

From: rgarms tds.net

Sent: Saturday, March 01, 2014 10:27 PM

To: Nikki Bown; Kak; ktgarden@chorus.net; Sathin Ouk; SteveCathey Strange; Tom Watson; grayw tds.net; Susan O'Leary; spinka.marek; Sarith Ou

Subject: Progress

Hi everyone,

Ann and Susan are both back, so I have some progress to report. Both say the culture at the school is good, with students happy and working on the building and gardens. Food production is good and Sokna now has control of an adequate garden budget that will allow him to get what he needs when he needs it. He is very happy with the garden prospects and an enthusiastic teacher and taskmaster for organic gardening. Thai is buying fill and has tools to spread it, and the village is kicking in some fill also at the Poum Steung garden.

The filters are in at JHP and the well water is now clear and more free of contaminants. It did not have significant levels of arsenic, but did have e coli, which the filters are designed to filter out. The exterior of the school is completely painted now, and paint has been bought and painters trained to do the inside, which Sarith swears will be done by the time I visit in June. Sokneang continues to be an excellent addition to our faculty. In addition to teaching beginning computer skills, she is serving as Sophat's assistant in some administrative duties.

Susan says Sophat has done an excellent job teaching English, especially considering he has had almost no resources. She remedied some of that by buying over \$800 worth of English books and lessons at the conference where she presented in Phnom Penh. She will continue to provide support to Sophat and thinks that in a year or so we will qualify for significant support for English teaching from the U.S. She will make up a report. Her ideas are a move toward a much better English teaching program and possibly a significant source of revenue for it in the future.

All of our computer and English students have been placed. Two of them are working for NGO's and the rest are working as receptionists. They are making only \$70 to \$80 per month, but Sarith tells them that this is a first job, a chance to improve their English and get some experience for a better second job. He is still getting calls from places who want to hire our students, so I think we have found an employment niche for these graduates.

The tailoring/sewing students are taking a little longer to learn, at least some of them (3 have started their own businesses, as you may recall). Most of them will graduate in May. Sarith says there are many opening for them, and Piet may have something as his new factory is now in operation. I think it is going well, and that the administrative changes we have started are working out at this point and better for all concerned - Sarith doesn't have to mess with the many garden details and Sokna has earned the chance to run his own program.

Best,
Roger