

The young generation speak Thai, as the children are educated in a Thai government school on Angkhang. They walk some 4 - 5 km (one way) to go to school. With supplies of toys, clothes, snacks and rice, we quickly organised lines to ensure that everyone got something.

Day 5: We set out to visit the border schools on the mountains to offer them the sponsored educational VCDs that we had. At both schools, we provided a fun English interactive program where we taught them English action songs and games (left pic shows Mom with Jaime and Julia showing the way). Then Peter (right pic)



provided a short explanation and prayed with the students. At the first school, we found the majority of the 300 children from the Burmese Mai-Ai (a Burmese ethnic group). They were all educated in Thai and they followed along well in English. The head of the school was very thankful for the additional input as well as the programs. To get to the second school at Ban Kob Dong, which was located more remotely off a beaten track on the mountain (below -- pix of the dusty track leading to the Mussur village and school), we had the pleasure of going through the Queen's Botanical Project which features the beautiful sight of temperate flowers and plants. Gorgeous! The children enjoyed frolicking in these fields and they did, they got to bump into some folks. Below are three girls who wanted a picture with the children.



When we finally arrived, we found 300 children from the Lahu (Mussur) and Palong tribes. The Mussur (as they are known in Thai), also from Tibetan ancestry, have Thai nationality. We found these children more spontaneous than most of the kids we've seen in city schools. (pics below show the enthusiastic children participating in our program)

It was heartening to give a set of 10 VCDs to these remote schools which are so keen on new teaching aids and are willing to do what they can to make a difference in the lives of their students.



After a fulfilling day of reaching these schools, the Lord rewarded us with a change of accommodation where we were able to upgrade to a nicer bungalow on a hill.

Day 6: Breakfast and devotions the next morning was spent on the patio of this bungalow where we felt caressed by the cool morning breeze.

But alas, soon it was time for us to move on -- lest we get too comfortable! We moved on the fourth leg of our journey to Mae Chan, about 30 km away. On the way, we chanced upon the villages of some other tribes. This was the Ahka, the Lahu and the Padaung (the well-known long-necked Karens of Burma). Many missionaries have reached the Ahkas, and this is evidenced by several Ahka church missions that one can see along the way.



The Lahu and Padaung here were a small community living in very spartan conditions of bamboo shacks. Here, we felt led to donate the last of our supplies. We had 20 kg more of rice and as there were no men in this *Karieng* village at this time, we invited two tribeswomen (they don't usually venture out because of the brass rings around their necks and legs) to come up the 400-metre pass with us to receive the bags of rice.



Day 7: After a free breakfast at the hotel, we sent on the next leg of our journey to the Golden Triangle.. This is a part in the Chiang Rai province where the three borders of Laos, Burma and Thailand meet.



We went on to enjoy dusk (pic above right) at the well-known Chiang Saen lake, one of the largest lakes in Thailand, so serene yet 'alive' with birds and ducks. We had our dinner cook-out by the lake which was a lovely experience. The Lord topped it all by providing a beautiful resort across from the lake where we stayed in two air-conditioned rooms. beautiful rooms with great scenery. What more can we say! He is so-o good to us!

Day 8: We headed back for Chiang Mai where we stayed with friends.

Day 9: Peter took the kids swimming/diving in a sports complex and later ventured up to the mountain of Doi Suthep (hitting the Doi Pui peak at 1,600 metres!) for their last jaunt in the forest and hills before we head back to the city.

Day 10: An eight-hour drive back to Bangkok -- and home sweet home!

We packed in a lot of living there in that short time and we're so thankful for the experience. It was also a great time of bonding with the teens, without the distraction & temptations of city living. It was also a first for us to really travel around this part of Thailand and experience the different culture, lifestyle, foods, sights and sounds! Last but not least, the thrill of making a difference in the lives of the many different kinds of people that we met will eternally be etched in our memories.