



COPE Newsletter

May 2013

Latest news @ COPE Special guests galore!

The first quarter of 2013 has gone by very quickly and in that time we were pleased to welcome a number of special guests and visitors to the centre including:

Miss Minnesota USA 2012, Ms Nitaya Panemalaythong Click [here](#) for a link to the video of Nitaya speaking about her visit with us.

Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Mr Naoyuki Shinohara who listened to a tour intently and made a donation to the centre.

Commander of U.S Army Pacific (USARPAC), Lieutenant General Frank Wiercinski.

UN Under Secretary General, Dr Noeleen Heyzer. Under-Secretary Heyzer advised she would report what she had learned about the effects of UXO in Laos and also about COPE's work to the UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki Moon. Click [here](#) to read the news article about her experience.

Director of the Office of Mainland Southeast Asia, Mr Ike Reed. Here he is at the Visitor Centre during his visit to Laos in April. He was accompanied by USAID Tom D'Agnes and U.S. Embassy Vientiane Deputy Public Affairs Officer Ken Kosakowski.



COPE is

The Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise, or COPE, is a local not for profit organisation that provides orthotic, prosthetic, rehabilitation and advocacy services for survivors of bomb accidents and people with disabilities in Laos.

In this edition

- ✓ Stories from our FUNdraisers
- ✓ Meet patient Ton
- ✓ What's COPE been up to?
- ✓ New COPE staff
- ✓ Passionate people stories



What's going on at the Visitor Centre?



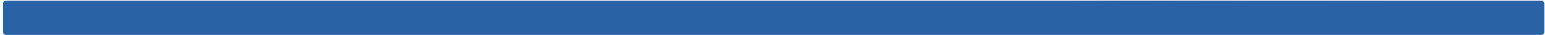
See more photos on



The last few months really have been very busy for us! Here's a few things we'd like to mention:

The COPE team participated in Lend your Leg Day (www.lendyourleg.org), an awareness campaign for International Day for Mine Awareness, by rolling up their pant legs to show compassion and support for survivors.

We also had a visit from a large group of students from Vientiane College in April, who participated in presentations from our Occupational Therapy Mentor Sherri and one of our Prosthetic and Orthotic technicians Mr Somsai.



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Some other things you might be interested in:

- ✓ Meet our newest staff members - [click here](#)
- ✓ Passionate people stories: Read about an NGO on wheels that visited COPE - [click here](#)



FAST FACTS



74%

Of our paediatric patients are treated for Cerebral Palsy - a motor condition that affects the development of body movement.

4601

Visits to the Visitor Centre across the first quarter of 2013! We told you we've been busy!



Ton after surgery for his club foot at the COPE rehabilitation centre in Vientiane

Patient story: Ton

We met Ton Vongsa after his surgery for club foot in April.

He is 12 years old and comes from Koknongbua Village in Soukhoumma District which is in Champasak Province.

Can you tell us about your foot?

I was very sick when I was 7 years old and because I live very far away from the centre of town I didn't get treated properly so over the years it got really bad.

The first symptom was that I started to have a high fever with a lot of pain in both of my legs. Two days later, I couldn't feel my legs. The pain affected my muscles and tendons, and the virus eventually made my feet point down like clubfoot. I couldn't walk properly and faced many difficulties in terms of mobility. So I needed to have surgery to fix my legs so I could walk and have fun like a normal kid again.

I heard about COPE services from my district hospital doctor. He

recommended me to come here for help.

What did you like to do before the accident?

I was a talkative and happy boy, I liked playing football with friends after school but after I got sick my behaviour totally changed. I would keep quiet and just play on my own because I felt shy and not confident to participate with friends. I still continued going to school without giving up though.

The future for Ton

COPE provided a clubfoot treatment for me and now I can see that my feet are getting back to normal. When my foot is healed I can go back to my happy life again and play with my friends again, as well as participate in ordinary day to day activities.

I am very happy, and thankful that I will be able to walk normally again. I want to say thanks to COPE and its supporters.

We <3 COPE Fundraisers



donations and awareness of our services. The concert was held on 5th April 2013 at The French Centre (Institut Francais) in Vientiane. There were different aged musicians but they were all fantastic in performance. Over 120 people attended, raising over 500 USD from ticket sales and other donations.

COPE Classical Concert - The Classical Concert was organised by Hyesun Hahn and Helene Plourde to raise funds to support the COPE project through

Red Spokes - Red Spokes is a small tour company that offers people a chance to cycle through unique parts of the world. Red Spokes has been a generous supporter of COPE over the years helping to raise awareness about our services by bringing tour groups through the Visitor Centre and encouraging its clients to make donations. In January 2013, Red Spokes brought another group to the COPE Visitor Centre and presented us with a cheque for GBP 1,720, raised through its Laos Village Community Fund.

COPE Services

Club foot surgeries

COPE carried out free corrective surgery to 8 people in March who have the disabling condition termed club foot. Funded by one of our international donors CBM, the operations gave some Lao doctors working in provincial hospitals the chance to hone their technique and of course provided improved mobility to patients.

Visit from ICRC SFD

The International Committee of the Red Cross Special Fund for the Disabled (ICRC SFD) visited the team for 3 weeks in April to conduct their bi-annual technical evaluation of the Centre of Medical Rehabilitation, at the Pakse Provincial Rehabilitation Centre (PRC) and Xieng Khuang PRC. The visit from ICRC SFD was very positive where the team were happy with the increased level of functional quality delivered Prosthetics compared to their previous visit in October 2012.



Above: Mr. Ken, 54 years old being fitted for a prosthesis for his right leg with Prosthetists Oudom and Sisay. He is from Non Sang Village, Phone Thong District, Champasak Province. The reason for his amputation was a work related accident.