

## **Maxime Von der Muhll - Office Volunteer - February to August 2015**

Having recently finished my university degree, I had a desire to mix travel and work in my near future. With a focus on International Development, I wanted to gain some work experience within a NGO setting so as to get a feel of life outside of academia. Child's Dream presented itself as a perfect opportunity for me to attain an in-depth and detailed view on how this non-profit worked. I wanted to know more about the projects that Child's Dream were implementing throughout Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar.

The responsibilities assigned to me were that of the Office Volunteer. To give a brief overview of what was required, the tasks included reporting on projects implemented by CD, drafting proposals to help convince donors to support us, manage the ever expanding contact database, and any other miscellaneous tasks required from Marc or Daniel.

Before heading off to Thailand to start my assignment with Child's Dream, I admit I was nervous about the prospect of living in a culture so profoundly different from what I had experienced so far. New country, new people, far away from any established connections I had, I was nervous but excited. Looking back on it now, I am glad and relieved that I took the leap to dedicate six months for Child's Dream. From the first day to the last day, the welcoming, selfless, and compassionate attitudes of the people I met and worked with amazed and humbled me. Living in Chiang Mai has been a rewarding and fulfilling experience. From the delicious Thai food to the beautiful nature and the hot weather, it was definitely one of the most unusual winters I've experienced.

Highlights of my six months in Thailand include Songkran (Thai New Year where it becomes impossible to stay dry), the Child's Dream workshop, participating in a project trip in Laos to see first hand the projects implemented, playing badminton with co-workers, the consistently delicious Thai food readily available everywhere, trying to forcefully reduce the mosquito infestation at work, rushing to Vientiane to renew my visa, fondue night, and the nights out with the co-workers. But what really was the main highlight was all the wonderful people I've met and developed friendships with in Thailand.

I'd like to thank Manuela, Gene, Daniel, and Marc for having allowed me to work and contribute in my own way to Child's Dream. I had a blast working for Child's Dream and this is an experience I will never forget.



Walking and discovering Chiang Mai was always fun, especially with such street art peppered around the city



The office fatty, McQueen, on the left and a very friendly cat met on a hike up Doi Suthep



One of many night outs with CD staff at Reggae Bar and Zoe's



Chiang Mai is filled with beautiful Wats and Temples that offer gorgeous and beautiful scenes



Songkran Festival, where beer and water flow freely for three straight days



During the project trip to Laos that I joined, we stopped in Luang Prabang located in the north of Laos.