

The Ayui Foundation is a non-denominational, non-government organisation that provides a home, educational opportunities and future pathways for disadvantaged hill tribe young people.

# Ayui



November 2008  
Chiang Rai, Thailand

## From the Director

The children have just returned from their month-long term break, and it's great to see them all again, ready to start the final term of the year. Meega, May and Yohan remained at the hostel during the holidays and I enrolled them in an art course for the duration. I also took them on the boat trip to the elephant camp, which was the highlight of their holiday. Now that the monsoon season is over, the kids are back to riding bikes to school.

The kids all did well in their exams, as confirmed by the parent-teacher meetings we attended. In Yohan's class, only 50% of the Grade two students passed their Thai reading test, so he now understands why he has to practice reading every night. Our housemother Noi surprised herself by passing all her exams, while many in her class did not. It's a great example for the kids that, at 25, Ayui Noi wants to continue her schooling.



FOUNDATION



This month we also offer a special congratulations to one of our Board Members, Mr Chatree Rungsriskujit for graduating in law after six years of correspondence study while working full-time at an NGO. He passed the legal theory exam at his first attempt (no mean feat!!), and if he passes the practical test in March 2009 he can become a registered lawyer, when he looks forward to helping other needy people. Chatree, a former hostel boarder himself, is another good example for the children of what Akha people can achieve.

## *Citizenship and other Hill tribe issues...*

- May and Yohan's father received Thai citizenship but May has to apply again. This should be easier now that her father is a legal citizen.
- Meega and Meenoo's father has also received Thai citizenship but the girls still have to wait for theirs, or may have to re-apply. Again, it should make a difference now that their father has a Thai ID card. Meega was unable to become a member of the local library in the holidays because they said they required a legal identity document that shows a legal registration number, which she does not have.
- Some good news is that Suda has received her Thai ID card. This was easy for her, though, as she was born in Thailand so was already a Thai citizen, and her parents both have Thai citizenship. She got the card made as soon as she turned 15, which is the required age to get the ID card.



## *Our new penpals....*

One of our sponsors Nick Stainforth suggested to The Ayui Foundation recently that it would be a great idea if our young people had children around their own ages that they could write to - develop relationships with and share experiences. It would be a way for the kids to develop a connection with a community of people that care about them.

We have had connections before with St. John Vianney's Primary School in ACT, Australia (through clothes and a donation from their Student Representative Council last year) so approached the school with this idea. The principal, Mr Nangle, and the teachers all helped their classes to write a letter to twelve of our young people.



It was an interesting cultural exchange, with many questions on what life was like 'in your country', and sharing information on weather, culture, jokes & activities. We heard the teachers at St John Vianney's were particularly interested to hear that our Thai classrooms have on average 55 students per class!! We are so pleased to have established this on-going link with other students overseas and hope that more letters can continue as it was so exciting to receive the letters from Australia.

## *A new partnership with the Indigo Foundation....*

The other very exciting news for us in October was the establishment of a partnership with the Indigo Foundation (IF). IF is an independent Australian community development organisation, providing assistance to improve the lives of people in marginalised communities. IF supports schools, training centres, and health projects in Indonesia, Afghanistan, Solomon Islands, Congo, East Timor, and India.



One of the focus areas of IF is education - and after finding out about The Ayui Foundation and the work that we do, they have agreed to take the Baan Ayui hostel on as their seventh project. Julianne Cowley (our Australian Board Member) has joined the Indigo Foundation as the Project Manager.

IF has agreed to a three year partnership, providing much needed funds as well as support and advice as we strengthen our management processes and develop as a small not-for-profit. We have negotiated a Commitment Agreement and look forward to working closely with this organisation. Find out more about the Indigo Foundation's work at - <http://www.indigofoundation.org/>



## *Visitors.....*

For a week in September, Leearna Petryk and Whitney de Leur, from Melbourne, Australia, come to work, live and play with the kids. This included a trip to the zoo and their favorite waterfall, kindly sponsored by Verity Cowley, Lee's colleague in Melbourne. Lee and Whit were brave enough to drive the motorbike into town, and went shopping to buy each child a plastic folder with school supplies and gave us a basketful of art supplies and snacks for their farewell party.



*The Ayui Foundaiton teaches life skills & provides support for work placements to ensure that our young people have the opportunity to grow into strong Akha people.*

## *An update from our Graduates.....*

Our first two graduates from last year, Buyer and Wanpen, are both working. Buyer received Thai citizenship, with support of The Ayui Foundation, which enabled her to move to Bangkok and find work with legitimate working conditions and employment protection. She has found a position in a factory and her Akha boyfriend, who also lives in Bangkok, is employed as well. The Foundation now serves as a link with Buyer and her family. She often sends home remittances through our housemother's account for her brother (Acheu) who stays at our hostel, to give to their parents when he visits home. Wanpen, who has yet to receive citizenship, got a job painting and packing handicrafts at a handicrafts center not far from the hostel, and I occasionally see her working there along with other Akha friends. She's earning B4,000 a month and is living with her Aunt's family. Her former sponsor continues to send her small donations now and then, via the Foundation.



## Thank you. . . .

As the children and the upkeep of the hostel relies purely on public donations, we are very grateful to our sponsors and supporters.

Thank you to:

- The Indigo Foundation - we look forward to growing our relationship with this fantastic not-for-profit organisation.
- Patchalin Williams, from Canberra Australia, who organized a Thai dinner at her house that raised a total of \$950. Thank you to The Trekking Co. Pty Ltd , Dr Errol Simpson, Dr Peter Boyle also for their donations.
- A big thank you to the PPSEAWA (Canberra) International Woman's Day Breakfast Committee for the donation of \$1,000
- Australian's Rosemary and Bob McNeil, for their donation.
- Catherine Johnstone in Canberra for tirelessly continuing her chocolate fundraising drive - this year alone Catherine has sold over \$1000 of chocolates (around 33,000 Baht) - The Ayui Foundation looves chocolate!!!
- Orn's Bookshop, Chiang Rai, for the donation of 50 second-hand Thai comic books for the kids.
- Last, but not least, our volunteers, Lee and Whit, for the five days of fun interaction with the kids (we hope you won't forget us) and to Verity Cowley who helped sponsor the fun.

Please let us know if you have any ideas for fundraisers for next year - we love all your creative suggestions - & feel free to suggest us to friends as a good place to make a Christmas donation!

On behalf of our kids -

THANK YOU!!



If you would like to visit, or have ideas on how you can support  
The Ayui Foundation we would love to hear from you!

Please contact Sumalee Milne - [ayui.foundation@gmail.com](mailto:ayui.foundation@gmail.com) - [www.ayui.org](http://www.ayui.org)

Thank you for thinking of us.

Cheques to 'The Ayui Foundation':  
414 Moo 4, Baan Mai, T.Rimkok, A.Muang  
Chiang Rai Thailand 57000

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