



# HOPE FOR THE NATIONS FOUNDATION THAILAND

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## HOUSE OF NEW HOPE

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the “Land of Smiles”!! Things continue to be very busy for us at House Of New Hope as we continue to expand. We now have 5 girls and 3 babies living in the home. We are learning a lot as we grow. We apologize for the length of this issue but so much has happened since we last wrote.

Amu was our first resident and is now 8 months pregnant. Her due date is January 17 and she needs prayer to overcome the fear of childbirth. November was an all round difficult month for everyone, but especially Amu. She had not been participating well in the program and was actually quite a trouble maker.

She then told us that she no longer wanted to live at the home and would go to live with her Auntie. We explained to Amu that this is a care facility and not a lock down facility. If she felt she would be better off living at her Aunties we told her she could go and gave her the phone to call and ask. Now this Auntie is not actually an Aunt, and in fact is not a relative at all as some of you are already aware of. Amu made the phone call and the Auntie told her she could not come and live with them. She told Amu that they could not afford to pay for the medical expenses and that if Amu were to show up on their doorstep that they would drive her out to the village and leave her there. This must have been a tremendously difficult thing for Amu to hear, but we believe it was an amazing breakthrough. There was an immediate change in her spirit as well as in her behaviour. Amu is now what we would consider being a willing participant in the program and has been a real help to the other girls and the babies in the home.



SUNDAY A.M. WORSHIP @ HOUSE OF PRAISE



DEE DEE & WOOD @ CHURCH

Dee Dee was the second girl to live with us and she came with a one month old son, Wood. Her husband's family did not want their son to continue in the relationship. Her mother told her that if she kept the baby she could not stay with them. Since she had no one to take care of her and her son and no way to support herself she was referred to us by a friend of ours working in that area of Thailand. Wood is now a strapping 4 month old who is very healthy and doing well. We have been helping Dee Dee repair the relationship with her mother and they have been exchanging photographs and letters as well as speaking on the phone. Dee Dee is hoping that they will continue to build on this relationship and one day soon have her Mom visit her and Wood.

Buey came to us from a government shelter here in Chiang Mai with her daughter Jiw Jiw who was 1 ½ months old. She was getting pressure to leave the shelter and consequently give up her daughter since she had no where to live and had no money to support herself. Her daughter, Jiw Jiw, is now 3 months old and looking just as healthy as Wood. Buey has not been in touch with her family and we know that she is hurting deeply because of this and is mustering up the courage to send her mother a letter with a photograph of Jiw Jiw. Please continue to pray for Buey as she tries to bridge the gap with her family.

## NEW RESIDENTS

Anna and her daughter Sirilak came to us on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November. She had been treated very badly by her Aunt in the village where she had been living outside of Chiang Rai. Through her pregnancy her Aunt kept telling her to get rid of the baby. Sirilak was born 1 month pre-mature and was very tiny. Since Anna had only been eating little bits of corn and sticky rice through her entire pregnancy both mother and baby were malnourished when they arrived and Sirilak was very jaundiced.

The people in the village were telling her to leave the baby there for them to care for and said she should go to Bangkok to work. They told her she would have to send them 3000 Baht/month plus the cost of formula in order for them to look after her daughter. Anna thought she might be able to get a job in a factory in Bangkok and hoped to be able to earn 10,000 Baht/month in order to provide for her daughter in the village and still be able to survive in the big city. We know that this is not a possibility as most factories do not pay that kind of salary and she would have most likely ended up in a very bad situation or possibly even resorted to working as a prostitute.



ANNA & CHOMPOO

Fortunately she knew of an organization in Chiang Mai called New Life Center and decided to contact them in hope of getting some help. That is when we got the phone call from the staff at New Life Center asking if there was room to take in another girl and her daughter. We took Anna and Sirilak to the hospital right away and had all the tests done. After only a couple of days of Anna eating proper meals and drinking milk and water there was a drastic improvement in both Mother and child. We took her back to the hospital a few days later for the follow up and the Doctor said that they were both in a very healthy condition and on the mend for sure. Sirilak did not yet have a nickname when she came to the home. Anna handed the privilege of giving the nickname to Rob. After some consideration Rob named her Chompoo. Chompoo, which translates to Pink, was the skin colour we were hoping for. Once again we see how important relationship and coalition is and you will see this again in the next story of Ming.

The events leading to Ming's arrival are nothing short of a miracle, and show how the power of God can take what Satan has intended for bad and use it for good. A few weeks ago I attended a funeral for the wife of a fellow Tourist Police Volunteer. After the service I was speaking to the pastor of the Church

and a few of the worship team members. One of the members of the worship team asked how long I had been living in Thailand and what work we were doing here. I explained to her the details of our Foundation and the work that the Lord had led us to do. She then told me that she was a nurse in a Government Hospital and that she often met girls who felt they had no options. She asked for my business card and said that she would call if she met someone she thought we could help.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November we got a call from Ming. We went to pick her up and bring her to the House Of New Hope. She then explained to us how she came about getting in touch with us. Ming is just over 3 months pregnant. She went to the hospital to try and get an abortion. The staff at the hospital told her that they would not give her an abortion. She said that she felt like she now had no other option and told the nurse that she was going to kill herself. The nurse went to talk with another nurse who happened to be the nurse I met at the funeral. She told Ming that there was a home she could go to and that the people there would help take care of her and her expected baby.



MING



CHOMPOO



L TO R: BUEY & JIW JIW, AMU, DEE DEE & WOOD, ANNA & CHOMPOO, DU, MING

Ming is 24 years old and is not a Thai citizen even though she has been living in Thailand for 12 years. She is from a small hill tribe village in Burma and is of the Thaiyai people group. She has no Thai ID papers and has no Burmese ID papers and is considered to be what is termed “stateless”. This is the reason she was not given an abortion. Not only did she not have the money to pay for an abortion but she is not Thai. We have been told that if she had been Thai they would have most likely given her the abortion even though she couldn’t pay for it. Because she is Thaiyai, she was discriminated against as the Thai’s see them as unwanted in Thailand.

We are doing everything we can to help her obtain ID papers so that she will be able to get ID papers for her child once he or she is born. In order to accomplish this we will need much prayer as

this will be a difficult road. We have to have all of this in order for when the child is born or we will then have a second generation being born “stateless” As we have gotten to know her we have found out a little bit more about her situation. Her due date is May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Ming was being “helped” by another organization here in Chiang Mai and I use the word help very loosely. We have inserted this article taken from the November issue of City Life Magazine published here in Chiang Mai. This is where Ming was working when she contacted us looking for help. The organization is called “Empower” whose sole purpose is to empower women in prostitution. They believe there are no “victims” in prostitution and no “exploitation”. They will do everything they can to convince women to stay in prostitution even when the women are asking for help to get out. Please read through this entire article to get a better understanding of some of the difficulties we face.

## STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



MARY

On October 16<sup>th</sup> Mary Ferguson arrived to volunteer with HFTN Thailand. Mary is from Kelowna, BC and has completed a Teaching English as a Second Language course. She is now tutoring the girls in the home, as well as our staff. All the girls are very excited about learning English or improving the spoken English that they already have. Mary is also working hard at building relationship with the girls and understands that this will take some time. She will be helping us with the day to day running of the home, offering her parenting skills and helping to mentor these young women. We are blessed to have Mary as part of our team and ask that you pray for her as she adjusts to the “Thai” way of life and deals with “culture shock”. Her plans are to be here long term so keep her in your prayers.

Having 5 girls and 2 staff workers living in the same house brings relational problems, and much time has been spent trying to help the girls to work their issues out. There are also doctor visits for the pregnant girls and for the babies that seem to be almost every week. Our house mom Du is doing a fantastic job and we are pleased with her heart to serve these girls. This is not just a job for her but also a ministry. Aroy, who is in charge of scheduling the meals and overseeing the preparation as well as overseeing the cleaning of the home informed us that she would be leaving at the end of December. She is a very nice girl with a great heart to serve the Lord. As it turns out she is just not much of a people person and was just not suited for this ministry position. We have hired a new girl, Sumalee, and she will begin working with us on January 6<sup>th</sup>. She has a degree in Theology and has experience in counselling and social work. She will help Du with the schedules in the home but her main role will be as the liaison with the Social Welfare Department here in Chiang Mai.

Evie has been very busy getting programs started for the girls for everything from reading and writing Thai and learning English to basic nutrition and parenting skills. There are many cultural



EVIE IN LANGUAGE CLASS

differences in child care between the east and the west, and it is a difficult balance trying to be respectful of village traditions, while maintaining proper care for the mother and the baby. We both are working on policies and procedures for the home, and have networked with many other organizations to develop our own manual.

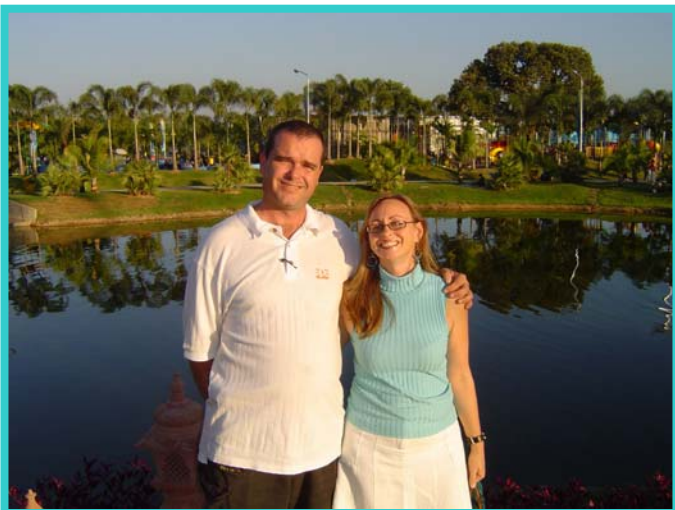
Rob has been doing extensive networking and researching for starting micro-enterprises that will not only provide employment for some of the girls in the program but also help bring in finances for the home. Watch for our News Bulletin in January that highlights our first business venture, a Lawn Care & Home Repair Business that we started in November and are now in the process of registering under the Foundation. Rob has also met with a local Thai Businessman who has some of the equipment needed to start the bakery. His heart is to evangelise through business and has expressed a sincere interest in helping to get the bakery started. We plan to open a Wholesale Bakery in the spring of 2007 and will be sending out a bulletin in the new year. Any of you bakers out there interested in helping to teach some of the girls how to bake Western Goodies will have an opportunity for a short term missions trip and partner with us in this new business.

## HOME FRONT



**SOLOMON ENJOYING A BAMBOO WORM**

themed birthday party. The kids dove for coloured rocks at the pool and then went back to the house where the expected gross and disgusting things to eat waited for them. Rob set up balloons with numbers written on paper inside them, and the kids threw darts to pop the balloons to reveal how many bamboo worms they had to eat. This is a northern Thai treat enjoyed here and sometimes eaten with ketchup. They are fried and quite crispy, and are quite tasty. They then had to dig a key out of fried cockroaches to read the number attached that said which corresponding plate of food they had to eat. This was either jellies, sardines or fried crickets. Trinity was the fear factor champion having gathered the rocks the fastest, eaten 4 of the worms, a cricket and Solomon's sardines.



Our own kids are doing well and we are all enjoying having their Ev's parents stay with us. Solomon and Trinity are doing great in the Thai preschool and their Thai continues to improve. Solomon is in Tae Kwon Do and Trinity is taking ballet. We are also able to take the kids to a near by pool a couple of times a week, and they are getting to be very good swimmers. We are in the process of registering Solomon for the 2007-2008 school year at Chiang Mai International School. The school year begins in August, 2007.

Solomon just celebrated his 6<sup>th</sup> birthday! There were 12 kids who took part in his "Fear Factor"



**L TO R:  
JONAH,ZOE,TRINITY,MAKAYLA,ELIYAS,ASIA,  
SOLOMON & TITO**

This was all followed by pizza and dirt cake. Incidentally, the kids polished off all the fried bamboo worms, including Jonah. Here is a group shot of the kids and their friends. Unfortunately some of the kids left early before we took the photo.

Jonah is still at home and plays happily on his own most of the time.

He loves to ride his "motorbike" which is his bike on training wheels and loves any vehicle whether it is a bike, a truck, a train or an airplane. He is out of diapers now and is definitely growing up. He will be 3 in February and has spent more than half his life in Thailand!

We are so grateful for all the support we get from all of you. Your prayers are so valuable to us, as none of this would happen without God's provision and direction.

We believe this is God's vision and we are doing His will, and that he is the One who must continue to be the center. Many of you have helped us financially with the start-up costs of the home, and we thank God that every need has been met. We have many medical costs to cover for the girls as well as provide their basic needs, so we continue to believe God for his provision. If we look forward and wonder how this will continue it is somewhat frightening, but when we look back we see where God has provided for every single need along the way. We stand firm on this and will continue forward.

We are also so thankful for the emails we receive and the phone calls we get to encourage us. We feel so supported in what we are doing with so many of you committed to us.

### **PRAYER NEEDS**

- Prayer covering over us as a family, the girls and the home
- Continued growth as a family and in our marriage
- We need continued wisdom and direction as we plan for the new year and start implementing new projects
- Continued development in relationships

### **FINANCIAL NEEDS**

- We need funds to cover all upcoming medical costs (a birth in January, \$1000)
- We need financial partners with committed monthly support (\$25, \$50, \$100/month)
- We need a vehicle big enough to be able to transport all the girls and the babies at one time (\$25,000)
- We need to put a cap on the truck with bench seats to provide safe transportation in the meantime (\$600)
- We need financial partners to help start micro-enterprise ventures
- We need to increase our personal support to cover the cost of International school for Solomon (\$3,800/year)

We ask that you would pray and see if the Lord directs you to partner with us and House Of New Hope.

Thank you so much and God Bless you through this Christmas Season!!

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<p><b>If you would like to partner financially there are several ways. For monthly support you can contact the office listed below to set up pre-authorized debit, or send post dated cheques. Please specify that your donation is for House of New Hope.</b></p> <p><b>Thank you</b></p>			
<p><b>For Tax Receipts in Canada send cheques to:</b></p> <p><b>HFTN-CANADA</b>  <b>2041 Harvey Avenue</b>  <b>Kelowna, B.C.</b>  <b>Canada</b>  <b>V1Y 6G7</b></p> <p><b>E-mail:</b>  <b>admin@hopeforthenations.com</b>  <b>Phone: (250) 712-2007</b>  <b>Fax: (250) 862-2942</b></p>		<p><b>For Tax Receipts in the U.S.A. send checks to:</b></p> <p><b>HFTN-USA (Western Division)</b>  <b>7729 E. Greenway Rd., Suite 500</b>  <b>Scottsdale, Arizona</b>  <b>USA</b>  <b>85260</b></p> <p><b>E-mail:</b>  <b>admin@hopeforthenations.com</b>  <b>Phone: (250) 712-2007</b>  <b>Fax: (250) 862-2942</b></p>	

I thought prostitution was illegal in Thailand? Apparently not, because there is a new bar strictly dedicated to it right here in Chiang Mai.

The "Can Do" Bar's grand opening on Friday, 16 September stood as not only a new Chiang Mai night spot, but as a stronghold for sex workers throughout Thailand.

A self proclaimed "experimental - dream bar" run by Empower Foundation, the bar is owned and operated by sex workers. A vibrant energy packed the pub as girls performed skits, music blasted and girls danced a go-go with the poles, while friends brought bouquets of condoms welcoming the Can Do to its new home in Chiang Mai Land.

What exactly is the Can Do bar I wondered, apart from yet another sexual service station? According to Empowers farang frontrunner Liz, it is a "fun and friendly place to drink, fall in love, fall over, sing, learn to pole dance, laugh, and relax." But, furthermore the "Can Do complies with all Thai Labor Laws and the recommended occupational health and safety standards."

The three story structure is painted like a Christmas revival, red with green trimming, or that from scenes inside The Matrix. From the bottom up, the downstairs has a roadside patio, full bar, seating, and dual dancing poles on the dance floor. The second floor hosts an exhibition space showing 20 years of "Honey Bee" cartoons featured in the sex workers newsletter, "Bad Girls." Adjacent is a sex workers' museum, with reportedly expensive shag carpeting. Red lighting highlights posters on the walls reading "NOT drowning- waving! Workers not victims" and "it's not what we do...its how we do it." Bookshelves are lined with titles such as Diary of a Manhattan Call Girl and "SPREAD: Tricking all over the world". Among archives included are posted letters covering 400 years of prostitution in Thailand. The third floor has resting quarters for the girls, as well as counseling and conference rooms.

Women feel privileged to work here as the "Can Do" bar is a fair, safe, working environment, a first in the industry. A bar like this, "should have been legitimized a long time ago" claims local author, Mo Tejani.

On opening night, I sat down and spoke with Pilaiporn (Nui), a former sex worker turned Empower staff activist and Tipakson, a PNN Journalist and good friend. In brief intervals our conversations began and continued throughout the night with breaks for dancing and shameless theatrical skits.

She began by telling us her experiences as a sex worker. "Bar working is complicated work as there are many things to do and we work in unfair conditions. The Can Do bar is a fairness bar - where we can service our customers with good standards" and just then we were interrupted by ear piercing whistle blows from a girl dressed in a police uniform.

"Check Point" a skit whose moral is wrap your member with a rubber before sex, was acted out by sex workers dressed as some of their regular clientele: Japanese tourists and Thai businessmen.

After "Check Point" - that thing is not coming near me with without a hoody on it - Nui continued. Firstly, we don't get paid overtime compensation. "As bar workers, we work late because we have to wait for the customers to leave, which is usually around 3 a.m. We don't get what the standard salary in Chiang Mai is; at least 150 Baht per day, instead we normally get a salary of about 3,000 baht per month or (100 baht per day). When we are sick we use our own money to go to the doctor or hospital. We can't claim to refund the money from our work place. The work place never gives us money for health care insurance at all."

Secondly, in regards to sanitation, there are no standards. "The bar I used to work for has only one bathroom for staff and costumers alike. It was not enough as we had a staff of 10 and many costumers, all needing to use the one bath room at the same time. It's like they put everything in one room, it's a mess, and putting us at risk of contagious diseases," she finished.

Working under the guidelines of labor and social security laws, the ladies are offered social welfare as part of their employment, something that is not regularly offered through other bars. They have an 8 hour schedule with a 1 hour break for rest, as well as one day off a week. Occupational health and safety issues are upheld to standard government regulations.

I wondered what made a girl lucky enough to work under such revolutionary conditions. Nui continued, "Everybody who wants to work here must expose themselves as a sex worker. We want for other people to acknowledge that whether a laborer/employee or a sex worker, both have the rights to work. And, the girls must be 18," that's all we ask.

No matter how grand it all seemed at the grand opening, I'm still not sold on the whole sex for sale concept to begin with. While at the party, I had the chance to chat with a Thai friend (who chooses to remain nameless) I'd met a few days earlier on a cultural tour of Lamphun. I asked him his opinion about sex workers rights and in well spoken English he answered, "We have to admit that this issue is a real controversy in Thai society. Many people don't understand the willingness of the people who sacrifice working to make society understand in sex worker's rights as a part of the greater human rights scope. But, I think it is hard because in general many people just deny this topic and believe that sex work is immoral."

Pornpit Pakmai, Coordinator of Empower Chiang Mai, whose nickname is ironically, Porn, claims that "people look at sex workers as if they are not human...Why do these women not have the rights to protect themselves and their bodies from abuse and violence in the work place?" Sex workers rights are human rights, per Empowers fight."

Found in 1985 the organization currently has 5 facilities from Phuket to Mae Sai with drop-in centers offering computer and informal English training, health education, counseling and other support to sex workers.

A former Empower volunteer has a strong opposing viewpoint towards the goals of the Foundation. She wrote me a letter expressing her thoughts after working with the women and asked to remain nameless. "They glorify prostitution and want women to be able to exploit men more. Perhaps in a safer environment - yet all the same, I don't feel they 'empower' women to have more choices in their lives" other than to be sex workers.

"Opening night means nothing, it is what you do with it I suppose... it is not much different than a one night stand," claims Mo curb side late night, "and you can quote me on that!" It made me wonder what he's really doing at the bar... Can the Can Do bar form a favorable relationship as a night spot locale where sex workers can turn their tricks into fair trade? Or, was it simply a one night stand?

**Written By: Lisa Ashley Warshaw**  
**Translations provided by Tipakson Manpati**

