



KEP GARDENS NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019



Hi Everyone,

On holiday at the moment for Khmer New Year. Happy Khmer New Year to our Cambodian friends and supporters. It is a special family time in Cambodia with people all over the country travelling back to their Province to spend time with their family. Once the third New Year of 2019 is over, we can get back to normal and prepare for the long third term ending late August.

Electricity Comes to Kep Gardens

We have finally joined the 21st century at Kep Gardens. WE HAVE POWER! We still have to install fans and a few other bits and pieces but we have a fridge and don't have to stay up to turn off the generator at night. Hopefully it will end up making life easier. We have been virtually camping in style for the last 11 years!



Annual Swimming Outing

Last Friday was the last day of Term 2 before 2 weeks holiday. We held our annual swimming excursion to Kep Beach. Two staff members Kimhean and Chanloun worked tirelessly all day to ensure the day was a success for all the students involved. Well done to you both, I am proud of the effort you put in. Selapech, Tithaka, Soyin, Seanglorn, Sarorn and Watana from the Youth Programme along with several students from Class 5 all did a magnificent job ensuring that the students were safe in the water. What an important job you had and you did it to perfection. I am very proud of the way you handled the responsibility you were given. Well done to all involved.



Breaking the Gender Code

We chose to do International Women's Day with classes 4, 5 & 6 and we extended the day over a week! Every day we focused on areas we felt were relevant and important to Cambodia and to the kids by doing various

activities and lots of group discussion work. We not only focused on the girls but the boys too and discussed how society shapes the way boys act and how boys should treat and respect women. This led us to give the name "Breaking the Gender Code" to this project. Throughout the week the kids painted amazing murals too that the whole school will be able to see every day. The week was a great success and I can only hope that the kids enjoyed it and learnt as much from it as we did! From this I have learnt much more about the Khmer culture and every day I become more admiring of this amazing country.

Gabi, Project Trust



Kep Gardens versus Buddhist Library Debate

The beginning of March saw our annual debate against the Buddhist Library. Thanks to Gabi and Long Han for judging. Always a hard job especially as all of the students on both sides did a very good job. I am impressed each year as the students get better and better - I feel so proud of all of them, not only from Kep Gardens but also the Buddhist Library. So thanks judges, I think the score of 1 each was a fair, good decision. One of the important aspects of the debates is that the students choose their own topics and they are usually important issues in their community. It is encouraging them to think about what is going on around them and I believe they come up with some great topics. Until next year



I've thought for a long time how to describe Kep Gardens, but there is no description that could fully encompass everything that Janine and Andrew have developed. To describe it as an English school doesn't do it justice.

Kep Gardens is located in the Kampong Tralach village outside of Kep, Cambodia. Children ages 1-4 have playgroup, there is a kindergarten class, reception classes, and 6 levels of English classes for ages 5-20+. They offer life skills classes for students and parents on topics like personal hygiene, social responsibility, drug awareness, road safety and child protection. The students participate in drama classes, debate team competitions, traditional dancing, football (soccer) and volleyball.

Volunteering was primarily spent one on one with kids working on conversation skills and reading. Watching the kids grow more and more confident in the answers to the daily list of questions was a real joy.

Thank you Janine and Andrew for the opportunity. I hope I added my brick.
Lori McLeod-Goodroad, Florida, USA

Ari and Dini Return



Ari and Dini, our very first volunteers at Kep Gardens 5 years ago came back in January for the 3rd time. It was lovely to see them. Their return brought back many happy memories. Ari and Dini helped support the nursing students

throughout the 6 years and looked forward to visiting Sreyleap and Savry at their work places. Dini especially, as nursing was her career. Lovely people who care deeply about others and follow through by actively helping not only in Cambodia but in the Netherlands and other parts of the world.

Activity Club

Recently, Maya and Gabi started an Activity Club every Wednesday afternoon from 1.00 to 7.00 pm. They hold it in the shed and students come and go before and after their English class. A great idea which the students are supporting, particularly the younger ones.

The first week went really well and the kids had a lot of fun (the mess was not so fun to tidy up though haha). Gabi



Ex-student Sekravoith

Another Kep Gardens' success story. Sekravoith studied at Kep Gardens for 4 years. Once he passed Year 12 he moved on to pursue further studies. He



left here with good English speaking and comprehension skills. Although he could not study the area of his choice at Paul DeBrule Hospitality School, he accepted another area and obviously gave it his best shot. He did so well that he was chosen to do his internship in Laos at Sofitel, a 5 star international chain of hotels. Upon completion of his internship he was offered a job teaching his skills at Paul DeBrule while at the same time being offered the supervisor's job of the food and beverages, training Laos staff. Well done Sekravoith, we are very proud of you and will follow your career with interest. Your enthusiasm for life and ability to make the best of opportunities offered to you opens up a whole new world for you of travel, job opportunities and personal growth. Congratulations.

Dental Hygiene

While Ari played football, Dini took the younger classes teaching personal hygiene, in particular dental hygiene. A big thank you to Michele and Bill as well as Toby's coworkers for donating the tooth brushes which the children then took home.



Trade School

In March the Trade School were asked to build a sandpit for the local village primary school. They did a great job and the children at the school really enjoy it. Many thanks to Lori and Toby Goodroad from Florida, USA for donating the materials for this construction.



Thank you very much to Debbie and Roger Watts also from Florida, USA for donating money to Keat, our Khmer craft teacher. Keat who lost all her family during the Pol Pot Regime, lives by herself in a very tiny house of one room. The money was used to buy a bag of rice, sauces, salt and various other food supplies, a new blouse and 5 chickens which sleep under her bed to keep them safe at night.

Reception classes

Kimhean is doing a great job for her first year of teaching older students. She is a born teacher, planning her lessons well and genuinely caring about her students. Hopefully, she will continue extra studies in May. The Reception classes each planted a mango tree recently after learning the various parts of a tree.

On April 12th, 1961 Communist Yuriy Gagarin became the first man in space. His words were: "Circling the earth in the orbital spaceship I marveled at the beauty of our planet. People of the world!! Let us safeguard and enhance this beauty-not destroy it."



Domestic Violence

Earlier this year RACH held a Domestic Violence workshop with Classes 4, 5 and 6. We held the workshop in conjunction with Bending the Gender Code week. Last week RACH held a workshop with parents. Despite the date being very close to the holidays I was very pleased to see 18 parents attend including 4 fathers. Not so long ago it was a taboo subject in Cambodia so it was encouraging to see a good attendance. Next time we will choose the date more carefully and hopefully have a larger attendance.



In order to continue to provide not only English classes to the students and all that entails like photocopying, teaching resources, staff wages etc but extras like the Activity Club, football and volleyball equipment, parent workshops, sports teams and excursions, we need support. We would appreciate it you would please consider Kep Gardens when thinking about your next charitable donation.

We hope you are all well and enjoying life.

Cheers,
Janine and Andrew

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DAILY LIFE AT KEP GARDENS

