

ADVENTURES IN LAOS

This faraway land captured Patti's and my heart in 2012. You will hear more in a later newsletter about Laos but let me first tell you about this year's adventure.

Steve Rutledge is the volunteer who heads up the NGO Adopt A Village in Laos and spends many months on the ground here. He hails from Port Hope, ON.

He arranged for us to head north of Luang Prabang to a couple of very remote villages. We set off in a van and travelled two hours to a village where we would overnight in a guest house, a nice new one. The next day, a flatbed truck arrived to take us to the village. "Roads" were to be difficult so we needed a truck. They did not exaggerate. We loaded up the truck with 10 cases of Beer Lao as the villagers love a good party. They distill their own whiskey also: Whiskey Lao. 100% alcohol!!

Steve has done SO much good work. At Thong Theung village, we celebrated the building of a new dam in a village that previously had NO water. The women of the village always had to climb down a cliff a very long way to carry water. Imagine how much impact this will all have on their lives. Steve arranged it all. BIG cost: \$78,000.00. The village also just received water filters, one per family (approx. 148 families) courtesy of Adopt A Village. At last they can drink clean water. There are also 12 "stalls" scattered around the village from which they can collect water or shower. We taught an English class and attended a baci, a very special celebratory meal in our honour. They kill a pig and a goat and the whole village gets involved.

Patti Lee, Enid Roitman and Barbara run a fundraiser every year to buy water filters for Laos. This year it will be held on TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 12 at Temple Sinai before Lee's game.

Alex will be doing a special one hour bridge workshop that morning as part of the event.

SAVE THE DATE!!! See pictures below of highlights of the two days.



Each water filter costs \$125.00 Can or \$100.00 USD. You can donate a water filter or any amount that you wish. A donation of \$30.00 or more will receive a tax deductible receipt. **Cheques made out to: Adopt A Village in Laos** may be sent to: **Barbara Seagram, 220 Lawrence Ave East, Toronto, ON M4N 1T2, Canada**



This was a momentous occasion for this village. A HUGE event in their lives. We take water so much for granted. Now hear this: The neighbouring village was pretty jealous of this village getting water that someone actually cut the pipe. The engineer had to track down the root of the problem and repair it. Adopt A Village has now pledged to do a water



project for this other village next year...another \$55,000.00!!

Another village, Ban Na Lea the next day. A van to the river, a boat to cross the river and then a tractor to take us to the village. Oh man, that was a bumpy ride. Coming back, we walked and took the bridge across the small stream.





A few years ago, when I was in this village, there was only one log on which to cross the bridge. This is progress!!

Siphon works for Adopt A Village in Laos. He is pictured in green above. He provides endless help through translation as well as coordinates all of Steve's efforts throughout the entire year. Patti and I met him in 2012 when he had not yet finished University and hardly spoke any English. He has come SO far and it is a delight to know him.



On one of my trips to Laos, several years ago, I taught at Ban Na Lea Village in the schoolhouse to the left. On the right, you will see the new Schoolhouse built by Adopt a Village in Laos. It was so needed. Our team taught a class here and gave out supplies.

We also met with two orphaned brothers that AAVIL sponsors, Do and Tic, ages 11 and 13. They are wonderful kids.

