

# BAAT NEWSLETTER

Volume 9, Issue 1

May 2009

## BAAT CELEBRATES BURMESE NEW YEAR

Dear Fellow Members,

It is time again to celebrate the Maha Thingyan, Burmese New Year Celebrated with Water Festival, fashionably late in BAAT style: a picnic in the park complete with tasty food, games, friends and ending in high note with water festival. Although this picnic does not resemble the vigor, grandeur and ceremonial aspects of Thingyan as celebrated in Burma (recently known as Myanmar) on April 14, it broadcasts a clear message – with proper care and nurturing, Burmese culture and traditions can survive even in a foreign land for generations of Burmese-Americans to benefit. For BAAT members, the participation in Thingyan picnic, albeit humble in nature, is a cultural conservation effort that they can be proud of.

Furthermore, BAAT members can be proud of many forms of relationships they have built through BAAT network. Perhaps, friendship is the secret medicine of the Burmese citizens from the homeland and ex-Myanmar citizens living in the United States (US) who have endured life's many hardships that manifested in subtle and not-so-subtle ways.

Moreover, people of Burma are born blessed with their remarkable natural ability to appreciate quick wit and artful humor. Renown Burmese comedians had always presented situation comedies and spoofs to the public to lessen the effects of hard times. They provided laughter stimulus packages in Burma even before Saturday Night Live television program was created in the US. Although I am not a historian, I secretly believe that RAP originated in Burma as Than-gyat in Thingyan to vent frustrations and to present controversial ideas.

In essence, strong friendships and laughter in abundance will prepare the BAAT members to gracefully weather the economic challenges of our times. Therefore, please seize the opportunity to renew old friendships and also make new friendships by showing up at the picnic. Above all, please enjoy yourself at the picnic. You deserve the wonderful company and attention of your friends and follow members. Let's meet up and have a fabulous time together!

Yours truly,

Aye Aye Kyi

2009 BAAT President



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### Special points of interest:

- Picnic details
- Letter to Tha-gyar Min
- Announcements

## PICNIC INVITATION

Fun, sun, great food, music, fellowship and splashes

**When: May 23, 2009 (Saturday)**

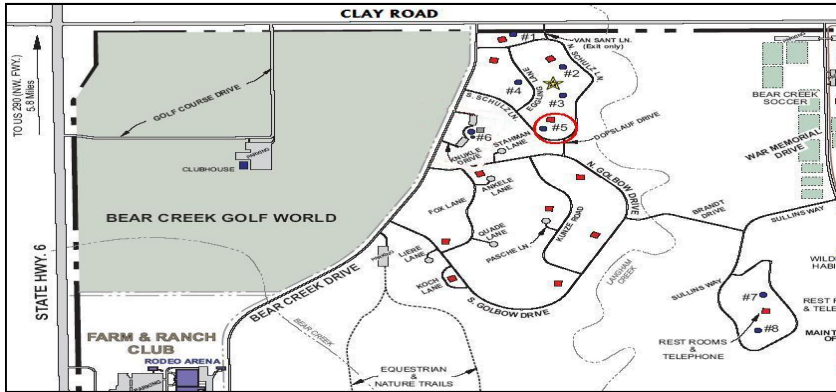
**11:00 AM - 5:30 PM**

**Where : Bear Creek Park, Pavilion #5**

Pot-luck lunch.

Bring your family members & friends.

# PICNIC DETAILS



Directions:

**From Belt Way 8**, exit Clay Road 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 Road and go east. Turn right again on Bear Creek Drive into Bear Creek Park. Please see the map for further clarification.

If you need further assistance please call Ko Myo Aye Thane (281) 221-6255, Ma Thant Zin Han (713)-392-9929 and Ko James Yoe (832) 265-3400.

Schedule of Events	
Members/guests Registration	11:00 AM
Pot-luck Lunch	12:00 - 1:00 PM
Welcome and Announcements	1:00 - 1: 15 PM
Auction	1:15 - 1:45 PM
Games for Adults and Children	1:45 - 2:30 PM
Tea Break	2:30 - 3:00 PM
Continue Games	3:00 - 3:30 PM
Water Festival	3:30 - 5:00 PM
Clean Up	5:00 - 5:30 PM

To prevent dehydration, please bring extra drinking water and keep it in your car.  
 If you plan to participate in the water festival, please bring spare clothes.

# SUGGESTIONS

**LUNCH**

Please bring **10 to 15 servings** of your favorite dish to share your excellent cooking with friends. Home-made dishes are very popular at the picnic.

If you need idea on what to bring, please contact Daw San San Myint (281-530-1898) or Daw Thant Zin Han ( 713-392-9929).

BAAT will provide white rice, drinks, tea, snack, and plastic utensils.

**BAAT MEMBERS AND THOSE WHO CANNOT BRING FOOD CAN ENJOY LUNCH BY PAYING \$5.00 PER PERSON AT THE REGISTRATION DESK.**

**BURMESE STUFF**

A variety of Burmese magazines, novels and tapes will be on sale at reasonable prices. All proceeds from this sale will be donated to BAAT by Kathleen (Ma Nwe) and Bruce Sebecke who are generous providers of the sale items.

**IF YOU WISH TO SELL BURMESE MUSIC OR CULTURE RELATED ITEMS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO BAAT MEMBERS AT THE PICNIC, PLEASE CALL AYE AYE KYI (BAAT PRESIDENT) IN ADVANCE TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE BAAT POLICIES.**

**THE AUCTION**

Every year, BAAT members find THE AUCTION very entertaining. You can earn extra cash by auctioning off your hidden treasures at the picnic and donating a portion of your proceeds to BAAT.

**JUST CALL ANY BAAT OFFICER IN ADVANCE AND BRING YOUR ITEMS.**

**BAAT IS GOING GREEN!**  
**YOU CAN HELP BAAT AND THE ENVIRONMENT BY USING THE PLASTIC UTENSILS SPARINGLY AT THE PICNIC.**  
**THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR THE WORLD.**

**TIPS FOR PICNIC SUCCESS**

Register at the front desk and pick up your nametag, review your membership status and contact information.

If your address changed, please provide your new contact information so that you will continue to receive newsletter from BAAT.

Game timetable will be posted on a board. Please check it often to find out the exact time of a game.

**BAAT APPRECIATES YOUR HELP IN MAKING THE PICNIC ENJOYABLE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS.**

**Water balloons are not allowed.**

Please do not throw water at people who stay inside the pavilion or anyone who does not wish to get wet.

Please understand and respect the needs of others.

**WHY IS THA-GYAR MIN SO SAD & FORLORN? MA ZIN ALSO KNOWN AS ANGEL TIN MAR LWIN TELLS US WHY.**

Every year, around this time, housewife –turned- papa-razzi Ma Zin would have a dialog with His Reverence, Tha-Gyar Min. The excerpts from those talks would send the readers into fits of laughter. But the events that happened last year in our homeland right after Thingyan were enough to make even the likes of Tha-Gyar Min to cry inconsolably.

*Nargis! - A pretty name for a storm that overnight created literally a sea of suffering humanity.* At least a million people lost their homes, loved ones, their possessions & all manners of livelihood. Against all odds, folks from all over the globe rushed to help. We could only say Sadu three times, many times to the good Samaritans, Burmese & non-Burmese alike

who pitched in time, money, expertise & all resources right to that remote corner of the world. They ran risks to make the impossible logistics possible.

Then, the think tanks started thinking. What if donor fatigue sets in? Even Tha-Gyar Min needed some convincing. Still, Ma Zin insisted we are Burmese, a people who will uphold what holds our DNA intact: generosity and the concern for those in pain or poverty. (Let's not discuss about a few black sheep.) Let us each do our part to help our fellow citizens. If you stop to ponder that for the cost of a hamburger or a latte, you can feed a family of five for at least two days.

Save the pennies too. Every bit will help. \$100 is enough to build a school for the kids whose futures seem so uncertain. Please make sure you choose a reputable source to channel your contributions big or small. Some examples are BAAT, TDSA and AMIM (all Myanmar institutes of medicine) where a hundred percent of funds will be used for the victims. Let's bring back smiles on their faces, put souls back in their lives & recreate

a future they truly deserve. We will do that with outpouring of love from inside our hearts.

Cry no more, Sir!  
Your earth girl,  
Ma Zin

**BAAT Officers (2009)**

<b>President:</b>	Daw Aye Aye Kyi (281-265-3300)
<b>VP-Executive:</b>	Daw Thant Zin Han (713-392-9929)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Daw Terry Win (281-358-6139)
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Daw Ayemyint Twin (281-993-4592)
<b>VP-Finance:</b>	U Robert Chan (281-242-8915)
<b>VP-Social:</b>	Daw San San Myint (281-530-1898)
<b>VP-Austin:</b>	Daw Wa Wa Myint (512-451-2348)
<b>VP-Dallas:</b>	Daw Molly Win (817-292-3969)
<b>VP-San Antonio:</b>	U Tin Aung Hla (210-490-0519)
<b>Resettlement Committee:</b>	U Shwe Tun Aung (713-447-0438)
<b>Immediate Past President :</b>	U Myo Aye Thane (281-565-0364)

**DO YOU KNOW HOW BAAT ORIGINATED?**

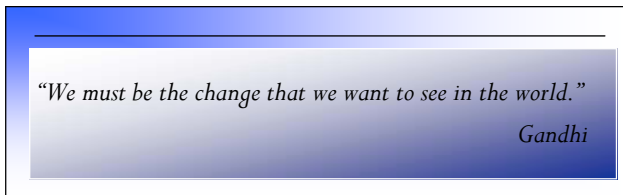
Twenty four years ago, approximately 50 Burmese adults and children celebrated the Annual Water Festival on April 14 at Bear Creek Park in Houston, Texas. As if Thagyar Min (The King of the Celestial Beings) wanted to bless the Burmese folks for celebrating the first water festival in Houston, rain poured down heavily that day and doused all picnic participants. Never the less, the notion to plan a more organized celebration was born that day. In the following year, 1986, approximately 100 people attended an organized picnic at Bear Creek Park on April 20.

Three years later, a formal organization was formed and Articles of Incorporation for the Burmese American Association of

Texas (BAAT) was submitted to the Secretary of State of Texas in March 1989. The first Board of Directors were Norman Zaw Wong, Min Jack Tham and Peter Saw.

When was the first time you come to the BAAT Thingyan picnic? How did you come to know about it? Do you remember the details? Please send your BAAT picnic story to baat.hou@gmail.com by July 31, 2009. The most compelling story will be featured in the next BAAT newsletter.

Please limit your story to 200 words.



Also, you must be a paid member to submit your

story. Please provide your full name, address and phone number in your e-mail.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Celebration**

Congratulations to James Kyaw, second son of Dr. Melvin Thein Kyaw and Daw San San Myint of Houston for his marriage to Ma Thu Thu Aye on December 20, 2008.

**Condolences**

To Dr. Khine Khine Oo of Houston (U Moe Oo Zaw) for the passing of her beloved brother U Khin Maung Oo (52 yrs) of Pyay, Myanmar on February 7, 2009.



**BURMESE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (BAAT)**

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

E-mail: [baat.hou@gmail.com](mailto:baat.hou@gmail.com)

If you wish to receive e-newsletter and periodic e-mails from BAAT, please send an e-mail to BAAT.



**MISSION STATEMENT**

To establish a multi-ethnic, non-denominational activity center called the Burmese Cultural Center of Texas to promote Burmese culture, language, literature, and works of art by equipping it with a library in order to educate the public at large in Burmese culture through reading and self-exploration.

To sponsor and invite well-known Burmese scholars, artists, musicians, and religious and spiritual philosophers to conduct and present seminars, classes, and educational workshops with the purpose of promoting and educating the public on various facets of Burmese culture.

To promote and foster friendship, fellowship, and racial harmony between the Burmese and all other racial and ethnic groups living in the United States of America through cross-cultural social activities that engender cultural interactions amongst a diverse community.

To help eliminate prejudice and discrimination and establish fraternal relations amongst members of the community by encouraging and advancing cultural diversity and tolerance towards ethnic and racial differences through cultural awareness programs and social activities.

To assist the Burmese immigrants in learning the English language and provide the upward mobility necessary to improve their socio-economic conditions.

**MISCELLANEOUS NEWS**

**WEBSITES**

If you would like to check out a new Burmese cook book, please go to, [www.hsaba.com](http://www.hsaba.com).

Do you know the botanical name of a popular Burmese leaf called Kadat? Check out [www.tuninst.net/MyanMedPlants](http://www.tuninst.net/MyanMedPlants) which has an impressive list of Burmese medicinal plants and botanical names.

**BECOME A BAAT VOLUNTEER**

**BAAT picnic and November party exist through the dedicated effort of volunteers.**

**Your service make a difference to The Burmese-American Community.**

**DUES ARE DUE**

Single membership: \$10  
Family membership: \$25

Pay your membership dues at the picnic or mail your check to U Robert Chan (VP-Finance) at 165 N. Hall Drive, Sugar Land, TX 77478. Checks should be **payable to BAAT.**

If you have not paid membership dues in 2008, please reinstate your membership. Members are not required to pay past dues for the years before 2008.

Do you have a talented child who would like to perform at the BAAT party in November?

Send an e-mail to BAAT mentioning the child's name and age, name of instrument that he/she plays and his/her availability.

