

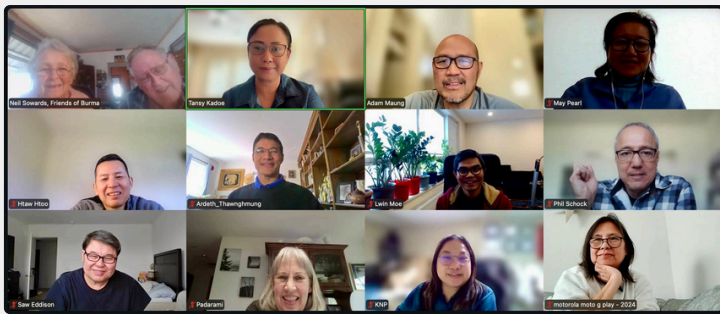
FRIENDS OF BURMA, INC.

SPRING EDITION, MAY 2026



Friends of Burma’s Annual Meeting

On March 21, Friends of Burma held its 2026 Annual Board Meeting, where seven partner ministries from Thailand and Burma shared inspiring updates on their vital work in education, healthcare, women’s support, and orphan care. Leaders described their challenges amid Burma’s conflict (including airstrikes and displacement) and outlined needs for funding and infrastructure. The board reviewed finances, allocated grants, and planned future distributions.



Friends of Burma’s Future

Last October, we held a planning meeting in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to discuss making Friends of Burma more professional and transitioning leadership responsibilities to board members. Attendees included Adam Maung and Tansy Kadoe (from Arizona), Htaw Htoo (from Indianapolis), Lwin Moe (from Toronto), and Anna Maung, Neil Sowards, and Diana Sowards (from Fort Wayne).



From Neil and Diana to Our Valued Supporters



For some time, we (Neil and Diana) have been contemplating the future of our involvement in the administration of Friends of Burma. We are now 88 and 87, and feel it is time for younger people to take over the reins of the day to day needs. To this end, we are teaching Ms. Tansy Kadoe, a long time board member, to receive your donations and issue receipts. We are changing the address for your donations to **Ms. Tansy Kadoe, 8055 W. Via Del Sol, Peoria, AZ 85383** We appreciate your patience as we transition to a more professional way of conducting this charity. Thank you so much for your understanding. *Neil and Diana.*

Christmas Gift Recipients

As Christmas is a time of giving love, Friends of Burma's partners in Burma delivered Christmas gifts to those in need back in December, 2025. Here are some of the reports.

A Lifeline for Ma M. D. W.



A teenage mother from a village about four hours from Yangon was raised by her mother, who has faced long-term mental health challenges and works as a daily housemaid. At age sixteen, she became pregnant, but as she neared her due date, her husband was away and did not provide any support. After a local religious minister shared her situation, Friends of Burma's mission partner, Naw Paw Gaw, met her last December and provided basic food, newborn essentials, and some cash. She and her mother were very happy and grateful, and we explained the gifts were sent by friends abroad who wished her health and joy as a mother during the Christmas season, thanking Friends of Burma for making this support possible.

Bringing Christmas Hope to M.

A patient currently undergoing chemotherapy for sarcoma and bone cancer shared that, although he has never met the woman who supported him, her love reached him and brought him comfort during his illness. He expressed deep gratitude and offered a prayer: "May God bless her abundantly."



Healing the Hurting: Restoring Hope to a Weary Soul



Naw T. M. M. is a 68-year-old widow with a worsening chronic skin condition that has contributed to depression and social withdrawal, including avoiding church. Her son lives far away because his wife fears her illness, so she depends mostly on her nieces and occasional help from villagers. A doctor has said the condition is not curable because of internal complications and nutritional deficiencies, and her symptoms worsen when she feels weak. During a recent visit, she received basic supplies and cash for medicine, along with reassurance that supporters in the USA care about her and that she is not alone.

Pee Pee D is a 100-year-old widow from Put Chaung Village in Ma Oo Bin Township who has spent her life farming, especially growing chilies, and staying active in church. Widowed for 60 years, she now has great-grandchildren, but her family cannot always provide the nutritious food she needs. She still sees and hears well and her memory is mostly sharp, but weak legs limit her movement, so she rests most of the day. On December 2, she received milk powder, food, and cash from friends in the USA for Christmas, and she thanked FOB for the surprise support.



After the Fire: A Family Rebuilding Their Home

This family of seven lives in Paa Taw Village, Maw Kyun Township, and is struggling with poverty and unstable health. They have five children: the two oldest work as child laborers in a tea shop, two attend the village school, and the youngest is five. After the wife's COVID illness, she sometimes experiences mental health challenges, and the husband is dealing with depression as their health and livelihood worsen. With no land to build on, they live over water in a place others consider unusable, and their situation became even harder when a kitchen fire, caused by unattended firewood, burned their home down, leaving them with nothing; with help from villagers and a small project grant, a bamboo house is now being rebuilt. During a visit on December 2, Friends of Burma's mission partner reached them by small boat, brought staple foods and cash, and the family expressed heartfelt thanks to FOB and to supporters abroad, saying the gifts made Christmas feel real for them.

Equipping the Next Generation: Kawthoolei Nursing School

The Kawthoolei Nursing School continues to flourish as a center for medical excellence. Supported by six donors through Friends of Burma, these nursing students are currently immersed in the rigorous process of their semester examinations, demonstrating the practical skills and clinical knowledge they have worked so hard to master. This support provides more than just an education; it supplies the tools, environment, and instruction necessary for these young professionals to practice their craft with precision and care. As they move from the classroom to hands-on practice, these students are being prepared to serve as the backbone of healthcare in their communities, turning their passion for healing into a lifelong vocation of service.



"Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'" – Luke 10:9

Gillen Hostel



(a) Students prepare firewood for hostel, (b) Students are watering the crops they have planted, (c) Naw Htar Htoo Paw, (d) Students study at night.

Gillen hostel, established by the Patheingyi-Myaungmya Sgaw Karen Baptist Association, supports high-potential students from rural areas with a stable, study-focused environment. Before 2004, the association ran only Kothabyu hostel, where diverse student backgrounds made consistent matriculation exam success challenging. In response, leaders opened Gillen for outstanding students, though limited space means few are admitted. Promising students who passed Grade 7 receive preparatory lessons before taking an entrance exam.

Naw Htar Htoo Paw, now 26, shows how this opportunity can change a life. Raised by Rev. Blute Htaw and Naw Phe Paw in a faith-filled family, she pursued education despite financial hardship. At Gillen hostel (Grades 9–11), she overcame homesickness and built independence, discipline, and teamwork skills she uses as a doctor. A full scholarship eased her family's burden and inspired her medical career. Now in residency at a public hospital, she credits Gillen's structure and support for her resilience and service commitment.

Shared Hope at the IDP Camps

Because of a gift from one of the donors, help reached two IDP (Internally Displaced People) camps made up of families who fled from Rakhine State and Paletwa. After ongoing conflict and the burning of their homes, they left with almost nothing and found safety in these camps, where two local pastors are faithfully caring for groups of about 60–80 people each. With this donation, the camps prepared warm chicken and rice porridge that provided protein and energy, and everyone was able to eat together. Many shared heartfelt thanks to the donors, saying your kindness brought comfort and encouragement when they needed it most.

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat." (Matthew 25:35)



Wa Orphanage Support Update

Support was recently delivered to Wa Orphanage after ongoing conflict following the coup disrupted daily life in Lashio. The orphanage has faced serious challenges, including transportation needs during the rainy season and damage to its building from gunfire and bombs. With this support, the orphanage was able to repay part of a loan used to buy a light truck, and the remaining funds will go toward repairing and renovating the center. The orphanage expressed heartfelt thanks for the timely donation and said it came exactly when it was needed most.



Damage from Gunfire and Bombs

Agape Clinic



Agape Clinic in Chin State has been faithfully serving the community for years despite many challenges and hardships. With vital support from Friends of Burma, the clinic has been able to obtain needed medical equipment and provide treatment for its most vulnerable patients. The clinic hopes to continue this partnership by securing ongoing support for nurses' honorariums, patient care, and medicines for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) who have taken refuge in Hakha from neighboring townships.

WISH LIST

- Kawthoolei Hope Theological Seminary (support for seminary students): \$3,000.
- Orphanage Child Care Centers: \$4,400 total (\$400 for each of the eleven centers).
- Humanitarian Needs: Any amount is welcome to provide food and medical supplies for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Agape Medical Center (Hakha): Any amount is welcome for medical supplies.
- Women empowerment embroidery and sewing projects: \$600 for ten women and two trainers.

This newsletter was compiled by Anna B. Maung, Saw Eddison and Lwin Moe. Please notify us if you wish to be on the e-mail list and feel free to pass along the printed copy or e-mail version of this newsletter. Please visit our website to view all other information that could not be included in this newsletter. Thank you all for reading and please continue to pray for Burma.

Neil & Diana Sowards

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You can donate online via PayPal, Zelle (Zelle account: neildianasowards@gmail.com), or checks via mail. Please make checks payable to Friends of Burma, Inc. and mail to Tansy Kadoe, 8055 W. Via Del Sol, Peoria, AZ 85383