



# HOPE FOR THE NATIONS FOUNDATION THAILAND

September/October 2006

Volume 01 Issue 01

## VOLUNTEERS



We were blessed with having 2 young women from Kelowna come and volunteer with us for a week in September. Jess and Evelyn came with a heart to serve and took on the task of painting the home on the main floor. The walls in the house were very dirty and in some cases had already been painted with some bold colours that were actually very unattractive. Kind of like Trading Spaces gone wrong.

It also seemed to be warmer than usual in a country where Rob thinks it's hot all the time. They worked really hard to get the whole house painted. Due to all their hard work the home now looks great! We also enjoyed their company and had some great chats while we worked.

We then began the process of setting up the home with furniture and other household items. We purchased beds and wardrobes (houses here don't tend to come with closets), bedding, a crib, a table and chairs, ceiling fans and all the other little things that make a house a home. We are very thankful for the contributions made by some of you to help with the start up costs, which made this all possible. As you can see the home looks great!

On Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 2 girls living at our house, along with the 2 live in staff members, moved to the new home. The girls all settled in quickly and seem to get along well. They are all used to village life, so community living seems to come easily to them.



House Of New Hope

Amu is from the Karen Hill Tribe. She was born in Burma, but like many of the other Karen, her family moved to Thailand to escape the relentless attacks of the Burmese Army.

Her mother lives in a refugee camp on the Thai/Burma border with 2 of her sisters. She has no memory of her father who still lives in Burma. Three years ago Amu and 2 of her sisters came to live in a girl's home here in Chiang Mai called Brianna's House Of Joy. When Amu realized that she had become pregnant, she did not want to stay at the home as she was afraid of the other girls finding out. The facility was also not set up to take care of a pregnant girl or to take care of her baby once it was born. The Directors of the home phoned our church office, and they gave them our number to contact. Since our home for these girls wasn't opened yet, she moved into our home in the interim.



Amu

Amu is very intelligent. She can speak several languages and can read and write in Thai and English. She is at a grade 4 level in school, but like many children from the villages she started school when she was older and was learning 2 grades at one time. She seems to enjoy anything that is creative and likes to make ear-rings, greeting cards, sew, embroider, and she seems to be the head cook when it comes to making meals for herself and the other girls living in the home.

She is outgoing and pleasant to have around, and likes to be helpful.

Amu is now about 5 ½ months pregnant and just had an ultra-sound this past week. The baby is doing well and they said she will probably have a girl. Amu has lost weight however, and is under strict orders to drink 3 glasses of milk a day and eat 2 eggs every day as well. This in general do not drink milk and don't seem to like it either, so Amu is very challenged by this. We are hoping she will at least drink one glass a day and we are all encouraging her with this.

Her due date is January 17<sup>th</sup>. Please pray for a healthy and normal pregnancy and that the birth will have no complications. Amu is very fearful of the actual birth.

Dee Dee is also from the Karen Hill Tribe and came to us from a town on the Thai/Burma border called Mae Sot. Her family lives in a village nearby, but she left when her parents told her she could not live with them if she kept her baby. Her husband's parents had also rejected her and said that they did not want her for their daughter-in-law. Her husband chose to submit to his parents and Dee Dee left the village to stay with some friends in Mae Sot.

Our friend Jen Sawchenko who works with an organization called Babies At Risk frequently travels to this area to help young mothers with health and nutrition issues so that their babies have a better chance of survival. She learned of Dee Dee's situation from her Karen contacts there.

Dee Dee had just had her baby, whose nick name is Wood but was unable to stay with her friend indefinitely and needed to be in a place that would offer her more opportunities. When Jen informed us of Dee Dee's situation we readily agreed to have her come and stay with us also. She and Amu quickly became friends and Amu is often helping with Wood.

Dee Dee has about a grade 10 level of schooling and is fairly proficient in Thai as well as her native language of Karen. She is very brave and determined. Dee Dee would like to become a teacher and go back to her village and teach. Wood is now 2 months old and is in good health. He is getting to be very chunky!

Buey has also joined us at the home. We learned of Buey from another organization here called the Agape Home, which is a home for children who are HIV positive. Buey was in the government shelter when she had her baby, but because it is a short term facility she was under pressure to find a place to go. She does not have a job right now and has no place to live, and although she has worked in the past and is very



Dee Dee & Wood

employable, it is difficult for her to find a job while caring for her new born baby. She is breast feeding and also really wants to keep her child. We went to the emergency shelter on Friday and picked Buey and Jiw Jiw up.



Buey & Jiw Jiw

Buey's baby is a little girl named Jiw Jiw and she is 1 month old. She is gaining weight and has just had a physical check-up and is doing very well. Buey has her equivalent to a grade 12 education completed, and had begun to major in English at a local University. When she is ready, finding employment will not be difficult.

After interviewing several women for the position of Program Administrator/House Mother we felt that Sunun had the best qualifications and heart for this job. She is a Thai Christian and feels very strongly about having a Christian focus in whatever project she is involved in. She also has a degree in English which is helpful for us right now, as there are many government and official organizations we will be dealing with and our Thai that we have now in many cases will not be adequate. We are also dealing with medical issues and need to make sure that we fully understand the information that is being given. In the past she worked for Compassion Foundation and received very good training under them.

She is very organized and has taken a real interest in helping these girls. She will lead a daily devotional and weekly bible study with the girls as well as take them to church on Sunday. She has also shown us that she is more than capable of translating any documents from Thai to English and English to Thai. For those of you who don't know, the Thai to English is the really difficult part as the Thai language has no plural forms or tenses and is quite difficult to find someone who can translate properly.



Sunun

She has put together schedules for the girls and helps them with their homework. We can tell already that the girls really respect Sunun and they are all very happy to have this home to live in.



Aroy

Aroy is the general worker in the home who is responsible for overseeing the cleaning and meal preparation in the home. She will also help with some child care as more babies come to the home and the girls need to be freed up to do homework or other studies. Aroy is a committed Christian also, and is a very willing worker.

Please pray for our employees as this is more than just a job, it is a ministry.

The girls have begun lessons in reading and writing Thai. Amu and Dee Dee are at different levels and both want to improve their skills. They are tutored in the home on Monday and Thursday nights for 2 hours each lesson. They are assigned 3 days worth of homework after each lesson.

Mary Ferguson will join us as a volunteer on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November. Mary is from Kelowna and plans to work with us here in Chiang Mai long term.

She will teach the girls in the home ESL and also help with other areas of their daily routine. We are excited about Mary coming to work with us as we know that she will be more than just an English teacher for the girls, as she will have an opportunity to mentor them as well. Please pray for Mary as she adjusts to Thai life and culture and embarks on the difficult task of learning Thai.



JIW JIW



WOOD

Both Amu and Dee Dee will be registered in Adult school but most likely not start until the beginning of the next school year in May. This gives Amu time to have her baby and spend time with her, before starting her studies. They will go to adult school on Saturdays and then be assigned homework for the week allowing them to be at home for most of the time. Buey is already in an employable position, and just needs time until her baby is old enough to be away from her for more than 2 hours at a time. Buey will then seek employment, but will also be given the opportunity to work for several months first before leaving the home, so that she will have some money saved up to rent an adequate home and buy the essentials.

We will introduce other programs and training opportunities for the girls, but want to first assess what are the areas of genuine need. We also don't want them so busy that they don't have time with their babies, but at the same time we don't want them to be bored. In the future we would like to offer some computer training as this would be very helpful for them when seeking employment. We will also offer parenting courses as well as some training in health and nutrition. Our friend Jen has already been helping with nursing issues and health and nutrition. She is a real blessing!

We are very thankful for all the support we have received so that we were able to start this home for the girls and they have all that they need to be comfortable. We are also very thankful for the many contacts that we have here that assist us through their various organizations. We feel that connecting with the government facility this past week was crucial for us as many girls will come there in need of assistance and they will now refer them to us.

We would like you to pray about partnering financially with this home and the many areas of need. We need to purchase a vehicle now that the home has opened. We also need committed monthly support to cover the costs of running the home. We also ask that you would continue to pray for us as a family, for the girls in the home and for the staff.

Thank you so much. God Bless you.

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