

Merry Christmas!



December 2008

Dear Friends,

With all the anxiety in America and around the world this year, I'm so glad we have our projects to help us keep perspective. When you visit our Villages and orphans with NO Security, NO Possessions, NO Promising future, and yet they are happy and upbeat because they know God is in control. You can't help but have a little more faith than you had before. They are amazing people and it is such a privilege to be involved in their lives. Thank all of you so much for your loyalty, which makes it possible for us to meet some of their needs.



I went over in July of this year and was able to inspect all of our projects and meet with the principles involved. This year's contribution on behalf of all of you will be spread out over several projects.



The first project is the purchase of another piece of land in Chiang Rai in northern Thailand to expand a third village for "AKHA migrant workers to own their own place for the first time in their life. You may recall we did our first village project in Doi Mae Salong in 2005. We bought the land. Each villager was required to purchase their lot for \$12 a month. This money is put into a "kitty" that is used to improve infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water,

and sewer. This village has been such a success that the villagers (without us) joined up with some other Akha leaders and put some of the money they collected together to start a new village called Takaopluak. This village is strategically located close to a city and is surrounded by rice paddies and fruit orchards. This will allow the villagers to find work without having to travel very far. A beautiful piece of land adjacent to the village became available and we bought it to expand the village for 15 more families. Let's hope all these village projects multiply themselves as Doi Mae Salong has!



Second. I was finally able to get into the refugee camp in Mae Hongson (after 4 years of trying) to check out the CFI orphanage we built. It was quite a trip as it is still illegal for me to enter the camp. In a rainy season downpour I was treated to a hike/ motorcycle ride on a 20" wide trail over the mountain and into the back door of the camp. The ride came complete with the motorcycle wiping out in the mud coming down the mountain. No serious injuries just a few scrapes and one lost shirt. The buildings were definitely in need of repair. They are made of Bamboo and there are bugs that eat the buildings constantly. It takes 3-4 years before you need to replace most of the building. I showed up right on time. So we left money for the repair of the buildings and to help catch up some overdue bills.



Third... The boarding house we built in Maesot turned out beautiful. There were a few odds and ends that still need completed. The front steps were covered in VERY slick tile. I have directed them to remove the step tiles and replace them with something textured before one of our kids or some visiting American falls and kills themselves. Also at the base of the steps we needed to add a concrete pad for the children to leave their shoes.

Fourth. We provided funds to establish a church site in western Thailand below Maesot in a huge agricultural area. The migrant workers in that area are some of the poorest in Thailand. One young family of five I visited lived in a 12' by 20' plastic box 3 feet off the ground with a tin roof in the middle of a rose orchard. It was at least 110 degrees and the "house was filled with 50+ flies. The smell of the insecticide being sprayed all around took your breath away. Most of these people live in shacks in the middle of whatever fields are their responsibility. In rainy season, travel outside of a few miles is not possible. We have supported Pastor Uthong and his wife in their efforts to help these isolated people. His ministry helps them with blankets, mosquito nets, food, and some schooling (as most of the children cannot attend Thai schools). We need a building (large Hut) and toilets at the church site so the people have a meeting place that is accessible and people can stay in when necessary.



Lastly... We are going to work with the Free Burma Rangers again this year providing funds for relief teams that will travel deep into Burma to provide relief to people attacked by the Burmese Army. Dave Eubanks (former US Delta Force) started the FBR and literally goes where “No other American man will go”. His relief teams search for the fighting and bandage wounds, provide food and extricate the people from within a hundred yards of the enemy. To read more about what they do visit their website at: www.freeburmarangers.org.



If you are new to our services this year, you can read our previous Christmas letters on our website at: www.americanbenefitsplanning.com

As always, we have made a donation on your behalf for Christmas. For those of you who wish to make an additional tax deductible donation, please make your checks out to “World Aid, Inc.” and put a note in the remarks that it is for “Thai-Burma Missions, Relief Teams” and forward to us for processing.

Thank you all again and may God bless you through his Son Jesus this Christmas!

Sincerely,

Donald B. Hoffman,CFP,CLU,RHU,LUTCF
President

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Broker

Birgit Ralston
Client Services Manager

