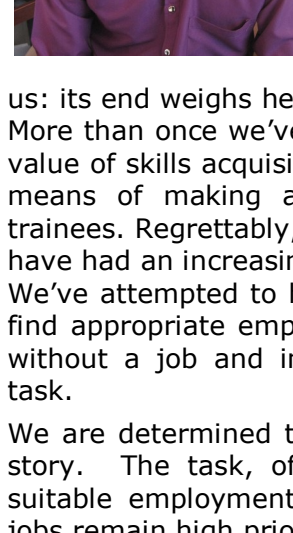




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Marist Solidarity Cambodia

Director's Message

Dear Friends of MSC,



In recent months Marist Solidarity Cambodia (MSC) has had to make some of the hard decisions demanded of organizations torn between providing opportunities for its trainees and trying all the while to generate enough of a profit to meet its costs. Over a good number of years our craftspeople have produced attractive products selling some online and others through the Yodiffee Craft Outlet in Phnom Penh. The whole enterprise has been a source of pride and pleasure for us: its end weighs heavily.

More than once we've justified financial shortfalls by pointing out the value of skills acquisition, skills which, we've hoped, would become a means of making a living for some of our young handicapped trainees. Regrettably, the balance has tipped too far so that the costs have had an increasing and negative impact on our other projects. We've attempted to help all of the staff and trainees leaving MSC to find appropriate employment. If even one of them continues to be without a job and income we haven't successfully completed that task.

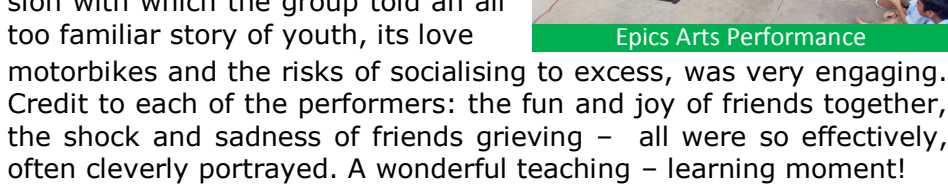
We are determined that this is the end of a chapter and not of the story. The task, of equipping our students and trainees to find suitable employment and the assistance we provide to find those jobs remain high priorities for our work. This particular part of MSC's work is probably the most challenging but we are committed to it.

We continue to be very grateful to you and others like you who support us. We know you share our regret about these unwelcome changes. We hope too that you share our optimism: there will be, for our young people, new challenges, new projects and new opportunities.

Mr Nimul Ouch

MSC Board Meeting

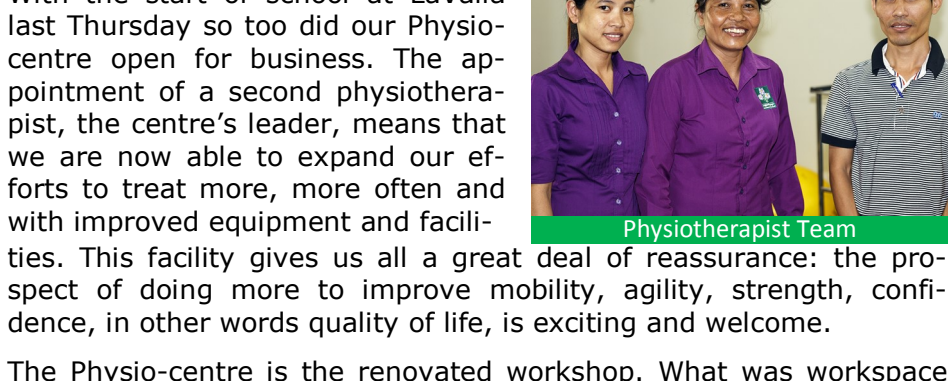
The MSC Board was delighted to welcome to its meeting April 1 two new Board members: Ms Sokhany Prak and Mr Seila Hort. Both bring to our meetings long and rich experience in various organizations, most of them NGO's and both have generously committed themselves to the service of MSC for three years. They joined Dr Luise Ahrens, Dr David Buckley, Ms Tith Davy, Br Max Meier, Mr Nimul Ouch (MSC Director), and Br Terry Heinrich for this, MSC's Ninth Board Meeting. Br Tony Burrows and Mr Sopagnya Chhom, both responsible for MSC's financial administration, took part in this meeting also.



MSC Board of Directors

Visitor

In March six young students from United World College in Singapore spent a week at LaValla working, tutoring, engaging with students and staff, helping in whatever ways they could. A mixed group, four of them Koreans, two Chinese, one from Hong Kong and one from mainland China. UWC has been supporting LaValla through its student social action groups since 1998. In recent years they have provided funds for our annual camp, held in September.



Our Visitors

Epics Arts - Visit and Performance

MSC was delighted to welcome back the performers from Epic Arts in Kompot. The group, all of them hearing disadvantaged, presented their now celebrated "Moto, Moto" dance-drama. The vigour and precision with which the group told an all too familiar story of youth, its love motorbikes and the risks of socialising to excess, was very engaging. Credit to each of the performers: the fun and joy of friends together, the shock and sadness of friends grieving - all were so effectively, often cleverly portrayed. A wonderful teaching - learning moment!



Epics Arts Performance

Australian Volunteers International and MSC - a Long-term partnership?

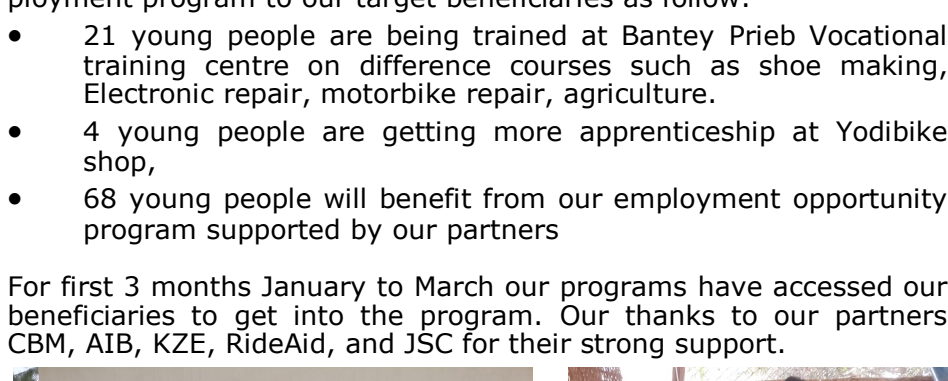
Mr Leo Buckles is the Phnom Penh-based Country Manager for Australian Volunteers International. With a view to sustaining good work already done Mr Buckles advised us to consider making applications for future AVI placements, one of whom might replace Mr Kym Hall the Australian horticulturalist working with us 2013-2015. Out of that suggestion have come a number of applications for volunteer staff who, if appointed, could greatly enhance our administration. Most pleasing is that two of our applications will be made jointly with the Deaf Development Program, a Maryknoll project led by Father Charlie Dittmeier, a good friend of MSC.

Physiotherapy Centre

With the start of school at LaValla last Thursday so too did our Physio-centre open for business. The appointment of a second physiotherapist, the centre's leader, means that we are now able to expand our efforts to treat more, more often and with improved equipment and facilities. This facility gives us all a great deal of reassurance: the prospect of doing more to improve mobility, agility, strength, confidence, in other words quality of life, is exciting and welcome.

The Physio-centre is the renovated workshop. What was workspace and storage spaces for equipment, stationery and wheelchairs is now therapy room, office space, sick room and doctor's consulting room. Exercise machines are placed throughout, parallel bars ready and the whole complex looking renewed.

We welcome Mr Leang Sokny, our newly appointed senior physiotherapist and we wish him and his team well in their valued work.



Physiotherapy Centre

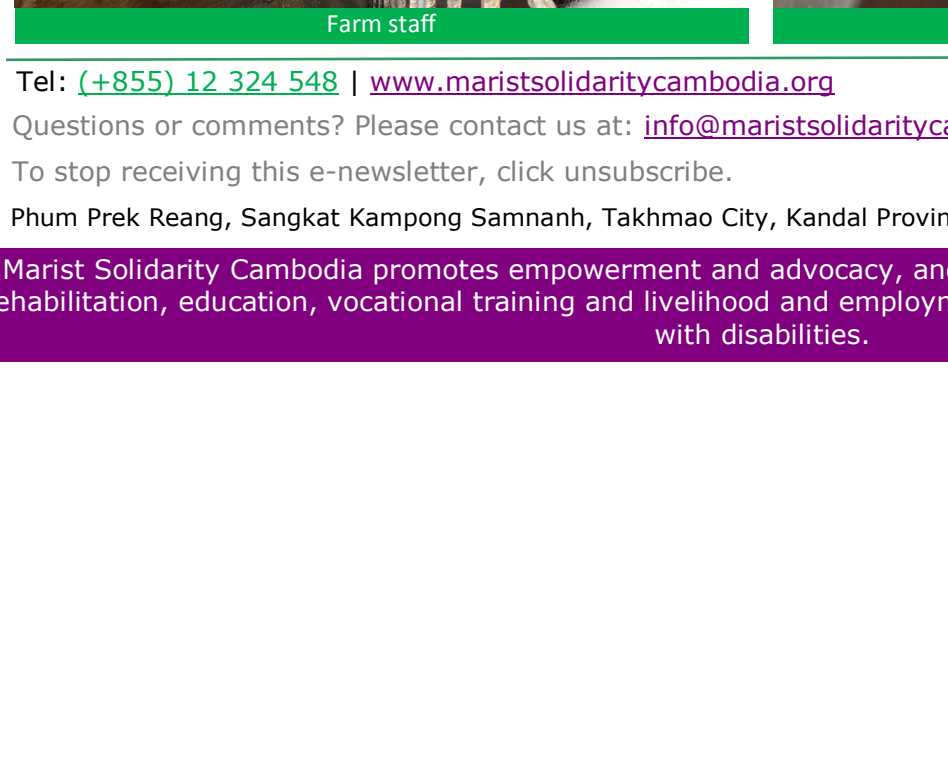
At the Farms

Earlier this year Leung Sophoak a member of staff since 2005, was appointed manager of the farm at Sa'ang. Che Lin, an ex-student, was appointed the on-site manager and Sophoak's assistant.

Hard work is the order of the day! Peanuts have been planted and harvested. Corn too. Ginger was planted in February, sugar cane about the same time. The number of papaya trees has been quadrupled and more than 100 mango trees, emerging as the preferred crop, were added.

In a couple of intensive workdays welding, painting, clearing and storing have been done so that the new building is functional. Electricity and water supplies have been improved but, much remains to be done. Our thanks to staff and students who did the work on those days.

The visit of the LaValla staff and students was a highlight and on the day, as well as consume a lot of mangoes, they did good work. Step by step current students are assisting the farm when they can.



LaValla students visited Saang Farm

Employment

Within our plan 2014, MSC is planning to support the skills and employment program to our target beneficiaries as follows:

- 21 young people are being trained at Bantey Prieb Vocational training centre on difference courses such as shoe making, Electronic repair, motorbike repair, agriculture.
- 4 young people are getting more apprenticeship at Yodibike shop,
- 68 young people will benefit from our employment opportunity program supported by our partners

For first 3 months January to March our programs have accessed our beneficiaries to get into the program. Our thanks to our partners CBM, AIB, KZE, RideAid, and JSC for their strong support.



Agriculture student in 4th generation



Farm staff produced pig food.

The Sustainable Piggery Farm Project

The Sustainable Piggery Farm provides job opportunities for Cambodians youth with disabilities in piggery farming to overcome the barrier of job employment. The farm is aimed to be the sustainable farm via earning the profit from the sales.

Funding from "Aiutare I Bambini" Onlus is used to assist financing the start-up of a Piggery Farm where 6 young people benefited from the farm.

The expected results that the project aims are to provide education, vocational training and support for employment for young people with physical disabilities.



Farm staff



Pig at the farm

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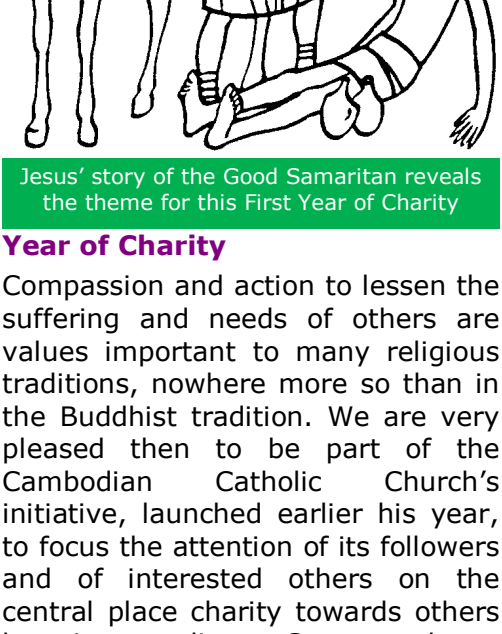
Questions or comments? Please contact us at: info@maristsolidaritycambodia.org

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Marist Solidarity Cambodia promotes empowerment and advocacy, and provides referral services for appropriate rehabilitation, education, vocational training and livelihood and employment opportunities to the children and youth with disabilities.

Issue #10, Jan-Mar 2014



Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan reveals the theme for this First Year of Charity

Year of Charity

Compassion and action to lessen the suffering and needs of others are values important to many religious traditions, nowhere more so than in the Buddhist tradition. We are very pleased then to be part of the Cambodian Catholic Church's initiative, launched earlier this year, to focus the attention of its followers and of interested others on the central place charity towards others has in our lives. So central, so important that the Bishop of Phnom Penh, Olivier Schmitthaeusler has indicated that Charity will be the focus of study, reflection and prayer for three years among Cambodian Catholics.

Volunteers at LaValla

Currently the two young Australians living and working at LaValla are Luke Ham and Alex Jack. Both are from Sydney. They will spend two months working and assisting in any ways they can the work of the school. They've been busy since their arrival April 29: good workers both!



Volunteers Alex Jack and Luke Ham

Recent Surgery

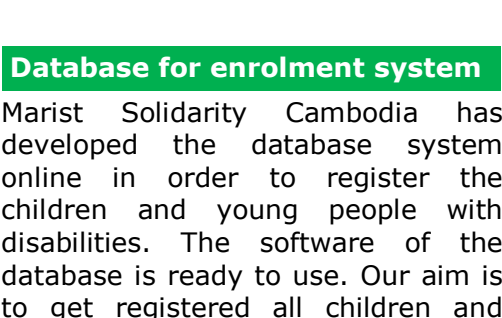
An earlier newsletter told of the visit of a medical team from Spain. Out of that initial visit three of our students had reconstructive surgery in April at Infant Jesus hospital for children in Takeo. So far progress for Red Roas, Pai Van Chai and Mat Serlium looks promising. They were in the best of hands with the Spanish team. Our thanks to them.

Among Our Visitors

Aussies for Orphans, Lawrie Nethery and Mark Brown, Amy and Anneleise McCosker; the Sealnet Leadership program group and representatives of Raffles International College, Phnom Penh; Japanese students and friends from Drop of Water; Peter and Pam Doherty were special guests; a group from Red Bend Forbes and girls from Brigidine College at St Ives; Marist aspirants from Vietnam, along with those we've already reported in this newsletter and those whose names we did not note.

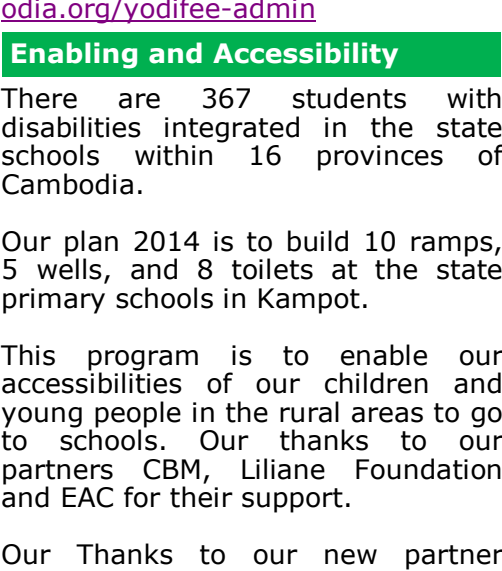


Anneleise McCosker tutoring



Weeding time! Classes at LaValla at work in their gardens.

Friends - Donor- Activities



Sharing hope



Database for enrolment system

Marist Solidarity Cambodia has developed the database system online in order to register the children and young people with disabilities. The software of the database is ready to use. Our aim is to get registered all children and young people who go through our service are collected into the system and in the future we could count for the impact survey. Please go to www.database.maristsolidaritycambodia.org/yodiffee-admin

Enabling and Accessibility

There are 367 students with disabilities integrated in the state schools within 16 provinces of Cambodia.

Our plan 2014 is to build 10 ramps, 5 wells, and 8 toilets at the state primary schools in Kampot.

This program is to enable our accessibilities of our children and young people in the rural areas to go to schools. Our thanks to our partners CBM, Liliane Foundation and EAC for their support.

Our Thanks to our new partner Aussie for Orphans and Aide et Action-EAC who support our project.

Current Needs

- 10 tablets for the library, each of them is 300 USD.
- One person one project to support 5 families, each family to raise a cow, each cow is 700 USD.

To see more, and find out how you can help, please click [here](#).

Support MSC, Donate Today

Your in-kind support will directly contribute to bettering the lives of Cambodian children and youth with disabilities by giving them a hand-up, not a hand-out. Please go to <http://maristsolidaritycambodia.org/donate.html> or contact nimullavalla@yodiffee.org if you wish to make a donation.

Marist Solidarity Cambodia (MSC) is an international non-government organisation, an integral part of the mission of the Marist Brothers, which promotes empowerment and advocacy, and provides referral services for appropriate rehabilitation, education, vocational training and livelihood and employment opportunities to the children and youth with disabilities.

