

Newsletter Fall 2004

Dear Friends,
We give thanks for the faithful giving, support, and prayers each of you give FOB. God is working through you to meet the needs of Christians in Burma.

Accomplishments: A computer (\$575) was given to Mon Bible School at Moulmein. \$3,100 was given toward the purchase of a van for Karen Baptist Convention.

Rocky Thein has completed his class work at Fuller Theological Seminary and spent six months with the Sowards working on his thesis. He spoke at several churches and attended the Mission Conference at Green Lake.

Lwin Moe met a young woman near his hometown, Mudon, who wanted to finish high school so she could go back to her village and teach. FOB contributed \$200 to help her fulfill her dream.

Lwin Moe is making an outstanding contribution to BARS both in teaching, relating to the students and bringing new ideas. Lwai Moo Paw says she will be returning soon to strengthen that vital school.

Mosquito Nets: We have distributed 100 high quality nets that will protect a person for ten years. Word has spread about these nets and thirty two pastors and evangelists in malaria infested areas want them. The Advisory board has voted to buy 200 more at \$7 each. Many persons die from malaria in Burma each year. It is one of the big killers.

Multimedia Projector: MIT faculty has a great need for equipment to enable power point presentations. FOB has contributed \$975 (90%) toward the purchase. The machine will be kept at MIT and loaned to KBTS and MICT as needed.

Requests: Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) is building another class room building at a cost of \$270,000. Each faculty member is raising \$200. They are asking each Burmese Church in the U. S. to raise \$200. There are many Burmese here who could give \$200 as individuals. Memorial rooms will be \$5,000 and equipping a room is \$500.

The Karen Baptist Convention is building an apartment building for much needed staff housing because of the rise in the cost of living in the Rangoon area. The van they are attempting to acquire is to provide transportation for the staff (100) for various functions with churches.

Nyaungleben Bible School at Nyaungleben (the school Diana once said was the poorest school she had ever seen) badly needs faculty housing for its staff. The principal gets the equivalent of \$4 per month. The students do not get even one egg a month. When the principal's son gets sick, they pray. Please help these worthy people working to bring the Kingdom of God. They need \$10,000 for one important building.

Orphan Report: David Horton at: dehgvaz@cox.net Each Fall one of our volunteers at FOB sends out a letter to over 50 persons to remind them of their annual support for over 100 orphans in 5 Baptist



orphanages (Agape, Pu Mooler, Kayah Pu, Grace Care, Pu Saw Bu) in Burma. The first few years that FOB was involved, individuals sent us \$12 per month and Diana tried to keep track of it all. Sponsors have graciously helped us out by sending \$144 in November or December for the next year. Annual payment saves us a lot of bookkeeping and simplifies transfer of funds to the Myanmar Baptist Convention for distribution to the orphanages. Some individuals send an extra \$25 for a birthday or Christmas party at the orphanage. Yes, there is always a need for sponsors. Make your check out to "Friends of Burma" and send it along. We will send you the name of the child and the name of the orphanage.



FOB Volunteers sorting medical supplies at C. U. R. E.

Clinic Report: TansyJKadoe@cox.net the KBC HEALTH CARE CLINIC is located on Seminary Hill in Insein. The clinic serves students at the seminaries and many other people in the neighborhood who can not obtain affordable healthcare. In addition to some brand new equipment bought with a gift from a Michigan church, individuals have carried in CURE kits

from PROJECT CURE. A CURE kit contains about \$3,000 worth of medical supplies that are badly needed at the clinic. Recently a concerned person, on a business trip, took a microscope from PROJECT CURE to the clinic. Gifts given to FOB and specified for the clinic are always needed in this overworked facility. If you or a friend is planning to go to Burma in the near future, let us know and we can arrange for you to carry in a CURE kit with you. We will have it shipped to your house and you can carry it as luggage at no added expense. There is a cost of \$150 for a CURE kit that covers gathering, handling, storage, shipping and other related expenses. The most recent project is the raising of \$4,000 for a generator. This relieves the staff of having to finish surgery by flashlight when the power went off! Pray for the staff and volunteers at the clinic. A 20 minute video about the clinic is available for the cost of return postage or \$10 to purchase it. Due to high demand, the KBC clinic would like to expand its eye-related services. In order to acquire equipment for eye-related surgeries, your help is needed. The cost for an operating microscope is \$10,000. For more information, please contact Tansy Kadoe.



Ruth & May Pearl Charlie

Promotion Report . John & Ruth Peterson spoke at Women's groups in Baptist and Methodist churches, at Campus Ministry, and a church's Mission Fair. Dave Horton, Saw Say Plah and Neil Sowards spoke at First Baptist Church at Saginaw, MI. Harriet Hone spoke on Burma and distributed 40 brochures. Supporting materials available: Friends of Burma Brochure, Newsletter, Video on Clinic.

Library Report : Sue Dolbow at: suedolbow@earthlink. net Show Ei Ei Tun at: showeitun@yahoo.com The community libraries at Insein and Taunggyi continue to develop and be used. Our efforts are being focused on developing the Nai Mehm Boke Library connected with the Mon Bible School at Moulmein (Mawlamyine). For extensive information and plans see http://www.student.ipfw.edu/~moel01/tansy/mon_library.html Note it is moeL Zero One.

Burma Christian Fellowship Tour : The tour will be Monday January 10 to Sunday January 23, 2005. Cost is still \$1,500 plus air fare. For details contact Paul D. Aita at Japanese Baptist Church, 160 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122. Phone 206/622-7351. E-mail:

paul.aita@juno.com David Horton went to Burma with Neil and Diana in 1999. He said, "Meeting the teachers, pastors, and lay persons enriched my understanding of what God has been doing there. The solid work started by missionaries is being continued with fervor by committed and sacrificing indigenous Christians. Working under great economic handicaps the church is growing. My life was changed by this travel opportunity."

Volunteer Service : Gail and Paul Aita recently returned from Yangon, where they taught for seven weeks at the Myanmar Institute of Theology--their third such experience as adjunct faculty at MIT. Paul regularly taught Greek and Pastoral Theology, and taught other classes as well. Gail taught English in various degree programs at the school. Paul says, "Each time Gail and I serve at MIT, we are deeply blessed by the faith, the dedication, and the graciousness of both the faculty and the students." He notes that MIT is eager to welcome volunteers to teach and provide other services. For further information, you are welcome to contact Dr. Paul D. Aita, Japanese Baptist Church, 160 Broadway, Seattle WA 98122; e-mail: paul.aita@juno.com; phone 206/622-7351.



Min Vila & Min Htoo

Ministry in the U. S.: While most of our projects are in Burma, FOB also helps the Burmese in the U. S. The Petersons have opened their home to May Pearl Charlie as she studies to be a medical doctor. The Sowards currently have three Burmese living with them--a doctor and two high school boys. The doctor is studying for her medical licensing exams. The two high school boys, Min Vila and Min Htoo, are receiving extensive tutoring from Diana. Please keep us in your prayers as we become parents once again to two teenagers.

Disappointments. Many people worked very hard to gather all the necessary paperwork and bring several Burmese to the U. S. for further study. Just recently all of those students were turned down visas by the consul at the American Embassy in Rangoon. Senators and Congressmen have not been able to help. Colleges in the U. S. are really

hurting financially because so many foreign students are being denied visas.

If you would prefer receiving this newsletter in color by e-mail just let us know. It saves us time and money. Send your request to neildianasowards@juno.com.

Opportunities for Helping Needy People in Burma (Myanmar)

1. **Karen Baptist Convention Staff Housing.** The total cost is \$110,000. They have raised \$70,000 and need help with the rest.
2. **Van for Karen Baptist Convention.** They need a reconditioned van.
3. **Karen Baptist Convention Clinic.** Wish list: Backup generator \$3,125, one tube well \$650, and two Nitrous Oxide cylinders at \$200 each.
4. **Book.** "Where There is No Doctor" for village health workers. Cost is \$2 each.
5. **Scholarships for Life Committed Christians.** One hundred and fifty dollars will give a year's education in a Bible School or Seminary. It takes 3-4 years depending upon school.
6. **Myanmar Institute of Theology.** They need thirty beds at \$20 each, 50 chair-desks at \$12, and \$200,000 for a new classroom building for their ever expanding student body.
7. **Christian Resource Books.** The Christians need religious resource books and have permission to reprint in Burma some of what they need. They need capital to underwrite the printing. The books will be sold and the money recycled to print more books.
8. **Entrepreneur Loans.** After training and saving their match, a group is given a loan to develop their business. The money from their loan repayment is then loaned to others. But more seed money is needed as word spreads about the program and more want to participate. Cost is

\$300 per project. Usually about thirty six benefit in the first round.

9. **Eye Glasses.** If you appreciate the clear vision your glasses give you, perhaps you would want to give that blessing to another person for only \$10. Faculties get them as well as students.

10. **Sponsor an Orphan.** Cost is \$144 per year--all this money goes to support the orphan.

11. **Aid a Retired Christian worker.** Ten dollars goes a long way in Burma. It is more than two months income for many desperate retirees. If your retirement is comfortable, perhaps you will like to help a retiree on the other side of the world.

12. **Mosquito nets for evangelists.** We have an opportunity to buy high quality mosquito nets for \$7 each that will last ten years and 21 washings. It is the best protection from malaria. A \$7 donation may save a life for ten years.

13. **Girl's Dormitory Extension.** MICT (Myanmar Institute of Christian Theology) needs to expand its girls' dormitory because currently sixteen are crowded into each room. Total cost is \$8,000. MICT has given sacrificially by donating land for the new Unified Library which will be on Seminary Hill. Should we not help them to build their new building?

14. **Hearing aids for Ministers.** Some old ministers need hearing aids. The cost in Burma is \$50 for a general amplifying hearing aid.

Please make checks payable to Friends of Burma, South Wayne Baptist Church, 548 Home Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46807. Phone: (Note change in area code) (260) 745-3658. neildianasowards@juno.com All donations are tax deductible. All work in the U.S. is done by volunteers--Neil & Diana Sowards, David Horton, John & Ruth Peterson, Tansy Kadoe, Paul Aita, Saw Htaw Htoo and Sue Dolbow.

BURMA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP TOUR

A spiritual uplifting 14 day tour of Baptist work in Burma and seeing the sights of that beautiful, exotic land.

14 days for \$1,500 plus airfare (about \$1,200)

Monday January 10 to Sunday January 23, 2005

Check sentence below that applies and mail to Paul.

Yes, I want to go on the tour.

I am interested. Please send me more information.

I can't go but send information to the name below.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Tour participant: "It was a very moving experience and changed my life."

Please mail to Paul at:

Paul D. Aita

Japanese Baptist Church

160 Broadway

Seattle, WA 98122