



Eighth Meeting

FreeSchools World Literacy Australia

DATE commencing: Friday 1st February 2008 TIME: 9 am
DATE completion: Sunday 3rd February 2008 TIME: 9 pm

INTERNET VENUE: FreeSchools Literacy Australia email network
fswl-australia@googlegroups.com

Minutes of the Meeting

1. Rollcall of members and others present and apologies.

There were 11 participants in attendance
Robert Coenraads (President)
Ben Bowler (Vice President)
Delphine Swadling (Secretary)
Merindi Swadling (Treasurer)
Ian Esmore (Public Officer)
Donna Cervantes (Committee Member)
Kathleen Swadling (Committee Member)
Yvonne Hirt (Committee Member)
Jildou Brower
Sue Tennant
Chelsea McLean

2. Acceptance of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Seventh meeting were sent to each member of the committee but still need to be accepted by the committee
Moved by _____ and Seconded by _____

3. Reports from the Committee.

The President's Report was received by the committee

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the 8th meeting of FSWL Australia.
I hope that you all enjoyed your Christmas and New Year holidays. Special wishes to Ian Esmore, who is hopefully making a speedy recovery from his total hip operation.

For 2008, I am looking forward to FreeSchools continued development as a professional organization - beginning with our important goal being able to allow our donors to claim their FSWL donations as a Australian tax deduction and thereby enabling us to seek corporate sponsorship.

Thank you all again for taking the time to participate and for your valuable comments.

Kind regards,

Dr. Robert Coenraads (President)

4. Progress in Thailand.

Sue: The transfer of management of the schools from Ben and Jildou to the Mirror Foundation was accomplished by the end of November. We've had a report from Mirror on the December activities, but as yet no financial report. I have requested that this be made monthly (we need it according to requirements of Revenue Canada). So far, we in Canada are funding all the scholarships. We would love any help you can give.

There is a Canadian group from the Kenoli Foundation (Vancouver) that will be visiting the Mirror Foundation and hopefully our FreeSchools next month. I have talked to them about funding our FreeSchools in the future. Any help from them will depend on what they see.

The Thai schools still remain our most costly investment although Ben did cleverly amalgamate 11 schools into 5 to reduce the costs, but that was after our Board approved the mean average budget over the previous three months where costs were running \$2000/month. This was the offer that we made to Mirror and which they accepted.

Robert: Thank you Donna for your offer to sponsor the following two students in Thailand for \$125 each per year:

- Darika Suriya (girl, age 8)
- Channon Krongkrawpana (boy, age 8)

Jildou: Here some details regarding the scholarships from the 6 students from the Lahu village Nong Tao.

- Cost to go to Moung Choum Government school is for each student an average of 3059 Baht. This includes:
 - Uniform is 796 Baht a child (prices vary for size of child; this is the average of 6 kids)
 - Books are 213 Baht a child (average)
 - School fee is 550 Baht (becomes higher when child gets older)
- School costs 1500 Baht a year
- Transport is 1500 Baht a year

Please know that these are the number (exact) from last year. We know that fuel has gone up drastically and that has big consequences for the transport costs. Might coming year easily be 2000 Baht. I would say that 3500 Baht a year is the most realistic number for this coming year. 3500 Baht a year is 125 Aus Dollar per child

Please note Australian team/ sponsors; the 4 girls from Nong Tao are chosen by us (Ben and me) for the laptop project. So in the future there could be easily email exchange! But first of course we need to give them all a sponsor, otherwise they won't be able to stay in school.

I think it's great to sponsor individual children and I tell you they are worth it! When things are clear if it all goes ahead I will help with sending detailed info of each child and a photo if you like. Take care and keep up the good work!

Robert: Donna, I have received your letter and cheque for \$250 for sponsorship of Darika and Channon. Today (14th Feb) I banked it in the FSWL-Australia Account. Thank you very much for your kindness.

Jildou: Summary of the interviews with students receiving Free Schools Scholarship.

Darin Sompert (female, 14 years old, second year student in primary school)

Darin has 1 elder brother. She has tuberculosis and needs to see a doctor every month at Fang hospital. She does not have money for studying and lunch. She studies in Free Schools in the evenings from Monday to Friday. In the evenings of Saturday and Sunday, she goes to work at a plantation. Sometimes, if she does not work at the plantation, she will go and work for others by picking oranges. She still does not know what she wants to be in the future. She wishes to continue her studies until the third year of Secondary school.

Chanon Jangpupai, (male, 12 years old, First year student in primary school)

Chanon takes the bus to school. He has lunch at school. On the weekend, he helps his parents on the farm. He studies in Free Schools in the evenings from Monday to Friday. Chanon wants to work washing dishes when he grows up because he has seen his elder siblings go to work washing dishes. He wishes to continue his studies until the third year of Secondary School.

Phatapong Yapupai, (male, First year student in Primary school)

Phatapong doesn't know his age, he goes to school everyday during the day and studies at Ban Nongtao Free School in the evening. He doesn't know what he wants to be in the future but he wishes to graduate from junior high school.

5. Progress in India

Sue: In India, we really need to fund a person to evaluate our work in Bihar with our 34 FreeSchools and south of Delhi with our 6 ISPCK FreeSchools. Serious fundraising here depends on quantitative field assessments that show just exactly what FreeSchools does that benefits the children, parents and communities. I'm been so resistant because you can't examine love under a microscope and love has really been the creative and enduring energy behind these schools. But the reality is we have to have independent assessment by professionals with credentials. In order to win the support of a new layer of funding that can grow FreeSchools in India and Thailand and beyond, we need a new kind of independent assessment and we'll have to pay for it.

Any advice or help you can offer in this regard would be wonderful.

Thank you for your continuing interest in and support of FreeSchools.

Chelsea: I would like to sponsor Rufus if possible and have just done an online transfer today of the \$72 into the Free Schools account that you provided the details for. If someone else already has Rufus then Mihir or any of the others will be just fine.

Robert: Thank you Chelsea for your kind offer to sponsor Rufus

Rufus (boy, age 8) and *Mihir* (boy, age 6)

Rufus and Mihir, come from a broken home. Unfortunately, at the early stage, the marriage of their parents, Mala and Rajesh, became a failure. The father was a heavy drinker, and did not care or look after wife and children, so Mala returned to her parents with the two boys. Mala is teaching in a small private school, She gets Rs 600/- along with food per month, with these Rs 600/-. She has to maintain herself and the two sons. Rufus and Mihir stay at their grandparents place at Bettiah and study at the Mission School Bettiah. As Sister Crescence entered his house one day, she heard him shout, "I have passed in all subjects."

Robert:

Dear Sister Crescence,

I hope that all is going well with you and FreeSchools as we progress into 2008. I am thinking of how convenient it is to have direct email communication with you, rather than the week and weeks of the regular mail.

On the 12th of February, I sent you a registered letter containing a bank cheque made out to you for FreeSchools, for the amount of A\$1,439 (48,623.81 Indian Rupees) which has been pledged from our usual generous donors:

- Allan Platcher
- Yvonne Hirt (K-Mart Group)
- Donna Cervantes
- Val Billington
- Adriana James-Richard
- Carmel Stewart

Note that included in this total amount are the \$72 annual scholarship funds for the children"

Ashish Kumar Majhi (sponsor Gerhard Neueller)
Sonal and Samridhi (sponsored by Francheska and Leonora)
Rufus (sponsored by Chelsea McLean).

Included in the envelope are also some drawings and a letter from my children for Samridhi and Sonal, plus a letter about my family's very busy year for 2007, which you may find interesting.

We wish you the very best, Sister Crescence, for your continued efforts in following the Will of God and your tireless work in His name. You are always in our thoughts.

With kind regards,
Robert

6. General Business.

The following discussion took place during the meeting and is recorded here for completeness under the following headings:

1. Media Kit
2. The FSWL charity registration process in Australia
3. Continuation of open discussion topics

Media Kit

Chelsea: "Thanks for your email Sue with some clarifications. It is my pleasure to make the changes and there are a few revised sections marked in blue in the attached documents. Please let me know if there are any more changes so I can keep the media kit up-to-date for you. The statistics about illiteracy world-wide in the media release are from the UNESCO website below. Hope it is okay to use these stats to link in with the Decade of Literacy.

"On a global scale, one in five adults cannot read nor write. According to the latest estimates, 774 million people are illiterate and two-thirds of these are women."

<http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php->

[URL_ID=53899&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=53899&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Brennan has emailed me 23 wonderful photos with captions from Thailand.

Now we are up-to-date, I will develop the Australian media target list and keep Robert posted next week."

The FSWL charity registration process in Australia

Ian has been recovering from a major hip operation and has asked permission of the Committee that the FSWL charity registration process be put on hold until next month

7. Set date and time for COM meeting. Close meeting

Meetings of the Committee of FSWL Australia will be held on the first Friday of each month. The next official meeting will be from Friday 7th to Sunday 8th of March, 2008.

The Committee is thanked for its involvement

END OF MINUTES

Appendix 1

The FSWL Committee - Australian Contact Details

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