

DEPDC-NEWSLETTER

January 2006

SOMPOP'S WORDS



Sompop Jantraka

Welcome to this new edition of the DEPDC newsletter! It's been a while since the last newsletter, but many exciting things have happened in the past year that we would like to share with you.

The Mekong Youth Net has been an important project for us during 2005. Our first group of trainees graduated in April, with most of the girls going back home to begin working in their own communities. We quickly started with our second MYN group, and I'm proud that the Open Society Institute is funding the project for another year. I'm also happy to say that we now include trainees from Cambodia and Vietnam.

Many of our other projects have focused on creating more opportunities for the children at our centers and for people living in our community. Foreign volunteers have recently organized activities and special events for children at the DEPDC and the Border Child Protection & Rights Centre (BCPR). A new Activity Room at the DEPDC gives students a chance to make crafts, learn English, and play games. We've also started a Community Learning Centre, where people from the villages around DEPDC can come to study Thai, English, or computers three evenings a week.

I also visited the United States last year, where a documentary about the DEPDC was shown at the Boston International Film Festival. It was a great opportunity to let many people know about DEPDC and the problems we have in northern Thailand. You can learn more about the DEPDC and the issues it faces in this newsletter, so please keep reading!

Volunteer Thank You

DEPDC would like to thank Alexandre Aubert, Helma van Haften, Lindsey Kingston, Anna Lansiti, Jenny Learmont, Elina Makila, Manon Sluijter, Joeke de Hair and Armando Pannacci for volunteering with DEPDC. We hope you can look back at your time with us with fond memories!



DEPDC IN THE NEWS

New Heroes

Last summer Sompop Jantraka, founder and director of DEPDC, was highlighted in the United States by a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) documentary series. The series, produced by the Skoll Foundation, aired on U.S. national television on June 28 and July 5 2005. Hosted by actor Robert Redford, the series told 12 dramatic stories of daring social entrepreneurs around the globe. These "new heroes" have focused on self-sustaining programs, which have resulted in long-term benefits for their target populations. Visit www.pbs.org/opb/thenewheroes for details.

Daughters and Sons



Sarah Feinbloom's film tells the story of child trafficking.

A documentary about the work of the DEPDC was recently shown at the Boston International Film Festival in the United States. *Daughters and Sons - Preventing Child Trafficking in the Golden Triangle* was shown on June 24th and 25th in the Rabb Lecture Hall at the Boston Public Library in Boston, Massachusetts. The 25 minute film was selected from over 1,800 entries to be part of the festival. The film, which focused on eliminating the plague of human trafficking, was shown free of charge. Viewers had the opportunity to meet Sarah Feinbloom, the film's award-winning director and producer, as well as DEPDC founder Sompop Jantraka. Please visit <http://www.bifilmfestival.com/daughtersandsonsession8.html> for details.

DEPDC PROGRAMS



Fun at DEPDC

Coming home from school is more exciting for children at DEPDC now that the Activity Room has opened its doors. Three nights a week, children living at the center are invited to stop by a newly-renovated activity room to have a good time. The room, organized by Canadian MCC-volunteer Cindy Low, is staffed by foreign volunteers from 7 to 9 p.m.

An excellent place for the children to practice their English and get help with their homework, children can also make crafts, play the guitar, listen to music, read books, play games, or simply hang out after a busy day at school.



Children get creative in the Activity Room



The children were also kept busy during their school holiday. From mid-March until mid-May the children who stayed at the center had lots to do, thanks to staff and volunteer organizers. An April activity week was organized for more than 100 children by Low and Dutch volunteer Joeke de Hair. The kids enjoyed music, drama, arts and crafts, woodworking, and English activities. They played games in the afternoons, went on a horseback riding trip and had dinner in a local restaurant, a first experience for many.

A week later, 40 children and 10 staff members went on a study tour to the beach. The first day was spent at a national park near Bangkok, where the children took guided wildlife tours. They also visited a marine museum, watched a dolphin show, and of course had time to go swimming and play at the beach. Then, in the last week of the school holiday, Magicians Without Borders visited the DEPDC and led art activities, magic shows, and games with the children.

Donor Thank You

Aeroworks - The Netherlands, **S. Balocating** - USA, **Mr. and Mrs. Bellinzona** - Italy, **S. Caplan** - USA, **Mr. and Mrs. Corstjens** - The Netherlands, **Ms. Daw Aye Aye Thant** - USA, **G. Deal** - USA, **S. Dejavitlert** - USA, **Diakonie 't Harde** - The Netherlands, **T. Fletcher** - UK, **Friends of Thai Daughters** - USA, **T. Galema-Faber** - The Netherlands, **Mr. and Mrs. Garfield-Zimmerman** - USA, **Mary de Groot** - USA, **G. Harbenn** - Germany, **Mr. and Mrs. Hasek** - USA, **Mr. and Mrs. Jetten** - The Netherlands, **Mr. and Mrs. Kanuk** - USA, **S. Kazenel** - Canada, **T. Lughofer** - Germany, **N. Lussing** - The Netherlands, **K. O'Malley** - USA, **Mr. Masaoka** - Thailand, **Mr. and Mrs. McCauly** - Canada, **K and G.W. Mehler** - USA, **Bur. Architectuur Ruimtelijke Ordening Martini** - The Netherlands, **M. Minato** - Japan, **Ngam Thai Food** - Switzerland, **Barbara Peterson-Cremer** - USA, **R. Roach** - Japan, **S. Sapcote** - UK, **M. Shapiro** - USA, **A. Solberg** - USA, **Studentenkerk Nijmegen** - The Netherlands, **Thailife Foundation** - Germany, **T. Uitti** - Finland, **Paula Vergani** - USA, **R. Werder** - Switzerland, **T. Suwansawad** - USA, **T. Ypenga** - The Netherlands.



Graduation Day April 2004

Mekong Youth Net:

A second year of the Mekong Youth Net began in 2005, following the successful completion of MYN-1 in April. The project is aimed at creating a network of youth leaders working against human trafficking in the Mekong Sub-Region.

The new group of 15 girls includes students from Cambodia and Vietnam for the first time, and again welcomes participants from China, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand. The project now covers all countries in the Mekong Sub-region and is open to girls aged 15-25.

These students will follow much of the same curriculum as the original group of 12 girls. Throughout the year participants had leadership training, including conducting research, writing reports, and building teams from a human trafficking prevention angle. The training also included two village home stays, many field visits locally and in places such as Chiang Mai and Bangkok, and finally a six-week internship related to human rights.



Maggie with MYN-2 students

Save the Children UK in Bangkok has agreed to fund a follow-up project that will assist DEPDC in creating a stronger network once MYN participants have returned home. Most of the MYN-1 girls went back to their home communities, but some decided to stay with DEPDC and became volunteers within the organization. Thanks to this new funding, students will be able to do small-scale research projects, attend conferences, and visit the home organizations of other MYN participants.

DEPDC EVENTS



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ILO/IPEC Workshop

DEPDC co-hosted a spring skill-building workshop together with United Nations specialized agency, the *International Labor Organization* (ILO). The event was aimed at creating dialogue on the prevention of child trafficking, as well as on creating opportunities for the rehabilitation and reintegration of trafficking victims.

More than 40 participants attended the workshop, which was held from March 21-26, 2005. The first two days were spent in Bangkok and the final four at DEPDC in Mae Sai.

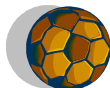
The event was coordinated by DEPDC and the ILO's Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Participants were invited by the DEPDC and the ILO's regional project, Trafficking in Children in South Asia (TICSA). Chief coordinators included Dutch VSO-volunteer Joeke de Hair and ILO/IPEC representative Parissara Liewkeat.



Some of the participants

TICSA partners included representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. DEPDC partners came from Laos, Myanmar, and of course Thailand, and several participants were representatives from Mekong Youth Net (MYN) host organizations.

The workshop resulted in an expanded anti-trafficking network and participants learned more about other approaches and organizations in the field. They were invited to share their experiences in working on prevention issues and in aiding victims of trafficking.



1st Annual Sports Day 'DEPDC vs. Childlife'

DEPDC hosted its first annual 'DEPDC vs. Childlife Sports Day' on November 19th 2005. Around 200 children came to participate as Child Life met DEPDC in a fun-filled war of strength and stamina.

The day was filled with soccer, volleyball, takaw, chairball, and various other games such as sack races, water balloon relays, and ski races. Even the staff tied up their laces and joined in. There was an 'edge of your seat' excitement all day as the fight for the trophy continued, but there was also laughter, high-spirits, and good sportsmanship, despite the competition.

Midday was break time as young and old filled their plates to regain their strength for more activities to come. To end the day speeches were given and the highly-admired trophy, which had been gleaming temptingly in the sunlight all day, was finally awarded. DEPDC was victorious and Childlife went home, tired but in good spirits.

But this isn't the end of the story. Does Childlife have a chance of gaining the trophy? We'll have to wait until next year to find out!

Christmas Story

It was a cold night, but inside the school building at DEPDC light, music, and warmth filled the air. The children and staff of DEPDC, the children of BCPR and Doi Luang, and the MYN participants gathered on December 26th to celebrate Christmas.

Many of the children had been working hard over the previous weeks preparing dances. There were performances from the children of DEPDC and BCPR as well as the MYN participants and the foreign volunteers.

However, the prime attraction of the evening was the tables loaded with presents. Each child was given a number that corresponded with one of the brightly

wrapped packages and were delighted with the trinkets and treats that filled them. The evening was a festive success and a delight for all who were present.



DEPDC Travels: Japan

Eileen Woliner, a Swedish-American volunteer, represented DEPDC at the 7th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific. The event, held from July 1st -5th in Kobe, Japan, centered on the theme of 'Bridging Science and Community'.

During the Satellite Meeting on Migration, Trafficking, and HIV/AIDS, participants discussed ways of giving AIDS-affected communities access to the development of prevention, treatment, and care strategies. The meeting, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Thailand, focused on vulnerabilities in the region. Asia has the highest number of trafficked women and girls in the world. Large-scale migration and unequal gender dimensions also heighten vulnerability.

Woliner presented ideas and experiences from Northern Thailand at the meeting. Other presenters included B.Bhamathi from the Government of Bihar in India and A. Koirala from MAITI, a Nepalese organization aiding victims of sex trafficking.

Staff: P'Noom goes to America

Somporn Khempetch, known as P'Noom, is a long term member of staff and now assistant director in DEPDC's management team. She traveled to the United States to participate in the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). The project, held from April 14th - May 5th, focused on combating human trafficking.

Launched in 1940, the IVLP was designed to foster relations between the United States and other nations through professional visits to the U.S. for current and emerging foreign leaders.



P'Noom visits The White House in DC.

P'Noom was one of more than 4,500 IVLP participants who were selected by U.S. embassies last year to meet and confer with their professional counterparts in the U.S.

During her three-week trip P'Noom visited Washington D.C., Minneapolis, New York City, Los Angeles and Seattle.



Volunteer Corner

By Helma van Haeften



Helma and children

I have been working at the Border Child Protection and Rights (BCPR) centre, located near Mae Chan, since February 2005. The site opened in January, with a stone building serving as the office and the girls' dormitory, a bamboo house for the boys, and a tent school.

The kids have their own community, with children from many different tribes, ages and countries. They have all had problems and they are trying to live safely at BCPR, in the hope that one day they may find a new home where they feel secure.

My time at BCPR has been spent organizing activities for the children. In my last ten weeks at BCPR, the children worked on an exhibition that was held on July 9. Children and staff from DEPDC in Mae Sai came to look at art work, watch a drama and music show, and joined in workshops.



Whistles as gifts

It was a fabulous morning for the kids, who could eat a lot of khanom (candy) and have lemonade instead of water. Everybody went back to their centers happy...and with slight headaches, since the children had received whistles as gifts.



Donation Info

There are two ways to donate to DEPDC:

(1) Directly to DEPDC in Thailand by transferring money directly to their Thai bank account.

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR DAUGHTERS AND COMMUNITIES
PO Box 10
Mae Sai, Chiang Rai
57130, Thailand

BANK: Bank of Ayudhya Public Company, Mae Sai, Thailand
NAME OF ACCOUNT: Development and Education Programme for Daughters and Communities
ACCOUNT NR: 331- 1- 05358-6

The Bank of Ayudhya does not provide depositors' contact information, but we will gladly verify your donation and send an official thank-you letter if you choose to e-mail us with your information.

(2) Indirectly to DEPDC through the U.S.-based "Friends of Thai Daughters" (FTD). FTD was set up by American supporters to raise awareness of child trafficking and exploitation, as well as DEPDC's role as a pro-active, educational safe shelter for young girls and boys. For more info please have a look at: www.FriendsofThaiDaughters.org

Donations made through FTD are conveniently tax deductible, and a modest 4% fiscal-sponsor fee from each donation covers FTD's participation in another organization's 501(c) 3 non-profit status. Checks made payable to "Origin" with "Thai Program" on the Memo line are mailed to:

Friends of Thai Daughters inc,
PO Box 442
Trevett, ME 04571
USA

Acknowledgment of each tax-deductible donation will be sent and donations are forwarded almost weekly to DEPDC.