

## FRIENDS OF BURMA ANNUAL REPORT 2018

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“Pure unsoiled religion in the judgment of God the Father means this: to care for \*orphans and widows in their trouble. ....” James 1:27 \*As in Matthew, the word implies personal service and help. James Moffatt translation.

When Friends of Burma first began in 1985, we focused on higher education primarily. In the 1990’s the Karen Baptist Convention began operating orphanages for the many children who were products of unrest in Karen and Shan states, and for children of very poor villages. Thus, FOB began supporting orphans.

We now support 9 childcare centers under the KBC, 1 under the supervision of the Loikaw Baptist church, and one long time independent facility in Taunggyi, which was originally started by 3 sisters. Although there are other donors who give support, our support is crucial for the continued survival of the KBC facilities. Here is a success story for one of the orphans.

Naw Esther, first arrived at the orphanage on June 1, 1998 and began schooling in Loikaw from Grade 6. Rev. Richard Thawt, the then pastor of Loikaw Baptist Church, brought her from Daw-law-khu village after finding her as an orphan there. After failing the Matric exam twice, she attended the Kayah Seminary in Demawsoe for four years from 2005 to 2009 till she got the L.Th degree. She served at the orphanage for a year, then joined the Southern Shan State Seminary in Taunggyi for the B.Th degree from 2010 to 2012. Later she served at the orphanage as the boarding mistress as well as the spiritual teacher, dutifully caring for her younger fellow



orphans with love and patience. She got married beautifully before God and man at Loikaw Baptist Church in January, 2018. She continued to look after the children till the end of their final exams in March, 2018. Only then she left the orphanage for good and went to live with her husband in Sar-boo-taung village in the Bago Division. She was the most obedient and dutiful among all the orphans who came to live at the orphanage. She is much loved and greatly missed by everyone, especially by the committee members.

Along with our support of orphans, we have over the years contributed to the health of various libraries. On Oct. 29, 2018, Alan Po, head librarian for Myanmar Institute of Theology, visited Neil and Diana on his way home to Myanmar the next day. Diana invited him to pick his “most desired” historical and relevant Baptist related books to carry back with him. These will be used for research and study at the seminary. There are two other seminaries on the compound that also will have access to these valuable books. Some date from the collection of Neil’s parents, and include autographed

copies of some mission related books. There is a total value of approximately \$1,600.00.

The books will be marked with a bookplate inscribed with “Gift of friendsofburma.org”. This is a donation to be used, protected, and treasured at M.I.T.’s library. It is just part of our years of supporting libraries for the

good of the country and includes many books shipped to India and carried over the border to Chin State, the independent Dr. Chit Maung Library, and several other libraries throughout the country.

On Nov. 1, I was sitting in the office of a literacy organization here in Ft. Wayne when I noticed their very sophisticated and elegant mirrored logo wall decoration. I looked--and thought--FOB doesn't have anything like that to present to the public. (this is because we are a bare bones volunteer organization in which nobody in the U.S. is paid to do the work of our charity. Our hard working board members work free.) Then I saw fliers from an organization that offers low interest, partly refundable loans to students. And I thought--FOB has offered thousands of scholarship grants, not loans, to students in Myanmar since 1985. I want you to consider this as you pass on your newsletters and talk to your friends and put FOB's values on social media. We will rely on you subscribers to get the word out on the needs we are attempting to meet.

From the very beginning of FOB, our focus was on education. Following is a testimony to the meaning of education and how you, our donors, have helped so many students.

*Dear Donor, First of all I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to you for your kindness. My name is Naw Bway Khu and I just graduated this September 2018 majoring in Business Administration. As I am the eldest daughter out of four siblings, my parents have difficulties sending me to the University. During my years at K.B.T.S. I learned subjects relating to Business Administration and marketing has become my favorite subject as I'm interested in creating and promoting my own ideas of products. I believe the knowledge and experiences I gained from KBTS would help me in my future career. At the moment, I'm trying to do my final year of University of Distance Education, majoring in English which will finish in November first week. I hope to apply for a job after the exam. I'm very thankful that although my parents cannot afford to send me to the university, the Lord has provided and made a way for me with kind people like you. I really feel very blessed and hope to become a person who is sharing my blessing with others. Thank you so much and I pray that the LORD will bless you richly. With best regards, Naw Bway Khu*



Malaria is a very big problem in Burma. It kills many and if a person recovers they can have relapses if they get weak. The most cost effective way to fight malaria is with mosquito nets which protect people at night which is when the malaria mosquitoes bite. A good net has insecticide that kills the mosquitoes if they land on the net thus protecting the sleepers if they lie against the net. FOB has given out hundreds of nets to protect pastors and evangelists.



During the year 2018 FOB took in \$407,602. Most of this was designated by the donor for a particular program the donor wanted to support or was for a program of their own that was within FOB's mission statement. Part of the undesignated money was from one donor who gives to support FOB's annual budget of \$57,840. That left \$27,167 in undesignated money that the board will allot at our annual meeting June 20, 2019.

According to Naw Paw Gaw, whose Women's Empowerment Programs have been supported by you, the accomplishments of

the mainly women's groups have been many. The groups are reaching milestones of saving, trust building, accountability, and cooperating in their various communities. Her comment, "I do believe that FOB members will receive joy and satisfaction when they see the positive life changes in group empowerment members."

The following are some of her reports. "Pwo Karen Women Department." This group is still going in gaining income generation. They provide loans to other women's groups each year. From the benefits of the loans, they provide skill training. This year they supported a Bible student from their profits.

Hpa Pun Women's Group. This group received funds of 300,000 kyats (\$250 U. S. Dollars) from Friends of Myanmar Governing Board. (This group in Myanmar which disburses \$20,000 a year.) They have plans to make a small scale business of printing local materials. The leader has attended training at the KBC Women's Department. During the month of July, because of flooding, they could not start as planned, but now they are preparing to activate the printing project and are very excited. They have great hopes for success.

Mara Chin Women's Group. This group is run by Rev. Mrs. Mai Ki. They received FOMGB funds of 300,000 kyats (\$250) on July 24, 2018. They will encourage mothers to increase their income by providing initial funds for traditional weaving in the village. They will make materials available and link to the markets in Yangon. Emphasis will be placed on children's education.



Many thanks for your most generous gift of 207,000 kyats (\$138) to Hsaw Htit Bible School for glasses. Lady Paw, Principal.

We want to ask you who are on our mailing list to do three things to help FOB.

1. Pray for Friends of Burma, that we will be wise and careful in funding those projects that we can raise funding for.
2. Talk about us to your friends. Two of our elder board members have done an outstanding job of raising funds by talking about us. To those of you using social media, please mention us.
3. If you use email and have not done this already, please send us your email so we can reduce our postage costs. We watch every penny.

Some of you retired people have IRA's and must take the required minimum distribution (RMD). You pay taxes on this distribution. The good news is that rolling over part or all of your RMD to a charity like ours can help

reduce your tax bill while supporting our cause. If you are 70 ½ or older, you can direct your IRA administrator to distribute a gift to Friends of Burma.

Our Wish List

1. A long time professor at KBTS is on kidney dialysis. He still teaches at home. He needs dialysis twice a week. \$50.00/dialysis treatment
2. We have lost three donors who went to their final reward. So we need three donors who will give \$360 each year to support an orphan,
3. Sponsor a self help women’s group aka Microcredit or Entrepreneur group \$300
4. Give needy students prescription eyeglasses. Cost is \$17 per student, a school can total \$150 to \$400.
5. Give a hearing aid to an old minister \$50.00
6. Support Naw Eh Ka Lu Paw, teacher at Late Pote Village. \$200 per year.
7. The Bible School at Hinthada to help them pay back a loan for a building they desperately needed. School has been in existence a long time. Our Goal \$1,000.



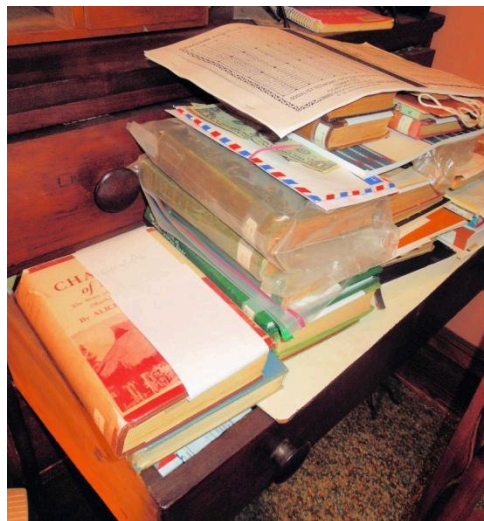
21 Ministers from Language and Regional Conventions who received mosquito nets.



Saw Kaw Khu & Naw Nay Mu from Kawthulei Karen Baptist Bible School & College who are studying online at Central Theological Seminary. A donor helped them for their first year.



Woman's Entrepreneur Restaurant.



\$1,600 worth of rare books on Burma missions from Diana's Library for MIT's library.

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