

The Ayui Foundation is a non-religious, non-government organisation that provides a home, educational opportunities and future pathways for 'for disadvantaged Akha hilltribe teenagers.



Director  
Sumalee Milne

# Ayui

## F rom the director

July 2010  
Chiang Rai, Thailand

The 2010 school year started mid-May, and it was great to see the children again after the two month summer break. Most of them have grown taller and it is easy to tell who worked in the fields in the holidays because they came back browner from laboring under the hot sun. Since we have more girls this year, the houseparents moved out of the Girls' House and into the Boys' House and six girls are now sleeping in their old room.

It took a while for the new girls to settle into hostel life, especially the younger girls who were homesick because it was their first time away from home. One orphan girl who was raised by her elderly grandparents ran away back home after the first day at school, getting on the school van that goes to her village. When the houseparents went

to her village, she ran off. Her grandmother was crying because she said if she won't stay with us, she won't be able to go to school because they simply have no money for the costs and she needs better care as her grandmother is going blind and grandfather is deaf. The village headman said he would talk to the girl, and she returned two days later. It was her birthday at the end of the first week, and the children enjoyed a night of fun and games - a good introduction to Baan Ayui hostel life.



For our first Discussion Group, all the children introduced themselves and talked about their family backgrounds and where they came from. It was to enable the children to get to know each other better, and to know that they all come from hard situations, so they should be supportive of, and respect, each other. They all get along well, and

the children are often found playing volleyball or a traditional Akha game that involves trying to knock down large seeds that are lined up in a row.

FOUNDATION





Fishing by hand and with a net



It's fish for dinner tonight

## New Members of Our Household

The ten new girls this year, including two orphans, come from six different villages in two different districts of Chiang Rai province. A few of them come from the same villages so it was nice for them to already have a friend here. They have already enjoyed regular hostel activities such as fishing and art classes. After a month had passed and the new children had become used to hostel life, many parents came to visit, bringing traditional Akha food they had prepared. We have an Open Door Policy for parents/guardians/relatives to visit at any time, as we stress the importance of family bonds and it is heartening for the children to be reassured that they have not just been put into a hostel and forgotten by their family. One new girl, Pimpa, has been reunited with her mother, who gave birth to her at the tender age of 15 and left her with her father. Her mother, who has since remarried and had another child, found out where Pimpa was and has come to visit her at the hostel twice. Now 30 and starting a family again, her mother is trying to make up for lost time with her first daughter.



## House Update



Yohan, Pimpa and May tending to the vegetables

In May, we paid off our second installment on the new place, another B500,000, and we still need another 1 million for our final installment in November this year. There are a few fundraisers planned for July in Australia and NZ, and any donations towards our House Fund are greatly appreciated. As it is the start of the monsoon season, we have made a vegetable garden, growing potatoes, chillis, pumpkins, onions and eggplant. Housefather Lek and the boys have also made wooden benches for the porch - not bad for a first-time effort.



## Visitors



We have had many visitors in the past few months, including 2 long-term sponsors whom we are honored to welcome to the hostel. It is great when a child finally gets to meet their sponsor in person, and sponsors appreciate the chance to see the hostel for themselves and see how their sponsored child lives. The Moller-Mawson family from Western Australia, who have sponsored May since the Foundation was established, came to visit in April, undeterred by the political demonstrations in Bangkok. They took May out to lunch and bought her a watch, which she has always wanted.

At the end of June, Ms Diana Reid, who has continuously sponsored Ahyi since the hostel opened, came to visit with her 2 teenage children and her mother. Ahyi presented Diana with a traditional Akha shoulder bag from his village as a souvenir of her visit, while Ahyi received some clothes from Canada.

Also in June, we were visited by three representatives of the local Mae Chan Rotary Club, including expatriate Ms Carol Acosta. They had recently traveled to Tasmania as guests of the Glenorchy Rotary Club, that sponsors two of the Baan Ayui children, and informed us that members plan to visit Chiang Rai at the end of the year.

The Ayui Foundation was also contacted by HELP International on how they could help the Foundation. Now that it is the

monsoon season, a good time for planting crops, and the Director's land

has finally been tilled and evened out, HELP volunteers will be giving the children a training on Square Foot Gardening, so we can grow more of our own produce to eat, and the kids will learn how to mix the organic fertilizer and grow crops on a small piece of land, and they can teach this method to others in their villages who only have small plots of land. The children will choose what vegetables they want to grow, and be divided into groups of four to be responsible for their own plot. HELP volunteers will also be coming in on the weekends to give classes on computer and basic economics.



Asor with the new sign he helped put up



# Thank you

- ★ As the Ayui Foundation does not receive funding on a regular basis, we rely solely on donations to feed and care for the children and provide the wages for the houseparents who live with the children. We would not have been able to have accomplished this much without the support and generosity of the following people:
- ★ Thanks to sponsor Brian O'Keeffe for his donation, and for supporting another girl in place of the girl who is no longer at the Foundation. Also, thanks to sponsor Nick Staniforth for sending a bit extra this year.
- ★ A big thank you goes to those who have helped towards our House Fund, especially the Lions Club (A.C.T. Australia) for their large donation, and to Catherine Johnston for raising an amazing \$2,000 selling chocolates. Donations for the house were also received from Mr Roy Hudson in Chiang Mai, Mr Toni Alzamora in Chiang Rai, and former volunteers Annette Piloni and Bruce Millar.
- ★ Thank you to long-time supporter, Mr Murray Yaxley, for his donation.
- ★ Thanks also goes to Dave Thomas in Chiang Rai, who has re-designed our website. The main pages are up and more will be added later.
- ★ We also want to thank Gess Mazis and Diana Castelo for sponsoring the 2 children in our new Village Scholarship scheme. Now that the monsoon is here, the children will use this months' funding to buy umbrellas and/or raincoats for walking to school in the rain.
- ★ And we would like to welcome new child sponsors Joan ten Brummelaar, Alanna Maclean, Chris Payne, all from Australia, and Khun Majulee Sinthuchat in Chiang Rai.
- ★ Last but not least, we wish to give our heartfelt thanks to all our child sponsors who have continued their sponsorship for this school year. Your support/correspondence/ gifts and visits provide so much encouragement for the children.



## House Fund

The Ayui Foundation has a few fundraisers planned to raise money for the House Fund, but we still need to raise more for our final payment. The children are very happy in the new house, and it is in a very suitable location, which is why we want to purchase it and live in it permanently. All donations and fundraising ideas are welcome.

**If you would like to visit or support us 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.**



### Donations transferred to

Australian bank account: Bendigo Bank Acc no: 133516195	Thai bank account: Siam Commercial Bank Acc no: 5072669424
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Tax deductible donations in Australia cheques to: Rotary Australia Overseas Aid Fund  
(46/2007-8) Ayui - & mailed to: Garry Gunnell, PO BOX 807, Strathfieldsaye VIC 3551  
(with donor's address clearly written)