

Secondary entry #14: Central Coast Rudolf Steiner School



STEINER RECORDER



Repair of a farmer's hut begins in a Cambodian village.

No holiday in Cambodia

By **GEORGIE RAYNER**

SINCE 2009, year 10 students of the Central Coast Rudolf Steiner School have travelled overseas to work in some of the most impoverished rural communities of Cambodia.

In preparation, students raise money all year. Fundraisers include running the school canteen, organising barbecues and silent auctions.

The majority of the money taken overseas goes towards building development programs in rural schools for classrooms, teacher accommodation and even toilet blocks. With the favourable Australian dollar conversion, the students quickly grasp how much of a difference they can make.

Hollie Rayner said her trip was "indescribable to be honest. It was definitely an eye opener, and makes one more humble and grateful for what we have. I have never met happier people who have the barest minimum and still manage to be the happiest of souls."

Purchasing vital items such as clean drinking water, food, electricity and blankets are also a focus for the students. Last years' cohort discovered school students drinking from the same waterhole that was being used for washing tools and mixing cement. "We were immediately able to use the money to fill the dry water tanks and stop students drinking from the ditch," said Tiffany Reynolds-Flannery, an accompanying teacher from CCRSS. "It's those kinds of experiences that really show students the difference they can make in the world".

By **MIGUEL CULLEN-GREEN**

EXTENSIVE storm damage has created a dangerous hazard for locals on the Central Coast.

Four months ago a major storm hit the coast of NSW causing severe damage from the Sydney region to the Hunter with a significant loss of property and life.

Many of the beaches' frontal sand dunes were swept away by high waves accompanying the enormous meteorological phenomena known as an east coast low.

At Umina and Ettalong Beach the damage is still clearly visible. The slope of the dunes that opens directly onto the beach was swept away and some of the paths are closed off because there is now only a sheer drop to the sand below.

The damage is so extensive, residents fear that it may still be some time before the paths down to the beach can be opened again and are safe to walk on.

A local dog owner said: "I walk my dog twice a day; before and after work. The pathway that I usually use has been closed off and I am now forced to take a different route that takes much longer."

Elderly resident, Rocio Naranjo, said that she and her neighbours can no longer walk down to the beach from their nearby homes and expressed concerns that the



Native coastal plants are an ongoing casualty of the recent east coast low.

Picture: Miguel Cullen-Green

other accesses to the foreshore are too far away.

"I am worried that an accident could happen if someone is not aware of the dangers of the unstable sand dunes and I hope the council will be able to repair them soon."

To address the problem, Gosford

Council has closed off a section of Ettalong Beach, where some of the worst damage is, and are conducting restorative works on the dunes.

A council spokesman said, "The works are progressing as quickly as possible, with a minimum of inconvenience to the residents and we will be expanding to other

areas shortly."

A beachside cafe owner expressed concerns that with the beach not looking itself and with limited access to it, if repairs are not made soon the upcoming summer tourist season may not be as successful as it has been in previous years.

It's time to fight the toy gender stigma.

Picture: Chloe McFadden



Boys love blue and girls love pink

By **CHLOE McFADDEN**

SEEMINGLY innocent and socially acceptable assumptions about children and their gender are facing scrutiny. A growing concern amongst parents is gathering momentum online and making changes to big business.

Recently US Target removed gendered toy aisles after customers "raised questions about a handful of

signs. Our teams are working across the store to identify areas where we can phase out gender-based signage to help strike a better balance."

In Australia, parents are calling for local stores to follow suit. Lisa Almond, a mother of two sons said, "Why should your gender dictate which toy you play with?"

Objections argue that labelling has positive effects such as re-enforcing boys

with cars will grow up masculine and girls with toy dolls will grow to be maternal. The question remains if these labels are helpful or limit growth and potential.

"We shouldn't classify objects, outfits or behaviours to a gender ... [if a boy] likes the colour pink he should be free to do so without discrimination or consequences," Teeka-Mai Keavney Veldman, a student, said.

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