



# PATTAYA GAZETTE

Pattaya Orphanage & School for the Deaf

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**Pattaya Orphanage**  
Box 300 Pattaya City Post Office,  
Chonburi 20260  
THAILAND

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For more information about the Pattaya Orphanage, please contact us at:

Box 300 Pattaya City Post Office, Chonburi 20260, THAILAND

Location: 384 Moo 6, Sukhumvit Highway Km 144,  
Naklua, Banglamung, Chonburi 20150,  
Thailand.

Tel: (+66) (0) 38 423 468, (0) 38 416 426

Fax: (+66) (0) 38 416 425, (0) 38 716 204

Email: [info@thepattayaorphanage.org](mailto:info@thepattayaorphanage.org)

Website: [www.thepattayaorphanage.org](http://www.thepattayaorphanage.org)



The orphaned and deaf children expressed their special joy throughout the official visit of the U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, H.E. Mr. Eric G. John, and Mrs. Sophia John. Our honorable guests kindly visited the children and witnessed how the spirit of Father Ray Brennan is ever living and growing at the Pattaya Orphanage and Sotpattana School for Deaf Children. Clearly and gratefully felt was the loving concern of His Excellency the Ambassador and Mrs. John, through their interactions with all of us both in verbal and sign languages, donation of books for the children's library, and a promise to come again. Thank you kindly for great kindness and concern!



During his annual official visit to Thailand, Mr. Andrew Scadding, Chief Executive of the Thai Children's Trust (until the end of 2008 known as Pattaya Orphanage Trust - POT) in London, United Kingdom, met with the Management of the Pattaya Orphanage and the School for Deaf Children to provide meaningful encouragement as we face the challenges of 2009. Apart from the review of the 2008 operation, the mutual concern of both partners for the future of the orphaned and deaf children was shared. Led by Fr. Michael Phangrak, and accompanied by Mr. Derek Franklin, Khun Andrew spent time inspecting the fire exit that was generously paid for by TCT, touring the ground and visiting the deaf and orphaned children.

It is wonderful to welcome Mr. Didier Moly, Mrs. Veronique Besson, and Mr. Gerard Kaloci, the executives of "Les Amis des Orphelins de Pattaya et de Rayong," France, during their annual visit. Our long time friends and supporters exchanged views and updates with Rev. Fr. Michael Weera Phangrak. Valuable comments and suggestions were much appreciated. Thank you for the on-going support from you and all our benefactors in France to the orphaned and deaf children at the Pattaya Orphanage and the Sotpattana School for Deaf Children.





## Message from the Director

"Even my own children hated me whenever they saw me in such a detestable behavior; that is why I decided to change my life completely."

These were a few word from a self confession of one of our former residents sharing his family ordeal during the latest homecoming day. It's undesirable and painful to hear but the story is true and frequently repeated by various different persons.

Life is also a mystery. It's better understood only by those who have direct experience of it and willing to correct or

improve when fully realized and lived. It's a blessing when it's corrected on time but unfortunate for many who do not even have any chances to change when needed. That's the reason why we at the Pattaya Orphanage try our very best to educate our children to be gradually mature and responsible persons. We hope and pray that their self discipline will be naturally developed through a long and constant training so that success in life will await them all.

Fr. Michael Weera Phangrak  
Director



Congratulations to two of our adopted children on their athletic acheivement! Rasa was awarded golden medal in the 400-metre Mini-Marathon (Student Range), while Runglawan or Chetah, got golden medal in gymnastic competition. Chetah was considered the smallest athlete in this competition! Both children have been progressing in their studies and sports and living in a loving family of the Fuehs family in Germany.



Members of the football team of the Pattaya Orphanage thoroughly enjoyed the Friendship Football Match with the youth team from Baan Chang Municipality, in Rayong. The constant supervision and coaching by Mr. Heiko Klimanschewsky, one of the children's sponsors and long-time friend of the football-loving children, was an important part of the team's winning score of 9:7. The Orphanage Team was very happy and had a special celebration with pizza meal with their wonderful coach



What a great fun the deaf students of Sotpattana School and orphaned preschoolers of the Pattaya Orphanage had, when they were accompanied by their teachers and carers on the study tour to the Sea Turtles Conservation Center, at the Sattahip Naval Base, Chonburi. Getting a chance to learn and witness the life circle of Turtles made the kids so happy. Besides, the new experience of travelling by a local train kept them very excited and joyful!



Participants in the Workshop on Child's Rights, co-organized by the Department of Social Development and Welfare, under the Thai Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and the Children With Hope, Australia, led by Khun Sirirat Karnkamthorn, paid a visit to the Pattaya Orphanage in one of the field trip programs of this seminar. Following the welcome and briefing by the Foundation's Director, the party had a tour of the compound and interacted with the babies and preschoolers.



Everyday is the Children's Day here at the Pattaya Orphanage, but the National Children's Day 2009 was even more special when all the orphaned and deaf children, together with other members of the residence, met for various enjoyable and creative games and sports. The teams of Sunflower, Hibiscus, and Marigold played in good spirit on the sunny and windy day. "Think smart, Think pure thoughts, Inspire dreams and Promote unity" being the slogan for the day given by the current Prime Minister, was well followed through the day's activities.

The winners were Hibiscus, Sunflower and Marigold respectively. Thanks to all who contributed to the success of this fun-filled and memorable day.



Beaming here, there, and everywhere around the Pattaya Orphanage on a special occasion! Red roses are a symbol of the love, respect, unity and good will expressed to each other. Moments of joy are not rare here and all the children, staff personnel and management of the Pattaya Orphanage send our best wishes to all our friends and benefactors around the world. In preparation for this special occasion, the children joined hands in decorating the garden around the Fr. Ray's monument.



In the evening of Makha Bucha Day, the full moon day of the third lunar month, the primary and secondary school children from the Pattaya Orphanage participated in the Buddhist ceremony at Djittabhawan Temple in Banglamung. Led by their supervising teachers, the 33 children learned the religious teachings from the sermon of the monk, prayed and joined in the prayerful procession around the temple with lighted candles and flowers in their hands. Peaceful mind and closer to Dharma most of the kids felt.

## Collections from School Bus



Episode 2: This home has never been moved but we may have forgotten our way home.

Sawaddi khrap, dear friends; we'd like very much to share with you this special story from the "Collections from School Bus." Although the Bus went nowhere due to the long Christmas and New Year holidays, but from where it was parked, the great view of the annual party could be seen.

Each Christmas and New Year party has always been one of the most important annual events at the Pattaya Orphanage. The little ones who remembered the previous years' excitement and fun kept asking when Christmas would come. Their seniors knew it was coming because they were practicing dances. All the older children in colleges and university studies who normally spend more time at their dormitories came home to celebrate with their juniors, friends, teachers, and elders of the house.

Forty-nine former residents, some of whom living quite faraway, made the event very special as they met each other in the familiar atmosphere. A number of them brought their family members along. Throughout the day, although arriving at different hours, they all offered bouquets or garlands to the late Father Ray at his monument. Fr. Michael and their familiar elders were overwhelmed to receive their greetings, and in turn gave them blessings.

The feast, held at the soccer field, warmed every soul with the presence of some 450 residents of the Pattaya Orphanage and the School for Deaf Children, the children's sponsors and invited guests. The current members sang Christmas Carols wishing their benefactors around the world a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy Year ahead. Then each child received his/her presents. Many of them presented beautiful stage performances.

It was later found out that some of the former residents either came a day too early or a few days after the party, we hope they would all join the party next Christmas. This home is not merely a shelter but where the children find love, warmth, support for the building of their own lives, and ever welcoming embraces.

Homesick I now feel.. missing the sweet smile of my younger sister, the warmth lap of my mom where I place my head, my old bed, etc. What about you? How long have you been away from your home? For many of us, "home has never been moved but we may have forgotten our way home."

Kind regards,  
Editor