 207-442-7612 [e-mail, [jjones@Roteang.org](mailto:jjones@Roteang.org)] Happily for TSF she has been the point person for quite a few cars now.



# TSF Support of Kampong Speu Projects - New and Ongoing



Dining room expansion in progress at KS

the building, to cost system we also put in there five about \$4500 was or six years ago, the costs of proposed and passed; propane for cooking, and the this should be costs of the two nannies completed by November employed there. Periodically we 10, and all the K. S. fund expenses for dance residents will again be costumes, an occasional trip to able to eat in one sitting, the beach for all the children or other special needs.

renewed surroundings. We are very thrilled with The Foundation also our investment in a full supports K.S., on a scholarship [tuition, textbooks, continuing basis, paying uniforms, housing, board, for many less glamorous transportation, and allowance] or obvious needs: the for Leng Sopharoth, a very maintenance and diesel talented orphan, now a fuel for the generator sophomore at Norton University, that runs the water doing incredibly well.

Suddenly a few months ago Pol Sok Ly, the Orphanage Director at Kampong Speu, was told by the Government that she was going to have 20 more school age children added to her Orphanage, bringing the number there up to 70 students.

In 2001, TSF had built an up-to-date kitchen/dining complex for 50 residents children, replacing the single picnic table, where all 50 kids ate in rotations of eight at a time, and wood- fire cooking which was

actually taking place in an old wooden cow shed. A generous donation from the Feeney and Mannix families of Nantucket, Mass. made the original construction possible, and we have kept the kitchen/dining building in perfect condition, with regular maintenance and the replacement of equipment and dishes, and bright new oil cloth on the 8 tables as needed.

At the last TSF Board meeting in September, Pol Sok Ly's request for an extension on



## Khmer Literacy School Provides Children with Major Head Start

For Mon Channy, 10, and Srey Touch, 6, the Sharing Foundation's Khmer Literacy school, at our Farm project, has given opportunity. Mon Channy is the only child of his widowed mom, who supports herself and her child by her work on the TSF farm. Channy, who is very small, probably due to early malnutrition, is proud to be going to school, as his Mother never did, and looks forward to advancing to the Village school. His Literacy school teacher, Ying So Ry, says Channy is a very attentive, hard working student and sees a bright future for him.

Srey Touch is a happy, energetic little girl who is in her second year at the Khmer literacy school, and also, this year having had a great head start there, is going to Grade 1 at the Roteang Village school very successfully. Her Mother, who is illiterate, is

very proud of her daughter's education, and plans to keep her in school indefinitely. Lao Pov works in the TSF Farm project, and her income from that is enough to keep her from worrying about her daughter needing to earn a small amount of money daily to add to family income, a problem for many very poor families.

Srey Touch has actually been known to TSF since infancy; when she was 17 months old, her mother appeared at our gate with her starving daughter. Lao Pov said that she had just buried Touch's twin sister underneath their thatch hut out in back of Roteang Village. The baby had died of malnutrition, and she feared Srey Touch would too. Srey Touch was in very bad condition, and she was admitted to our Orphanage "hospital room" with her Mom, and gradually fed

back to health. Her Mom received lots of support and counseling from our head nanny, Dany, and after a few months went back to her home with weekly weigh in follow ups and formula and rice supplied, as the Mom and baby continued to do well. Srey Touch also received complete immunizations for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, and Hepatitis B.

The Khmer Literacy school, started four years ago, currently has 138 students attending daily, taught by two teachers, in three daily sessions. It was established to "head start" children of the illiterate workers in our farm outreach project; in

fact, sending their children to school was requirement of acceptance in the project. As first there was much parental resistance to schooling; now we have parents and children eagerly enthusiastic, and could use expansion. The school, a two classroom thatch building, is out at the edge of our farm fields, for accessibility by this previously unschooled population.

(below: Channy & friends)

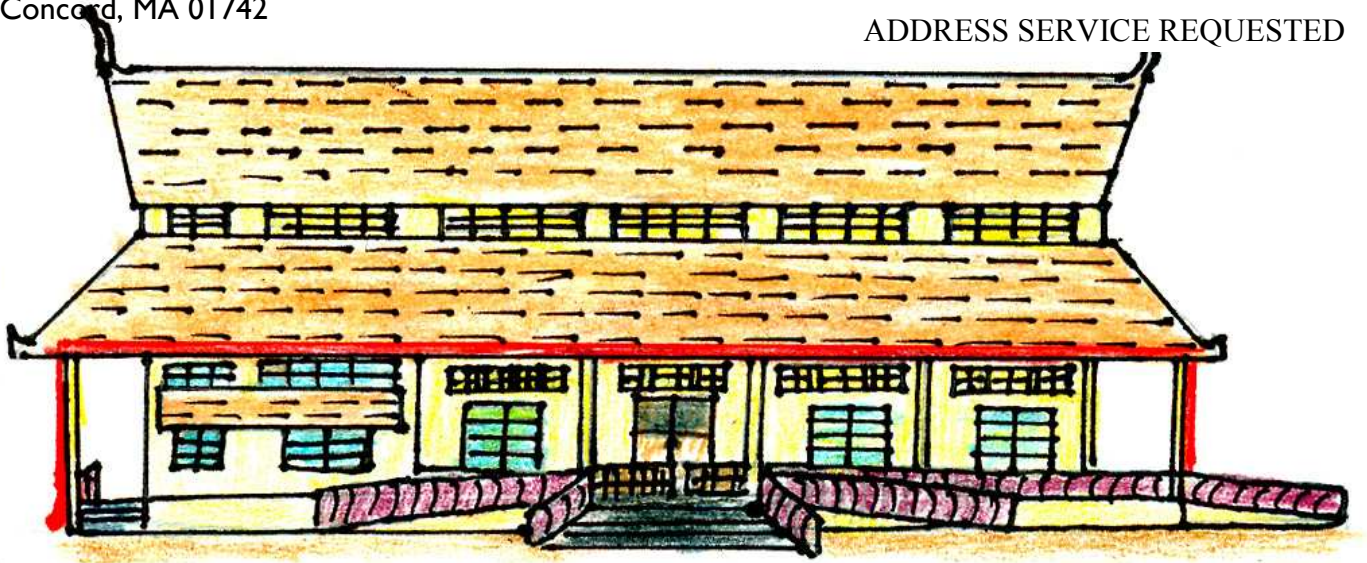




## The Sharing Foundation

Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



*Roteang Orphanage*

[www.sharingfoundation.org](http://www.sharingfoundation.org)

*The purpose of The Sharing Foundation is to help meet the physical, emotional, educational and medical needs of orphaned and seriously disadvantaged children in Cambodia. Our goal is to prevent some of the problems associated with poverty by developing, in conjunction with Cambodian community leaders, programs to improve the social fabric for these children and their families.*

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