

# AWARENESS CAMBODIA

*"Rebuilding the children of Cambodia"*

Issue 2 2011

www.awarecam.org.au

## AwareCam Medical Program changes lives



The Operation Nightingale project has now been operating in Kompong Speu for approximately **five years**. It continues to provide much needed medical services free of charge to the poor, in particular women and children of the province as well as our own orphaned children at Sunshine House and House of Progress.



Working in close cooperation with the Provincial Health Department, Awareness Cambodia has expanded from its initial solitary health centre to establishing well trained Cambodian doctors in four provincial health centres. Our doctors have not only helped stabilise many of the community's prevailing chronic conditions, but have been instrumental in training up nursing and auxiliary staff to provide increasing standards of service to their patients.



Our doctors and staff often work in conditions many in the West couldn't imagine; for starters most of the health centres have **no electricity** or **running water**. This year Awareness Cambodia secured and funded a stable power supply into the first of our health centres, Krang Skus, creating much excitement and appreciation from all concerned.

Once again our doctors and staff look forward to meeting up with the annual international medical team who will work alongside them in September for a week. If you wish to be on one of our teams feel free to contact our office. At the same time if getting away is difficult for you but you'd still like to play a part, can I suggest that this year you set aside funds from just one procedure and send it to Awareness Cambodia. All contributions over \$2 are tax deductible and those funds would then empower us to have someone in Cambodia perform a procedure in-country on your behalf.



I would also like to congratulate one of our hard working doctors, **Dr Chenda Lim** who has been accepted into a three year post graduate training course in Australia.

*Gary Hewett,  
Founder/ CEO*



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# Graduation House update



by Kim Hewett

## Why build Graduation House?

The Graduation House programme is the final piece in the jigsaw that is seeing orphaned kids complete their university or vocational study and take their place as major contributors to the future of Cambodia. Currently our leased building that houses Graduation House is reaching its accommodation capacity. At present, we have six students studying at Graduation House, with another two students set to join them after graduating from House of Progress in August 2011. Next year another nine students will join Grad House, taking our total to 17 students studying at university or VET studies.

## Who benefits?

Graduation House is the final stepping stone for students such as our oldest boy, Chumrarn Kith. He arrived at Sunshine House in 2001 with his sister and brother (HIV positive). He had lost both parents to AIDS and at age 12 had not attended school for 2 years.

Chumrarn, like many others at Sunshine House, took to these new opportunities with enthusiasm. Adjusting wasn't always easy for him, but with the appropriate counselling and support, by age 16 he had caught up with other students his age and moved to our House of Progress programme to complete his high school education.



Above: Chumrarn upon arriving at Sunshine House, aged 12.

Below: Chumrarn today, an aspiring civil engineer.

**“ Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation. ”**

**John F Kennedy**

Upon entering his final year at House of Progress, time was taken with all students to discuss what they wished to do when graduating from high school. It was very rewarding to hear students like Chumrarn, who arrived at Sunshine House hoping to get married or become a moto driver, now talking about University degrees. Chumrarn decided he'd like to become a civil engineer. With only 50% of his year passing their final exams, Chumrarn and the others passed exceptionally. He did so well that he was awarded a 50% fee scholarship to study Civil Engineering at Norton University.

Chumrarn enters his 3rd year of study in a few months. Last year he was presented with an award and scholarship by the Prime Minister for top English student out of over 2,000 peers. He has also received a scholarship to complete a second degree in Business Management. He works part-time, has a steady girlfriend and does volunteer work with other groups and organisations.



## When will building commence?

As with all things in Cambodia, the wheels turn slowly and there are always new challenges to navigate.



At present, the plans have been submitted to the local government for approval. Also awaiting Government approval is the joining of two soft titles into one hard title. While this has postponed the actual starting of the building, the good news is, it allows us to continue to raise funds. Our desire is to build the whole project over an eight month building period. This can only be achieved if we can raise the funds in time. Our second option and less desirable, is to move to 'plan B' and complete the buildings in stages.

Building our new purpose built facility is becoming urgent. Please send a donation today; it is certainly our largest building project ever undertaken and we need your help!

## Funding Graduation House

Fundraising continues to source the funds needed to build Graduation House. Our latest initiative is a fundraising committee with the goal of raising \$200,000. A great team has been assembled and planning is underway to hold a corporate dinner in March 2012. This is the largest building project undertaken by Awareness Cambodia; we are thankful for this group of dedicated people who are giving of their talents and time to assist with our mission "to rebuild the children of Cambodia".



Above: The fundraising committee hard at work.

We invite you to join with Awareness Cambodia in the building of Graduation House. Please donate and change an abandoned child's world. This life changing project is developing them into quality future leaders in their nation.

## International Children's Day in Cambodia

International Children's Day was celebrated in Cambodia on June 1. Cambodian orphans are at high risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect. Young boys and girls who are orphaned are often sold or simply abandoned by neighbours or extended family. Those who purchase these children make them work long hours in the streets, where they sell flowers, books, bracelets and sometimes even their bodies. Many children are also forced to work in dangerous settings such as garbage dumps and karaoke bars. The trafficking of children, especially for sexual purposes, is a serious problem in Cambodia. World Vision estimates that

1 out of 3 sex workers in Cambodia are under the age of 18. In addition, many children are trafficked for their labour. Awareness Cambodia believes these children deserve our protection. They have a right to see their basic needs met and to see a new future of hope and optimism realised through the provision of opportunity. Awareness Cambodia is dedicated to creating brighter futures for Cambodian orphaned children - free from exploitation and abuse. You can help by donating: [www.awarecam.org.au](http://www.awarecam.org.au)

# House of Progress update

## New Staff

One of Awareness Cambodia's most important goals is to employ qualified Cambodian nationals to oversee and manage each project. In February 2011, we have reached yet another milestone by employing Cambodian Managers, Vanna and Vannary, at the House of Progress (HOP).



They have extensive experience working with young people in past roles with other NGO's and have brought a gentle family atmosphere to House of Progress with their baby daughter, Suzanna. The House of Progress young adults simply adore her.

Some of their key responsibilities at House of Progress include: monitoring young adults' attendance at school, overseeing the budget, ensuring cooking and cleaning are undertaken to a high level and strong mentoring of the young adults. Welcome Vanna and Vannary to the team!

## Preparing House of Progress young adults for university



## Khmer New Year Celebrations



Khmer New Year is one of the biggest Cambodian holidays on its calendar. It is a festive time which involves time spent with families. Most people leave Phnom Penh to visit family in the "home-land" as they call their home province. It is estimated that about a million people leave Phnom Penh, which means that the city can resemble a ghost town.

Each year our children head to the village that they were born in for a "home-land visit." One of the positives to come out of the visit to a province and village is a sense of belonging.

Before heading off for the home-land visit, the House of Progress young adults celebrated with a party and new clothes. A new initiative by our House of Progress Manager, and one that the HOP family is hoping will become an annual event.



# Computer classes begin at Graduation House

Report by Sopheak Pheng (Projects Manager)



Last November we were fortunate enough to have Pru Troedel and 12 talented people from the “Cambodian Working Team” volunteer at Sunshine House for a week. Apart from a week of hard work, each visiting group fundraises to leave behind a legacy of improved resources and facilities for the children of Sunshine House, House of Progress and Graduation House. “The Cambodian Working Team” left behind a generous donation and 23 laptop computers to assist our children’s projects.

The donated laptops have allowed Awareness Cambodia to start computer classes at Graduation House. Cambodian Projects Manager (Sopheak) worked for many years as a high school principal, so with his experience as an educator, he is holding computer training lessons four nights a week.



The Graduation House students are enjoying the lessons and making fine progress with their computer skills. They are currently developing a greater understanding of Word and Excel. Similar programs are now about to start at House of Progress and Sunshine House.

**Internet Café**  
a project of  
AWARENESS CAMBODIA  
www.awarecam.org.au

**Opening Hours**  
Monday to Saturday  
closed on Sunday  
7am-11am  
12pm-7pm

**Internet prices**  
15 minutes 500 riels  
30 minutes 1000 riels  
1 hour 2000 riels

Location: No 567, Road Number 4  
(50 metres from Teachers Training College)  
Samnong Village, Rokkharthom Commune  
Chbarmon District, Kampong Speu Province

## Internet Café proves popular

The internet café is currently providing an internet service and overseas phone calls to the people of Kompong Speu. Last year Awareness Cambodia was approached by Cambodian Internet Service Provider, Chuan Wei to form a partnership. Papers were signed in early 2011 and our internet access is now provided free of charge along with a much faster internet connection. That means scanning, printing and overseas phone calls are now all operational at the Internet Café.

With the increase in speed of the service has come an increase in its patronage. Last week 180 paying customers used the Awareness Cambodia Internet Café; 30% of them local and NGO workers and with end of year exams approaching, 70% were students.

The internet Café is proving itself invaluable to the community in Kampong Speu provincial town. The café has really opened up their access to resources locally and worldwide; particularly to study materials for students.

The internet Café runs at a profit every month, whilst providing a much needed service to a desperately poor region in Cambodia. We are very proud of this project and the difference it is making.

# BUSHDANCE FUNDRAISER

by Raelene Perselo



A wonderful time was had by all who attended the Bush Dance fundraising evening in May. The evening was organised by Jayne Triffitt, Don Gauci and many friends from the Joondalup Anglican Church.



It was a fabulously successful event raising \$3,200 for Graduation House. Don, as master of ceremonies, directed everyone through the dance steps and the magician had the children hanging on his every move, waiting for the elusive rabbit. A poet orated The Man from Snowy River with panache and musician Alex had the kids dancing around the floor, plus we enjoyed a rockin' rendition of Rocking all over the World by Jayne's daughter and sister. It was wonderful to see so many different age groups - from the littlies, to teenagers and seniors - all joining in the fun and frivolities.



Delicious snacks and drinks were available thanks to the wonderful kitchen volunteers and an amazing array of raffle prizes were up for grabs, 33 in total! From the Awareness Cambodia Team and children, we thank the organisers and volunteers for your dedication and hard work and a big thank you to all those who supported the event. We look forward to the next one!



## Thank You Perth College!

Perth College's 7th annual trek to Cambodia happened this past April. Gary and Kim were fortunate enough to spend time with the staff and girls as they immersed themselves in life at Sunshine House. Thank you to the girls, parents and school community for your support. Your fundraising and devotion to the staff and children of Sunshine House, House of Progress and Graduation House is so appreciated!



*Pictured: Gary and Kim receiving the fundraising results from the PC girls.*

# Sponsorship: Change a Child's world!

Awareness Cambodia has dedicated the last 15 years to providing shelter, care for vulnerable orphans and protection for abused and trafficked children and in the last seven months 11 new children have come into Sunshine House and need sponsorship.

This is the story of our latest orphan, Pech Soy, who came to us in late June 2011.

Pech's mother passed away during his birth. Sadly she lost a lot of blood during the labour and died only one hour after he was born. His father died six months ago due to an illness. Since then he has lived with his two grandmothers.

When Pech's father passed away, his 12 year old brother Saran, was sent to live as a Buddhist boy monk in a monastery. His grandmothers are aged 82 and 89 years old, desperately poor with no ability to feed and support him or his brother. Awareness Cambodia is also trying to get Saran released to come live at Sunshine House with his brother. Pech is currently living at Graduation House in Phnom Penh while he undergoes medical tests before moving to Sunshine House. He is receiving a lot of TLC as he is emotional after having been through so much. Knowing that we are trying to have his brother released from the monastery to come live with him at Sunshine House is giving him a lot of comfort.



*Above: Pech (10 yrs) and his Grandmother, outside his home in Kompong Cham.*



*Left: Sokhim (5 years) is from Kandal Province, this photo was taken the day she arrived.*

*Right: Sokhim a few days later settling into life and enjoying breakfast in her brand new PJs.*

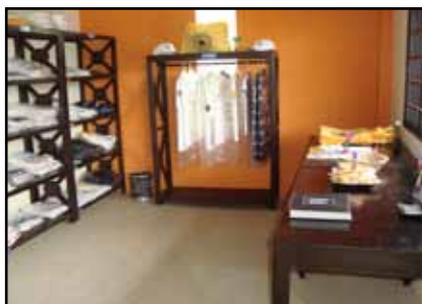


*Please contact the office today and become a child sponsor.*

*Your child sponsorship will help Awareness Cambodia transform the lives of these children, bringing them hope, freedom and a new future.*

## Sunshine House Shop is now officially open!

The Sunshine House shop finally got a fit out this year and is now up and running. When you next visit, drop by for a T-shirt or two to remember your stay.



*Find us on Facebook!*



# The Perth office has moved!

by Rob McCullough



Well our Perth headquarters have moved and in the process had a five day makeover at the new office. In just a few short days we were able to demolish walls, build new ones, paint the office throughout, re-wire the internet, install new floors and shift office furniture from the old Morley office to our new office in Bayswater.

Without the help of so many volunteers we would not have been able to accomplish the work in such a short time span. We didn't want to have to close the office to complete the work. At the same time as our 'makeover' we had some innovative young lads stealing all the copper water pipe, for the second time in two weeks, at the rear of the new office. This left all the units without water or toilet facilities and certainly made the makeover more challenging. My thanks to all those who gave freely of their time and for the effort they each put in to obtain such a fantastic result.



*Visit our website!*

*[www.awarecam.org.au](http://www.awarecam.org.au)*

*Stay on top of the latest updates  
or donate securely online..*

## Can you help?

We are looking for a volunteer maintenance person to assist at the Bayswater office each Friday for a couple of months.

If you can help with small paint jobs etc, then please contact Rob McCullough.

Email: [rob@awarecam.org.au](mailto:rob@awarecam.org.au)

Coming to Sunshine House...

a new playground!

Awareness Cambodia USA has partnered with Kids Around the World and sourced a recycled playground for the children of Sunshine House. It has undergone a powder coating and is now blue and yellow, fitting in comfortably with the colour scheme of the Sunshine House village.



*"Children are the greatest natural resource a country can have. Bringing joy, laughter and play through this playground is building a future of hope."  
-Kids Around the World-*



In early June, a hardworking and dedicated team from the USA packed the container and launched it on the high seas towards Cambodia. A specially trained team from the US will arrive in October to re-assemble the unit on site.

*Above: USA team pack the container.*

Thank you to Perth College Community, Sopheak Pheng (Awareness Cambodia, Phnom Penh office), USA Awareness Cambodia supporters, Kids Around the World, and Janet and Russ Landreth (our USA coordinators). People from across the globe have worked in harmony and co-operation to provide this very special opportunity for the children of Sunshine House.



## Awareness Cambodia Story

Awareness Cambodia is a not for profit, overseas aid organisation established in 1996 by Perth dentist, Dr Gary Hewett in response to the incredible suffering and poverty experienced by the

Cambodian people after the execution of 25% of its most intelligent under Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot. We work to relieve poverty and encourage development of life skills through participation in self sustaining projects.

Awareness Cambodia doesn't simply raise funds to pass onto other organisations; instead we initiated projects in response to ongoing needs. Together these projects form an environment that provides a seamless structure for orphaned Cambodian children to transition into well adjusted and self sufficient leaders, so necessary in rebuilding Cambodia's future.

We also see Cambodian culture as a unique national treasure meaning all efforts are taken to ensure our presence doesn't simply result in these children being westernised, relocated to other parts of the world or being reduced to the indignity of a dependency on overseas handouts.

Effective training for indigenous staff, a non adoption policy, working in cooperation with local organisations and government departments as well as the inclusion of self funded business components in projects are key components in reaching our objectives.

*"Awareness Cambodia is proud to be a partner for project 'J515 Awareness Cambodia-Stage 2' with Global Development Group, an Australian AusAID approved NGO carrying out quality humanitarian aid and development projects with approved partners to relieve poverty and provide long term solutions."*



AWARENESS CAMBODIA INC  
Together we can make a difference

### Donation Form

(Please return by Fax/Post/Email)

Name .....

Street .....

Suburb ..... State ..... Post Code .....

Daytime Phone ..... Mobile ..... Fax .....

Email .....

#### One-off Donation

\$1000  \$500  \$250  \$100 other \$

#### Monthly Donation

\$250  \$100  \$60  \$40 other \$

(please note that all amounts are in \$AUD)

- I would like to become a child sponsor
- \$55 per month (general & health)  \$60 per month (tertiary)
- I would like to become a Monthly Partnership Program (MPP) sponsor
- I would like to receive the Awareness Cambodia newsletter

#### Payment Options

Mastercard  Visa  Amex

Card Number

Cardholder ..... Expiry Date ..... / .....

Signature .....

- Cheque (please make cheques payable to 'Awareness Cambodia Overseas Aid Fund')

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### Thank you for your generous support