



# 3 Violets news

The Marist Solidarity Cambodia Newsletter  
February 2013 Issue number 9

**Our Name**  
**Marist Solidarity**  
Cambodia promotes equality, dignity, inclusive development and social justice for all.



A 25 -seated bus donated by St. John's Woodlawn



Yong Phau and his mother at the airport

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### A Note From Our Director ...



Since October our administration staff have been working together in one centre at Villa Maria. The arrangement, if a little crowded, has been good and welcome for a number of reasons: communication and access are easier; it's more efficient; we are getting to know each other better; we are working together more happily. There are times when a sense of truly belonging to a team is very real and that is reassuring.

Our organization is a whole lot bigger than it was and its demands, for good management don't lessen. We are strongly committed to accountability and transparency: given the number of Donors to whom we must answer a lot of our time is given to reporting. Easier said

than done when English, our second language, is the required medium. I want to commend to you, our supporters and friends, all of our staff, for their efforts to improve, to learn, to do their jobs well. We know we have plenty of challenges yet to meet. I hope we know too that we face those together and that around us are good people, ready to encourage us, willing to advise us.

We speak often of our indebtedness to the many people who support our work financially. So we should. In this edition of 3 Violets I want also to thank each of our staff for his or her efforts to do their respective jobs better day by day. Doing that is as good a way as any to show their care for each other and for the children and young people of MSC.

Mr. Nimul Ouch  
Executive Director

## Head Teacher at LaValla

Principal **Seik Maroum** returned to her duties at the Provincial Education Department of Kandal at the end of the school year. We are grateful to Maroum for giving us those two years when she took leave from the Department and for her careful and capable administration. We had the benefit of her long experience in education and now we wish her continued success and satisfaction in her work.



At the commencement of the school year **Um Srey Nan** assumed the role of Head Teacher at LaValla. Since LaValla began in 1998 she has been a much valued teacher and member of staff. Srey Nan will mix regular classroom teaching with her administration duties. She has not long returned to school from maternity leave following the birth of her baby boy. We wish Um Srey Nan success in her leadership role.



While Srey Nan was on maternity leave teacher **Hong Lai** very ably acted as Head Teacher, doing much to help everyone settle into the new school year. Lai has been teaching at LaValla since our beginnings and before that, together with teacher Cheang, began the classes at Rehab Craft Cambodia. We are grateful to Lai for his leadership over these past months.



## A Big Day Out!

Chinese New Year seemed as good a time as any for our high school students and trainees to spend an afternoon and evening at Dreamland on Koh Pich. The Maze and the Ghost House, Dodge 'em cars, the Superdisco and an array of other rides kept them fully engaged. The fact that no provision whatsoever is made for people with disabilities to access these fun activities did little to lessen the enjoyment of our students. They are very used to making the best of situations and they certainly did!



The Student field visit to Tonle Bati

## Garden Project at LaValla

In recent months the LaValla community has enjoyed fresh produce from our gardens, thanks to the efforts of each of the class groups. The decision to allocate each class a small plot and to encourage them to raise a crop has paid off well. At first light and last there are students at work in the gardens, weeding, watering, just gazing. We've enjoyed trokuon, black cabbage, beet and other greens. We wait to see if the tomatoes grow. A little time out of class to tend plots and an element of competitiveness have probably helped the project to flourish!



LaValla Students at Garden project

## Our Korean Connection

On the evening of January 11 we welcomed home Yong Phau and Sourn Sok Chea who, together with our staff member Han Sopheap, spent more than six months at the Samyook Rehabilitation Centre (SRC) near Seoul in Korea. Given intensive physical therapy there the boys show much improved agility and mobility while Pheap had daily training as a physical therapist.

The initiative for this remarkable opportunity came from SRC who met all the costs involved and cared for our group most attentively. Clearly, we are indebted to SRC yet remain hopeful of an on-going collaboration with them.



Sourn Sok Chea , Yong Phau and Han Sopheap

## Meet our Management Team – Marist Solidarity Cambodia



- Up left - Chhom Sopagnya. Financial Administrator. Began – La Valla, 1998.
- Up right - Ngin Visal. Registrar. Began – La Valla, 1998.
- Down Left - Choeung Samang. LaValla Site Manager. Began La Valla 2002
- Down middle - Ouch Nimul. Director. Began – LaValla, 1998.
- Down Right - Um Sreynan. Head Teacher at LaValla School. Began – LaValla,1998.



## Visitors to Villa Maria and LaValla

There continues to be a steady stream of visitors, often young people, wanting to spend a day or more among our students, ready to do whatever work is helpful. In the last months of last year students and staff from Ashgrove and Woodlawn Colleges in Australia came. The Harris family from Queensland and a group from Alice Springs were here early January. We welcomed Marist Brothers Chris Wills, director of Marist Mission International in Rome and Brian Etherington from Sydney. Mid-December the Catholic seminarians spent a morning with us and joined us for lunch. We were happy to have Meg and Bianca, Ryan, Emily and Sam spend some time here and we thank them for their work.

Christine Holme, a US Peace Corps volunteer, has reviewed and strengthened the English language programme at Villa Maria and Hannah teaches there daily.

With us at LaValla for two months is Llywellyn O'Brien from Canberra, Australia's national capital.

## YODIFEE AMBASSADORS



Two students, Chou Chhoeun, who manages the Viola Wheeler Music Program, and Chea Soheat, the lead guitarist and vocalist in the Yodband, were destined for some time in Australia, courtesy of Marist St John's Woodlawn in Lismore in November 2012 .

Soheat and Chhoeun featured

in some fund raising activities to raise money to purchase 25 seated bus.

Thanks gratefully to St John's Woodlawn to make this possible for our project



## Surgery Programme

Due in part to the appraisals done by visiting Orthopedic surgeon Gabriel Buntin from Italy last August, a number of our students have had surgical procedures intended to improve mobility and agility. Since the start of the new school year last October five students, Pong



Makara, Chen Navi, Noy Vysna, Chea Dyna and Poy Tharin have all spent time in Loak Song Hospital where the orthopedic team led by Dr Ry Sina has operated. We are deeply appreciative of this collaboration with the hospital and medical staff as we are for our that with Cambodia Trust and VI Kien Klang. The quality of therapeutic care being provided here continues to improve steadily.

## Our Yellow Fence and Our Yellow Bus

Mention is made elsewhere of the visit of the Ashgrove boys and staff. Under the direction of Br Mark Fordyce they have again done good work, this time painting much of the main fence. Some of us needed time to adjust to the bold yellow they chose now happily referred to as "Fordyce Yellow", a reminder of Br Mark, friend, supporter and regular visitor, who on site has always ensured that useful work was thoroughly done and from home was a



regular life line for us. Coincidentally our recently acquired 25 seat bus looks as though it came with the fence.

## Br. Anthony Burrows



MSC and the Marist community here in Takhmao welcome Br Anthony Burrows who arrived February 20th. Brother has been appointed to Cam-

bodia and will be the Marist Community Leader at LaValla. In recent years he has been the financial manager for the Marist Brothers working in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Prior to that he was the director of a rural training college in the Solomon Islands. He has been working out of Australia since 1997. We are all very happy to have him with us and wish him well in his work here.



## James Hodge



James at Staff meeting

From April 2012 until mid December James lived and worked here in the capacity of a financial consultant. A Marist Volunteer, he took leave from his work as an Accountant / Auditor in Brisbane, Australia, to assist with the re-organization of MSC finances. In the early months of his stay with us he worked closely with Australian Business Volunteer Peter Corless who, likewise, had come to assist our finance staff. They proved to be a good team and James was well placed to continue the work begun by both. We are indebted to James and our administration is better for his hard work. Happily, we look forward to the return of Peter Corless later this month, to take up where James left off.

## MSC AT A GLANCE

Staff Number	63
Students – Villa Maria	52
Students – LaValla	95
Takhmao Rented Houses	22
Phnom Penh Rented House	19
Rented workplace sites	3
Student Schooling Assistance - throughout Cambodia	457

## ABOUT US

Marist Solidarity Cambodia is a humanitarian organisation. We hold as our vision the hope for an inclusive community where concern for individual human development makes education a high priority. In fulfilment of this vision, we see as our mission a need to be in solidarity with the young, especially the most disadvantaged, providing them with the means of achieving their full potential through the delivery of education and life-building support. The Values we hold in our approach to aid and development therefore encompass the promotion of equality, dignity and social justice for all.

## Contact us

3Violetsnews is a three-monthly newsletter published by Marist Solidarity Cambodia (MSC)

Should you have any comments, or feedback, about this newsletter, or our organization, here are some ways you could contact us:

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## Stock Yodicraft Goods

Should you wish to stock Yodicraft carving or sewing products, or should you wish Yodicraft to produce specific items for your shop or organization, please contact us on [yodicraft@yodiffee.org](mailto:yodicraft@yodiffee.org).

more info please visit @ [www.yodicraft.com](http://www.yodicraft.com)

## Our Current Needs

### Currently we are need of:

- One person one project, a small business enterprise set up for a person with disability, a project costs an amount of US\$ 500 per business for each applicant.
- A cow to provide to the poor, each cow costs US\$ 500.
- Food program, each child eats three meals per day. One year is US\$ 450 per child.
- Each university scholar is US\$ 500 per year.

Obviously all donations and help are appreciated, however because of practical reasons, such as security and postal problems many times we find it better to receive money rather than actual items.

## MSC's Administration Centre – Villa Maria

When, in July-August last year MSC's Director and family vacated the residence at Villa Maria to move into their own house not too far away, the Villa Maria residence was re-organized as the Administration Centre for Marist Solidarity Cambodia. In what is a wholly more convenient arrangement the Director, the Financial Administrator and Assistant Financial Administrator, the Registrar, leaders and support staff for each of MSC's projects now work from the one centre.

Funds for the renovations and new furniture came from Australian Marist Solidarity.

