

Rejoice Foundation Newsletter

January 2015

18th IUSTI Asia-Pacific Conference...

In November 2014, Gee Jaiglar of Rejoice Thailand and Dr Martin Huddart, Trustee of Rejoice Foundation UK attended the 18th IUSTI Asia-Pacific Conference at The Ambassador Hotel in Bangkok. The theme was "STI, HIV and Sexual Health. Global Collaboration for Effective Prevention.

This was a three and a half day conference on all aspects of sexually transmitted infections and included presentations from leading experts from the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the United States.

Two main WHO aspirations were trailed. Firstly the UNAIDS 90-90-90 ambitious treatment target to help end the AIDS epidemic. By 2020, WHO would like to reach a target of 90% of all

people living with HIV knowing their HIV status; 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection receiving sustained antiretroviral therapy and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

The second aspiration was the Global Initiative of Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of Syphilis and HIV: An Attainable Maternal and Child Health Goal. To achieve this goal would require the identification of pregnant women in the first trimester, testing them for HIV and Syphilis and initiating antiretroviral and antibiotic treatment at the point of diagnosis. With the introduction of inexpensive and accurate near-patient testing kits and the reduced cost of antiretroviral drugs, WHO believes that prevention of infecting the unborn child with these devastating infections is possible.



Gee Jaiglar and Dr. Martin Huddart

Background

Rejoice Charity provides medical, social and educational support to communities infected with and affected by HIV/Aids.

Rejoice has no religious or political affiliation and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or ability.

Based in the city of Chiang Mai, Rejoice makes weekly visits to communities as far afield as Mae Ai in the north to Chomthong in the south.

Objectives

Rejoice's Goal is to provide the much needed medical and social support system to the poor, sick and under-privileged living in Chiang Mai's villages and the surrounding hill areas. In particular, Rejoice addresses the diverse array of medical and social needs of HIV/AIDS affected people.

Rejoice's programmes cater to a variety of needs, there are HIV/AIDS medical care, HIV/AIDS education and prevention programmes, free infant formulas, education sponsorships and one to one counselling.

The distribution of infant formulas has been very effective. Apparently, babies born to infected mothers may not develop HIV/AIDS if not breastfed.

Living with HIV

Supporting; children, families and communities in rural Chiang Mai Province

Providing; formula milk, palliative medicines, food provisions, school scholarships

Emotional support; counselling, community meetings focused on education and prevention of HIV and other STDs.

...18th IUSTI Asia-Pacific Conference

These two WHO initiatives are fundamental to the work of Rejoice Thailand and, during 2015, the Charity will liaise with other health care providers in Chiang Mai province to discuss how best it can support these aspirations, within the financial and workforce resources of Rejoice.

In contrast to these optimistic presentations, were reports of a rapid rise of rates of HIV and Syphilis in MSM (men having sex with men) in China. This is apparently due to the previous one child policy in China introduced in the 1970's, which created a gender imbalance with 24 million

"left-over men" unable to find a bride.

The advent of smart phone apps and social media has helped to facilitate casual sexual encounters between men and the risk of transmission of HIV and Syphilis.

In summary, the conference was very informative and stimulating, bringing together the leading specialists in HIV and Sexually Transmitted infections from around the World, highlighting the advent of inexpensive near-patient testing and effective antiretroviral treatments and the potential to eradicate the HIV epidemic within the foreseeable future.

References:

[90-90-90 An Ambitious treatment target to help end the AIDS epidemic.](#)

[UNAIDS October 2014.](#)

[Investment case for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of syphilis](#)

[WHO 2012.](#)

Welcome to Royal Mountain...

The healthcare workers at Chiang Dao District hospital have formed a support group for everyone living with HIV in Chiang Dao District. The name of the group is กลุ่มผู้ขวัญคอยหลวง (Welcome to Royal Mountain).

On the final Wednesday of each month a self-help group of local HIV/Aids victims get together for an informal meeting and lunch at Chiang Dao Hospital. The object of the meeting is to share their knowledge and experience of living with HIV, health issues, antiretroviral medicine and opportunistic sicknesses they and their family

have encountered. The meetings are especially useful for new HIV patients. They can discuss with the more experienced group members factors such as stigma, side effects of ARV medicine and the importance of a regular daily regime of taking their medicine.

On the final Wednesday of the year the group holds their AGM (Annual General Meeting), at the specially designated building at the hospital.

This year the meeting was held on December 24th with over 120 attendees many of whom travel long distances on motor bikes or the rear of a pick-up truck. The main purpose of the meeting is to communicate the latest news and information concerning HIV.

Hot lunch is provided and each person brings a small present which is exchanged with another person. The meeting also provides a meeting place for people affected by HIV to meet each other, many would not have met since the previous AGM, and to discuss issues with others from different ethnic origins.



At Chiang Dao District Hospital

...Welcome to Royal Mountain



Kanda

Kanda, a HIV positive healthcare volunteer, explained to the meeting that the government decided that Thai citizens and registered migrants with HIV can receive anti-retro-viral therapy (ART) free, regardless of CD4 cell count (an important indicator of how well your immune system is working). Previously people with HIV would only receive ARV medicine when their CD4 count fell below a certain level.

Also, the patients were reminded of the importance of taking their medicine and to keep a close check on when their next appointment at the hospital will be and to bring along any unused medicine they may still have.

The Rejoice Team has been attending these meetings for over three years and are well known to all of the patients. Rejoice helps with the food and transportation costs and distributes donated clothing, blankets, toiletries and school materials to the needy.



Certificate of Appreciation from the HIV group, the local municipality and schools thanking Rejoice for the work being done supporting people living with HIV in Chiang Dao District.

Russ Taufa returns

Russ Taufa is Insight Director (Global Insight and Analytics) for SDL based in Saigon, Vietnam. On his first visit, last year, Russ was so impressed by the work Rejoice was doing in supporting people living with HIV in the remote communities in Chiang Mai Province, he wrote a very complimentary article, [Russ Taufa \(SDL\)](#), which was included in the Rejoice January 2014 Newsletter.

Russ recently made his second visit to Rejoice. He spent a week with the Rejoice team on their outreach visits. Russ gives tremendous encouragement to the people living with HIV and the Rejoice staff - he is always welcome.

Russ works for [SDL plc](#), a company with headquarters in Maidenhead, UK, providing software and service solutions for language translation purposes.



SDL also operate in Thailand and, thanks to their country manager, Wight Wong, have been supporting Rejoice for several years and are Rejoice's main supporters.

Another regular visitor was Nigel Haunch, chairman of Rejoice Foundation UK. This year Nigel missed Russ by a couple of days but was here for Alan's 70th birthday celebrated together with friends and Rejoice staff at a local restaurant in the city.



Wi, Arm, Russ, Gee and Alan at

Tulips from Amsterdam?

Not really – cheese from Alkmaar!



Frank, Wendy and daughter Anouk have been sponsoring twins Narin (Bank) and Mayuree (Bow) for several years, the twins will be 19 years old next February

Mayuree is studying chemistry at Rajabhat University and Narin is in his final year at high school. They both live with their HIV+ve mother, their father having deserted the family.



Twins Mayuree and Narin with mum

Frank and Wendy hail from The Netherlands. Previously, Frank worked for BP (British Petroleum) in West Africa. He and Wendy bought a house near Chiang Mai where Wendy lived whilst Frank was away working in the Oil Industry. BP has a scheme whereby they match donations their employees make to an approved charity. Thus, Rejoice and the twins benefited two-fold from Frank and Wendy's donations. In 2013 Frank left BP and is now working as a consultant based in Alkmaar, a city in the north of The Netherlands. Although the family have returned to The Netherlands they still maintain their house in Hang Dong near Chiang Mai and allow friends who visit Thailand to

use it free of charge - they ask the visitors to drop money into a collection box for their favourite charity, Rejoice.

Last week Frank and daughter Anouk popped into the Rejoice office and dropped of a donation from themselves together with the donations from their friends in the collection box. Frank and Wendy will also continue the annual sponsorship of Mayuree's and Narin's education which comes up for renewal in March 2015.

Now back in Alkmaar, no doubt looking forward to skating on the canals and eating lots of cheese this festive season.

Thank you Frank, Wendy and Anouk. Looking forward to your next visit to Chiang Mai.



Alan with Frank and Anouk at Rejoice Office



Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Winter Landscape with Skaters and a Bird Trap (1565)

One man's trash is another man's fortune

Connie Low and family together with a group of like minded people make regular donations of clothing, toys, school materials etc. for the poor people living with HIV in Chiang Mai province.

The boxes, particularly the ones with warm clothing, have arrived at a good time since the temperature in Northern Thailand can drop to single figures (degrees centigrade) in winter. If you consider that many people in rural areas live in houses built of bamboo with no heating then gifts of clothing and blankets are always thankfully received.

Connie and husband Ray run a blog showing a timeline of the development of their three young children. In the blog is a Instagram link, "One man's trash is another man's fortune" where Connie uses the phrase to highlight the collection of donated items to be sent from Singapore to Chiang Mai.



Arm, Gee and Wi with the packages received from Connie

Meditation Weekend at Wat Umong



Meditation Weekend at Wat Umong

Rejoice sponsored a meeting for people living with HIV in Chiang Dao district in conjunction with HIV healthcare workers from Chiang Dao Hospital. This month a gathering of approximately 40 people came from their villages to Chiang Dao hospital.

Here they were met by the health care workers who had organised transport for them to travel to Wat Umong which is in Chiang Mai city about 2 hours drive south from Chiang Dao. They were here to spend their week-end together meditating and receiving blessings from the monks at the temple. Also, a very important aspect of such meetings is for the patients to meet each other and exchange information, stories and concerns regarding living with HIV.

Rejoice helped the patients with the transportation costs, without which many would not have been able to attend.

World Aids Day 2014



World Aids Day 2014 at Tung Kao Puang

Tung Kao Puang

World Aids Day falls on 1st. December each year. Schools and government institutions (hospitals, police and army and local municipalities) get together to promote awareness of HIV. This year, Chiang Dao district held their jamboree at Tung Kao Puang, situated in a village half way between Chiang Dao and Arunotai on the Myanmar border.

Schools organise art and written competitions for the students. School bands play and students of varying ethnicities perform traditional dances.

Stalls were set up around the school's playing fields offering advice, brochures, condoms and advice on sexual and reproductive health - all in a light-hearted and informal manner.

Rejoice and the HIV healthcare workers manned a stall providing advice, brochures, condoms and general school materials.

Prizes, for the competition winners were presented by an army official.

Sanpathong

Also in Sanpathong World Aids Day was commemorated. In the morning a meeting was held at Wat Huarrin temple for family and friends of people who have succumbed to the HIV virus. Here people paid respect to absent family and friends and they

received blessings from the monks at the temple. Later, they went to Sanpathong hospital where a special meeting was held to commemorate World Aids Day. Here the stalls were set out with brochures, posters and general information about HIV prevention both for the children and adults.

Similar World Aids Day commemorations were held throughout Chiang Mai province.



Parents and children at Wat Huarrin, Sanpathong

Loi Krathong Festival

Friends of Rejoice Singapore (FRS) visit



Yi Peng or Yee Peng (local name) is part of the festival of lights in Northern Thailand to show respect to Buddha. Its date usually coincides with Loi Krathong which all of Thailand celebrates using floating lights on water. Yi Peng is different in that lights are placed into sky lanterns which float up into the air.

Alongside the floating light ceremonies there are also parades, fireworks, displays of colourful lanterns and cultural highlights.

Since Chiang Mai was the former capital of the Lanna Kingdom it holds the largest Yi Peng Festival.

As in previous years, Wight Wong organised a trip to Chiang Mai for the Friends of Rejoice Singapore (FRS). This year the group comprised 10 members. They enjoyed the all the cultural aspects of Loi Krathong and floated their problems away either up in the air in a Khom Krathong (lantern) or in a 'Krathong' (small basket) specially made to float down the river Ping.

As always after the Loi Krathong celebrations the group hired a minibus and spent a full day with the Rejoice team visiting

Chiang Dao including their favourite venue, the See-Un Muang Day-care Centre. They bought warm clothes and goodies for the children at a local market in Chiang Mai, and together with warm clothing and other items they brought from Singapore distributed them to the children and various locations around Chiang Dao.

The Friends of Rejoice Singapore (FRS) are a group of generous individuals living in Singapore who have been helping the needy families and children affected by HIV. The group is organised by Wight Wong and make regular monthly contributions to Rejoice. The group sponsors the education of 25 children through the Rejoice scholarship scheme, individual members raise funds by making handicrafts for sale to friends and colleagues, individuals donate provisions to the needy and on their annual visit bring warm clothing, toys and goodies for the children.

Their efforts and kindness are very much appreciated by the recipients.

A big thank you from Rejoice on behalf of all the beneficiaries.



SDL Renew 12 Education Sponsorships



SDL Language Services have been supporting Rejoice for over 5 years. Without the help and advice of Winston Wong, SDL's Thailand country manager, Rejoice probably would not exist today. SDL's support and encouragement following Steve Hallam's death was instrumental in the revival of Rejoice.

Still continuing today, SDL has renewed sponsorships for 12 needy students who otherwise may not have been able to attend school. Also, SDL continues contributing to the medicine and formula milk programmes as well the general running costs of Rejoice.

The photo shows Russ, Narumon and her father receiving the scholarship. The children each receive 7,000 baht which helps to cover the costs of uniforms and shoes, writing materials, a daily lunch and travel expenses for one year.

Some of the children are HIV/Aids orphans being looked after by grandparents or other relatives. Some are also HIV+ and receive free anti-retroviral drugs from the small hospital in Chiang Dao town.

SDL Language services are based in Maidenhead, England, a picturesque town on the river Thames west of London. Each year SDL allocates a portion of its profit to needy communities world-wide.



Narumon and her father with Russ Taufa of SDL

On behalf of the Rejoice and all the recipients in Chiang Mai province - **THANK YOU SDL**

For information about SDL and the services they offer, visit their website at:

www.sdl.com

Education Sponsorship....

Rejoice currently directly assist over 500 HIV+ve patients and their families regularly on a weekly basis. The children of these patients and HIV/Aids orphans are eligible for educational scholarships. Currently 66 children have scholarships through Rejoice.

All, in one way or another, are affected by the virus and their extended families are finding it extremely difficult to make ends meet. They have become much poorer and many are finding it difficult to come to terms with the additional hardship and responsibility of living with HIV. Many extended families cannot cope with the increased costs of caring for an additional child (or children) and have no option but to put the child into an orphanage.

Others, with the help of sponsorship can afford to send the child to school which often frees-up sufficient funds to allow the family to stay together. Ostensibly, the sponsorship is in the form of

an "educational scholarship" but in reality it is much more, it will;

- allow the child to attend school
- allow the child to grow-up in his/her community with their extended family
- allow the child to learn to speak the language and follow the religion of their community
- make it easier for the family to accept financial help – the money is received on behalf of the child
- prevent the child becoming institutionalised in an orphanage
- be a significant factor in deciding whether the child continues his/her education to high school, college or university.

....Education Scholarships



Sponsor a Child's Education

There are many families affected by HIV/Aids. It could be that grandparents, relatives or one parent have taken on the responsibility of raising children affected by HIV. The child may be also be infected or orphaned by the virus. The hardships and difficulties of bringing up children in such circumstances can be quite substantial. Often without a regular income the household can be in danger of falling into abject poverty.

A wonderful way to help such families is to sponsor a child's education for one year.

- For infants and Junior School children 5,000 baht
- Secondary School children (ages usually between 16 and 18) 7,000 baht
- College and University students 10,000 baht.

The higher figure of 10,000 baht reflects the higher cost of transportation and fees etc. The images show some of the children being sponsored through Rejoice.

There are many more children who could greatly benefit from your sponsorship. Please link to ["Ways to Help"](#) page on the website.

Please go to the [DONATE](#) page to sponsor a child and to make a donation.

Please also send an email to; contact@rejoicecharity.com so that we can thank you.



Testimonials

I was stunned by the remarkable progress the Charity had made over that period. By linking in with volunteer HIV health workers from Chiang Dao Hospital, Mae Ai and San Kamphaeng clinics, Rejoice has effectively increased their outreach workforce from one to seven health care workers, with minimal staff costs. This has expanded the catchment area significantly and Rejoice is now visiting villages as close to the [Burmese](#) border as it is possible to travel by road and reaching communities, whom have no access to health care locally.



Dr. [Martin](#) Huddart (Trustee Rejoice Foundation)

However, the most impactful part was being able to use my time to give back in a meaningful way to those in need. It's clear the patients require the check in, medical support, and supplies the outreach team provides, but I think just as crucial is the emotional support – knowing they can count on an experienced team who cares being there for them on a consistent basis. At every clinic and home we visited, the patients faces lit up when they saw the truck and the guys coming to spend time with them. Knowing the Rejoice team does this week on week, year on year, my efforts were really just a small drop in the bucket compared to the work they do. I have so much respect and admiration for Alan, Gee, Wi, and Arm, and I'm so grateful to them for facilitating this experience for me.



Russ Taufa
(Insight Director, Global Insight and Analytics, SDL Vietnam)

Coming in for just a week, or two or three won't make it far even if you knew the language. Even if you would possess skills and education that are directly linked to the charity's field of work. You need months to get to know the culture, the system and most important of all the people and gain their trust. Money is easy to give. PayPal, credit cards, money transfer, you name it. Problem is finding a charity that puts the money to good use. For the benefit of the people. A good indicator for a charity like this can be found from what Rejoice does. A real grassroots charity run by locals, that employs locals, empowerment is done by locals and thus they gain the trust of the people they work so hard (and with [so](#) little!) for.



[Viljami](#) Hätönen
(research student, and paramedic, Finland)

Please Support Rejoice

- **By direct bank transfer;**

Donations can be made either direct to the local (Thai baht) account in Chiang Mai, Thailand or, alternatively to London, UK (GB pounds). or Maastricht, Netherlands (Euro). Account details are shown in the tables below.

Account	Alan Wheeler (Rejoice Charity)	Account:	Rejoice Foundation UK	Account:	Alan Wheeler
Bank name:	Bangkok Bank PLC	Bank Name:	HSBC Ltd	Bank Name:	ABN AMRO Bank
Address:	Thapae Road	Address:	Canary Wharf, London E14	Address:	Maastricht,
	Chiang Mai 50100	Account No:	41466879		Netherlands
	Thailand	Sort Code:	40-02-44	Account No:	Acct no: 41.28.64.495
Account No.	251-4-767678	Swift Code:	MIDLGB22	BIC code:	ABNANL2A
Swift Code:	BKKBTHBK	IBAN	GB89MIDL40024441466879	IBAN:	NL85ABNA0412864495

- **By Credit Card via PayPal**

If you want to make a donation via PayPal, [go to Rejoice website and click on the “Donate Today”](#) button in the top right corner.

- **Create a Standing Order**

If you would like to make a regular contribution /donation, of whatever size, please print out and complete this standing order form with your bank details and amount pledged, then return it to Rejoice Foundation UK (not your bank) at the address below;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

- **Gift Aid**

If you are a UK taxpayer, Rejoice can reclaim tax on your donation from the Inland Revenue at no extra cost or inconvenience to you. This currently makes your donation (at basic rate) worth an extra 25p for each £1 given.

If you pay tax at the higher rate, you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment return.

For us to benefit in this way when you donate, you can download and print this [PDF form](#), sign it and send to the address below OR, alternatively, you could email your home address to contact@rejoicecharity.com and we will post the Gift Aid form to you to sign and return to;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

- **Send a Cheque**

If the banks are still accepting cheques and you wish to make a one-off or intermittent donation to Rejoice, please make your cheques payable to 'Rejoice Foundation UK' and send them to;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY



Notes for Donors

Please let us know about your donation by sending a short email to; contact@rejoicecharity.com. So that we may contact you and thank you directly.

If you would like part of your donation to go towards sponsoring a child's education (5,000 baht) please let us know whether we should select a child on your behalf or you would prefer to select a child yourself, in which case we will send the Excel file 'Children Seeking Sponsorship' to help you decide.

Thank you all for your generous support.

Please visit our website; www.rejoicecharity.com and let your friends and relatives hear about us by forwarding this newsletter or better still printing it and use it as a discussion topic.

Your help and constructive criticism will be gratefully received so please send all your comments to;

contact@rejoicecharity.com

Rejoice Foundation UK Trustees

The international fundraising arm of Rejoice based in the UK was started by Nigel Haunch who, after living and working in Asia for some years, returned to London to run his own media consultancy business. Having learned about the work of Rejoice on the internet, Nigel made a visit and was moved by the scale of the HIV/AIDS crisis in northern Thailand. At the same time, he was impressed by the extraordinary achievements of Rejoice in helping those infected and affected by the epidemic, particularly in outlying rural communities.

The Trustees of Rejoice Foundation UK are as follows;

Chairperson Nigel Haunch

Vice Chair Dr Darrall Higson—a Consultant in Pharmaceutical Medicine and formerly a medical director of GlaxoSmithKline

RFUK honorary Secretary Prof Philip Evans, Director of Research for the University of Westminster,

Dr Martin Huddart is a General Practitioner in East London and also a tutor at the UK's Royal Free and University College Medical Schools

Alan Wheeler, a retired petroleum petrophysical engineer who now lives in Chiang Mai



Alan Wheeler
Jan 2015

