

Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children

The Sharing Foundation

www.sharingfoundation.org

PO Box 600 Concord MA 01742

Fall 2010

TSF University Graduates 2010 & New Freshmen

On Sunday, October 24, our second class of college graduates celebrated the completion of four years at university. We are so proud of these students from the small village of Roteang for pursuing their dreams, and we are thankful for the support of their sponsors, who helped to make it all possible. Mam Sary, the Head of our English school in Roteang Village, where all the students had spent at least 4 years learning to speak and hear English, stood by at graduation very proudly. All the parents were there too, and each came up on the verandah with their own son or daughter as each graduate was handed a diploma from TSF, and an embossed portfolio.

It has been such a pleasure to watch these village kids mature from somewhat awkward ninth graders entering our sponsorship program to the sophisticated young men and women they are today. These nine students started out in our English program, which meets after school in the evenings. They applied for, and received sponsors to afford them the opportunity to stay in school and finish high school, something quite rare in rural Cambodia. They were then required to pass the national examination for completion of high school and to pass a required English exam at the Australian Center for Education in order to enter our college sponsorship program. Every year, under Sary's able teachers in Roteang village, the qualifying English scores have risen and risen.

Two of the students, Kong Maneth and Sin Vuthy, attended the prestigious Institute for Foreign Language, a university which requires its students to pass a very stringent entrance exam. All classes in this program



College graduates. Front row: Srey Vanny, Phorn Vandy, Chhom Thavy, Sin Vuthy, Kong Maneth. Back row: Mam Sary, Elephant, Nhuong Pheasa, Heng Phanara, Thong Buntheng. Missing: Leng Sopharoth

are taught by native English speakers. The others attended Norton University with majors varying from hotel and tourism to accounting.

All of these students are now employed, quite an accomplishment in a country with a high rate of unemployment and where most jobs are only available through contacts. We are proud to report that Kong Maneth is teaching in our TSF English school, and also our computer classes. Srey Vanny is working in the administrative office at Norton University and as resident advisor for our new University freshmen; Vandy is teaching English at a local school; Thavy is sales manager at a library; Vuthy is sales manager for a U.S. website company in Cambodia; Pheasa works in a call center as a trouble-shooter; Phanara is sales manager and in charge of computers at a large café, and Leng Sopharoth is sales manager for a

jewelry company. Average of salaries is \$130 a month, a good start in Cambodia.

As these nine students have graduated and are moving on, we have a new class of college freshmen moving in. Over time, we have made our requirements for college sponsorship tougher and tougher. In spite of this, our English school under Mam Sary keeps cranking out students with higher and higher scores on their English exams. As a result, this year we have 13 students in our incoming freshmen college class.

Because Norton University is in the process of moving their campus out of the city center to a new campus with all new buildings, but quite far from the city, they have moved only their freshmen to the new campus this semester. We have been forced to rent a new townhouse or dorm to accommodate our incoming freshmen, boysCONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Spectacular Fundraising Quilt has a Winner

An amazing amount of planning and work went into the gorgeous Cambodian quilt that Terry Kelly- Ruhlmann made for the Sharing Foundation raffle in October. Her brother Paul Kelly and his family, which includes Seth, adopted in 1999, traveled to Cambodia last summer, and as part of their adventure, searched the markets for the perfect “earth tone” fabrics with lovely weaves. Once home, Terry set to work, pinning a sheet up on the wall where she attached the over 70 squares cut from 15 different fabrics, and rearranged them often, based on her own sense of “the jigsaw puzzle” and suggestions from other people. She estimates that over several months, she put in about 45 hours fabricating the quilt.

TSF had a huge response to the picture of the quilt enclosed in the last newsletter — over \$5000 was sent in for lottery tickets to win it. On October 2nd, the day of the big reunion party in Concord, young Tay Detenber, of Northampton, MA drew the winning ticket. We held our breath

collectively—and were very happy that Donna Savicki, and her husband, Jim, of Duxbury, MA, supporters and sponsors of 2



different college students, won. Their current student is Ros Simney who was our home school orphanage first grade teacher, and is very close to our hearts.

Donna says the quilt is “magnificent” and reminds them every time they see it of their students and the work of the Foundation. Donna had bought lots of tickets and was thrilled to win.

The money will be used, as promised, for the next round of our Roteang Village and surrounding areas’ immunization projects, which we have been repeating about every two years, as new children are born or move into the area. Protection from diphtheria and tetanus in these farming families hugely important, and the 3 shot series of hepatitis B vaccine is life saving, against one of the commonest causes of severe morbidity and mortality in Cambodia. An incidental benefit is that all the young girls immunized in the program are protected against ultimately producing HepB positive infants, or babies with neonatal tetanus.



Mai is in the center, yellow shirt, holding the “Sharing” sign; sister Tola is on right holding the “Foundation” sign; Grace Potvin is on the left, holding the “The” sign, also from Roteang.

A Birthday Party for Mai’s First Home

Mai MacInnis decided that for her 9th birthday on 11-17-09, she would like to invite her friends to a party and asked for “no gifts” but instead for donations to TSF. The children at the party made the banner, and all signed their names.

Mai collected a total of \$150 at the party, and added \$50 that family members had sent her in the mail, bringing her total donation to \$200.

She talked about TSF and how important the donations were to the children at Roteang, and all the work that is being done in the country where she was born.

Mai was very proud of this event and told everyone that “it was my best birthday ever.”

This is what T.S.F. is all about

Panha, age 6 ½, and Hay Leap, age 7 ½, have just had surgery this fall, done by a Belgian-trained Cambodian orthopedist in Cambodia. They are walking flat-footed on their affected legs for the first time in their lives!

Both boys have been in our Roteang Orphanage family for quite awhile, Panha for 6 years, and Hay Leap for 3 years. We have had to wait until the right surgeon, trained well in children's orthopedics, was available.

When Panha arrived he could not even roll over, never smiled, and had obviously been "put aside" because of his disabilities. He had apparently had a stroke at birth and his whole right side was crippled. His patient nanny, Chenda, worked and worked with him- getting him to roll over, then to sit, then finally to his feet and walking on tip toes. She taught him to feed himself, enjoy books,

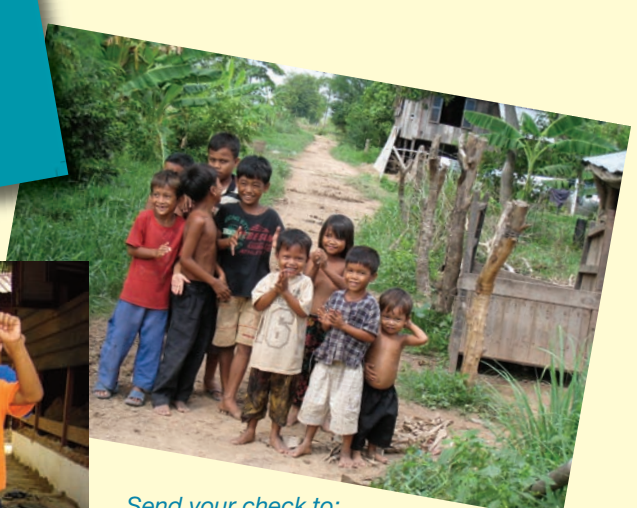
and mingle happily with the other children. He now can climb the jungle gym, pulling up with his good hand, and he talks well, and can take care of all his activities of daily living.

Hay Leap, who has cerebral palsy, has somewhat limited learning ability, but is a happy boy. He unfortunately also has HIV, undoubtedly from maternal infection, but he gets his antiretrovirals twice a day along with our other HIV/AIDS kids, and is medically very stable. He will have his other heel cord fixed in December. Panha and Hay Leap can lead much more normal lives now and they are very pleased with their flat feet.

T.S.F. arranged and paid for the surgery and physical therapy that is an essential concomitant. Panha and Hay Leap each had his own nanny with him full time in the hospital. Their sponsors are pleased too!



2011 Sharing Foundation Calendar Now Available



Calendars are available by mail for \$12 including postage, or \$10 at craft fairs or from Sharing Foundation Board Members.



*Send your check to:
Calendars
The Sharing Foundation
PO Box 600
Concord, MA 01742*



College graduates, Phorn Vandy, Srey Vanny, Nhuong Pheasa, Kong Maneth, Heng Phanara, Thong Buntheng, Sin Vuthy. Missing from photograph: Chhom Thavy and Leng Sopharoth.

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and girls together, with Srey Vanny, one of our new college graduates as “house mother”. Once Norton is ready to move the upperclassmen to the new campus, we will have to rent another townhouse there and divide the men from the women once again, giving up our old dorms in the downtown area. It is too bad to have the freshmen distanced from the experienced upperclassmen presence, but we hope it will only be for this semester.

The new students are very excited about their brand new dorm—an indoor kitchen, and an indoor bathroom, something none had in the village of Roteang. They love the new stucco walls, and the real beds and space for all. The boys are limited to the first floor, and like American kids of long ago, they respect this rule.

Extending the cycle, we have interviewed 11 new 9th graders this fall. Although

they stumble through their interviews in English, all come recommended as hard workers by Mam Sary and their English school teachers. All are excited by the opportunity of High School, and now maybe University, something no one could have envisioned just a few years ago. *Sally Stokes*



Ros Simney in the new dorm kitchen.



The freshman in front of the dormitory:

*Ram Sarom,
Lun Vandy,
Pang Sineth,
Sam Nara,
Som Sovyroth,
Chhym Lakhina,
Ros Simney,
Sao Chenda,
Sous Sreynan,
Sok Vandy,
Horn Makara,
Phann Sokea*

Where Your Money Does NOT Go

You should know.... The Sharing Foundation has no Americans on salary. No money is spent on executive pay: Board members are all volunteers. Many parents and other community folks work hard selling crafts, helping with a concert, putting on a benefit evening, or helping their children with a fund raising project.

The Sharing Foundation has no offices: we entirely depend on rent-free spaces in volunteers' homes. There are no paid fundraisers or soliciting staff, and no paid advertising campaigns. Our only administrative expenses are the required accounting and legal expenses, and the printing and mailing of newsletters and thank yous.

Our overhead is consistently less than 10%; ninety one cents of every dollar raised goes directly to TSF programs in Cambodia—Roteang Orphanage, five schools, water projects, immunizations, school uniforms and outreach help for the poorest of the poor.

If your organization is interested, a TSF Board member would be proud to come and talk with you, and show our DVD or give a compelling power point presentation.

You can contact us at
sharingfoundation@roteang.org

**Thanks for helping us care
for hundreds of children in
Cambodia!**

Roteang Orphanage children needing sponsors

August brought us two new children, sent by the Ministry of Social Affairs. We really are full, with 75 children in our Roteang family, but the Ministry gives us no choice, and our TSF Board has long said that if a child has no other decent alternative, we will welcome him or her. Both children have essentially no history available, but we are sure can benefit from loving care at Roteang.



Srey Rath was abandoned at Kantha Bopha hospital in Phnom Penh. According to workers there, the mother brought her to the hospital, and stayed with her for a few days, then told a nurse one evening that she needed to go out for a “few minutes”. She never came back. Srey Rath (name given at the hospital—means “girl

ward of the state”) has very obvious severe cerebral palsy; she is not able to communicate, roll, sit or connect with the outside world. We will work hard to connect her, and see if, through physical therapy, good nutrition, and her own one-on-one nanny, we are able to find a spark to develop. We’ve assigned her a birth date of October 22, 2005.



Also from Kantha Bopha hospital, Horn Panha (name assigned) was found on the ground there, at the side of a long queue of parents waiting with their children for medical care. After several days of no caretaker returning to ask about him, he was transferred to us. Our orphanage doctor gave him May 6, 2007 as a birth date. Horn Panha has bright eyes and an eager appearance, though he cannot sit, bring food to his mouth or even roll over. We have high

hopes that with lots of loving care, careful feeding, and stimulation by a loving nanny, he will come along developmentally.

Ly Sopheak is a wonderful sparkling little girl who loves to dance. She is an able student, has lots of friends, and joins eagerly in any project at the Orphanage. Ly Sopheak has been with us since September of 2008; she had a sponsor for a while, who faded away. Ly Sopheak is about 10 years old. She



had been sold in the market originally to a Cambodian woman who bought her to be a household servant. When Ly Sopheak seemed to lack energy, her boss had her tested and found her to be positive for HIV antibodies. She was sent to an orphanage which subsequently sent her to us. Ly Sopheak is truly a charming bright girl; in a few years she will be fun to correspond with in English, which she’s learning.



Veasna is a little boy who has been with us since 10 days after his birth on August 31, 2007. He was born to a mom with HIV and was antibody positive himself, but not HIV infected. Right when he was born, his mother was convicted of robberies by motorcycle and sent to Preysor Prison in Phnom Penh for six years. For this reason, and because she had many other children already, she did not wish to keep him.

T.S.F. would very much like to find sponsors for these children, or others at Roteang Orphanage. Sponsorship provides nanny care [at a ratio of one nanny for 2 preschool children, 1:3 school age, one on one for disabled kids.] It provides high quality food, vitamins, clothes, medical care, dental care, immunizations, schooling in preschool, or our home school through 3rd grade, dancing school, and computer school as befits age and interests in a clean, safe, well maintained environment. The kids also love an occasional party or field trip.

Most of all Roteang provides a family that nurtures and cares for each child; we are their family, to which a child will be able to come home to permanently. We have 75 children in residence now; 67 have sponsors. The orphanage costs about \$7500 per month to run, with lots of caretakers, and increasingly expensive food, electric and fuel bills.

If you’d like to consider sponsorship as a family, or with a group of friends or coworkers, or as a church, for example, please email nhendrie@Roteang.org. Reminders can be sent quarterly, if sponsoring all at once is overwhelming.

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P.O. Box 600

Concord MA 01742

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Roteang Orphanage

Our Mission

The Sharing Foundation's mission is to help meet the physical, emotional, educational and medical needs of orphaned and seriously disadvantaged children in Cambodia. Our goal is to help prevent some of the problems of poverty by developing, in consultation with Cambodian community leaders, programs to improve the health and welfare of these children and their families.

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