

SO MUCH HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN THE VILLAGE (AS USUAL)!

Newsletter 14 - 3 December, 2006

In this newsletter:

- Update on the community centre/school
- Tax deductible donations
- Christmas Gift Cards
- Adult literacy classes
- Seeds
- Bikes
- Thanks to our donors

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE IS JUST ABOUT FINISHED

Our school/community centre is only about a day and a half from completion.



Here are some more photos of the progress.....

Getting the building materials to the site has been fun and games. Chanti organised five different trucks to deliver materials from five different locations and all five got stuck in the mud in five different places, requiring many villagers to help get them out. All five truck drivers refused to come out to the village again! Fortunately, Chanti is very resourceful and always found a way.



Basically, it meant dumping the materials some distance from the building site and then the villagers had to use ox carts, bicycles or even carry the materials to the site (as you can see in the photos). The villagers work very hard in very trying conditions and yet the morale around the building site is always very upbeat.



TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

Very exciting news! We are now able to accept tax deductible donations in Australia.

In order to be able to accept tax deductible donations I have partnered with Global Development Group in Brisbane . Global Development Group is a Non Government Organisation (NGO) carrying out humanitarian projects with approved partners and providing aid to relieve poverty. Their website is www.globaldevelopment.org.au

To give a tax deductible donation you can send your donation to Global Development Group, 56 Goorari Street , Eight Mile Plains, Qld, 4113 with a note stating the donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia – project number J213. You can also donate online via their website. If you choose to donate online you also need to email them a short note stating your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia – project number J213. Global Development Group will then send a tax receipt to you.

Alternatively, you can still donate directly to us but inform me via email that you want a tax receipt and I will organize for Global Developments to post a receipt to you.

LOOKING FOR THAT SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT?



Looking for a truly meaningful Christmas gift? Why not give a gift that really makes a difference to someone less fortunate. I'll be selling gift donation cards at the Maroochydoore Markets at Fisherman's Roa. The cards will range in value from \$5.00 to \$50.00. See below to find out just how far your money can go. (I'll also be selling a beautiful range of silk bags, silver jewellery and other gift items from Cambodia at the markets.)

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| <p>Stationery supplies for our school.</p> <p>\$5.00</p> | <p>A water filter for one family.</p> <p>\$10.00</p> | <p>Approximately 12 children's books.</p> <p>\$15.00</p> | <p>Enough seeds for 4 families.</p> <p>\$20.00</p> | <p>Teachers' salary for one week.</p> <p>\$25.00</p> | <p>A bicycle.</p> <p>\$35.00</p> | <p>Teachers' salary for two weeks.</p> <p>\$50.00</p> |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Many people continue to generously give donations. I'd like to make special mention of:

Ben Taylor and his friends for their wonderful contribution.

Noosa Rotary Club who have paid for 100 bikes.

Zonta Club of Maroochy held a fundraiser and raised \$1,000.



And my wonderful big brother, Brett, Lorraine and the crew at Northline who are holding a Christmas raffle.

On behalf of all the villagers, like this little girl, **THANK YOU!** We really couldn't do any of this without you.

ADULT LITERACY CLASSES

I was thrilled to learn that some of the adults in the village have approached Chanti asking if we will have Cambodian reading and writing classes for the adults. The vast majority of adults in our village are illiterate.

I've always wanted to hold adult literacy classes but am always very aware of not pushing my ideals onto the people if its not in line with what they want, or for that matter assuming that I know what's best for them.

Now that they have shown real interest we will be setting up adult classes in the New Year.

Furthermore, we may also set up kindergarten classes at our community center in the New Year - if the finances stretch that far (wink, wink).

SEEDS

We are continuing with all of our usual work at the village, such as providing bikes, accessing specialist medical care when necessary, helping people set up businesses, etc.



We are also still supplying seeds, but we've changed the way we do it. Our aim is to promote a culture of self-sufficiency as opposed to having the villagers become reliant on aid. Accordingly, rather than give away seeds all the time, which doesn't encourage responsibility, we are now selling seeds in the village. We buy them in Siem Reap and then sell them at approximately half of the cost price. This means the villagers can buy a small can of vegetable seeds for as little as 15c and they don't have to travel all the way into town (25kms) to get them. You may think it doesn't seem right selling seeds to the poor people, but I have been absolutely amazed at how much we are selling. It seems every second day Kim (the lady who sells them on our behalf) phones with a request for more seeds.

This is Kim and Chanti (my right hand man). Kim has a small stall where she sells some basic grocery items. She sells the seeds on our behalf and for this we pay her a small wage.



This extremely poor, single parent, family live across from Kim's stall and never used to have a vegetable garden. As you can see, they do now! The seeds used here were bought from Kim.