

Grace House Community Centre Newsletter



November / December 2010

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
From everyone at Grace House*



2 Years Old and Growing Strong



It's hard to imagine we were 2 years old in the first week of November, the days of 2 classrooms in the main building and volunteer teachers seem a long time ago. We now employ 8 full time and 8 part time staff, plus 3 fathers who do our house repairs and work on site when needed. There are 4 purpose build classrooms for the English Language Program, a Pre school classroom, crèche, 2 Vocational Training workshops, a medical room, a proper office and a toilet block for the children. The upstairs classroom has just been converted into a library, a third building is nearly finished for the weaving ladies and funds are being raised for a kitchen. The vocational training project is well under way and the English Language program is achieving great results. The family support program continues to grow, the rewards of healthier, happier children are becoming apparent but there is a long way to go yet.

This has all been achieved by your hard work fund raising and we are very grateful to everyone who has donated / volunteered over the past 2 years.

Education Updates The Centre is always a hive of activity and here is what has been achieved in the past 2 months.

English Language.

One cheeky young man in Loung's class has been promoted to Rith's English class, I am very proud of him, he has progressed from being a little trouble maker into a delightful young man with an endearing smile. The 3 - 4 pm classes have expanded and we now teach 75 students in this hours, thanks to



our hard working teachers. The conversion of the upstairs room into the library is completed, thanks to funds raised by St Ursulas's school in Australia and Lake Bonavista school in Canada. Volunteers Graham and Janelle worked tirelessly building shelves and categorised the books we have. The next stage is to purchase Khmer Language books to enable the library to be open to the villagers.

Vocational Training - have just received wonderful news, we have successfully secured one years funding from "Hesse-Ragle Fonden" in Denmark for the vocational students, women's workshops, to employ a marketing/quality assurance person, expand the Adult Literacy and purchase a sewing machine. Many thanks to Tracey and Mikkel for putting us forward and the foundation for awarding the funds.



Wood work

All the equipment has now arrived, after much discussion with Cambodian customs officials. The workshop looks very professional, the next stage is to enrol students and start training. The course run for 6 months, after which students will be able to produce sellable items and hopefully earn a living. A workshop will be built on site for production. (Issy with Tina, an electrician student)

Weaving



The new building for the weaving ladies, funded by the Green Gecko Project as part of our partnership of "The Grace Gecko Vocational Centre for Women" is nearly completed. It has been constructed in the corner of the site, beside the maze, this will give the ladies a "women's space" where we can run workshops and support groups in addition to the working environment. The ladies are very excited as they have been moved around the site for months. We aim to start training in the afternoons using water hyacinth and employing an additional trainer in the new year.



Domestic Electrician

The apprentices are making good progress and now have the opportunity to practice their skills "on the job". They are also learning about alternative energy and have built a solar oven and a water power generator. We have sponsorship for the 2 young men who live in the village, this has enabled them to give up their jobs and stop falling asleep in class!



New Sign

Globalteer kindly donated the funds to put up a sign on the road, now everyone can find us!

Calendars

The calendars are now ready and selling well, get your order in quickly before they sell out. E mail info@gracehousecambodia.org with name and address and we will send them out in UK as soon as possible. Please pay by donating £7 via www.virginmoneygiving.com/gracehouse

Second Birthday Party

In typical Grace House style - never missing a chance to party - We celebrated our 2 nd birthday with 3 parties , 2 for the children - morning and afternoon and an evening party for all the staff and volunteers. The children had the choice of crafts, computers, board games or traditional Khmer games for the first hour, then after a snack we had a circle time followed by a treasure hunt for a small gifts. To finish our resident DJ pumped up the music!



Dancing, Sparklers, Food and Gifts



Family and Staff Updates

It's been a dramatic time, one of our families suffered the death of their father at the age of 44, leaving 5 children fatherless. The family are sponsored and we were able to donate money towards the funeral.

We have had 2 births over the past 2 months, mothers and babies doing well. We have also taken on another 2 families.

One family is a mother with 5 children, her violent husband has left and she is struggling to manage the children, none of whom go to school. We now have

a sponsor for them and are working with her to get the children into school.

The second family is a young couple with a 3 month old baby who have bought or brought a 9 or 10 year old girl from another province to care for the baby while they farm! We are trying to find out if the girl's father gave them permission, they say the mother is dead. We have offered the child a place at Grace House so she is not caring for the baby all the time and can make some friends.

We were donated 7 bikes via Concert, and 3 from volunteers, all have been given to the families apart from 2 which we will use for family visits.



Dani

Vulnerable Children Course

Grace House desperately needs a social worker to help with our vulnerable families and Dani possess the skills to make a wonderful social worker with training.

She has been offered a place on a course run by the Social Services of Cambodia. The course is for 6 weeks over a 6 month period and will be intense studying for Dani.



Chamrith

The course costs \$375 but involves travelling to Phnom Penh and staying for 6 nights each month which we estimate will cost an additional \$1000 over the 6 months

If you would like to contribute towards the costs please contact me at info@gracehousecambodia.org



Chamroeun

Good Luck Chamrith and Chamroeun

Chamrith, our special needs assistant has been awarded a place to train as a teacher in Battambang. A past volunteer is sponsoring him.

Chamroeun, morning pre-school assistant has also left us to study at university. We are currently recruiting new staff for these posts.

We wish them both the best of luck

N'yum Bai and General Funds Update



Amazing Fund Raisers

N'yum bai

The fund raising or the Lunch Club has got off to a great start. The aim is to raise £13,333 (\$20,000 US) to build the kitchen and fund lunches for 100 children a day for 1 year before we start.

- Carol and Jo held their Christmas lunch for us, instead of gifts
- Elaine and Alex, who were running a lunch time art club for us, cycled 100 k in the Angkor Bike Ride
- Jon and Meryl who visited us earlier this year, have donated salary from a teaching assignment

Alex and Elaine's 100k ride



Running Costs

- Lyn and Bob have spoken at local groups to raise funds and awareness
- Pam held garages sells and sent goodies via a visiting friend
- Simon, Colin and their friends Tony and Clare run / walked a half marathon along frozen canal paths
- Sarah, Tony's wife swam the equivalent of swimming to France and back
- Russ and Heather are busy raising funds for the Khmer library books
- Don and Sylvia have downsized and held a garage sell

Many thanks to everyone for your energy and hard work

We still need £9,000 (13,500 US) before we start the Lunch Club and it costs £3,000 (\$4,500 US) a month to keep Grace House and the family support work running.

SPONSOR A FAMILY



Spean Chreav Families



Please help these Families

We urgently need help to feed and support families like these. Currently we have sponsorship for 10 families which is wonderful, but need more sponsors. 40 families were identified in the family survey as living hand to mouth.

When you sponsor a family, you'll help give them access to life-saving things like clean water, nutritious food, vital health care, better housing, opportunities for education, vocational training and family business development. A little goes a long way.

\$40 US / £25 a month will support a large family - 27 families

\$30 US / £20 a month will support a small family - 5 families

\$15 US / £10 a month will help keep a child in state school

If you can not manage these amount please donate what you can, every bit helps for details of how to sponsor a family e mail info@gracehousecambodia.org



Visitors

42 school students from around Australia visited and worked on the football and volleyball pitches. They repaired the netting, cleared the weeds and installed new netting between us and our neighbours.

Two of the group played a tune on a piece of metal pipe which became a didjeridu. Our children were amazed at this skill.

Each day finished with a football match, which was declared a draw. The students left us a battery operated

singing kangaroo which amazed the children. They are now all singing "I come from a land down under"
Many Thanks for all your hard work .

DONATIONS

Monthly Donations via Direct Debit

If you are sponsoring a family or wish to make a monthly donation you can now do so via

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?charityId=1001091>

just drop us an e mail at info@gracehousecambodia.org so we can inform Globalteer

Donating from USA

Thanks to our friends at ABOUT CAMBODIA it is possible to claim tax exemption if you are a USA tax payer. **INTERNET BANKING OR OVER THE COUNTER**

Bank: JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A (802)
Swift code: IRVTUS3N
Account Name: **IAMCAMBODIA INC**
Account number: **802591875**
ABA: 021000021
Bank Address: 140 Katonah Ave, NY. 10536

email David Chase, director, at david@aboutasiaschools.org with the following donation details:
Your Name and email , Date of donation, Amount of donation
Stating it is for Grace House Community Centre, Cambodia
You will receive an email confirmation of receipt and sending of funds within 24 hours.
<http://www.aboutcambodia.org>

From around the World

1) via Virgin Money Giving: - <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/gracehouse>
(gift aid for Uk tax payers)

2) directly into our bank account (over \$500 only as we loose \$10 to bank charges):-

ANZ Royal Bank (Cambodia) Ltd, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Swift code: ANZBKHPP

Account name :- Community Center of Grace House (note spelling)

Account no; 1771711

Telephone no:- +855 (0)92 207 852



Last but Not Least

Many thanks to the volunteers who have worked so hard to keep Grace House running smoothly. Whether you have taught in a class or helped with other much needed jobs we really appreciate all the effort.

Thanks to

Russ, John, Susie, Jenny, Caroline, Graham, Sonia G, Courtney, Sonia S, Romy, Sarika, Eadie, Tor, Chelsea, Katrina, Janelle and Esther

A warm "Welcome Back" goes to Marilyn who volunteered in January 2009 and has come back for 6 months to help the volunteers and teachers with their lessons.

We also want to say 'Congratulations' to Danni and Matt who tied the knot on the 6th December - the staff and children wish you both all the best for the future.

Thanks also to the schools who continue to support us, especially Lake Bonavista in Calgary Canada and Choosen Hill in Churchdown, UK who have nominated Grace House their charity for 2011.

Many thanks to the Funky Munky Pub and Rosy Guesthouse in Siem Reap for supporting us via their charity quiz nights.

Thank you for reading our newsletter, please forward it to family, friends, colleagues, company directors, corporate managers in fact anyone who might be interested in helping Grace House and the families to flourish and grow.

Follow us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Grace-House-Community-Centre-Cambodia/121624184548149>

Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2011

Bridget Cordory

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