

Hallo Everyone,

We would like to wish our family, friends and supporters of Kep Gardens a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. 2023 went whizzing by so fast it's hard to believe another year is almost upon us. Many people have holidays at this time of year. Enjoy and recharge your batteries ready to face whatever 2024 brings.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY 2024**

We never cease to be grateful for the dedicated, committed teaching staff at Kep Gardens. Every student matters and it shows in their caring attitude. To them, the more training courses the better, as each strives to improve their teaching knowledge. Enthusiasm abounds and I believe this is the secret to Kep Gardens' success. And what would we do without Mr Huch and Pov. Thank you all very much.

Thankfully, all but 1 staff member will be joining us again. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Long Han who has been a part-time teacher with Kep Gardens for 7 years. Thank you very much for your service. We will miss your cheery face of an evening. All the best.

## VOLUNTEERS

We had very few volunteers this year but the old saying "quality, not quantity" certainly applies.



Cassandra

A short stay but they had lots of fun with the students and were a great help.



Hans



Thanks so much for the wonderful experience. Kep Gardens is a fantastic place created by brilliant commitment, vision and enthusiasm for making a real difference to the lives of so many. What makes it so special is that the children love being there, both learning English and just being in such a happy child friendly environment – you don't find children careering into lessons with such boundless enthusiasm in many countries! I shall miss you all and wish you lots of luck for your futures.

Bella Campbell, England



Helen



Deborah

For 2 weeks Kep Gardens had the most amazing volunteers, Helen Mckinnon and Deborah Craddock. Helen, a retired teacher, who continues to be involved with community projects and schools, has volunteered with us before. This time she brought a friend, Deborah, who is the Headteacher of West Moors Middle School in

England. Apart from working with individuals and groups of students, a large part of their time was involved in staff training. Deborah also organized some Zoom calls with students at her school in England with our older classes. A busy but very productive 2 weeks beneficial to both staff and students.

Let's hope we are lucky enough in 2024 to have such great volunteers who offered so many skills and huge experience to our students. Anyone thinking of volunteering at Kep Gardens are more than welcome. We are sure you will leave with the magical feeling that others have taken with them in the past.

### **HEALTH CHECKS**

We organized health checks for our new students this year. Sonja Kill provides the checks free-of-charge, Kep Gardens pays for any medicine or tests required but by far the biggest expense is the transport. A very big thank you to Andy and Ming Price for donating the cost of the transport this year. Andy and Ming are long time supporters of Kep Gardens, providing computer classes for our students before they started work at Don Bosco. We greatly appreciate their latest support. Thank you very much.



### **KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION**

There were many excited children when students from all the kindergarten classes in Kep came together for their graduation ceremony. Kep Gardens saw 11 students graduate but we will see them back next year when they join the Reception English classes. They join the big school next year in Year 1. We wish them well

and hope they enjoy and have happy memories of their school days.



### **ENVIRONMENT AWARD**

A few months ago now, a group of people from the Department of Environment in Kep visited our school, walking around, taking photographs, but we didn't hear from them for ages. These photos and a video too were sent to Phnom Penh where the winners were chosen. What a nice surprise when they informed us we were one of 3 Kep winners.

Kimhean, Kep Gardens' representative, attended a ceremony in Phnom Penh to accept a certificate from the Ministry of Environment "to appreciate Kep Gardens who has been coordinating in protecting the environment, preserving natural resources, conserving biodiversity as well as living with cleanliness, greenery and sustainability". We were very proud to accept the award on behalf of the whole school community.







## **ANNIVERSARY**

A great crowd of roughly 700 people helped Kep Gardens celebrate 15 years of service to the local community. Thank you to the Khmer Magic Music Bus for their contribution to the concert. From small beginnings, Kep Gardens now employs 19 Khmer people, 13 full-time and 6 part-time. We are extremely proud of all of our staff and students.



Before the celebratory concert the Khmer Magic Music Box spent time with the afternoon classes showing and playing traditional musical instruments.



## **CRAFTS**

Our Reception 1, 2 and 3 children have been learning all about turtles and made their own to take home!



We hope 2024 brings you health and happiness. Let's pray that the world finds some normalacy.



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