

Helping the Needy



2008 was another busy year ever in terms of BCCT support for the Needy in Thailand. Using funds secured from the Annual Christmas Lunch auction and raffle, and charity auctions from football dinners, the following have received BCCT assistance:-

POPULATION & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (PDA) – THB 250,000

BCCT's donation is to support a Village Development Partnership (VDP) project at Ban Nong Tad in Buri Ram Province 400 km from Bangkok. The village of Nong Tad has a total population of 443 (235 males, 208 females), living amongst 108 households.

Agriculture is main source of income. Villagers are predominantly

rice farmers. Some villagers raise cattle and take up day-labourer jobs to supplement their income.

With PDA's close guidance, Baan Nong Tad has completed Phase I of the VDP. First, PDA field staff approached the village to create an understanding of the VDP concept. Then, village meetings were held to discuss VDP objectives, activities, outputs and expected outcomes. The villagers elected their Village Development Committee, which takes the lead in planning and implementing activities. PDA assisted the villagers in conducting a current needs analysis, accompanying them on an eye-opening trip. The result was a village development plan.

Phase II is underway. Villagers have begun to implement the development

activities identified during Phase I. Projects include: income generating activity: decorative tree farm; reforestation; village development bank; irrigation; improvement of village water piped system; training on mushroom farming; hydroponics; solar-powered water pump; and fertilizer production.

ROTARY WATER WELL PROJECTS IN PHUKET – THB 250,000

BCCT has maintained the post-tsunami initiative through support for water well projects to provide clean, safe drinking water for children in two schools in Phangna, Ban Bang Larm School and Wat Ditharam School.

BCCT is sole sponsor of both systems (with the support of the Rotary Club of Bangkok South and Rotary Club Phuket).

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STUDENTS' EDUCATION TRUST – THB 131,600

Peter Robinson founded the Students' Education Trust (SET) in 1995 to sponsor one student to attend university. SET now supports more than 500 students at universities and colleges, sponsoring young teachers from the UK, organizing drug prevention camps, English language camps, job-training for students and a host of other education-related projects in Nakhon Sawan province.

SET's primary aim is to give scholarships to needy students at universities and colleges, but the trust sponsors many other education-related projects as well. This year BCCT has provided THB 131,600 to fund two 'gap year' students, assessed for SET by the Project Trust in the UK, to teach English at a vocational college, an inner city high

school (with mostly slum kids) and at SET's novice school (where the students are disadvantaged youngsters from rural areas).

TEACHER PLUS FOUNDATION – THB 100,000

Teacher Plus Foundation (TPF) is a charity that improves the quality of the Thai education system through upgrading the quality of teachers in rural areas.

Napaporn Kurupasutachai Landy, the Foundation's Secretary-General explains that TPF has always realized that in order to deepen and sustain the impact of its intensive training programmes, they would need permanent centres to maintain the momentum. This important programme is now underway.

In its four years of operation, TPF has arranged school-based workshops in

modern teaching skills in various rural areas of Thailand. Teachers, students and parents at these schools have seen positive results.

CARE FOR KIDS – THB 50,000

As a Gold sponsor, the BCCT helped to contribute to a new record total of THB 8.45 million from the 2008 Care for Kids Charity Drive. This will be used to help underprivileged children through more than 20 different charity projects on the Eastern Seaboard - <http://www.care4kids.info/>

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, CHONBURI – THB 25,000 – 'LEST WE FORGET'

The Royal British Legion Chonburi Branch was formed on 1st July 2007. The organization is based at Tropical

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Bert's in Pattaya. Members meet every Sunday afternoon to swing the lamp and promote the Legion. All money raised is used for those in need in Thailand.

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS GALYANI VADHANA KROM LUANG NARADHIWAS RAJANAGARINDRA FUND – THB 10,000

Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhiwas Rajanagarindra Fund's main purpose is to support various foundations under the late [?] Her Royal Highness' patronage or direct to the needy.

BRITISH COMMUNITY IN THAILAND FOUNDATION FOR THE NEEDY (BCTFN) – WWW.BCTFN.COM

Formal charitable activities by members

of the British community in Thailand, including the BCCT, began in the war years with monthly fund-raising events held at the British Club. The first charity fair was organized in 1948 at the British Club and in 1951 the YWCA held their first International Bazaar. In 1957 the first Ploenchit Fair was held in the grounds of the British Embassy, and raised THB 78,000 for Thai charities. The fair was conceived for the British community to join together to raise funds for Thai charities, and by 1968 a committee of British people from a cross-section of the community had been formed to organize and disburse the funds.

The objectives of this committee were to maximize the support from the British community to Thai charities in an annual fund-raising effort, to ensure that funds

were properly spent, and to unite and promote British companies' charitable donations giving them a forum to handle requests that they received throughout the year.

In 1999, the Ministry of Interior approved Foundation status for this committee under the name British Community in Thailand Foundation for the Needy (BCTFN). In conjunction with the BCCT, BCTFN hopes to expand its fund-raising efforts and, where possible, assist British companies, organizations and community members who wish to help the less privileged in Thailand.

The Foundation Committee is entirely voluntary and has acquired vast experience over the years, enabling it to understand and administer to the needs of the recipient charities, advise them where necessary and monitor the work



they are and have been doing over the decades on an ongoing permanent basis.

In recent years, priority has been given to self-help projects that benefit and enable a community to become self-sustaining; Assistance has also been through the provision of basic necessities and equipment to improve healthcare, nutrition, education, agricultural projects and the disabled throughout Thailand. The list of recipients is almost endless and includes charities, foundations, institutions, hospitals and schools.

PLOENCHIT FAIR

On Saturday 29th November, 2008, Ploenchit Fair, the major fund raising event of the BCTFN, took place at Shrewsbury International School on the banks of the Chao Phraya River.

For those unfamiliar with the Ploenchit Fair – the theme has remained the same for more than 50 years. It is that of a British family fairground. More than 2,500 members of the community voluntarily organize and run the many stalls. British companies and organizations, together with “friends”, donate goods and materials to help meet the costs of the Fair and provide prizes. Until 2001 the Fair was held in the gardens of the British Embassy, but after 9/11 the Fair had to move out due to ongoing security concerns.

Today the Ploenchit Fair is arguably the biggest event on the British Calendar and is known and admired throughout South East Asia. It has proved a successful and enjoyable way to raise funds whilst promoting British interests in Thailand. Money raised at the Fair has

enabled the Foundation to allocate funds for projects to over 35 different charities annually throughout Thailand.

BCTFN would like to thank all sponsors and volunteers who donated their time, money and goods to help BCTFN raise in excess of THB 5 million for some 20-25 Thai charity projects in 2009. The BCCT organized the Grand Raffle on behalf of BCTFN. In 2007 the raffle raised a record of more than over THB 1,100,000, close to 25% of the total income of the fair.

The BCTFN is always looking for new charities or organizations to support, and donors. If you would like to contribute to the work of the BCTFN in any way please contact the President, Carolyn Tarrant MBE (bctfn@loxinfo.co.th) or Vice President Greg Watkins (greg@bccthai.com).