up a tree. She managed to hold on at the top even as ants swarmed over her body. As she called out to Buddha, she

could hear what sounded like “a thousand children calling out

for their parents and a thousand parents calling out for their

children.”

After spending several days in a hospital, she and her

husband discovered that part of their house remained

standing but needed much repair. Some materials were

provided by a group who also brought Bibles and instructions

to read certain sections. “Our God will help you,” they

said, and then sent a van to take them to church. This was

confusing to Nang because, according to Erich Krauss, “She

was a Buddhist. She loved going to the temple to pray with

the monks. When the wave had taken her under, she had

called out to the great Buddha.”

The church group never really provided the help Nang

wanted, so she took a job cleaning the house of a local official.

There she discovered “rice cookers, gas stoves, dishes, bowls”

stored in a room instead of being distributed to villagers who

needed them. When Nang asked for a rice cooker, “the leader’s

assistant would say she would get something tomorrow but the

tomorrow they talked about never came,” said Erich Krauss.

Wonderful assistance was donated to the tsunami

survivors but many of them also had to deal with theft,

deception, and disappointment. Relief workers had the best

success when they found out what the local people needed,

included them in the planning, and then made sure necessary

materials were delivered. For example, when villagers wanted

to rebuild using traditional methods, engineers gave them

a demonstration showing that a similar but stronger house

design would hold up better in the next earthquake. Models

were made of both types of houses and put on a “shake

table” to imitate an earthquake. When the traditional house

crumbled and the reinforced house did not, all agreed the new

design would be better. Then they worked together to include

features that fit the lifestyle of the village.