

# Fr. Ray

## School for Blind Children

**Nickname: Rapee**

**Sex: Male**

**Birth Date: 2002.05.28**

**Birth Place: Chonburi**

**Arrival Date: 2006.01.17**

### Family History and General Information

Rapee is just a small boy of 4 years old whose family is living in Chonburi Province. Our School is well known to them. Rapee's family brought him to our School. He is found to be completely blind; however he appears to be a strong and healthy boy. He has been promptly assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> entry level for close observation and evaluation. In the meanwhile, like all other new comers, Rapee is being trained to attend to his daily personal needs especially those related to his personal hygiene. Rapee is 11 kilograms in weight and 93 centimeters in height. (NS)



### July 2006

There has not been much progress made for this young little boy, Rapee, whose weight and whose height remain pretty much the same as those previously measured when he first arrived at the School. He continues in good health and is receiving strict training in order to he may be attend to his daily self needs. In June of this year, Rapee participated in the school's annual traditional Wai Koo (Literally meaning – paying respect to teachers) Ceremony. The proceedings, led by the whole student body, consisted of taking vows to behave in class and to devote themselves to their studying. They also expressed and paid their respects to their teachers as well as their valued sponsors and friends. The Wai Koo ceremony may be steeped in Buddhism and Thai tradition, but there was much evidence of feelings of respect and gratitude for the teachers from all those present. The ceremony was presided over by the Deputy City Mayor in the presence of Father Worawut Saraphan, C.Ss.R.

Rapee's family continues to keep in close contact with him as well as with the School. (NS)

## February 2007

Rapee has not been able to make noticeable progress in general because of his overall muscle weakness. In the meantime, he continues to need help in attending to his daily personal routine needs, especially those relative to his personal hygienic requirements. He is receiving daily massage to help his muscle development. He is 12.5 kilograms in weight and 96 centimeters in height. Nevertheless, Rapee takes part in the School's activities just like his other friends in the School.

The following is a list of some of the special events that took place in our various projects.

*The School's annual traditional sports day, February 8, was a grand event in which all students participated, even those students with multiple sufferings in addition to being blind. The competing sports for all students included football, volleyball, goal ball, swimming, and other contests classified to be under track and field events. This year the school was honored as the event was chaired by the head of the local authorities led by the Chonburi Provincial Vice-Governor, and attended by many foreign as well as local Thai dignitaries who are the School's regular guests and sponsors. The grand event ended with the award presentation to all athletes and a fabulous luncheon was attended by all.*

*In Honoring H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Royal visit, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, the full band accoutrement of 24 girls and boys consisting of 7 pieces of our Thai classical music group, 7 pieces of our Ankhlong Thai woodwind music group, 7 pieces of our Thai classical musical percussion section, and 3 girl students performing Thai classical dancing, performed for the Princess.*

- 10 of our girl and boy students took part in the presentation of many varieties of our manual handicraft work which is achieved under the close supervision and monitor of 7 of our teachers. Samples of these handicraft productions were presented to Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, as souvenirs of her visit.
- There were 3 girl and boy students participating in a display of Braille reading, writing, and typing also under the close supervision of 3 teachers.
- The remaining students sat on both sides of the walkway, waving flags welcoming Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to their School.
- A highlight of the visit was when Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn humbly and graciously sat to play the bass gamelan together with the other blind Thai student classical musical players.
- The Grand Ceremony, after awarding a group of those local people who have rendered great service and support, and giving generous sponsorships to the School as well as to the blind students, ended with the Crown Princess honoring the School and its staff, by laying the foundation stone for a new 6 story building scheduled to be completed in 2 years, which will be devoted to Vocational Training for blind students. (NS)

## September 2007

Rapee remains in the same class for yet another year while continuing to receive strict training in his daily self-help, including those relative to his personal hygienic requirements. Rapee likes to be left alone by himself. Communication is strictly one-sided. He cries and wails whenever he dislikes something, which makes it difficult for his teacher to comply to his needs. He returns home to be with his family whenever the School is closed on long holidays. He does participate in some of the School's activities which include:

26<sup>th</sup> June 2007 - The annual *Wai Kroo* is a traditional ceremony where the students pay respects to their teachers. The event starts with the presentation of floral decorations, each one designed and made by the students over many hours. Performances by the students in classical dancing and traditional songs entertained the teachers and the event closed with many students receiving awards for outstanding achievements during the school year.

12<sup>th</sup> August 2007 - The country celebrated the birthday of HM the Queen on August the 12<sup>th</sup>, which is also National Mothers Day. As a mark of respect to the Queen, several older students traveled to Somdej Hospital in nearby Sri-Racha to donate blood. The day came to an end with a candlelight ceremony, and the singing of the national anthem to honor HM the Queen.

16<sup>th</sup> August 2007 - On the fourth anniversary of the passing of the School's founder, Fr. Ray Brennan, the teachers and students joined together with the students and children of his other projects at a Memorial Mass. To remember the man who gave them a chance of an education they lit candles and laid flowers on his grave. Khun Aurora, Principal of the School, gave a short speech to the congregation praising the good deeds that Fr. Ray did for the blind of Thailand. (NS)

#### April 2008

Rapee, regarded as the slowest in the class, will remain in the same class when the new school year begins in May. The help he gets from the teacher and his friendly classmates has not allowed him to progress at a satisfactory pace. He always needs big help in attending to his daily routine requirements. His teachers are working hard towards making him as independent as they can. Rapee continues to live and play alone. Although he is in a class of 28 students, he has no best friends. The weather in Thailand is quite changeable, Rapee, like most of young children, catches a cold and needs some medication from the doctors whenever this happens. He is 14 kilograms in weight and 100 centimeters in height.

24<sup>th</sup> of November - Loy Krathong Festival. The annual celebration this year took place on the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> of November. The celebration consisted of praying for oneself to do well in the coming year and the help to lead a good life. Beauty contests of representatives from different class-rooms, singing and dancing shows were the order of the day, and finally the celebration ended in a grand feast for all of the students and teachers.

Loy Krathong, or, River Lantern Festival, originated with the idea of water spirits and the floating away on Krathongs of all wrongdoings and uncontrollable calamities that befell people of the north and northeastern parts of Thailand. Much of the north is a major rice-growing area, and also a place where superstitions have held on more strongly than in other parts of Thailand.

The earliest Krathongs, were simple and constructed from natural materials. The trunk of a

banana tree was cut for a base while the leaves of the tree were carefully folded into the shape of lotus petals and attached to the base. Finally, flowers, incense sticks and candles were added. People want to create the most beautiful Krathong and took great pride in designing and making their Krathongs.

5<sup>th</sup> December - H.M. the King's Birthday and National Father's Day. The celebration took place in the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of December consisting of poem reading, singing and praising and pledging to do good deeds in honor of His Royal Majesty. The activities for the day ended with musical pieces being rendered by the School's band.

The celebration continued the following morning, the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, when students and teachers joined forces and met with the general public of Banglamung District. The idea was for the students, teachers and public to meet at the Somdej Hospital in Sriracha District to donate their blood. Students ranging in age from 17 years of age and upward and weighing at the minimum, 45 kilograms were allowed to donate. Then came the high light of the day when all students and teachers lit candles in honor of H.M. the King.

7<sup>th</sup> December - Miss Caulfield's Memorial Day. Miss Genevive Caulfield, an American Lady, is highly regarded and respected as giving birth to the idea of giving education to the blind people in Thailand. The Memorial ceremony was held in the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> of December.

25<sup>th</sup> December - Special Events with Television Celebrities. For the very first time in the School's history, 50 students ranging in age from 8 through 13, were invited to participate in a popular and well known television program. The whole event was pre-recorded a few days earlier while the actual program was aired on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December.

The program was performed by 5 schools, totaling 250 handicapped students. The event was filled with television celebrities playing with and serving goodies to the handicapped and disabled students, singing and dancing, gift presentations, and other fun-filled activities. Two of our students received 2 big awards – one being a full set of mini home theatre while the other received 40,000 baht in the way of an educational scholarship.

It was another fun and games day for everyone. The principal of the School told the students about Christmas and it ended up with much praising and wishing well to one another. The students then enjoyed games and raffles and the activity ended with a special luncheon served for everyone.

12<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 - the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the Year – The Country's Annual National Children's Day. The day started quite early, before sunrise actually, with people gathering around the football field at our Children's Home for the annual group picture taking. This consisted of all residents and personnel from all projects, followed by a hearty breakfast.

The day consisted of a most fun-filled day for residents, personnel, and guests with sports, shows, exhibitions, etc. being the main part of the day. Food and beverages were available to all throughout the day. The event continued on until late in the evening with everyone having a great time but being completely exhausted!

15<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 is the official day for the School's Anniversary. The celebration started with a blessing and prayers and chanting of the Buddhist priests who had come from the

nearby Thai Buddhist temple. A delightful lunch was held for the Monks and the attendees and finally ended with fun and games for all. (WS/NS)

#### November 2008

The 16<sup>th</sup> of May marked the opening of the new academic year for our blind students. Rapee continues on with his academic study in the same 2<sup>nd</sup> entry level. Although his general health is doing all right, he is 13 kilograms in weight and 103 centimeters in height. Rapee continues to need help from others in moving from one place to the other. He must hold on his friends to help him in his movements. Rapee usually does not mingle with others easily. He tends to be close to his few friends who help him around. Rapee cannot do things as quickly as he would like to because of his prolonged problem with his muscle weakness. He returned home to be with his family during the long school holiday while at school he does participate in all of our School's activities. (NS)

#### June 2009

For his own benefit, it has been deemed appropriate to keep Rapee in the same class for yet another year. Rapee is generally strong and healthy, with the exception of some minor head colds requiring medication and attention. He now weighs 14 kilograms and is 105 centimetres tall. Rapee continues to need help in all aspects to attend to his daily routine personal needs, especially those relating to his personal hygiene. Rapee likes to be left alone. He returns home to his family whenever there is a long school's holiday. (NS)

#### January 2010

Rapee has made some noticeable progress towards attending to his daily personal routine needs. He holds his friends' hands and relying on them to lead him to the place where he wants to be, such as, going to the dining hall for meals, or going to the play ground around the school's flag poll where most students congregate during their free time. He is enjoying good health. His weight and height remain to be pretty much the same as those previously measured. Rapee now wants to be left alone to play. He mingles with his friends when he needs them to do something for him. He certainly is a sly one. Other than that he enjoys being alone. He returns home to be with his family during the school's holiday. He also participates in the school's activities along with his friends or under his teacher's guidance. Training him to be able to attend to his daily routine personal requirements shall continue especially in attending to his personal hygiene. (NS)

#### September 2010

Rapee continues to need all kinds of help and all kinds of training for his daily personal routine self-help program. He is completely helpless in every way and needs the help of others or his teacher. Although he is usually strong and healthy, he was hospitalized for a few days for a cold fever. Rapee is now 15 kilograms in weight and 110 centimeters in height. Rapee needs to be looked after most of the time. Formal schooling, at this stage, is out of the question. 2<sup>nd</sup> Entry Level- group 3 appears to be the most suitable place for him in our School at this time. Development and progress are definitely slow. Repetitions are required in training. Time and patience are what is needed for Rapee at this time. (NS)

#### March 2011

In addition to being completely blind, Rapee also suffers frequent allergy and head colds both of which caused delay in his daily training for self-help. Rapee is 15 kilograms in weight and 110 centimeters in height which is the same as before. He continues to need all kinds of

training, especially those in relation to his personal hygienic requirements. For his own benefit, it seems appropriate to retain him in the same class – 2<sup>nd</sup> Entry Level – group 3. It is most likely that he shall remain in this class for the next few years while continue to receive further training. Fortunately, Rapee returned to be with his family during the school's long holiday. While at school, under strict guidance by his teacher, Rapee attends to some of our school's activities. (NS)

### September 2011

This school year started in the early part of May. Most students returned to resume their academic study with us while there were some students being retained at home to continue on with their medication from the family doctor. These students are usually brought back to resume their studies or their training at a later date.

Towards the end of August of this year, there were 2 interesting athletic events held for blind students. It started with the Annual National Championship Competition in Goal-Ball in which our girl's team captured the Bronze, while the other contest was the Annual National Championship Competition in Futsal/Footsal (indoor soccer) which is only for the male students. Unfortunately, our men's team was not able to match the success of the girl's team. The competitions were held in Bangkok.

Rapee remained in the same class when the school year started in the early part of May. He continues to receive intensive training in an attempt to help him to attend to his daily personal needs, especially those in relation to his personal hygienic requirements. Rapee, in the meantime, suffers his usual allergies when there are changes in the weather. He needs lots of help from his teacher. Formal schooling has been put on hold and it looks like this will be the place which is most suitable for him. Rapee returned home to be with his family during the school's long holiday. (NS)