

# Newsletter

# **Burmese American Association of Texas**

April 2006 မဟာသင်္ကြန်

# **Message from the President**

#### **BAAT Officers (2006)**

U Myo Aye Thane

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U Htin Aung Win

VP Dallas

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Daw Wah Wah Myint

VP Austin

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VP San Antonio

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Please contact any officers above if you have any inquiries or business communication concerning the Burmese community.

#### Dear Members and Friends,

First, I would like to wish you Happy Burmese New Year! This is the time for our favorite gathering of the year, *Thingyan*! I am sure those of us who participated in Thingyan back in Burma will remember these joyous days. For the younger generation, who as not had opportunity to see the Thingyan in Burma, you can recall BAAT's Thingyan gathering where you've enjoyed various authentic Burmese dances and Burmese dishes, playing outdoor games, and throwing water at one another. This year, as a special arrangement, we moved Thingyan back to April to get the essence of True Thingyan Spirit. We want to encourage participation from our younger generations who will be responsible for carrying on our traditions in the Twenty-first century.

Our last gathering in February, for Union Day, was very successful. Thanks to everyone's hard work, we all enjoyed plenty of traditional Burmese food and music. It was the first time we tried out the singing contest. Due to its success, we have requests to hold other contests as well. When we get more volunteers, we can look into expanding it.

We are planning on having a big *Thazaungdine* party in the later part of October or early part of November. BAAT will keep you informed in advance.

But, first things first. We are about to celebrate our new year. I would like to invite all of you to our celebration of Thingyan and hope to see you all there.

Happy New Year!

Yours truly,

Myo Aye Thane President, 2006

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## **Invitation**

BAAT's annual Thingyan Picnic will be held at Bear Creek Park on Sunday, April 23, 2006. You and your family are cordially invited to join us for a day of fun, great food, music, fellowship and of course splashes. Bring your friends along to share the fun. Please bring extra clothing if you are going to participate in water throwing event.

When: April 23, 2006 (Sunday) 10:30 am - 6:00 pm

Place: Bear Creek Park, Pavilion #6. Please see map for location. If you need further assistance,

please call Ko Myo Aye Thane (281) 221-6255; Ma Thant Zin Han (832)-633-9598; Ko Stephen Yoe

(832) 452-5757.

<u>Directions</u>: From Belt Way 8, exit Clay Rd and go west (towards High-way 6) for about 4 to 5 miles. Pass Eldridge Road and War Memorial Drive. Turn left on Bear Creek Drive into Bear Creek Park. From High-way 6, turn right on Clay Rd and go east. Turn Right again on Bear Creek Drive into Bear Creek Park. Please see the map for further clarification.

#### **Schedule of Events:**

Member/guest arrival & registration	10:30 AM
Potluck lunch	11:45-1:15 PM
Welcoming Speech and Announcements	1:15-1:30 PM
Auction	1:30-2:15 PM
Picnic Games (Egg Toss, 3- Leg Race, Piñata, Htoat-Si, Chinlone, etc)	2:15-3:30 PM
Afternoon tea break	3:30 PM
More Games	3:30-4:30 PM
Water Throwing Event	4:30-5:30 PM
Clean-up time	5:30-6:00 PM

<u>Auction</u>: Auction will be held after the lunch break. If you would like to participate in the auction, please bring your items to the picnic. Participants have a choice of getting the cost reimbursement from BAAT or donating the proceeds to the BAAT. U Norman Wong, U Maung Maung Lay, and U Than Shwe will be organizing the auction.

Books and Tapes Sale: A variety of Burmese magazines, novels and tapes will be on sale with reasonable prices. (These books and tapes are compliments of our active member, Kathleen Sebecke (Ma Nwe) and Bruce. BAAT thanks Ma Nwe and Ko Bruce for donating books to BAAT for a number of years.)

<u>Lunch</u>: The lunch will be a **potluck lunch**. Please bring your favorite dish for <u>10 to 15 servings</u> to share your excellent cooking with friends. BAAT will provide steamed white rice, drinks, afternoon tea, snacks, cups and plastic ware. If you need idea on what to bring, please contact Daw Thet Thet Win (281) 277-0433, Daw San San Myint (281) 530-1898. **Friends of BAAT members and those who cannot bring food can enjoy lunch with us for \$5.00 per person.** 

**BAAT Membership Dues:** Annual Membership Dues will be collected at the picnic. For those who have not paid membership dues for 2005,

you will have the opportunity to pay them to reinstate your membership. Members are not required to pay past dues for the years before 2005. Dues may also be sent directly to our VP – Finance, Ko Robert Chan by making **check payable to:** 

BAAT c/o Robert Chan 165 N. Hall Drive Sugar Land, TX 77478

Family - \$25.00 Singles - \$10.00

#### Official Announcements:

At the picnic, please stop by at the registration desk first to pick up your **nametags** and review your **contact information** for accuracy while paying your membership dues. If you moved recently, please update your mailing address, phone number and e-mail address. Having your current contact information enables BAAT to keep you informed with the latest developments in our association.

This year's emphasis will be outdoor games. BAAT encourages you and your children to participate in the games of your selecting. However, please use your best judgment in selecting the games for BAAT or its officers are not liable for any injuries before or after the games.

Suggestions on Water Throwing: (1) Please maintain and show the highest level of courtesy and consideration for others in throwing water. Considering a potential liability for injury, NO WATER BALLOONS will be allowed. (2) Please do not throw water at people who stay inside the pavilion or anyone earnestly requesting not to do so. Please understand and respect the needs of one another at the picnic. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

**Keep Us Posted**: BAAT encourages all members to inform one of its EC members or Board of Directors of any solemn occasion so that we all could pray and share the profound loss with the family in grief. Also please keep BAAT informed of any achievements or success stories of our so that member(s) BAAT could proudly congratulate the individual(s) their for accomplishments.



## Welcoming a new year

Burma is known to have festivals for each month of the Burmese Calendar. Among all the festivals, *Thingyan* is Burma's biggest and most enjoyable. The four days of water-throwing and celebrations are rich in symbolism and significance as well as fun and youthful exuberance. It is a time when Burmese people have a chance to cleanse themselves of the past year's mistakes and regrets and motivate themselves for success in the new year. It is also a time for reflection on the past year's successes and a chance to set goals to capitalize on those already attained. Thingyan is a time of sharing, when family and friends join together at a time of joyous celebration. Another aspect of the water festival is the relief it offers against the sweltering temperatures of the peak of summer. The Padauk flower is a potent symbol of Thingyan. People love the flower not only because of its beauty and charm, but because the Padauk is faithful; it blooms once a year during the festival. Partners in life say to each other "Padauk ka Thingyan gko thitsar shi thalo ko lai min gko thitsar shi nay hma ba" - "I'll be faithful to you, as Padauk is faithful to Thingyan." The holding of the festival is not linked solely to religion. That is why almost every Burmese will include themselves in the celebrations even though not all venture into the streets for a thorough soaking. Thingyan is a social and cultural festival as the heat of the summer takes hold before the rains come. The late British academic, J.G. Frazer, in his book *The Golden* Bough, offered the theory that the festival originated because of a perceived need to "call" for rain by invoking celestial beings. For many Burmese, Thingyan is a time to seek deeper refuge in Buddhism or in Buddhist meditation. Many Burmese enter the monkhood or become nuns during the festival. Many others, especially young women, spend the festival at meditation retreats. Offering alms and performing meritorious deeds are also among the ways of acknowledging *Thingyan*. For some, *Thingyan* is a time to have parties or spend time with family or friends. Some renew their vows or look for romance. Others take the opportunity to go on holiday. However you intend to spend Thingyan, make it a happy and healthy celebration. (From Myanmar Times Online)

The BAAT wishes you an auspicious beginning to the new year.

#### In Memoriam

BAAT was saddened to learn the recent passing of the loved ones of some of our members. All of us here at BAAT extend our most heartfelt condolences to those who have experienced such a profound loss. Please remember that our hearts, prayers and thoughts are with you at this most difficult time.

- Daw Lily (age 78, passed away in Yangon on March 1, 2006) – the beloved mother of our Active Member Ma Mona and Ko Salim Kyaw Sein
- Amyn Hussein (age 21, passed away in Padre Island on March 19, 2006) - the beloved son of active member Mithu of Savoy Restaurant.
- U Maung Gyi (passed away in Connecticut)
  the beloved brother of our active member U Ko Lay.



# Thank you!

BAAT appreciates the efforts of all volunteers for the November event and generous contributions. BAAT strives to acknowledge the names of all volunteers who brought in the delicious food items, participated in the event, and assisted with the setup and cleanup before and after the event. There is too long a list to mention your name individually. BAAT wishes to thank all of you such as members, board members and EC members for your support, time, and effort. Once again, BAAT beseeches you for your collaborative efforts for the future events. Thank you all for your contributions, large or small.





## **Burmese American Association of Texas**

c/o Myo A Thane 12826 Stancliff Oaks Street Sugar Land, TX 77478

### \*\*\*DISCLAIMER\*\*\*

BAAT was incorporated with the mission to promote friendship, cooperation, and entertainment among Burmese Nationals, people of Burmese descent, and friends of Burma. BAAT's activities are conducted primarily for the benefit of its members. BAAT and its officers and members take no responsibility and will not be held responsible for any injuries or any liability that may occur during its events, howsoever caused. All participants should exercise utmost care and participate in its events at your own risk.