



Rejoice Foundation News

January 2016

Western Australia Aids Council

WA AIDS Council staff are keeping Rejoice's wheels turning!

Rejoice had a great Christmas present in December from the staff of the Western Australia (WA) AIDS Council in the form of a very generous donation which will pay for vital diesel fuel for our outreach truck.

The WA AIDS Council (<http://www.waids.com>) is a non-government organisation committed to the HIV response in Western Australia. Established in 1985, the Council leads the Western Australian community in the provision of a wide range of services in the prevention of HIV, sexually transmitted infections and blood borne viruses, and the treatment and care of people living with HIV and AIDS.

The Council provides counseling, wellness, referral, general and financial assistance to people living with HIV; needle and syringe exchange programs; professional training and development for health sector workers and a range of support and prevention education services to target audiences at risk of



HIV, sexually transmitted infections and blood borne virus transmissions.

Each week the forty staff who work at the WA AIDS Council put money into a fund which is then used to support an organisation in the region chosen annually to coincide with World AIDS Day. We are delighted that for 2015 they selected Rejoice and after discussion with us decided to put their donation specifically towards meeting our fuel costs in 2016.

Fuel represents one of Rejoice's most substantial ongoing expenditures. Our

small team of field workers travel huge distances each month in Rejoice's truck, reaching out to people many of whom are living in abject poverty, with no access to health care, not able to speak Thai, mistrusting any authority figure outside their ethnic group and often afraid to get an HIV test because of the consequences of knowing that they have HIV. The funding from the staff of WA AIDS Council will enable us literally to keep the show on the road for the next months and thus continue our work amongst the underprivileged and impoverished peoples infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in Northern Thailand.

Rejoice is very grateful to all the staff of the WA AIDS Council for their generous support and to Mark Reid, their Fundraising, Events & Media Coordinator for coordinating this very welcome initiative.

Rejoice's First University Graduate

Congratulations Woranut!

Woranut has recently graduated with a Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from the Science and Technology Department at Chiang Mai Rajabat University.

Woranut's University education has been sponsored by Carol Foo, a member of 'Friends of Rejoice Singapore (FRS)', for the past 3 years via [The Rejoice Scholarship Programme](#).

Woranut's father died as a result of an HIV related illness. Woranut's mother, Kasemsri, is HIV positive and works in a small group making specialist garments for export. Kasemsri also volunteers her time and helps Rejoice organise '[Education and Prevention Meetings](#)' for the local communities in the Sankampeang area.

3 Moo 3 Rongwuadang, Sankampaeng

5th November 2015

Dear Carol Foo,
My name is Woranut Jumnong. I feel so grateful that you have helped me until I graduate. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University.
Currently I'm working as a construction foreman in Diya Valley Village at Sarapee, Chiang Mai.
If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be successful today. I promise to be a good, honest person for the community. If I have an opportunity, I will give to others, in a similar way, to that you have given to me.
Lastly, may god bless you. I hope you are there to help others who need an opportunity like me.

With respect, Woranut Jumnong

Above is a translation of the "Thank You" letter written by Woranut to Carol.



Woranut with her mother and Gee at the presentation ceremony at Chiang Mai Rajabat University.

A photo album of the scholarship children can be found by clicking on the following link: [Scholarship Programme](#)

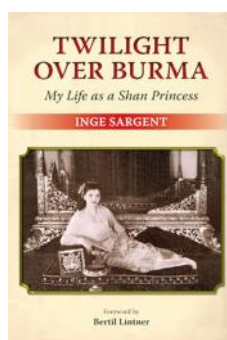
Barbara Lavender's Annual Visit

Barbara Lavender has been supporting Rejoice now for many years. Barbara hails from Boulder, Colorado in USA and is a Human Rights Lawyer specialising in LGBT issues. Despite suffering from degenerative muscular dystrophy she travels to Thailand every year during the winter months in Colorado. She always makes a point of visiting Rejoice and making a donation before travelling to Fang where she meets up with Shan community leaders to work with and train a group of Shan students in a multi-media communication project coordinated with students back in Colorado.

Barbara's connection with Rejoice was made through a charity "Burma Lifeline" which was associated with *Shan Women's Action Network* (SWAN), and other Shan assistance programs in Chiang Mai and Fang. Burma Lifeline donated toward the cost of the diesel fuel for the pick-up truck for Rejoice's clinic,

near Fang, for Shan migrant workers. The President of Burma Lifeline was Inge Sargent, a Shan Princess— *Thusandi, the mahadevi of Hsipaw*.

She has written a book "[Twilight over Burma \(My Life as a Shan Princess\)](#)", which is "the story of a great happiness destroyed by evil, the overthrow of one of Burma's most respected local leaders, and one woman's determination and bravery against a ruthless military regime."



A TV-film has been made based on the book. A recent article in The Irrawaddy magazine makes mention of the film in an



article, "[Hsipaw Haw—Abode of Tragic Shan Prince](#)"

Sittichai, a future Graduate or Footballer? (or both?)

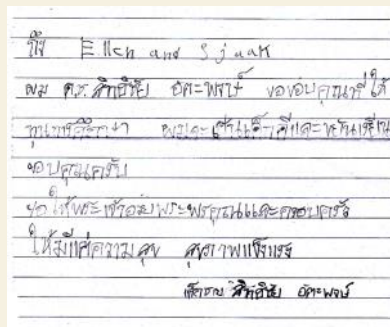
Sittichai lives with his mother who is HIV+ve. His father has left home.

He studies in a special school for orphans and children affected by HIV in Chiang Dao although he does not have HIV himself.

Over the past few years Ellen and Sjaak have been escaping the European winters in Maastricht and flying to sunny Chiang Mai for a couple of months. They are sponsoring Sittichai, through the Rejoice Scholarship programme. This year they asked if it would be possible to travel with the Rejoice Outreach team and visit Sittichai so that they could give him a present for his 9th birthday which fell on 11th January 2016.



The picture shows Sittichai with his mum and Ellen. He is modelling his birthday present, a Lionel Messi football shirt.



Dear Ellen and Sjaak,

My name is Sittichai Artapong. I would like to thank you for the scholarship. I will be a good boy and study hard.

May God bless you and your family and may you be happy and healthy.

Sittichai Artapong

Arm presenting the money for the Scholarship to Sittichai. Ellen and Sjaak received a thank you note from Sittichai with a translation from Rejoice.

Make a Difference
Sponsor a Child's Education

[The Rejoice Scholarship Programme.](#)



Left: Sjaak at the Chiang Dao Migrant Workers Day Care centre.



Right: Ellen and Sjaak at The Chiang Dao Nest. Their favourite spot for lunch.

Education and Prevention at Two Schools in Mae Ai District

On 15th December Rejoice made "Education and Prevention" presentations at two schools in Mae Ai. A total of 158 children attended the meetings.

1) Baan Pangtonduea School, Mae Ai District on the Myanmar border

Multi ethnic school;
approx. 60% Tai Yai
approx. 20% Lahu
approx. 10% Thai
approx. 10% other (Lisu, Akha)

Age range between 13-15 years a total of 70 students

The presentations were given by Rejoice, 2 HIV healthcare workers from Mae Ai Hospital (Deang and Loy) and Mon, a healthcare worker from Chaiprakan Hospital

The meeting consisted of general introductions followed by the video series "Up to Me" provided by NGO Plan International.

The session lasted about 2 and a half hours. Snacks were provided during the intervals between videos and small prizes were given to students who answered questions correctly. Rejoice provided lunch for the healthcare volunteers.

The meeting was well received by the students and the teachers. The teaching staff were very pleased and asked if we would be able to repeat the meetings each year.

After lunch a presentation was made at the second school some 30 minutes drive from the first school.

2) Chotikunakasem Baan Muangngam School, Tha Ton Mae Ai District

This is a multi-ethnic school consisting of Karen, Lahu, Akha, Lisu, Tai Yai and only about 2% Thai. Because of the long distance from school, many students sleep at the school during weekdays and go to their various homes at weekends. Most of their parents work as farm agricultural labourers.

Age range 13-15 years and a total 84 students.

The same presentation as described above was given at this school.



Baan Pangtonduea School, Mae Ai



Chotikunakasem Baan Muangngam School, Tha Ton

World Aids Day 2015 at Piang Luang on the Myanmar Border

This year, for World Aids Day, the Rejoice Team visited Piang Luang. Piang Luang is a small border town in Wiang Haeng district with a population of about 17,000. We travelled three and a half hours to reach the healthcare workers, man and wife Samak, and Mam at their home in Wiang Haeng. There, the plans for the following day were made which included a few home-care visits and then a visit to Koung Jor Refugee Camp. Samak and Mam directed us to Chomview Resort on the route to Piang Luang where we spent the night. The inset photo, above, is a selfie of Arm at sunrise the following morning.

Hui Hok Community

Hui Hok is approximately 7km from Wiang Haeng hospital and consists of small hamlets of Thai, Lahu and Shan communities.

The pictures show a typical Lahu house constructed with bamboo with an indoor kitchen and open hearth with a wood fire. Here, a mother and her 7 year old daughter live (both HIV+). They don't have their own transport and rely on

home care visits from the volunteer healthcare workers from Wiang Haeng Hospital in order to receive their medication.



Koung Jor Refugee Camp

We accompanied Samak and Mam to the Koung Jor Refugee camp. As we arrived at the camp we saw a pick-up truck off-loading rice and provisions delivered donated by the [The Border Consortium \(TBC\)](#). The camp is home to over 500 people in more than 130 houses who have

fled fighting from Shan State in Myanmar, approximately 90% being Tai Yai (Shan). Over 100 children of school age attend Thai schools in Piang Luang town. There are 135 pre-school children between 2 and 6 years old who attend a very lively day-care centre in the camp. There is a clinic in the camp run by a nurse called Sudsuay. Medicines and

provisions for the clinic are supplied by [Shan Women's Action Network \(SWAN\)](#). A handsome young Shan man, Korn, who is the education assistant at the camp, explained that there are evening classes to learn Shan, Thai and English languages and also computer studies (although, as yet, there is no connection to the internet).

obtained them from [Migrants Assistance Programme \(MAP\)](#). Also, we brought condoms from Chiang Dao hospital.

More information about Koung Jor Camp can be found by clicking on the following links:

[A first New Year's festival at the Shan camp - YouTube](#)

[Koung Jor story](#)

[Koung Jor Refugee camp](#)

[Read more on website](#)



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A handsome young Shan man, Korn, who is the education assistant at the camp, explained that there are evening classes to learn Shan, Thai and English languages and also computer studies (although, as yet, there is no connection to the internet).

We gave information pamphlets and brochures in Shan language about reproductive health and prevention of STD's (we brought these from Chiang Mai having

The Rejoice Education Scholarship Project

Children living within a family affected by HIV are eligible for a scholarship. The child may be an AIDS orphan, living with one parent, living with grandparents or living with relatives. Rejoice provides scholarships which enables the child to attend school, whilst allowing them to grow up within their own ethnic community rather than them being institutionalized in an orphanage. Currently there are 24 HIV+ children receiving scholarships. Also 8 students are attending University or Technical College and next year a similar number is expected to graduate from school to higher education. Without the Scholarship Programme it is very likely that this would not have been possible. A database of all the children is updated continually and database files are linked to PDF files for each child.

71 students benefit from the **School Scholarship Programme**.

Ostensibly, the sponsorship is in the form of an educational scholarship, but in reality it is much more, it will:

- allow the child to attend school
- allow the child to grow-up in his/her community with their extended family
- allow the child to learn to speak the language and follow the religion of their community
- make it easier for the family to accept financial help - the money is received on behalf of the child
- prevent the child becoming institutionalised in an orphanage
- be a significant factor in deciding whether the child

continues his/her education to high school, college or university

SDL Foundation is currently sponsoring 12 children in the upper primary and secondary level. As can be seen from the table below, these children come from families ravaged by HIV Aids with at least one or both parents being HIV positive. The financial plights of these families are dire with the grandparents being the breadwinners.

Although basic education is free in Thailand, textbooks, writing materials, uniforms, daily commute etc is not covered. Therefore, without SDL, these children would have dropped out of school to earn whatever little they can as unskilled labourers. Therefore, SDL's support is crucial in providing the education foundation for these children to break-out of the poverty trap.

A wonderful way to help such families is to sponsor a child's education for one year. Recently, Rejoice Charity introduced a 3-tiered education sponsorship program (primary, secondary and college/university). This is to better reflect the differences in costs associated with each group of students;

- For infants and Junior School children 5,000 baht,
- Secondary School children (ages usually between 16 and 18) 7,000 baht
- College and University students 10,000 baht.

The higher figure of 10,000 baht reflects the higher cost of transportation and fees etc.

Rejoice keeps a PDF file, with text and pictures, for each student and an XLS database of all the students. Below is an example of a translation of a "Thank you" letter from a student. This is included, together with the original letter in Thai, [in the PDF file](#).

Hello,

My name is Tidarat Yain. I am studying in Grade 12 at Chiang Dao Wittayakom School. I live with my grandparents who are very old and not very healthy but they both love me. We are all a little bit sick because it is cold in mornings and hot in the afternoons. My grandparents work hard so that they can afford to send me to school. Transport to school costs 500 baht every month and lunch costs 50 baht every day.

When I am at home I help by doing the washing and ironing and also cleaning the house because I want my grandparents to relax and not become tired. At the weekends I help by making bamboo baskets, some days I make 30 baht and other days 50 baht. I promise to study hard and be good for my grandparents and my sponsors.

Finally, I would like to thank you very much for your support again and I will use the sponsorship money in the best way. Without your support I would be unable to attend school.

I hope that you are happy and healthy and I will always remember you.

Best regards, Tidarat Yain

...Education Scholarships



Sponsor a Child's Education

There are many families affected by HIV/Aids. It could be that grandparents, relatives or one parent have taken on the responsibility of raising children affected by HIV. The child may be also be infected or orphaned by the virus. The hardships and difficulties of bringing up children in such circumstances can be quite substantial. Often without a regular income the household can be in danger of falling into abject poverty.

A wonderful way to help such families is to sponsor a child's education for one year. For either, at least 5,000 baht (for pre-school, primary and secondary school students) or, at least 7,000 baht (for high school) or, at least 10,000 baht for (college/university students). The excess goes towards providing formula milk, medicines, provisions and fuel for Rejoices mobile outreach and home care clinics.

There are many more children who could greatly benefit from your sponsorship. Please link to "[Ways to Help](#)" page on the website.

Please go to the [DONATE](#) page to sponsor a child and to make a donation.

Please also send an email to:

contact@rejoicecharity.com so that we can thank you.



Please Support Rejoice....

- **By direct bank transfer;**

Donations can be made either direct to the local (Thai baht) account in Chiang Mai, Thailand or, alternatively to London, UK (GB pounds). or Maastricht, Netherlands (Euro). Account details are shown in the tables below.

Account	Alan Wheeler (Rejoice Charity)	Account:	Rejoice Foundation UK	Account:	Alan Wheeler
Bank name:	Bangkok Bank PLC	Bank Name:	HSBC Ltd	Bank Name:	ABN AMRO Bank
Address:	Thapae Road	Address:	Canary Wharf, London E14	Address:	Maastricht,
	Chiang Mai 50100	Account No:	41466879		Netherlands
	Thailand	Sort Code:	40-02-44	Account No:	Acct no: 41.28.64.495
Account No.	251-4-767678	Swift Code:	MIDLGB22	BIC code:	ABNANL2A
Swift Code:	BKKBTHBK	IBAN	GB89MIDL40024441466879	IBAN:	NL85ABNA0412864495

- **By Credit Card via PayPal**

If you want to make a donation via PayPal, go to Rejoice website and click on the [Menu "Donate"](#) and then the PayPal button.

- **Create a Standing Order**

If you would like to make a regular contribution /donation, of whatever size, please print out and complete this standing order form with your bank details and amount pledged, then return it to Rejoice Foundation UK (not your bank) at the address below;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

- **Gift Aid**

If you are a UK taxpayer, Rejoice can reclaim tax on your donation from the Inland Revenue at no extra cost or inconvenience to you. This currently makes your donation (at basic rate) worth an extra 25p for each £1 given.

If you pay tax at the higher rate, you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment return.

For us to benefit in this way when you donate, you can download and print this [PDF form](#), sign it and send to the address below OR, alternatively, you could email your home address to contact@rejoicecharity.com and we will post the Gift Aid form to you to sign and return to;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

- **Send a Cheque**

If the banks are still accepting cheques and you wish to make a one-off or intermittent donation to Rejoice, please make your cheques payable to 'Rejoice Foundation UK' and send them to;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

Testimonials

I was stunned by the remarkable progress the Charity had made over that period. By linking in with volunteer HIV health workers from Chiang Dao Hospital, Mae Ai and San Kamphaeng clinics, Rejoice has effectively increased their outreach workforce from one to seven health care workers, with minimal staff costs. This has expanded the catchment area significantly and Rejoice is now visiting villages as close to the Burmese border as it is possible to travel by road and reaching communities, whom have no access to health care locally.



Dr. Martin Huddart
(Trustee Rejoice Foundation)

However, the most impactful part was being able to use my time to give back in a meaningful way to those in need. It's clear the patients require the check in, medical support, and supplies the outreach team provides, but I think just as crucial is the emotional support - knowing they can count on an experienced team who cares being there for them on a consistent basis. At every clinic and home we visited, the patients faces lit up when they saw the truck and the guys coming to spend time with them. Knowing the Rejoice team does this week on week, year on year, my efforts were really just a small drop in the bucket compared to the work they do. I have so much respect and admiration for Alan, Gee, Wi, and Arm, and I'm so grateful to them for facilitating this experience for me.



Russ Taufa (SDL Vietnam)

Coming in for just a week, or two or three won't make it far even if you knew the language. Even if you would possess skills and education that are directly linked to the charity's field of work. You need months to get to know the culture, the system and most important of all the people and gain their trust. Money is easy to give. PayPal, credit cards, money transfer, you name it. Problem is finding a charity that puts the money to good use. For the benefit of the people. A good indicator for a charity like this can be found from what Rejoice does. A real grassroots charity run by locals, that employs locals, empowerment is done by locals and thus they gain the trust of the people they work so hard (and with so little!) for.



Viljami Hätönen
(research student, and paramedic, Finland)

Notes for Donors

Please let us know about your donation by sending a short email to: contact@rejoicecharity.com. So that we may contact you and thank you directly.

If you would like part of your donation to go towards sponsoring a child's education (5,000 baht) please let us know whether we should select a child on your behalf or you would prefer to select a child yourself, in which case we will send the Excel file 'Children Seeking Sponsorship' to help you decide.

"Thank you all for your generous support".

Please visit our website; www.rejoicecharity.com and let your friends and relatives hear about us by forwarding this newsletter or better still printing it and use it as a discussion topic.

Your help and constructive criticism will be gratefully received so please send all your comments to;

contact@rejoicecharity.com

Rejoice Foundation UK Trustees

The international fundraising arm of Rejoice based in the UK was started by Nigel Haunch who, after living and working in Asia for some years, returned to London to run his own media consultancy business. Having learned about the work of Rejoice on the internet, Nigel made a visit and was moved by the scale of the HIV/AIDS crisis in northern Thailand. At the same time, he was impressed by the extraordinary achievements of Rejoice in helping those infected and affected by the epidemic, particularly in outlying rural communities.

The Trustees of Rejoice Foundation UK are as follows;

Chairperson Nigel Haunch

Vice Chair Dr Darrall Higson—a Consultant in Pharmaceutical Medicine and formerly a medical director of GlaxoSmithKline

RFUK honorary Secretary Prof Philip Evans, Director of Research for the University of Westminster,

Dr Martin Huddart is a General Practitioner in East London and also a tutor at the UK's Royal Free and University College Medical Schools

Alan Wheeler, a retired petroleum petrophysical engineer who now lives in Chiang Mai



Alan Wheeler
January 2016

