

# **FRIENDS OF BURMA, INC.**

**2009 Fall Newsletter**

**Neil Sowards, President**

**548 Home Avenue – Fort Wayne, Indiana 46807-1606**

**A COMMITTEE OF AMERICAN CHRISTIANS FOR AIDING THE PEOPLE OF BURMA**

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## **KAREN BAPTIST CONVENTION ERECTS NEW THREE STORY HEALTH CLINIC**



Dr. Gabriel has announced plans for the dedication of the newly renovated clinic in October.

Construction in Insein has moved along as scheduled and all will be ready after many months of prayer and hard work.

The enlarged facility will house 99 beds, a new surgical suite, relocation of the pharmacy and enlarged lab. The medical staff, nurses and support team are excited about what God has accomplished. They are very thankful for all the donations that have made this possible.

KBC clinic still needs patient beds, bedside lockers, chairs, examination tables, computers and other items. Computer science students are writing needed programs to record and store patient files and retain clinic data. One bed will cost \$200.

Interior work continues on electrical installation, water and sanitation, air conditioning, and partitions. The new x-ray machine has arrived. Readers may designate gifts to for the KBC Clinic to Friends of Burma, Inc.

*Friends of Burma depends upon prayer and donor support to continue during this time of financial recovery in the U.S. The needs in Burma have always been great and have been further deepened due to hurricane Nargis. FOB in the U.S. spends no money on staff support. All volunteers pay their own expenses. Designated gifts are sent in their entirety to the ministries in need. **Tax deductible gifts should be directed to Friends of Burma and sent to 548 Home Avenue, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46807-1606***

## **FRIENDS OF BURMA, INC. ASSISTING NEW BOGALAY MOBILE CLINIC**

Friends of Burma has designated \$10,000 for the Bogalay Mobile Clinic in the Yangon Division area most devastated by Nargis. FOB Executive Committee member, Dr. Ardeth Thawnghmung, visited Bogalay this summer and on behalf of FOB allotted \$7500 to purchase medicine and pay doctors and nurses, plus \$2500 toward the construction of the new multi-purpose building to house the clinic, conference hall and provide facilities for workers and volunteers. Many non-governmental organizations and local organizations operate from Bogalay and use the church as an important training center to offer therapy and assistance to the remote areas of Bogalay.

The clinic treats between 50 and 70 patients daily from the poorest sections in the Bogalay area. Patients are coming from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

### **44,000 KAREN REFUGEES ADMITTED TO UNITED STATES FROM THAILAND**

In addition to Karens, many Chin and some other Burmese refugees continue to arrive from refugee camps in Thailand as well as from Malaysia. A high per cent of the refugees are Baptist and relate to American Baptists through mission ministries going back to Adoniram Judson. Other religious back-grounds include Buddhist, Muslim, Seven Day Adventist and Anglican. Scattered now in 130 U.S. cities, they are seeking employment and the Christians are seeking welcoming churches. .

Admission of refugees to the U.S. continues as a part of U.S. policy. These legal arrivals in the United States must repay the refugee settling organizations for their airfare.

Duane Binkley, former missionary in Thailand and now under appointment by National Ministries, International Ministries, and Cooperative Baptists, is ministering with Karen refugees and also regularly visiting camps in Thailand. He currently needs financial support as a commissioned missionary and solicits that support through International Ministries separate from Friends of Burma. For further Karen refugee information visit the American Baptist website at -- <http://www.karenconnection.org>

**Good News and Sad News:** FOB has supported a program where the brightest student from each of 63 villages was brought to Pathein and housed in a hostel so they could go to Middle and High School. Eight have now graduated and entered Pathein University and one enrolled in Ko Tha Byu Theological Seminary. One perished in Nargis and another succumbed to illness.

### **BURMESE BURY 86,000 NARGIS VICTIMS; AN ADDITIONAL 60,000 BODIES WASHED OUT TO SEA**

As Americans and people around the world wade through the recession, many in Burma have literally waded through the waters and now are rebuilding lives. Some villages were entirely wiped out. Baptist churches, despite meager resources, continue to minister to pressing needs and to help reestablish lives and livelihoods.

**The Pwo Karen Bible School at Pathein currently houses 153 children who survived Hurricane Nargis.** Seventeen lost both parents; 115 lost one parent. They need assistance for school fees for the children. Send \$100 per child.

**Seventy church buildings destroyed by Nargis.** The Karen Baptist Convention would like to aid poor villages to rebuild their churches. Any amount helps.

### **Orphanages Fill to Capacity Due to Nargis**

Dr. David Horton reports over seventy-five FOB donors contribute toward orphan support @\$180 per year per child. Neil Sowards during his August visit to Burma stopped at many of the "child enrichment centers" finding some to be overflowing due to the devastation of Nargis. With the world economic collapse,

Dr. Horton asks readers to help enlist additional donors @ \$15.00 per month or preferably through an annual gift of \$180 for each orphan. Reports indicate that many children need an additional \$7.00 for school uniforms.

Pictures of individual orphans are available.

## Dr Chit Maung Library Thanks Friends of Burma



Dr. Chit Maung Library was established in July 1997 to provide knowledge and information to the community through newspapers, magazines, journals, and books. Books may be checked out, the reference section is open to all, and there special educational opportunities for children. These services have been satisfactorily provided for the past twelve years. To initiate its original objective of providing non-printed matter, DCML has expanded internet service to the community.

Friends of Burma contributed \$6880 toward the more than \$15,000 cost to expand the computer internet services now available at the library.

Challenges ahead to which readers may contribute include:

1. Insufficient, available electrical power. A VKV, Kipor KDE 6700 generator has been secured.
2. Occasional disruption of the network connection. They need to upgrade from a 256 MB to 512 MB connection.
3. Five more computers needed.

The library has the expertise to teach computer skills as well as to maintain the equipment. With the new additional services available on April 1, the library discovered a problem common in American culture--not only are children gaining computer skills for educational purposes, some children are spending significant time on computer games.

## ***WHERE THERE IS NO DENTIST APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION***

Thanks to Naw Tha Wah who four years ago assembled a committee of dentists to translate this existing publication into Burmese with Burmese drawings. After careful review by Christian Dental Care, a review committee of fifteen and funding toward a final anticipated cost of \$3700, the publication submitted to the Ministry of Health which gave permission to publish most of the book. The Hesperian Foundation and author, Murray Dickson gave permission for the translation. When ready, copies will be sold for 1000 kyats (\$1.00) per copy or as little as 500 kyats for those less able to pay. Money collected will be used for a future revision.



The picture above shows Saw Robertson leading a training session at the Sak Han Tha Village Health Workers Training School which trains 48 students in medical skills each six months. They would like to give each graduate a copy of *Where There Is No Doctor*. **The Burmese edition sells for \$3.00.** The English version costs \$32 in the U.S. **Any donors for this project?**



**Home Visit by Trainees**



## **EIGHTY NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED**

Naw Paw Wah Doh, supported by FOB, in her work at Shwegin, has trained people to establish eighty nursery school programs. In addition she trains people to make toys and playground equipment.



## **THE WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENTAL DEPART. (ZOE) NEEDS TO REPLACE FIFTEEN SMALL BUSINESSES DESTROYED BY NARGIS**

Naw Paw Gaw of the Women's Developmental Department trains women to begin small businesses. Nargis wiped out 15 businesses killing participants and/or projects with chickens and pigs. **She needs \$300 per replacement or start-up groups. One of her groups needs a \$400 loom.**



The Domestic Skills Training School which trains young women to weave and sew **needs a small \$200 generator** for when the city power goes off.

## **MUSIC CLASSES DEVELOP AT KBTS AND MIT TO TRAIN CHURCH LEADERS**

Some years ago FOB helped Tah Mla Wah study music in the Philippines. She now teaches music at KBTS and MIT. Now with a developed music department they need keyboards and a grand piano. **Maybe a donor with keen interest in music can meet the \$7000 requested.**



## **MUSIC ENHANCED IN NEEDY CHURCHES**



Friends of Myanmar Governing Board distributes guitars and keyboards to needy churches to strengthen their music programs. Friends of Burma annually provides a block grant to this sister organization in Burma. FOMGB, comprised of Christian leaders in Burma, is self-governing. Pictured is the Wanetgone Karen Baptist Church youth group proudly displaying their guitar.

Below are women of the Lai Baptist Church in Myaukchawg on joyfully singing with their keyboard accompanist on the left side.



## **MANY PWO KAREN SEMINARY STUDENTS AT AHLONE LOSE ALL SUPPORT DUE TO NARGIS**

Some students at the Pwo Karen Seminary at Ahlone lost their support—families, crops, farm animals, or just plain every-thing.

Pictured are students in the seminary learning keyboard. **The seminary needs \$200 per student**



**per student to make them ready to replace the seventy pastors who lost their lives.**

## **MYO BIBLE SCHOOL OFFERS**



## **WEEKLY CLINIC FOR THE NEEDY**

Patients are given free medicine at the Myo Bible School as part of the weekly ministry. **There is no financial support for this ministry which meets a deep need.**

Friends of Burma has long supported the Myo mission outreach of the Pathein Sgaw Karen Association. Eight copies of the story of the Myo Mission are still available for the shipping charge from Friends of Burma.

**Permit a quick listing of needs without pictures:**

- Henry Pan Aung, the venerated 80 year-old retired theology professor from KBTS, has arrived in the U.S. to visit his daughter. He reports that the large wooden church seen by many tour groups when passing through the Rangoon Home Mission Karen Baptist School was destroyed. The good news is that they have already received permission to rebuild. **Donations are needed.**
- **Shan State Baptist Seminary in Taunggyi needs financial assistance to build a new dormitory for their expanding student body.**
- **The Matthew 25 Love Clinic in Pathein needs a new sterilizer.**
- **The growing Yangon Home Mission Karen Bible School at Ahlone now enrolls 223 students. 83 students come from Nargis areas where they lost everything. 20 lost family members. \$125 can help one student.**
- **The Karen Baptist Seminary in Pathein needs assistance to rebuild faculty housing and a men's hostel which were destroyed by fire.**

Friends of Burma has received special contributions in memory of Elaine Lewis, Doris Horton, and Robert Johnson. In addition contributions have been received in honor of John and Ruth Peterson's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

FOB thanks Ekhugay and Ta Gay Htoo for helping prepare the FOB Newsletters for distribution.







Roy H. Lippert and Bernice S. Lippert established a charitable remainder trust through International Ministries as a part of their life-long support for international missions. Before her death, she wrote,

"My faith in Jesus Christ and His teachings have motivated me to participate in missions all of my life. I'm forever grateful He brought a wonderful partner into my life with his building and repair abilities and a willingness to share those gifts in Missions."

They directed 10 per cent of this trust to support Friends of Burma indicating the following distributions:

\$5,421.12 for the Burma Baptist Convention for Christian Education and school support.  
\$5,421.12 for greatest needs in Burma via FOB  
\$2,710.56 for Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Bible School

Roy and Bernice have been faithful supporters of Friends of Burma and will be sorely missed. May others step forward to follow their example. Thank you, Roy and Bernice Lippert!

***Have you put Friends of Burma, Inc. in your will?***

***Help 153 Nargis Children Survivors (see page 2)***

