The Sharing Foundation Newsletter

Holidays 2014 · Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children · www.sharingfoundation.org

From Roteang Orphanage to medical school: a tribute to his nana

by Vuthea Tep

My name is Vuthea Tep. I'm one of the students who have been supported by The Sharing Foundation and I'm the one who have been with TSF since it was started in 2000.

My mother, Dany Tep, and I moved to Roteang Orphanage with some nannies from Cham Chao orphanage which they used to work for. However, my great grandmother was very old that she had some diseases and my brother, Vuthy Tep, was too young to take care of her alone, so TSF had a very good heart to allow them to stay in Roteang Orphanage, as well. My mom was a head nanny there. She worked so hard in order to make all of the kids live in warmness and happiness, but it didn't last long.

My mom had passed away in 2004 when I was in grade 5. It was a very hurtful day of my life that I have experienced and it was also my hopeless day to continue my life. I felt very nervous, who would I live with? How did I continue my study? And who would support my study? When I was in fear, I heard that the president of TSF, Dr. Nancy Hendrie, has adopted me as her grandson. I didn't believe what I had heard at first, then I realized that it was really true. I was so happy to call her "my nana" and I knew that I wouldn't be alone anymore.

Vuthea Tep and Dr. Nancy Hendrie shared a delightful meal and conversation at a dinner in Phnom Penh which included a number of college students and their sponsors.

I felt very hopeful in my life again and I expected to achieve all of my goals of my life. Because of her support, I could finish my primary school life till my high school life successfully, and now I'm in medical school which is my big dream when I was young and I never hope to study it. I have got not only her supports but also her love as one of the members of her family who she never forgets.

My life has been changed by her because it seems she has taken my life from a very dark place to a very bright place that I never think of. I'm so grateful that she always by my side and it is the truth that she is the one who brings my life again. I love her so much, my nana.

Vuthea began studying medicine at the university in 2011. In the next issue, he will share some of his experiences and plans for the future.

Vuthea vaccinates a child in Beng Krom against hepatitus B, a program funded by TSF.

Stay connected with TSF between newsletters! *TSF is on Twitter and Facebook! Follow us @TSFCambodia and "Like" our page to see all of the latest Sharing Foundation pictures and updates!*

Notes from the President

by Ann Trudeau

Cambodia is one of the poorest countries on earth. There is so much that can be done to make it a better place to live, a place where there is hope, especially for youth. This is what keeps the Board of Directors for The Sharing Foundation a very busy group of people.

With our sponsor partners, our volunteer helpers, and our generous donors, we have been able to increase our effectiveness and the number of people we touch year after year. Our primary commitment is to the people we currently serve; our orphans, sponsored high school and university students, and staff are our number one priority. With the help of our TSF community, however, we have been fortunate to be able to accomplish so much more.

Last January, several visitors from Concord and Carlisle, MA, visited the Roteang village school and saw the terrible condition of one of the main buildings. Because of their quick action and generosity, the construction of a new building is already half complete. By January 1, the new building will be ready for use by public school children during the day and for 400 children attending TSF English Classes in the evening.

Our relationship continues with the Beng Krom school, located in an isolated and poor village accessible by ferry across the Mekong River. Our In-country Director, Elephant, and our very capable maintenance head, Peng Ron, have taken on the repair of the school buildings and that work should be complete by the start of classes on November 1.

One major concern we had this year is that a number of our high school students did not pass the national exam. As you might know, Cambodia has a reputation for corruption and the government wants to change that. They have an anti-corruption department and this year, they wanted to end the corruption in the High School testing program. Thousands of monitors attended the testing to make sure no one brought in any cheat sheets, bribed the testers, or shared answers with one another, all of which is common in Cambodia. As a result, less than 20% of the seniors in the country passed the final exam which determines whether they will be able to attend university. It is also believed that the government raised the passing grade from 50% to 75%. We are hoping that this last reason is why some of our students did not pass the exam this year. The country responded by allowing for a retake of the exam on October 13, and Elephant assures me that all of our high school students will pass. (Results were not available when we went to press.)

On a more positive note, we thank you for your response to our last newsletter. We told you that the orphanage needed a new (used) bus and I am so pleased to report that some very generous people stepped forward. We now have a vehicle that fits more than half of our orphanage kids. We also have a sponsor for the little blind girl, Srey Leak, whose future was so grim less than six months ago. And the HPV vaccination project, which we wanted to start, was fully funded for the orphanage girls and they have already received their first shots.

Thank you all for thinking of us, for believing in us, and for helping us to move forward

This past year, we graduated a large class from the University, welcomed three new orphans, and constructed a new building, all concrete examples of TSF in motion. I want to thank you all for thinking of us, for believing in us, and for helping us to move forward, making a better place for Cambodia's children. □

Left: *Roteang Orphanage children are eager to ride in their new, pre-owned bus.* ***Below:*** *Work progresses on the new classroom building at Roteang village school. Both the bus and building were funded by TSF donors.*

TSF initiates vaccinations to protect girls against HPV

by Ann Trudeau and Dr. Ny Not

In the United States, it is now common for pre-adolescent girls to receive a three-shot vaccination series against the human papillomavirus (HPV). In Cambodia, that same common virus has a statistically more deadly outcome, but vaccinations are rare. For that reason, The Sharing Foundation board identified a critical need to protect our girls from HPV.

As the board discussed a plan to implement a vaccination program, a friend of TSF, Stephen Senturia, covered the costs of vaccinating the girls at Roteang Orphanage in honor of his daughter-in-law, Chindaree Senturia. The Sharing Foundation's doctor on staff, Dr. Ny Not, was quick to implement the plan. The first round of shots has been given to the girls at the orphanage, and the second of three rounds will be delivered in December. The next stage will be to immunize the TSF female college students.

We thank Dr. Ny who contributed to the summary below to describe HPV and the associated vaccine.

TSF's doctor on staff, Dr. Ny Not (front and center), with some of his medical student volunteers.

HPV, cervical cancer, and vaccines

HPV infection can lead to a variety of outcomes but cervical cancer is the gravest concern. In developing countries, cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women, and 91% of global estimated HPV-related cancer deaths are due to cervical cancer. It is estimated that cervical cancer affects approximately 500,000 women each year, of whom 80% live in developing countries. In Cambodia alone, around 1,500 women die each year from cervical cancer.

HPV infection is primarily transmitted through sexual contact. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most of the time HPV has no symptoms so people do not know they have it and can easily infect others without knowing it. Infection can occur at any age and affect both males and females.

The HPV vaccines will reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of cervical cancer for the Roteang Orphanage girls. However, they will now be much better protected from that and other HPV-related diseases as they enter adulthood. □

Doing their share អរគុណ *(aw koon) Thank you!*

Eleven-year-old Sara McKenna *(above) learned about The Sharing Foundation from her grandmother, Mary Lou McColl, who visited the Roteang Orphange in January 2014. After Mary Lou showed Sara her numerous photographs and shared some of her anecdotes, Sara was touched by TSF's compelling mission. She wanted to help, too, and decided she would donate her birthday money to the orphanage. She loved the idea of being able to share her celebration with so many other kids. Sara hopes that someday she will be able to visit Cambodia and meet some of the children in the photos.*

Stella Privett, whose Cambodian name is Leakhena, *(right) came to her family through Adopt Cambodia on July 19, 2000. For her fourteenth birthday in 2014, Stella wrote on the invitation to her friends: "This is a really important thing to me because instead of the classic gifts, I would like donations to the Sharing Foundation which is a foundation for orphanages and schools in Cambodia. As most of you all know by now, I am Cambodian. This year I want to give back to my heritage and give back to my country." Her family helped Stella create a web page on First Giving — www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/warw4gktw/spbirthday — and most of her donations came in through the site. Stella's generous gesture resulted in $815 for the kids in Cambodia.*

College graduates: a record-breaking year

by Mary Hult

This fall, The Sharing Foundation celebrated the graduation of its largest college class, as well as the first graduate from Roteang Orphanage! Sixteen students, all sponsored by TSF donors, completed their studies at one of the two Phnom Penh universities.

Among those students was Sok Sopharoth (Pharoth) who came to us in 2003 as a 12-year-old, after her mother had died and she was left to care for her baby brother, Darith. This year, Pharoth, the oldest member of the Roteang Orphanage family, graduated from the Institute of Foreign Language and now looks forward to teaching English professionally. Since their arrival, Jeanne and Justin Starren of Marshfield, Wisconsin, have generously sponsored both Pharoth and her brother.

We are proud to list the names of our recent graduates and we thank their sponsors for the life-altering opportunities now afforded to these youth. □

Students	Majors	Sponsors
Chheng Borann	Electrical Engineering	Ellen Freed & Carol Barlow
Chhym Sovanchanlakhina	Accounting	Juliana Slocum / Laurie Simons
Horn Makara	Information Tecnology	Korey Lee & Michael Rooney
Lun Vandy	Management	Robert & Kathleen O'Grady
Pang Sineth	Accounting	Michelle Kokel
Phann Sockea	Information Tecnology	Neils & Doris Larsen
Pom Setha	Civil Engineering	Laura Brewer / Elizabeth & Frank Burke
Ran Sarom	Information Tecnology	Lee Steppacher & Dan Shepard
Ros Simnai	Accounting	James & Donna Savicki
Sam Nara	Banking and Finance	Mary & Steve McIntosh
Sam Putchai	Architecture	Virginia Latham
Soa Chenda	Accounting	Jane Feinberg-Kaplan
Sok Sopharoth	English Literature	Jeanne & Justin Starren
Sok Vandy	Accounting	Michael Dundorf
Som Sovyroth	Banking and Finance	Mark & Linda Carlson
Sous Sreynan	Banking and Finance	Frank Rigg

A video: after adoption, returning to Cambodia

In our last newsletter, Jesse Hansen, 15, shared his experiences about returning to Cambodia. He mentioned he was documenting his trip and hoped one day to share his video with the kids and nannies in Roteang. His first phase, primarily focused on the sightseeing portion of his trip, is now available on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MG5m7S844I

Clockwise from top: *Roteang Orphanage has new traditional instruments, thanks to the Concord Rotary Club. Kids enjoy art class at the orphanage. Four girls from Beng Krom are fast friends. Little Mun Mengheang, six months old, would really like a sponsor (email orphanage@sharingfoundation.org for information).*

High school senior wins trip to math competition in Singapore!

This spring, a high school girl raised in the poor, rural village of Roteang had the opportunity to travel to the densely populated, commercial hub of Singapore. Furthermore, this girl, Van Sovannary, won that trip because she earned a berth in an international math competition. What follows is her endearing letter to her proud TSF high school and university sponsor, Cynthia Sortwell of South Portland, Maine.

Van Sovannary enthusiastically began her University studies this fall.

June 30, 2014

Dear Cynthia,

I have finished my second semester. And I am preparing for last examination of high school. I hope I can get a good result.

You may be surprised if I tell you that I have been in Singapore. There are 8 students from 2 high schools in Cambodia were chosen to join SIMC "Singapore International Mathematics Challenge". I am the one who managed to go there.

I arrived Singapore on May 25th. It was my first time that I could fly abroad. There are 240 students in 60 groups who came from 28 countries around the world and joined this program.

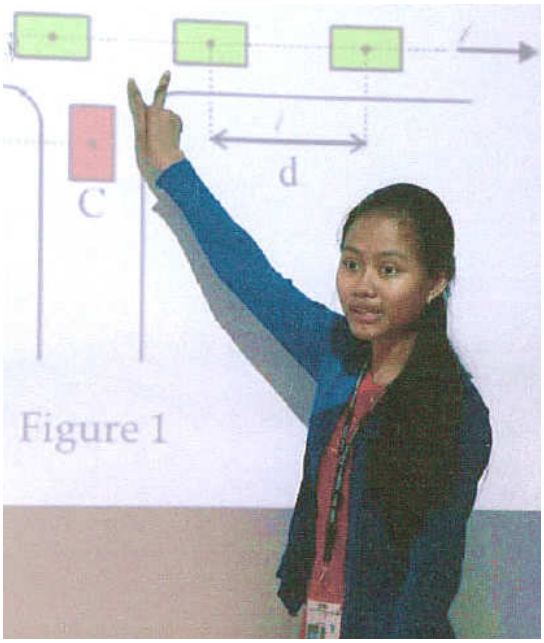
During the competition we worked in group of four and solve math exercise together. Finally we did a presentation to the judge.

I am so sorry that I couldn't got champion but it was my first time that I joined the international challenge. Even though I did not succeed but it was my good experience. I could know a lot of ways to solve math exercise and work together. The group who got champion is NUS math and science students in Singapore.

After the competition I traveled into Singapore city with other students. It was a great place of my life. I also enclose some pictures there.

On the other hand, next year I'm going to go to the university. The first subject for me is medicine. If it has any problem, architect is my second one.

Thanks, Savonnary



Top: *Sovannary sightsees in Singapore.*
Above: *At the competition, Sovannary explains the solution to her math problem.*
Left: *Sovannary and her group enjoy the opening ceremonies.*

Sponsors needed! The Sharing Foundation still needs several high school sponsors ($300 per year) and university sponsors ($1,200 per year) for the 2014-15 school year. If you are interested, please contact:

Richard or Kathy Recknagel at:
highschool@sharingfoundation.org

Lee Steppacher at:
college@sharingfoundation.org

Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children

The Sharing Foundation

P. O. Box 600, Concord, MA 01742

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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 associated with 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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The Sharing Foundation

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