

# Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children

## The Sharing Foundation

www.sharingfoundation.org

PO Box 600 Concord, MA 01742

Summer 2010

### TSF Stars Shine at University

We are thrilled with how well many of our University students are doing! Sam Puchai, a freshman in the Department of Architecture at Norton University is #1 student of 252 students in his department this term. His father is a moto-bike repairman, and Puchai is still amazed that he is even going to University.

Ban Kosal, a junior, is #20 of 773 students in the department of Economics, while Srey Nita, who is also a junior, is #10 of 332 students in Finance and Banking. Att Vannak, a freshman, is #12 of 264 students in the department of Computer Science.

Other very high ranking students are Soy Sovann Thida, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, in Banking, Leng Sopharath, 4<sup>th</sup> year in Accounting, Pom Setha, 2<sup>nd</sup> year in Civil Engineering, Sreng Pheakdey, 2<sup>nd</sup> year in Business, and Nut Sunny, 3<sup>rd</sup> year in Hotel-Tourism.



*R to L: Sam Puchai; Ban Kosal; Srey Nita; Att Vannak; Soy Sovann Thida; Leng Sopharoth; Pom Setha; Sreng Pheakdey; Nut Sunny; Khon Sopeak; Sok Pharoath*

Sok Sopharoth, our only girl to make it into the highly selective International Foreign Language School which requires special entrance exams, has grades in the high 80s and is ahead of all 5 male students we have at IFL!

Currently, 38 Roteang Village students are fully supported for Universities in Phnom Penh. All are products of high school sponsorships and five years in the TSF English school in the village; all have generous sponsors sharing the costs of their University education with TSF.

Students live in our two dorms in the city, and have food, books, uniforms, computers and a bicycle provided. [When we visited Norton university recently, it was apparent that only our students pedal bikes to school: the yard was totally full of mopeds and motorcycles. But our students do not complain.] We are thrilled with the program's success, and while we

constantly tighten standards for admission, the students and we are aware that, but for TSF and their sponsors, they probably would be working in fields or garment factories.

### PARTY TIME IN OCTOBER AND ....AN ELEPHANT IS COMING!

On Saturday afternoon, October 2, The Sharing Foundation is planning a reunion party for our terrific Cambodian adoptees, their sibs, and their donor families. Grandparents [if they can stand the hubbub] are welcome too.

Bernadette and Michael Feeney of Concord, Mass., parents of Jack Bora Feeney and his brother and sister, have graciously offered to host the extravaganza, which will include a batting cage, a bounce house, a Mexican band, three-legged and sack races, popcorn, ice cream and some secret surprises.

Our own Elephant, In-Cambodia Director for TSF, will be coming for the party. He looks forward to seeing how our Cambodian little kids have grown up .

In the Feeney's huge yard Elephant will get a real taste of an American celebration.



*Srey Tey with the Boss*

We hope to announce that our Endowment campaign 12 years in process with the last 4 years intensively so, is complete, with three million safely tucked away to ensure vital TSF programs in Cambodia indefinitely.

There will be no charge for the event, but contributions to defray cost will of course be gratefully received. Invitations will come in the mail, and RSVPs [e-mailed] are needed, as we plan for ice cream, prizes and the like. Rain date is Sunday, October 3, but all details will be forthcoming to all TSF supporting families within a 200 mile radius of Concord.

If you don't live close by, but will be in New England that weekend, please e-mail [nhendrie@roteang.org](mailto:nhendrie@roteang.org) to be included on the invitation list. All supporters of TSF's work in Cambodia are welcome. Watch for details arriving by mail by early September.

Mark your calendars now for a spectacular party!

## St. Paul School, Lakeland, Florida, Supports TSF Once Again

For the 8th consecutive year, students at St. Paul Lutheran School in Lakeland, Florida have reached out to their friends at the Roteang Orphanage

During May, 40 third graders participated in a Little Caesar's Fundraiser, selling pizza kits to friends and family. Each kit sold earned \$5.00, yielding a total profit of \$1200.

Cambria Sokly Gosch, (below), former resident of Roteang Orphanage, led the

love that our St. Paul students in Florida share with their friends halfway around the world in Cambodia. There is definitely a connection!"

Previous St. Paul Lutheran School projects include building our orphanage preschool in 2004 with the help of other Florida and Georgia Lutheran schools enlisted by Denise, and the donation of our magnificent playground equipment assembled by Massachusetts volunteers in 2006.

Keo Visal settled in at Roteang orphanage very well, enjoys going to home school, made some friends quickly, loves the food, and is sleeping fine.

We predict he will do well at Roteang.

If you would like to sponsor Visal at \$100 per month, please contact [nhendrie@roteang.org](mailto:nhendrie@roteang.org) for further information.

### FARM KIDS WITH NO PARENTS

TSF has been involved with the Ken family for six or seven years. The father



sales by selling 47 pizza kits.

In addition, students from other grades filled "pizza charts" with quarters that represented pieces of pepperoni. This extra project brought in approximately \$300.



Denise Gosch, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at St. Paul, and Cambria's Mom, says, "The St. Paul Lutheran School families continue to take such an interest in the lives of children at Roteang Orphanage. With the economy as it is, I was very concerned that the response would be low, but once again, as for the past seven years, the children of the school and their families saw this as an important fundraiser and we were successful. I continue to be amazed by the

### CAN YOU SPONSOR KEO VISAL?



**Keo Visal** born about March 28 2004, came to Roteang on 29 March 2010 with a complicated story.

His mother is apparently severely mentally ill, and the father gave him to an aunt in Odermeanchey Province. She decided she could not raise him and took him to a monk in Phnom Penh.

The monk, feeling he had no possibility of providing for Visal either, called us to see if we could take him.

had genital cancer and a painful downhill course, dying about 3 years ago. The mother had a seizure disorder, probably worsened by alcohol, and died soon after her husband. We built a house for these children, absolutely destitute and totally illiterate, out on the farm, offered school for all six of them, and tried to make the family's life a bit more tolerable with rice, dried fish and other foods. The oldest girl, then 15, came to our sewing school for a few months, but dropped out and ran away with a boyfriend; she now has 2 children.

The youngest children, Ken Samy, girl, now 16; Ken Sammay, girl, age 14 and Ken Samngang, boy, age 11, are taking care of themselves in the house, with TSF food assistance, school supplies and uniforms.

Though our food supplies are contingent on attendance, they do not really wish to go to school, or to have any interference with their lives. Very intensive intervention by Elephant, Mom Sineath, head of our farm program and a very good amateur social worker, who sees them daily has made few inroads.

We would like a one-year commitment from a sponsor to cover their food and school supplies, at \$40/month for all three kids. It may be a losing battle.

## FIRST RESIDENT VOLUNTEER SPENDS 2 MONTHS WITH TSF

*Looking for a volunteer who could inspire our preschool teachers and introduce new activities, I approached the volunteer office at Mount Holyoke College, and at their suggestion interviewed several students in May.*

*Hannah Rachootin, who had had some previous experience working in Thailand, and was not turned off by the idea of living in a dorm at the orphanage with simple surroundings no hot water, and orphanage food, seemed eager to bring what we were looking for. A grant from Mt. Holyoke paid her airfare; we supplied her room and board.*

*The children soon got to love her, and her modeling of new, vigorous activities was great for our teachers. We really appreciate her 8 weeks at Roteang, and know her influence will be long lasting. [NWH]*

### Hannah's Impressions of Living at the Orphanage



Life at the orphanage has a simple, soothing rhythm. Everything happens early here; most people are up well before six to bathe and clean. By seven, everyone has eaten breakfast and by eight I am sitting in a circle of three-year-olds at the preschool.

The three-year-olds are the funniest people at the orphanage, though they usually toddle around with very earnest looks. For them, kid-sized scissors and the removal of overalls in the bathroom present epic challenges. They all wear their hearts on their sleeves, none more

so than Virginy, whose tiny face erupts in a giant smile when she sees something she likes.

At 9:30 the four and five-year-olds replace the three-year-olds at the preschool.

They strut around confidently and love to test the limits of acceptable water table behavior. After an 11:00 lunch and a quick nap, school reopens, welcoming the first graders for two hours of play time.

These kids love to learn new games. Their current favorite is "Duck, Duck, and Goose," which they find both extraordinarily suspenseful and hilarious.

The kids are almost always happy, but, like all children, they have occasional moments of fear, frustration, and sadness. Three-year-old Sok Chea, frightened by a noisy procession of monks outside the orphanage gate, burst into tears.

First grader Srey Neang arrived at the preschool crying one day, for a reason I never learned. I gave her a big hug (any hug from an American is a big hug with these tiny kids), and she instantly laughed through her tears. Now every time she sees me I am the lucky recipient of a hug in return.

Simple pleasures are our mainstays here. When the torrential rains come, all the kids strip to their underwear and join their fully clothed nannies outside, running, shrieking, and laughing. We play soccer while it pours, collect water in buckets to bathe and wash clothes in (or throw on each other) and slip and slide across the tiles outside the buildings on our bellies. Every child's (and every nanny's) mouth is wide open and smiling a purely joyful smile.

I have been lucky enough to have many happy moments in my life, but I cannot think of a time when I felt more alive than while sharing these sopping wet moments with the orphans at Roteang. [HR]

### *Invest in Ros Simney TSF Teacher*

We have high hopes that Ros Simney will qualify for University this fall.

TSF hired her two years ago to teach first graders in our home school at the Orphanage.

Simney is a very bright, cheerful, gentle teacher. Our children love her



and our first graders, who work very hard for her, have gone far beyond the Ministry of Education Standards for first grade, as they read, write, and do quite complicated math. Simney requires wonderful classroom manners, and the children would stay hours beyond class time if she would let them.

Last year Simney, whose greatest wish is to go to University, passed the National High School Graduation Exam, but not our TSF requirement for level 4 competency –intermediate English proficiency- when tested at the Australia Center for Education [ACE]. This year she has been studying English with great fervor, both at the TSF English school in late afternoon classes, and by speaking English at the orphanage with everyone she can find- Elephant, Mom Seaneth [Head of Farm project], Vuthea and Sok Chea and Pharoath, our Orphanage teens, and of course any visitor she meets.

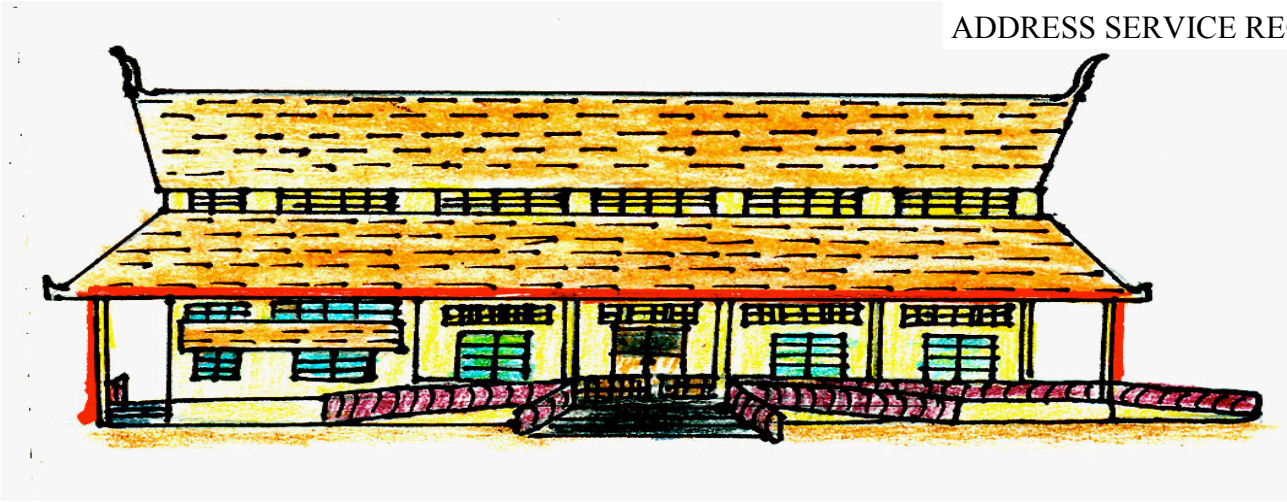
Simney is the youngest of 7 children in her family, with 3 brothers and 3 sisters. The farthest any sib got in school was 8th grade; one dropped out after 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Her parents are farmers with no formal schooling. From her teaching skills and her caring for students, we can already see that Simney will make a great teacher.

Sponsorship for University, at \$1200 for next year, to cover tuition, board and room, books, uniforms, and a bike, is still contingent on her meeting TSF's English proficiency requirement, but we would like to get a sponsor lined up on the bet this will happen.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



*Roteang Orphanage*

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

### Mission Statement

*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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### The Board of the Sharing Foundation

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