

# The Volunteers for Children Development Foundation

May 2009

To Our Extended Family –

Sa-wa-dee! Like always, we hope that all of you are doing well. And, to ease any concerns, all of our kids and staff are safe and sound far from the colored-shirt political unrest you may have caught on the news. Though the protests may dominate international news, our kids biggest concern is preparing to start the new school year later this month.

Firstly, we'd like to focus on just a few of many of our kids who were honored at their school for their participation in extracurricular activities. Juhur, age 15, won several art contests including designing a poster to encourage students to eat vegetables. Ah-Leeya, age 13, was the only boy selected from his school to join a provincial all-star soccer team and after a three-day tournament, were the provincial champs! Ye-Pah, age 6, received two awards



**Juhur**

**Ah-Leeya**

**Ye-Pah**

**Ah-Too**

**Ah-Leema**

from his kindergarten teacher; one for being the most polite student and the other for being the most creative student in his class. Ah-Too, age 14, was the leader of her school's crocheting club and drama club and her artwork was selected to represent her school at a regional art show. Finally, Ah-Leema, age 18, showed off his knack for team sports by winning first place in four different sporting events. Additionally, Ah-Leema completed a barber course and his boarding school hired him to cut the 300 male students' hair which not only gives him a lot of practice, but also lets him earn some spending money.

Also making our scholastic headlines, we are extremely happy to announce that we have two students entering their senior year of high school this term; one boy and one girl. **They are the first VCDF kids to reach the twelfth grade and we couldn't be more proud!**

Work in both of our Drop-In Centers in Chiang Mai and Mae Sai has been going well. During the day, each location works with 10-30 children under the age of 14 to give them an informal education and keep them safe and off of the streets. In the evenings, our staff take to the streets and visit at-risk kids, youth and adults and administer first-aid, conduct HIV/AIDS awareness activities and build upon their strong rapport and relationships. Through these outings, our staff learn more about each individual's problems and offer advice which will hopefully lead them to take advantage of VCDF's services.



**Kids at our Mae Sai Drop-In Center after completing their morning school lessons**



**Showing off their newly made solar oven**

Over their summer break, our kids have gone on a few trips, visited any family they may have and participated in a number of activities at the Children's Homes. Eight children and three staff attended a training seminar at the YMCA Northern Development Foundation's Energy Learning Center which focused on environmentally-friendly vocational skills and how to consume less energy at the Children's Home in Chiang Saen. They learned how to make a bio-gas system, a water pump powered by bicycles and a solar oven that can boil water. They also got hands-on experience and learned about liquid fertilizers and Efficient Microorganisms, mushroom cultivation and pig-farming.

Though liquid fertilizers do sound like a good time, our kids also participated in a handful of other fun activities this summer. 30 children from our Chiang Mai Drop-In Center and Children's Home made the long trip down to the beach! Car-sickness aside, our kids had a great time seeing the ocean for the first time. They also visited a giant aquarium and got to eat fresh seafood. The trip was funded by donations and a large piggy-bank that our kids would put a few coins in each day after school for a year! They were glad that they didn't spend their coins on video games as they really enjoyed themselves at the beach.

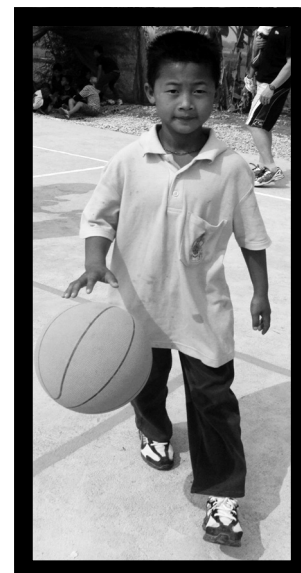


**Phone drawing in the sand**



**Somchai contemplates swimming**

In Chiang Saen, our kids had the opportunity to participate in a basketball camp, hosted by Not For Sale and the Gray Institute. **These two groups donated a full basketball court and equipment before coming to host the basketball camp.** Over 100 of our kids learned how to dribble, shoot and the basic rules of the game through Dr. Gary Gray's animated and enthusiastic coaching team who soldiered through the 100-degree temperatures! Each of our kids also received a pair of Nike sports shoes that they were busy cleaning after the first day. The basketball court can be used



as a volleyball court, a soccer field and a place for morning aerobics and exercises, especially during the rainy season where our property turns into a mud pit for 2–3 months. We are very grateful to Dr. Gray and Not For Sale's generosity!

VCDF also treated our kids to a few camps this year. Earlier this year, 25 of our kids who attend boarding schools in the North–East went on a camping tour of natural and historical sites during a 10–day break from school.



**Camping in Nong Khai during school break**

Children from the Chiang Saen Children's Home, the Chiang Mai Drop–In Center and the Chiang Mai Children's Home joined together for a 4–day camp that focused on AIDS/HIV awareness. The purpose of this camp is **to equip our kids with the knowledge that they will be able to use for the rest of their lives and to help educate and protect their peers.** The Chiang Saen Children's Home and Mae Sai Drop–In Center also went on a camp in Chiang Rai. This camp included games and activities and many of the mothers who have gone through our drug rehabilitation program were able to join in on the fun as well.

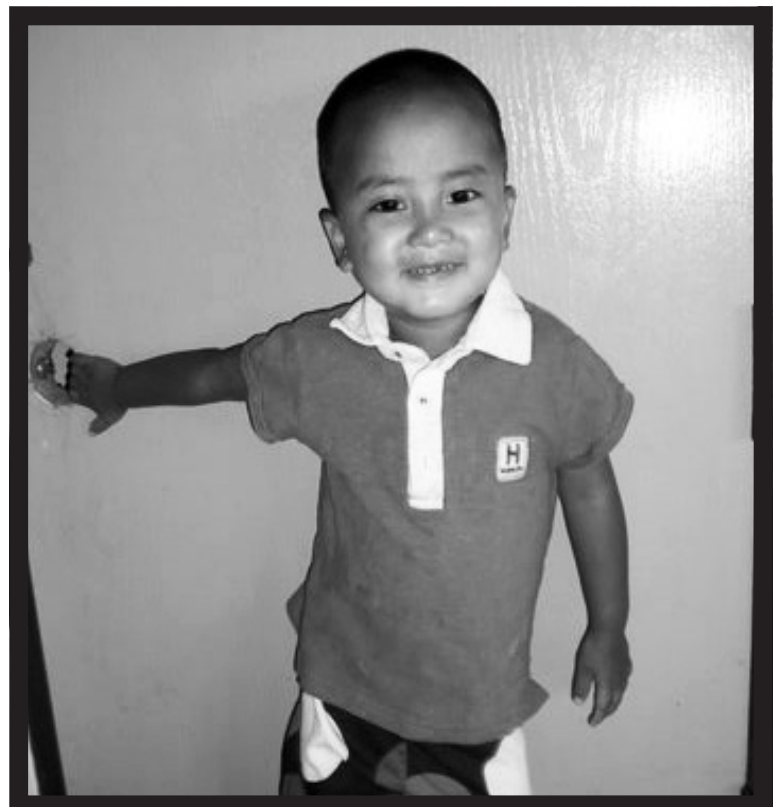
**We also want to introduce to you our newest, youngest and smallest member to our family, E–Que!** E–Que is a feisty 4–year–old and just recently came to stay with us at our Chiang Saen Children's Home. E–Que has quickly become a favorite among all of the kids.

All of **VCDF would like to give our American sponsor parents a special thank you** for your continued support and the many, many gifts that you sent this past Christmas season! Our kids were very excited that you thought of them enough to not only support them financially, but also to send them a gift and a letter. If you are a sponsor parent (or would like to become one) and have any questions about our sponsorship program, please contact us at: [VCDF.Thailand@gmail.com](mailto:VCDF.Thailand@gmail.com). And remember to check out our Chiang Saen Children's Home and Mae Sai Drop–In Center's new Web site at: [www.yourbuddies.org](http://www.yourbuddies.org)!

Thank you all for your continued support. **VCDF and all of our kids wouldn't be where we are today without you!** We're proud to be partnered with you.

Wishing you only the best,

– All of the children, volunteers and staff at the Volunteers for Children Development Foundation



**Our newest addition to our family, E–Que**