

JOHNSON'S JOTTINGS

NEWS FROM DOUG AND CAROLYN JOHNSON

MAY 2003



CROSS STITCH

As a local Thai organization committed to planting and nurturing local churches, LIFE desires to move toward financial self support. Over the years, LIFE has attempted a variety of activities which have not been successful.

About four years ago, LIFE started a cross stitch project. The staff train village women to do cross stitch, provide them with patterns and materials, and pay them for the finished pieces. Then LIFE finishes the pieces, packages them, and finds markets for the work. The project goals are:

- ❖ To provide self support income for LIFE
- ❖ To provide supplementary income to village women, which they can earn without leaving their villages
- ❖ To help the participants discover the love of God in Christ
- ❖ To foster community among the participants

Each Wednesday and Friday, women bring their handiwork into the LIFE office. While one of the staff checks over each piece, two others lead the women in a time of fellowship and talking about spiritual issues. Since virtually all the village women in the project are Buddhist, they are using the seeker booklets that the LIFE team recently developed. As might be expected, some of the women who come are very responsive and some don't seem very interested.

The products include wall hangings, cards, and bookmarks. Some have Thai themes, some have Bible themes, and some are more general. One product which we expect to have broad appeal is a set of ten ethnic angel notecards. We also have a set of six flower notecards.

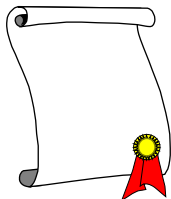


The main channel of marketing for the early years of this project has been through the Southern Baptists Thai crafts projects. In order for LIFE to have a more firmly established financial base, it needs to find additional markets. The Covenant Bookstore in Chicago is selling some of our products. While we are in the US this next year, we will be looking to add other avenues of sales. As we visit churches we will bring products with us, so keep your eyes open for LIFE handicrafts when we visit your church.

One of the ways in which Doug has been involved with the handicraft project is in helping to develop systems and computer spreadsheets to keep track of various aspects of running this project. It has taken time to develop the different pieces that need to go into making the whole project flow smoothly.

Developing a means of supporting LIFE's ministry has not been without its challenges. At the end of April, the staff working with the cross stitch project did a thorough inventory of stitched pieces and finished products. In the process, they uncovered a pattern of theft involving one employee within the cross stitch project. This employee already had a history of stealing. Even when confronted with the testimony of multiple parties, she continued to deny her actions. She was released from LIFE early this month.

The woman who was fired is a member of the Khan Hak village church. We ask you to pray that Satan would not use this event to tear down the church community. Rather, may the Holy Spirit bring the local believers into an ever deeper relationship with each other and with God.



Family News

Jennifer will graduate from Chiang Mai International School June 5. She has decided to attend Willamette University (Salem, OR). She will be traveling to the US on June 24, attending a MK reentry seminar, and spending time with her grandparents.

The rest of us will be flying to the US on July 22. Our address there will be:
4625 NW Hill Road
McMinnville, OR 97128
Phone: (503)472-2269
e-mail: jdouglas@loxinfo.co.th (no change)

Prayer Points

- ❖ Pray for our visa renewals to come through in time for our July departure. We need to have both visas and work permits extended before we leave Thailand.
- ❖ Pray for the movement of God's Spirit on the women in the cross stitch project.
- ❖ Pray for the marketing of the cross-stitch products; for the Lord to provide for the ministry here.
- ❖ Pray that the Khan Hak church will be able to live according to the truth and will seek as a community to glorify God.
- ❖ Pray for Rachelle Nordman, our short-term teacher, as she finishes up her time here in Thailand and returns to the States to continue her college studies.
- ❖ Pray for Jenny as she wraps up her time in Thailand and moves to the US for college. She has grown up here; Thailand is home to her. The excitement of moving on to college is muted by the grief of saying goodbye to the life she knows. Pray for a good transition for her.

Continue to pray for:

- ❖ The men's small group in Khan Hak village, that they would continue to encourage one another to grow ever closer to God.
- ❖ Evangelism efforts in Non San to produce lasting fruit, leading to a growing, healthy church in that community.
- ❖ Youth leaders to grow in spiritual maturity and for God to use them for the Kingdom.

Grateful for your partnership in reaching Isaan for Christ,

Doug and Carolyn Johnson