

"You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving."

- Amy Carmichael

MyHope Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 3 - August 2013

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Greetings

Well, it was August when we started this newsletter, but now it is September. So we hope you had a great summer and are looking forward to an even better autumn!

The main construction on our new girls dorm and ministry headquarters is nearly complete. Thank you all for your many generous donations. You can see some pictures in this edition of the newsletter, but there are many more posted on our public Facebook page. Please go there and see how much progress has been accomplished! Point your browser to https://www.facebook.com/MyanmarHope/photos_albums and then scroll down to view the many albums with construction update photos.



With your continued help the new facility will soon be finished, and the girls and Palal's family will be able to move in. It is all so exciting to see the plans and dreams of many years coming to pass. What seemed impossible six years ago is almost a reality! It just goes to show what the blessings of God and the faithfulness of His people can accomplish!

Hope Boarding School Report

By Palal Khongsai

We are very pleased to share the progress of our students in their examinations. We are in the third year of our boarding school in Yangon. I hope many of you have known that our students are coming from remote areas and were selected from the poorest families in Northwest Myanmar.

In the first year of our boarding school (2010-2011), most of our students faced homesickness, cultural differences, language problems, a new environment, health issues, and so on. The students all speak the Kuki language, and most did not

In This Issue:

Hope Boarding School Update.....	1
Khongsai Family Update	3
Anne Teztlaff, Super Shopper	4
Myanmar Trip Update	4
New Building Update	6
Report: Healthcare in Myanmar	7

speaking the Burmese language at all, or at least not fluently. The government classes are all taught in Burmese, so this was a problem for our students.

In the second year of our boarding school (2011-2012), the students felt more comfortable with the new environment, could speak the Burmese language, and could understand their lessons. They were stronger and healthier, and they were confident to stand with their Burmese friends at the government schools.

In the third year of our boarding school (2012-2013), our students were physically stronger and healthier, even compared to the other students at the government high school. They could all speak Burmese very well, and do well in their studies. This year (2013-2014) they are all doing very well again.

All of the students are very hard workers. When they help at the government schools for cleaning the rooms, moving the furniture, desks, and chairs, the teachers learned how they are very strong, how they can work and are willing to volunteer.

Sometimes, the teachers ask our students to come to the government school on the weekend and work as volunteers. Our students do this whenever they can. Some of our students even help their teachers at their homes. All of this means that our students have good fellowship with their teachers and the teachers love them as they work and study hard.

All of the students are progressing well in their studies. In

the government school the classes are divided as (S), (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), and so on in each grade. The number of the students in each classroom is between sixty and seventy students. The classes are divided into groups based upon the scores which the students received in the previous class.

I would like to share about five of our students who received high scores in their exams in the previous months, June and July. I hope you will enjoy reading about their progress and their class positions.

Mr. Thang Len Mang (High Marks)



Ma Mang

Mr. Thang Len Mang (Ma Mang) has been studying very hard even though he is still under treatment for leukemia. Last school year (2012-2013) he was in the B class. Since he did very well in his previous exams, he jumped over the A class and is allowed to sit in the S (Special) class, which is reserved for the most outstanding students.

There are sixty-seven students in his class (Grade 8-S). The results of his tests in June and July were very high. He is now in the 49th position. His total marks were 480 in June and 484 in July. He got full marks (100) in Math in both tests. He is progressing very well! Please continue to pray for his health and education.

[Editors Note: If Ma Mang had not been able to come to Yangon in 2010, he would most likely be dead by now. Yet, because of your prayers and financial support, he has been able to get regular treatments for his cancer, and is well on the way to full recovery!]

Miss Lhing Kho Nei (1st Position)



Lhing Nei

Miss Lhing Kho Nei (Lhing Nei) is also doing very well in her studies and examinations. She is our previous cooks' daughter. Her brother, Lam Kho Gin, went home with his parents when they returned to their village. She is growing physically and is academically successful in her studies.

There are sixty-eight students in her classroom in Grade 8-A class. The results of her tests in June and July are very high. Lhing Nei attained the 14th position among the sixty-eight students in her class in June. She studied hard and made great progress in her tests in July. She is now in the 1st position! We are very proud of her success.

Miss Lhing Nei Lam (6th position)



Lhing Neo

Miss Lhing Nei Lam (Lhing Neo) is doing very well in her exams. She is in the Grade 9-B class. She had tuberculosis when she arrived at HBS, but after taking treatments she is very healthy now.

There are sixty-eight students in her classroom. In June she was in the 19th position, but in her July exams she jumped up to the 6th position. It is a great success for her!

Miss Lam Hoi Vah (8th Position)



Vah Si

Miss Lam Hoi Vah (Vah Si) is also doing very well, even though she is a new student who only arrived at HBS this year. She comes from a very remote, poor village where there are no Burmese speakers.

She felt a little homesick when she arrived in Yangon in March. However, now she is doing well with her friends at HBS and at her school.

Her teachers love her very much as she is very humble before them. She studies hard and is holding in a good position. She is in Grade 7—D class. There are sixty-eight students in her class room. She is in the 8th position! Her teachers are very amazed as she only came to Yangon earlier this year and already she is in the 8th position. If she keeps up her scores, next year she may be able to jump to a higher class.

Miss Neng Khan Chin (3rd Position)



Khan Chin

Miss Neng Khan Chin (Khan Chin) is in the Grade 8—A class. There are sixty-eight students in her class room. She was in the 3rd position in her test in June, but went down to 5th position in her test in July.

It is still a very good position! We encouraged her to keep up her scores and soon she will attain a

higher position again.

THANK YOU ALL

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all of you who have been praying faithfully and supporting our students at HBS.

We use your donations and support for the school fees at their school, the teachers' private tuition classes' fees, school supplies, clothes, medical expenses, etc.



Miss Nei Boi and Miss La Lam looking up Scripture verses

We especially would like to thank I.D.E.S. (www.ides.org) for their monthly financial aid for HBS. We use I.D.E.S. funds to purchase additional rice, food, bread, fruits, juice, milk, tea, meat, etc. Because of enough and nutritious food, our students are healthy and are able to make great progress in their studies.

We can surely say that without your help these students would not be able to continue their education. From your support, we are able to help these poor, young children who can't make their living by themselves yet. Their relatives can't help these young children who need a safe place, food, clothes,

education and spiritual directions for their whole life. They get these things at HBS from your support.

We would like to request you all to continue supporting our students at HBS who are eagerly studying and hoping for their bright future! Our students are depending on you. God bless you all!

In His Service,
Palal and Kikim Khongsai



Khongsai Family Update

Palal, Kikim, Solomon, and Cherry continue to do well, relatively speaking. The rainy season (June, July, and August) are the most difficult months of the year for health problems. The near constant rain coupled with extremely hot temperatures tends to make people very susceptible to sickness and disease.



We continue to praise God that everyone in Yangon has remained relatively healthy during this period. Even though there is a lot of coughing, low-grade fevers, and other minor sicknesses among our family, nothing major like TB or Malaria, which is so common in this area. We really ask for your continued prayers for health and wholeness during the rainy season.

As of this writing, Kikim's older sister, Mrs. Vah Hoi (a widow), has been diagnosed with gall stones. She had been suffering pain in her abdomen for three or four years, but since



All of the students of Hope Boarding School say "THANK YOU!!" to all who pray for them and to all who provide for them financially.

she had no money to pay for doctors visits up in her village, she kept her suffering and pain to herself. In April, she accompanied some of our new girls to Yangon, and then stayed on to help out at the school and around the house.

Kikim noticed her pain, and they sent her to the doctor to have it checked out. It was then that she admitted that she has been suffering for several years. The doctors said they could prescribe medicine to shrink the stones, but then they could move around and cause other problems.

An emergency request for donations went out for the \$1,500.00 for the surgery. Praise God, the entire amount was given in a single day by twelve people who responded to the call with generous love.

Reminder : MyHope Needs a Vehicle

We would like to remind everyone that Palal and Kikim do all of their work for MyHope and Hope Boarding School in a very large city of over five million people without a vehicle! Anytime they need to go to the market, downtown for paper-



work or money exchange, taking the students for appointments, or any other business, they must use a taxi. This is not only inconvenient and costly, it can also be dangerous. Not all of the taxi drivers are trustworthy.

So far we have received a little over \$5,600 toward the cost of a van. Please pray that MyHope would receive the needed funds to purchase a van—which costs about \$25,000.00 (including all fees, taxes, licenses, etc.).

Anne Teztlaff: Super Shopper

By MaryAnn Cherry

Have you ever wondered if you can use your unique, God-given talents and interests to help in ministry? Do you sometimes feel that the way you are made – what “makes you tick” – is not really something that God can use to build His Kingdom? Well, let me share a story with you about an amazing woman who has used her “gift” of bargain shopping to bless Myanmar Hope Christian Mission.



Mrs. Vah Hoi

Before we even met them, Anne and her husband, Joe, had already made several very generous financial donations to Myanmar Hope in 2011 and 2012. For example, they made a donation that enabled Mr. Pan Hu Ngai, a handicapped individual in northwest Myanmar, to start a motorcycle repair business. In August of last year they began a monthly sponsorship commitment for one of the boys at Hope Boarding School. We are very thankful for many generous donors like Joe and Anne!

We learned that Anne is a person who does not like to be out in front – she prefers to work from behind the scenes. Then, before our trip to Myanmar last December, Anne sent us a message asking if there was anything else she could do to help.



Mrs. Anne Teztlaff

Now, one thing I hate to do is shop. I hate it! Yes, I am a woman, and I hate to shop. However, the first couple of times that we went to Myanmar, guess who had to do most of the shopping for the items to bring along? That’s right—me. So, immediately upon receiving Anne’s offer I sent her a list of items that we wanted to take to Myanmar, and asked her if she could do the shopping.

It turns out that Anne is someone you would call a Super Shopper. She considers it a challenge to stretch a dollar as far as possible, and she knows how to do it! For example, one of the things on our list was underwear. It may seem strange, but good, quality underwear is really hard to find in Myanmar. The underwear available for purchase is not only of poor quality, it is also very expensive.

Anne got right to work and purchased approximately 250 pair of quality, name-brand underwear for less than \$50.00. Impressive! Then she also bought batteries, games, beef jerky, trail mix, and movie DVDs, among other things, all at bargain prices. She shopped online, used coupons and credit card bonuses, and who knows what other “secrets,” to purchases items at the absolute lowest possible cost. She is truly a blessing!

Who would have thought that the gift of bargain shopping could be such a blessing to the ministry of MyHope?

Thank you, Anne! You used what “makes you tick” to minister to the people of Myanmar. We love you!

Upcoming Trip to Myanmar

The travelers for our upcoming visit to Myanmar in December are already making plans and are getting very excited

about the trip. This year, along with Chuck and MaryAnn Cherry, we are happy to report that Mr. Robin Pickett will return for his second visit. Accompanying him for their first ever visit to Myanmar will be his two daughters, Miss Annie Pickett and Mrs. Maggie Wiant. (You can read more about Robin and his report from our last trip in our September 2012 and January 2013 issues).

Miss Annie Pickett



Miss Annie Pickett

My name is Annie Pickett, a twenty-year old attending Missouri State University for my third year of college. I am a student studying to earn my degree in Communications.

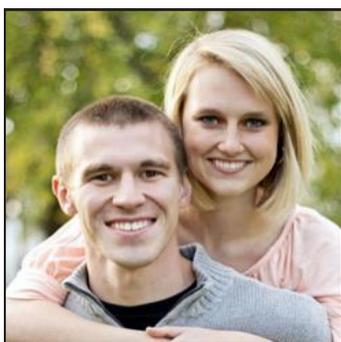
I am a sister traveling to Myanmar with my sister, Maggie. I am a daughter visiting MyHope with my Dad. Most importantly, I am a Christian seeking to see the world as God sees the world and learning how to love all people as God loves all people.

As I grow up and learn more and more about this broken world, I realize that I am extremely fortunate to live in America and also the extreme responsibility I have.

I claim God as my Lord, which acknowledges my role as a slave to His plan and will. I am young but am ready to be used for His purposes and to accept the role He has planned for me in Myanmar. I have much to learn from these Christians in Myanmar.

Mrs. Maggie Wiant

My name is Maggie Wiant, and I live in Edwardsville with my brand new husband, David. I'm in my fifth year of pharmacy school, where I spend every day in the same place, with the same people, who share my same Western view of the world.



Maggie with her husband Mr. David Wiant

When my Dad asked me to go to Myanmar with him and my sister, I knew God was calling me to step out of my routine and my comfort zone.

Spending my Christmas break flying halfway around the world to spend time with people I don't even know – it sounded terrifying. I knew, though, that God wasn't sending me

**In Loving Memory
Mrs. Lynette Coelho**

Mrs. Lynette Coelho, wife of Mr. Marco Coelho, went home to be with the Lord on Monday evening, July 8th, after suffering a massive brain aneurism on Sunday evening, July 7th.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Marco and their children Bradley, Andrew, Alexander, Chance, Jeralyn, Mark, and their granddaughter Jordyn.

Marco very generously asked that all memorial gifts for Lynette be directed to MyHope. Over \$1,200.00 was donated on her behalf, and those funds are being used to help our girls at Hope Boarding School.



God bless you, Marco. We share your grief as well as your hope for a blessed future where we will all be together with the Lord.

there just to spend time. I'm going to a completely different country, culture, and time zone (yikes!) to be the love of God to the people of Myanmar.

I know that God is in control, and that He will use me to make an impact for His kingdom there. I'm still a little nervous, but I'm excited to be part of His plan.

PLEASE BE WATCHING OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR SUGGESTIONS OF ITEMS WHICH YOU CAN DONATE THAT WE CAN TAKE TO MYANMAR IN DECEMBER.
www.facebook.com/myanmarhope

New Building Update

It has been amazing to watch the construction progress over the past several months. In February there was an empty lot, and now in August there is the completed shell of a new three story concrete and steel multi-function building that has been constructed to last for generations!

At each stage of the construction we had to pray and request donations to pay for the next stage. All of the work was done on a cash basis, with absolutely no debt involved. For this we praise God, but it has certainly been a trial of faith!



Installing window frames

The foundation work was started on February 24th and completed on March 20th. After allowing the foundation work to settle and cure, construction on the first floor resumed in April. The first floor (ground floor) was completed in May, the second floor was completed in June, and the third floor and roof was completed in late July. Everything was completed on schedule, and with the highest quality workmanship.

Palal was on site every day that workers were there, overseeing the construction and ensuring that everything was done correctly and no corners were cut. As an example of how closely he was watching things, one day he noticed that one of the window frames seemed to be a little bit crooked. He called the foreman over and pointed it out.

"That window is not crooked," said the foreman. "Yes, I can see it is not straight," said Palal.

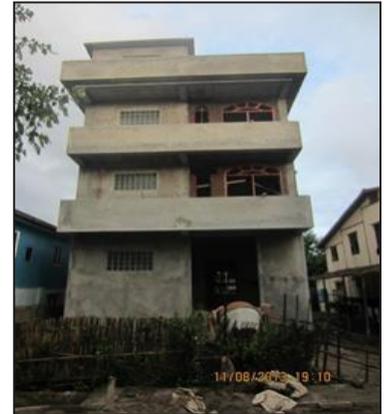
"I am an engineer, and I say it is straight."

"If you are an engineer, then use your level and prove it is straight," responded Palal.

The foreman went and got his level, and sure enough, the window was 1/8th of an inch off level. Palal made them tear the window frame out and put it back in correctly.

This sort of thing is not usually done in Myanmar, but Palal is bold enough and confident enough to assert his authority even though most tribal Christians are looked down upon by the Burmese.

The building shell was completed on August 13th. The staff and students held their first prayer meeting in the new building, even though there is not yet any electricity or plumbing, and none of the doors or windows are in. Each of the students went around and prayed for each door and window, and for those who would be donating funds to pay for them.



The completed shell of the new building

The Next Phase

So now that the shell is complete, the next phase of the construction is to put in plumbing and electricity, install windows and doors (both exterior and interior), install tile on the floors, paint the interior and exterior walls, and a few other miscellaneous items.

This phase needs to be completed as soon as possible, but for sure before the end of this year. Palal, Kikim, and all of the rest of those living in the rental house will need to move



HBS Students and staff holding the first prayer meeting in the new building

out of that house and into the new building by the end of December. That means there are four more months to raise the funds and complete the construction. It sounds impossible, but one year ago at this time it seemed impossible that we would be where we are now. With God all things are possible!

Palal has received estimates from the construction company to completely finish the building. We are still waiting on the price for a couple of the items, but the estimated total is around \$20,000.00. Please help us if you can.

Special Report: Health Care in Myanmar

The health care situation in Myanmar is very different from what most of our readers have experienced or ever will experience. For this reason, it is challenging for many people to understand just how difficult the situation is for our family in Myanmar.

Indeed, while attempting to explain various aspects of the health care situation to people, we often hear phrases like, “Well, why don’t they just...” followed by the normal way most Americans would react in that particular situation. We understand that reaction as we once reacted in much the same way.

The situation in Myanmar is so foreign that it is nearly impossible to adequately explain to anyone who has never been there and experienced it first hand. For instance, in the U.S. we are encouraged to ask questions and be involved in our doctor’s decisions. In Myanmar this behavior is considered disrespectful, inappropriate, and is almost unheard of.

When MyHope was first established, Myanmar ranked very close to the bottom of the World Health Organization’s list of problem countries, in terms of quality, access, birth statistics, and so on. The vast majority of the country had very limited access to very low quality care, and many folks had no access at all.



A typical government hospital room

MaryAnn’s uncle, Dr. Theo Habel, spent some time on a mission ship traveling from port to port. When in port he would check out the local hospitals. He has visited over fifty poor countries, and he told us that of all the cities in which he had been, Yangon had the worst hospital that he had ever seen.



A nice hospital room

Up in the remote villages, access to health care of any kind is almost non-existent. Unless there is a larger town within walking or riding distance, many people get sick and die without ever having seen a healthcare professional.

In cases where there is a clinic or hospital reasonably close, most people cannot afford to go there, and will wait until the last possible moment before attempting to borrow money to pay for care and transportation. By that time it is usually too late, and whatever the problem was is beyond cure. Many families go deeply into debt borrowing money from friends, relatives, and Burmese money lenders, in order to pay for a trip to a hospital in a far off city.

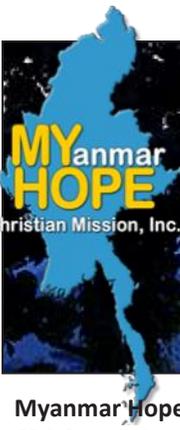


The “ambulance” that took Kikim’s father to the clinic

Simple things that could lead to vast improvements, such as immunizations, over-the-counter medicines, education, and so on, are either not available or simply too expensive for the average person.

All of these problems, and many more, lead to a situation in which most of the people are generally sick nearly all of the time, and especially during rainy season (June, July, and August). This is the time of year when most people die of their sicknesses. Palal once told us that they have the belief that if a person survives the rainy season, that person will most likely survive another year—at least until the next rainy season.

Things that most American’s take for granted, like Ambu-



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**Bringing the eternal hope of Jesus Christ to the people of Myanmar in a holistic manner
by addressing their spiritual, physical, emotional and educational needs**

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lance service, do not exist for the most part. Palal told us that he once had to transport his three year old nephew to the nearest clinic, which was twenty-four miles from their village.

The only way to get there at that time, because of their poverty, was on a bicycle. With his little nephew strapped to his back, he set out on the long ride. "He was crying a lot, at first," Palal said. But after a few miles, Palal noticed he had stopped crying. Palal got off the bicycle to check on the boy, and found that he had died. When he turned around to go back to his village, this time it was Palal who had tears in his eyes.

When Kikim's elderly father became ill and could not walk, some men from the village laid him in a homemade cart pulled by a motorbike and took him to the nearest clinic.

In America, when someone has to stay in the hospital, they are provided with a comfortable bed, clean linens, nutritious food, all the medicine they need, etc. In Myanmar, when someone goes to the hospital, that person or their family must



Kikim's father in the hospital (2012)

provide for themselves—everything from bed linens to food, clean water, and medicine. Sometimes even a bed is not available, and the patient must lie down on the floor or on hard wooden chairs.

This lack of medical care, coupled with a generally poor or even non-existent educational system, has led the people to live in a state of fear and superstition as it pertains to health.

One time, during the hot summer season, a man in one of the villages couldn't sleep because of the intense heat and humidity, so he decided to take a shower. The man died early the next morning, and everyone in his village was sure it was because he took a shower late at night, instead of in the morning or during the day, such as is normal for them. After that, no one would ever take a shower at night, for fear of dying after the shower.

Another "myth" that they firmly believe in is that a child should not be given food or water if they have a fever, as digestion would cause their fever to increase. Many other examples like this could be shared, but space is limited. Please pray for the healthcare system in Myanmar!