

# Newsletter: Friends of Burma

Fall 2022

## Fund Raising for Matthew 25 Clinic

On June 11, 2022, our FOB Co-founder, **Diana Sowards** ran a 100-meter race for the age group of 80-84 in Evansville, Indiana, Senior Games and got a medal. She started training for the race



in December 2021 at the YMCA. She is an amazing woman. There was a fund raising project for a large generator for the Matthew 25 Love clinic in Pathein. Due to an outpouring of love and affection, \$9,970 was raised. It went toward the \$15,000 needed for this clinic - which functions as a hospital - making it possible to have power during surgery. Matthew 25 was facing a hard time because power shortage due to the country's situation. The fund was quickly transferred to Pathein. Please be sure to read the feedback from the clinic in the next page to see what a blessing.

Diana just wishes she could run a race for other great needs for IDP children who are living in the jungle on the borders of India and Thailand. Thank you very much Diana for such an inspiration and all the supporters for making this happen!!

## Congratulations!

Nay Tar Mu Kwee was awarded a Doctorate degree from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas in May 2022. It was a great achievement as she was able to successfully complete the Doctorate program in four years given that she grew up and lived

*Continue to next page ...*

## Meet Our Newest Board Member

Please, welcome our FOB new board member **Kanyaw Paw Tha** from Ottawa, Canada. Kanyaw is a Karen and grew up in Yangon, Burma and she was an active member of Cole Karen Baptist church. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Yangon University and Master's degree of Conflict Transformation from Eastern Mennonite University in West Virginia. She worked for World Concern (Myanmar) and after that joined Hope International development agency.



Kanyaw is married to Dylan Chain, a Karen ethnic officer from the Royal Canadian Navy. She moved to Canada in 2015.

## ***Do you know that*** ... All FOB work in US is done by volunteers. The overhead cost

is less than 2% of the total income! That makes FOB one of the non-profit organizations in the US with the lowest overhead costs! Your love gift goes straight to the beneficiaries.

*From page 1...*

in a Karen refugee camp until she came to America! She has become an inspiration to many Karen girls in the US who grew up in the camp and struggle in the US educational system. Prior to coming to America, Nay Tar Mu served as

academic staff at Kaw Thoolei Karen Baptist Bible School and College (KKBBC). She looks forward to



going back to teaching at KKBBC as well as serving the refugee community on Thai-Myanmar border. Nay Tar Mu would like to express her heartfelt thanks to FOB and all the friends for supporting her to reach her goal.

## ***The Power from the New Generator***

May the good Lord bless you and guide you always. May God also bless all the FOB members. We are very grateful to you for

your love and kindness. Now we have bought a generator and started using it at Matthew 25 Clinic. The total cost for the generator is 38,400,000 kyats (roughly USD 20,000). It is 100 kva. It is now very useful for our clinic. We also extend 8 beds for patients. I want to let you know that the women department reopened a community health helper course (nurse aid training) on July 1, 2022 with 30 students. Outstanding students' hostels reopened. Now I would like to show some pictures.



*The generator*



*Nursing Aid Training Reopening*

With sincere regards,  
Moo Ler Gay  
General Secretary  
Karen Baptist Churches in Pathein

## *Empowering Women*

In partnership with FOB, Women Empowerment Program (WEP) in Yangon provides training and seed money to form self-help groups for women. Here is how the program works. First, WEP organizes women to participate in group work through Poh Karen Baptist churches. The participants buy raw materials from

the market and sell them to the women groups in the churches who are in rural areas. These women make soap liquid, Balm, and some healthy traditional lotion and sell them to the church's members. With the profits of these activities, they can support a few elderly persons from Hinthada-Danapu zone area churches. Moreover, they can support a sewing trainee who needs support for training fees. This year they have a plan for producing sewing products at their headquarters. They will create a new activity for income generation. They get 1 sewing machine and 1 Beading machine and they will operate this business

with two young ladies who need a job for income. Please see the stories of the participants below. For privacy, we are leaving their names out.

**Participant one:** rents a shop at Thar Yar Aye Market and sells traditional snacks. She also

makes  
soap  
liquid and  
sells it her  
shop as  
well as  
houses.

She takes a loan from her church loan program to start her business. In her time of trouble, she receives support from FOB through her church to continue her business to which she is very grateful for. Her husband is a driver and they have 4 children, who are all students.



**Participant two:** lives in Wah kare' Village, Ayeyar-waddy Division. She is a women leader in her church and is also willing to help other women

who have talents in sewing for their income for their families. She wants to help her women's community to realize their gifts and skills to generate extra income. Now she starts to sew preschool dresses and also make embroidery.



**Participant three:** lives in Nyaung Lay Bin village, Taik Kyi. She is married and has

twin daughters, 8 years old. Her husband is attending the seminary

at KBTS and also helping her in farm activities. She is breeding 3 pigs for extra income because she has to take care of her 2 parents at home. She has been successful in breeding pigs and she got profits from the pigs breeding.



## **FOB Board News**

- The annual meeting for FOB Executive Committee was held via ZOOM on Feb 19, 2022. Thanks to technology, FOMGB representatives and some partners from Myanmar were able to join the meeting together for the first time. The meeting minutes are now available on our website.
- On April 18, 2022, two board members and Neil and Diana got together to talk seriously about how to eventually put Friends of Burma into a more 21st century method of keeping records. Volunteer board members, Ms. Eh Moo Hmun, and Mr. Htaw Htoo discussed strategies for electronic record keeping. The good news is that Neil and Diana are doing okay. The bad news is that we can do better. As 84 and 83 year olds, the couple feel technologically challenged. Htaw Htoo, who has put uncounted hours into submitting our 990 yearly forms electronically, balancing records of donations, and records of giving in Burma, is, together with Eh Moo, working on how to make our record keeping up to date, while still recognizing that Neil and Diana are not computer skilled. We pledge to you that we are doing our best to be completely transparent and accurate. All of us are still working to help people in Burma, while assuring that all funds are given to the needy. We appreciate your patience and your support.

*Please let us know if you want to receive this newsletter electronically or go to <http://news.friendsofburma.org/> and be sure to share with your friends.*

## **Wish List**

• • •

Please take a moment to review a variety of ministries below and pick one or two that touch your heart to support.

- Electric Lift for Myanmar Institute of Theology ...\$14,000

The following two items are from KBC Hospital

- Oxygen plant for community ...\$10,000
- Electro Cardiogram ... \$4,000
- Educational expenses and laptop for Relocated Orphanages ...\$1,200
- Sponsor one orphan per year ...\$360
- IDP Camps ...\$50+
- KKBSC Orphanage Center ...\$75+
- Alternative Christmas gift ...\$50

Your support of full amount or any portion would be a blessing. For more information, please visit us at [www.friendsofburma.org](http://www.friendsofburma.org). Please write a check payable to *Friends of Burma* or use Paypal or Razoo.



FOB, tax ID 20-5572384, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax-deductible.



## *Orphanage Updates*

**Chit Myittar Orphanage Care Shelter** in Dee Maw Soe Kayah state, which housed 30 children, was relocated to the village far away from the township for safety since March 2021. Twenty two children have been



moved to Taungoo township, Ywar Thit Village because the place is safer for them and the villagers also take a good care for them. The remaining 8 were moved to Yangon to study life skills training. Please see Wish List in you are interested in providing financial supports.

**Naw Yeh Paw** who grew up in Htee Moo Htaw Ber orphanage care shelter has graduated with Master's of Divinity from Karen Baptist Theological Seminary in Yangon. She has gone back to the shelter, located in Thandaunggyi Township, Kayin State, to serve as a supervisor and care taker. At the moment, all of the government school are closed in Thandaunggyi, so, they are doing home school learning with the freelance teachers and they are learning English and other subjects. There are 11 kids in the shelter.

**Agape Orphanage Center** which is associated with Loikaw church in Kayah state has been facing many hardships these past years. From COVID 19 to the military coup followed by political and armed conflicts, people in the Kayah state have been living in fear. Now the orphanage center has become a temporary shelter for people who seek help and sanctuary due to the fighting. Only 7 children from the center can go back to school because of the country's situation. Dr. Mooler Htoo, director of the orphanage center, has expressed his heartfelt thank-you that they are very grateful for FOB's continuing support that serves God by helping who needed. Let us keep continue to pray and help.

**Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Churches' (KKBC) orphanage/dormitory** has seen a spike in occupancy due to attacks by



Myanmar military on villages on the Thai-Myanmar border. The new arrivals, mostly between 7-12, push the occupancy to 150 in the two dormitories. This puts tremendous pressure on KKBC to care for the children as support from NGOs is dwindling. KKBC is seeking financial support.

## Dala Mission Trip

One of our partners in Yangon went on to a mission trip to Dala with financial support from one of FOB board members. Here is an excerpt from his own words.

*I would like to tell you about our recent mission*



*trip to Dala, one of the poorest towns in Yangon Division. As I have been in touch with a missionary and pastor in*

*Dala, my family and I went to visit his family, his church (mission field), and his needy neighbors. For his small church, we bought and brought 10 hymn books (which include responsive readings). They were very happy to receive them. After I preached to them and prayed for them, my wife also talked to them individually and encouraged*

*them. Among them, there were three women who were over 60. We gave them 10,000 each. Moreover, we gave 20,000 to a woman whose baby was sick. My children also had the opportunity to give some money (that they saved) to some children. I am happy that my children willingly gave all their pocket money to the needy children. In my report in March 2022, I mentioned that we gave 150,000 to help repair the well in Dala. It is the only one in the neighborhood. At that time, the well and the water pump were broken, but with your donation, it was repaired, and now it works very well. It is very easy to pump the water. My children even enjoyed doing it.*



**Do you have a will?** If so, please consider FOB in your plan to support favorite projects. If not, we urge you to look into having one to have a say over your own legacy.

This newsletter was written and compiled by Anna Maung and Adam Maung.

**Friends of Burma, Inc.**  
548 Home Ave. Ft. Wayne, IN 46807  
Tel. 260-745-3658,  
Website: <http://friendsofburma.org>  
Email: [neildianasowards@gmail.com](mailto:neildianasowards@gmail.com)

[Type here]

[Type here]

[Type here]