



Newsletter

Burmese American Association of Texas

February 2006

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Message from the President

Dear Members and Friends,

It is my great pleasure to greet you for the first time in the year 2006. I wish all our members and friends to be successful at whatever you are doing or plan to do in 2006 and beyond. On the same note, I would like to cordially invite you to attend our first gathering of the year on February 11, 2006. We are going to have a great time.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a word of thanks to our outgoing President Ko Stephen Yoe for his service to our community. Ko Stephen has served this community since he was secretary of BAAT and will continue serving for many years to come. He had led our association through with his strong leadership and unwavering resolve during his presidency, and we are grateful for his dedication and service to our community.

BAAT is an organization founded by people from Burma based on the belief that people with a common background need to stick together and celebrate life and face hardship together. Now BAAT is inviting all those interested people, promoting friendship and culture to Burmese and Non-Burmese alike. We have members from Karen, Kachin, Chin, Mon, Myanmar, Rakine, Shan, Burma born Chinese origin and Burma born Indian or Pakistani origin and others. We all stay together with the Union Spirit in peace and harmony. So celebrating Union Day is quite appropriate for BAAT.

This year's Union Day Event is nothing short of extraordinary. Not only will we have a display of traditional dresses, but also a sing along contest. And I promise you, there will be a lot of food. So please come and join us when we celebrate this Union Day Event.

Yours truly,

Myo Aye Thane (Myo Gyi)
President, 2006

- BAAT Officers (2006)**
- U Myo Aye Thane
President
281-565-0364
 - U Robert Chan
VP Finance
281-242-8915
 - Daw San San Myint
VP Social
281-530-1898
 - U Maung Maung Lay
VP Community Affairs
713-291-1122
 - Daw Thant Zin Han
Secretary
831-633-9598
 - Daw Sylvia Hom
Treasurer
832-818-2986
 - U Htin Aung Win
VP Dallas
817-292-3969
 - Daw Wah Wah Myint
VP Austin
512-451-2348
 - Dr. Tin Aung Hla
VP San Antonio
210-490-0519
- Please contact any officers above if you have any inquiries or business communication concerning the Burmese community.



Invitation

BAAT's annual Union Day Event will be held at the Institute of Chinese Culture (ICC) on Saturday, February 11, 2006. You and your family are cordially invited to join us for an evening of fun, great food, music, and fellowship. Bring your friends along to share the fun. We encourage you to wear traditional national attires.

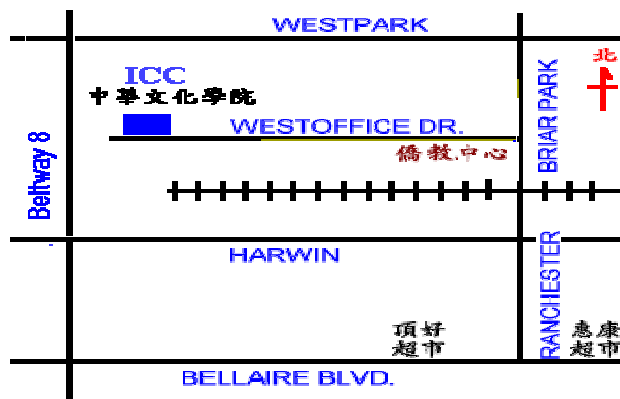
- When:** February 11, 2006 (5:30 PM to 11:00 PM)
- Place:** Institute of Chinese Culture (ICC): 10550 Westoffice, Houston, Texas, 77042; Phone: (713) 339-1992
Please see the map above for directions and location. If you need further assistance, please call Ko Myo Aye Thane (281) 221-6255; Ma Thant Zin Han (832)-633-9598; Ko Stephen Yoe (832) 452-5757.

Driving Directions:

Come to Beltway 8 (Sam Houston Toll Way) and Westpark junction. Go east on Westpark. Turn right onto Briar Park and turn right again onto Westoffice Drive. ICC (Sandspoint Elementary) is located at the end of the street on your right.

If coming from Bellaire, come to the Welcome and Diho Supermarkets. Turn onto Ranchester heading north. Pass Harwin, then turn left onto Westoffice Dr. ICC (Sandspoint Elementary) is located at the end of the street on your right.

The Map of the Institute of Chinese Culture



Dinner:

There will be a variety of food items such as Mote Hin Khar, Chicken Curry, Biryani (Dan Pauk), Egg Curry, Mix Vegetarian Dish, Chicken Gizzard Curry, Seafood Fried Noodles, Fried Rice, Samosa, Indian Tea, and many dessert items. Due to time constraints, dinner will not be served after 7:30 PM. We'd like to encourage each family to bring your home-baked or favorite desserts to share with other members. Please come early, but do not forget to bring your big appetite to help yourselves.

Entertainment:

There will be a **SINGING CONTEST** like American Idols. Contestants will be rated by a panel of five judges – looking for your presentation, timing, pitch, clarity, voice control and etc. Each judge will score your performance on a scale of 1 to 10. The top 3 contestants will be chosen to go to the final round. There will be a run off for contestants with tie scores. Only 3 contestants will advance. In the final round, contestants will be given a chance to sing one song and based on the same scoring system, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd winners will be chosen. Then, BAAT's President will present awards to the winners: \$100 for the first prize; \$75 for second; and \$50 for third. It's with great pleasure that BAAT invites and encourages all of

you to participate and give it a try. Please contact Ko Myo Aye Thane at 281-221-6255 or Ma Thant Zin at 832-633-9598 or report your entry at the Registration Desk no later than 7:00 PM on the day of the event. Please do not forget to bring your Karaoke VCDs with you!!! Please practice about three songs to sing to win a prize.

The entertainment program of the night will be as follows:

Schedule of Events:

Member/Guest Registration	5:30 PM
Dinner	6:00 – 7:30
Singing Contest/Music	7:45 - 9:30
Tea Break	9:30 – 9:45
Raffle Drawing	9:45 – 10:00
Entertainment/Music/Awards Presentation	10:00 – 10:45
Clean-up Time	10:45 PM

Raffle Drawing: Raffle tickets will be sold at the event. Please try your luck to have funs: 1 ticket for \$2; 3 for \$5; and 7 for \$10.

BAAT Membership Dues: Members are not required to pay past dues for the years before 2005. Dues for 2006 may also be sent directly to our VP – Finance, Ko Robert Chan by making check payable to BAAT.

Robert Chan
165 N. Hall Drive
Sugar Land, TX 77478

Family - \$25.00 Singles - \$10.00

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 member(s) so that BAAT could proudly congratulate the individual(s) for their accomplishments.

In Memoriam

BAAT was saddened to learn the recent passing of the loved ones of some of our members. U Raju Bahadur Thapa (Aged 52) – beloved husband of Daw Santhi Thapa and father of Ko Bahadur of Austin passed away in Yangon on December 16, 2005.

New Arrival

♥ BAAT is ravished with delight and welcomes the new arrival of an adorable baby girl Celeste Hope Kwi, born on November 7, 2005 (Proud parents: Ko Solomon Kwi and Dr. Timu of Port Lavaca).

Union Day

The celebration and commemoration of Union Day cannot be more relevant than nowadays.

We entered in The Family of Nations in 1948 when we became Union of Burma and were accepted as a sovereign nation by United Nations. The boundary of the country was as such recognized by the international community based on historical, ethnical, cultural and political as well as geographical demarcations.

Sadly, there are elements who want to make us smaller. Some announced independent countries within the country. Others have wanted to come out as autonomous countries based on inaccurate geographical and historical precedence.

To tell you the truth, there is not an inch of land on earth that had not been "owned" by this and that ethnic group. Most of these new claims are motivated by eager enthusiasm for our newly discovered natural resources. What is most important for the country in present day and the future world is the human rights of the inhabitants rather than the "territorial rights".

Our neighboring countries have constantly threatened our society throughout history. China and Siam have always sought to destabilize us so that the union can be exploited. Manipuri had invaded the territories many times. Kabaw Valley was fictitiously claimed by Manipuri as its own under the pretense of a falsified map labeling Chindwin River. Shan State was called Khemarhat during World War II and annexed, at least on paper, by our neighbor.

With the advent of rich gas fields and potential hydro electrical power, it is no wonder that recent interest in our land is armed by the voracious neighbors.

Union as it stands today is ours; let us strengthen ourselves so that the greedy ones would not dare trespass even an inch of our territory. Let us also not tolerate injustice, inequality, and discrimination within our land.

WunZinMin

Driving Safely and Saving Tickets

Driving is not a right, but a privilege, which can be yanked away if one is not in compliance with the traffic rules and regulations in effect. Skillful as they can be at rodeo, Texans, especially Houstonians, are failing the safety record with a

fatality rate of 12.45 per 100,000 population, clearly leading other major cities like Philadelphia (8.11), Chicago (7.9); Los Angeles (7.24); New York (4.39). About 40% of the accidents are attributable to DWI-related cases. According to the 2005 Urban Mobility Report, Houstonians annually waste about 63 hours per person in traffic congestion, thus ranking as the fifth most congested major city in the nation. While based on the national average, everyone is prone to encounter an accident once every 10 years, Houstonians again make it once every 7 years. Considering those undisputable facts, the driving conditions in Texas can be unpleasant. It is advisable to take the driving business seriously and drive defensively and safely. In addition, the Department of Safety has been tightening its traffic laws and regulations. Texas traffic laws are based on common sense. Any activity (such as eating, putting on make-up, talking on a cellphone, or anything -- although not passed into laws) that "affects" your driving behavior can be elevated to a citation or ticket.

In addition to driving defensively, one needs to heed some additional driving related laws, which could potentially save you a ticket.

- Littering will cost you a \$2,000 fine (Don't mess up with Texas).
- License plate must be visible (plate frame is okay as long as all letters are visible; but altering the color of the license plate is illegal).
- Driver must either vacate the lane closest to emergency vehicles or slow down 20 miles per hour below the speed limit. (If the speed limit is 45 mph, the driver must slow down to 25 mph).
- Children under age 5, or less than 36 inches tall must be restrained in an approved car seat. All children ages 5 through 16 years old are now required to use seatbelts anywhere they sit in the vehicle. Children under age 12 are suggested (not required) to sit in the back seat although anyone can sit in the front. Otherwise, it will cost you a \$200 ticket! (Seatbelt is optional to those over age 17 sitting in the back seat).
- The driver is responsible for a \$200 ticket for a passenger under age 15 for not wearing seatbelt (Front-seat passenger must wear seatbelts at all times).
- Passengers under age 18 cannot sit in the back of a truck (Truck owner, beware).
- Texas adopts a 6-point system limit. It will be costly if caught driving drunk, which requires you to pay a \$1,000 fine for the next three years.

- Driving without auto insurance or financial responsibility proof means \$250 fine; invalid driver license, \$250; not having driver license with you, \$100.

Apparently, it is good for all of us to abide by the traffic laws and stay out of the harm's way. It is not worth going thru the hassles of an accident. Here are a few situational humors to think about: "I have the right of way, but he has a big truck – what the heck?" "The police officers have stopped me so often that they finally gave me a season ticket." "Nothing confuses me more than a driver who does everything right – we are so used to the wrong that we feel it right." Hope you do not fall into that category. When in doubt, please contact the Department of Public Safety to obtain further clarification. Above all, be a law-abiding citizen and allow yourself a plenty of time to drive safely and defensively. Do not rush!!!

Stephen Yoe, CPA



HUMOR: Life & Work

There are three classes of people: the haves, the have-nots, and the charge-its.

There are three kinds of people to make the world: right-handed, left-handed, and underhanded.



Burmese American Association of Texas

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

There are three feelings that your spouse has toward you during your marriage: expect you (before marriage), suspect you (after marriage), and respect you (after death and leaving a good life insurance policy).

There are three types of jobs applicable to Burmese: standing all day, sitting all day, and running all day.

Stephen Yoe, CPA

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.

*****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.