

Buyong Sponsorship Program News 2003

The Buyong Sponsorship Program began in 1982 when Martha Zaiser decided to help Nora Erbito complete her high school education. Starting with this simple goal the BSP quickly expanded to include many more scholarships for deserving students, assistance to the Buyong Elementary School, and projects to improve the overall health and standard of living for residents of Buyong and Maribago.

Over the last twenty years the program has continued to pursue these three main goals. Despite some initial setbacks, we have had many successes, including:

Scholarships: Sixty-two students have gone to high school and/or college as a part of the program. Sixty-seven different individuals, families, school clubs or church groups have participated in this aspect of the program. Graduates of the Buyong Sponsorship Program include industrial and civil engineers, quality control inspectors for a variety of firms, health care workers, teachers, government workers, police, hotel and restaurant employees, dive shop operators, scuba instructors, and even a disc jockey.

Elementary School Projects: Contributions to the Buyong Elementary School include:

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| 1. Roof repair after typhoon | 9. School fencing completed |
| 2. New classroom desks and benches | 10. Tree planting |
| 3. Medical clinic construction | 11. Encyclopedias for the school library |
| 4. Garden fencing | 12. Laptop computers for school use |
| 5. Workbooks for the lower grades | 13. Computer instruction for teachers and Grade Six students |
| 6. Electricity throughout the school | 14. Desktop publishing of school Graduation Programme |
| 7. Installation of running water in the school | |
| 8. Mimeograph machine | |

School Food Program: The school food program continues to provide a hot meal for every child in the school. Since its inception in 1986 the BES Food Program has distributed more than one and a half million meals.

Medical Program: The BSP supports education and immunization programs at the Maribago Health Center. Our own BSP Medical Program continues to provide education and medicine for Buyong residents with tuberculosis.

Village-wide Projects: Working with the Maribago Barangay Council, the BSP has helped with many community projects, such as:

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| 1. Typhoon relief – repair and rebuilding of more than fifty houses following a major typhoon | 6. Maribago school roof repair |
| 2. The establishment of water cooperatives and the construction of communal toilets in four locations | 7. Construction at the Datag Daycare Center |
| 3. The development of a trash collection system | 8. Gravel surfaced Buyong village beach access road |
| 4. Participation in the barangay "Clean and Green Campaign" | 9. Laptop computers and instruction for the Maribago Barangay Council |
| 5. Assistance for the annual "International Coastal Clean-up" | 10. Continued assistance and support for programs at the Maribago Health Center. |



Of course, none of this would have been possible without the initial vision of Martha and the generous support received from more than 200 people during our more than twenty-year history. Your contributions have made a big difference in the lives of many people.

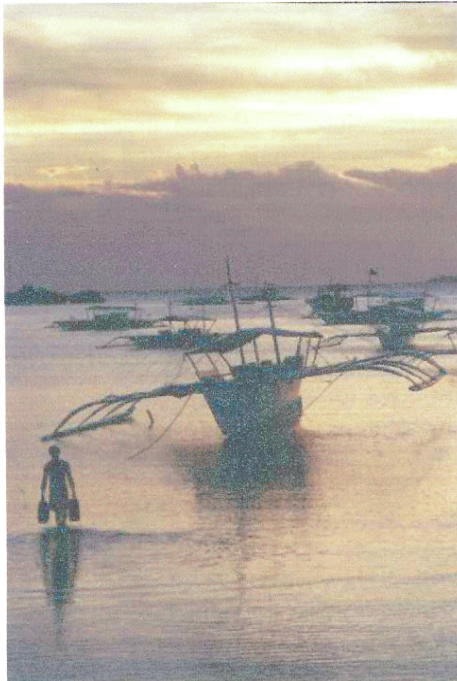
We hope you will continue to tell others about the Buyong Sponsorship Program and remember us when it is time to give. With your contributions we can further pursue our goal of helping the people of Buyong.



Buyong



Buyong is one of the five sitios of Barangay Maribago, which lies on the eastern side of Mactan Island. Mactan Island is adjacent to the central Philippine city of Cebu. Mactan is the place where Ferdinand Magellan met his death at the hands of Lapu-Lapu in 1521. The island is covered with coral and rocks that make farming extremely difficult. Island products are guitars, rattan and wooden furniture, and items made of native stone and shells. Mactan Cebu International Airport is on the northwestern side of the island, while the island's only city, Lapu-Lapu, is on the west side opposite Maribago and Buyong.



Buyong, like much of Maribago, is squeezed between beach resorts that claim most of the shoreline. The local people have only a narrow access to the water, limiting the area they can use for boating and fishing. Families of eight to twelve live in small homes. Pigs, goats and chickens roam freely through the village. Tuberculosis and leprosy are endemic to the village. Most houses have electricity now. Running water has been extended to some of the village homes near the main road. Some houses have toilets, but there is no sewage system. Shallow, brackish wells provide water for bathing and washing clothes. Many families still have to purchase drinking water.



Villagers work as boatmen, dive guides and vendors. Some are able to find employment in the nearby resorts. Others are able to find jobs in the factories located in the Mactan Export Processing Zone, near the airport. A high school or college diploma is needed for permanent work, yet many adults have not completed their education. Many of the companies on Mactan avoid paying the minimum wage (US\$ 4.00 / day) by offering only five-month contracts. According to the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment, the cost of supporting a family of four is approximately US\$ 10.00 / day, leaving most families in Buyong well under the poverty level.

The Buyong Sponsorship Program continues to work directly with the Maribago Barangay Council to improve the health and standard of living for residents. We continue to support the Barangay "Clean & Green" Campaign, and help organize the annual International Coastal Clean-up each September. The public toilets that we built and the water cooperatives we helped establish serve more than 100 families. Our work with the Maribago Health Center focuses on education and immunizations for mothers and young children. We also arrange for donations of much-needed medicines to the clinic.

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Buyong Elementary School

Buyong Elementary School has a staff of 16 and approximately 700 students. The school accepts children from Buyong and two other sitios of Barangay Maribago. The Buyong Sponsorship Program has worked closely with the school since 1984. A variety of projects and donations have directly benefited the school, including the following:



- The school roof was repaired following a major typhoon in 1986.
- Fifty school desks and benches were also purchased for the school in 1986.
- That same year the school lunch program was started, giving each student a nutritious daily meal.
- In 1987 the school garden area was fenced to protect from goats.
- The school medical clinic was built in 1987, making the school eligible for more government assistance.
- Workbooks were also purchased for students in grades 1 – 3.
- The BSP and the local PTCA raised money in 1988 to install an electric meter and put lights in all rooms.
- During 1989 running water was installed in every classroom and toilets were built for the school.
- A mimeograph machine was purchased for teacher use in 1991.
- By 1996 the Buyong Sponsorship Program had helped to fence the entire school.
- Local jewelry manufacturers sponsored art contests in 1997 with our help.
- Also in 1997 we helped arrange of donation of National Geographic books through "Books for the Barrios."
- In 1998 complete sets of encyclopedias and dictionaries were donated to the school.
- In 1999 we helped with a new gate for the front of the school.
- In 2000 and 2002 laptop computers were donated for school use.
- The BSP, Maribago Barangay Council and Buyong Elementary School hold regular clean up drives and participate in the annual "International Coastal Clean-up." Grade 5 and 6 students participate in these activities.
- Since 2000, Paul has been teaching basic computer skills at the school three times a week. Teachers and Grade 6 pupils are introduced to word processing, spreadsheets and use of the Internet.
- For the past three years, Paul, Grade 6 teacher Morena Dumao and selected students have designed and published the school graduation program, as well as designing other classroom artwork on the computer.

School Food Program

The Buyong Sponsorship Program, with the American School in Japan Philippine Relief Organization as its largest donor, started a food program at the Buyong Elementary School in 1986. Pompia Tohay, the Home Arts teacher, attended a seminar on nutrition and began preparing daily meals using a UNICEF recipe for malnourished children. During the first few years of the feeding program the school saw daily attendance improve and a reduction in the number of malnourished students.



A selected group of fifth and sixth grade students, along with parent volunteers, helps prepare the daily meal. Students start the meal preparation at 7:30 AM by building wooden fires in the outdoor "kitchen." Mrs. Tohay shops for fresh vegetables, fruit and meat daily. When students finish washing, chopping and mixing all the ingredients in large cauldrons they return to their first period class. By 9:45 the food is ready to be served and the students deliver a large pot to each of the thirteen classrooms. The morning recess (9:45 – 10:15) also is "feeding time." Each class has the responsibility for serving food and washing their bowls and utensils.



The menu varies, but usually includes either 'binignit' (a hot fruit and vegetable dish that includes coconut, banana and camote), chicken, vegetable and rice stew, or noodles with vegetables. For many students this is still the most nutritious meal of the day. Buyong Elementary School is the only school in this region of the country to offer such a program. The Philippine Department of Education and Congresswoman Nerissa Soon-Ruiz have recognized this as a model program.



The Buyong Elementary School Food Program continues largely due to the support of ASIJ students. Three Buyong teachers, Liliosa Soliano (Grade 5), Evelyn Cabanisas (Grade 2) and Pompia Tohay (Home Arts) have volunteered their time to ensure the success of the program. Since its inception in 1986, more than one and a half million meals have been served. The cost of feeding 700 students is approximately sixteen dollars a day.

BSP Continuing Programs

The Buyong Sponsorship Program will continue with a number of school and village projects during the coming year: The **Medical Program**, with the assistance of Pening Taghoy, is still providing medicine for six TB patients, and is working to educate members of the community to help prevent the spread of this disease. Constanica and Gaudencio Alegres, along with Pening and Paul, have produced materials in Cebuano about the procedures of the medical program, and steps to be taken to help combat this illness.



Clockwise from top left: Maribago Health Center and Daycare Center; In the Health Center; Pening Taghoy (Medical Program); Lucresio Soliano (Maribago Barangay Captain); Evelyn Cabanizas and Lily Soliano (Elementary School Programs); Constanica and Gaudencio Alegres (Accounts & Medical Program)



We continue to assist the Barangay Council with **Village Development Projects**. The Maribago Health Center provides much-needed immunizations, pre-natal care and the services of a midwife. Carl Zaiser made a commitment in February to help buy medicines on a regular basis. We are actively looking for donations to procure even more medicines and to extend the services of the clinic. Village clean-up drives continue. We continue to monitor the village water cooperatives, and local residents strive to ensure the continued success of the general sanitation program. **Buyong Elementary School Projects** will continue, including the lunch program that provides a daily meal for nearly 700 students.. The ASIJ Philippine Relief Organization continues its close collaboration with the BSP and the Buyong School. We would like to extend special thanks to them for twenty years of dedicated effort on behalf of the children of Buyong. Laptop computers will continue to be used at the school by teachers and sixth grade students.



Visiting the Matutinao Church (left); Barangay Clean and Green Volunteers (above); Island hopping (right)



We want to once again extend our sincere thanks to all those who continue to support the Buyong Sponsorship Program. You have had a positive impact on this small community and helped improve the lives of many families. Your continued contributions help ensure that our educational, medical and development work will continue for many years to come.

Buyong 2003

Several visitors dropped by during the past year, meeting friends in Buyong, seeing the sights of Cebu and participating in the activities of the sponsorship program. Carl Zaiser spent a week in mid-February visiting the school and health center, island hopping and traveling to Kawasan Falls on the western side of Cebu Island. Friend and author Ron Furth was in the Philippines the last week of February. He arrived just in time to help us take a one-year-old child to the free cleft lip and palette surgery clinic run by Operation Smile. In addition he attended the annual fiesta in Mactan and also visited the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary. Andrew Zaiser visited Buyong just as the school was preparing for graduation. Andrew also helped deliver medicine to the Maribago Health Center and attended the fiesta in Sitio Bagumbayan. The residents of Buyong are always anxious to meet the people who have done so much to help them over the years, and they extend every hospitality to these visitors.



Kawasan Falls (left); OIWS (center); Bagumbayan fiesta (right)

Paul left his teaching position at the American School in Japan in 1996 and moved to the Philippines to expand and extend the range of activities of the Buyong Sponsorship Program. During the last seven years a number of projects have been successfully implemented in Maribago and Buyong. Many more people have access to clean water and toilet facilities as a result of the village water cooperatives. The Clean and Green Campaign and trash pick-up system instituted with the help of the Barangay Council has improved both cleanliness and appearance of the village. Teachers and students at the school have received instruction in computer basics, and our involvement with the Maribago Health Center has increased greatly. But, more than that, Paul has become a part of the local community, getting involved with youth groups, participating in fiesta and community planning, and opening his house and offering his help to local residents. Weddings, birthdays, baptisms and funerals have all become a part of his stay in the Philippines. The Maribago Barangay Council has made Paul an "Adopted Son of Maribago." Volunteering in the community, traveling and exploring the central Philippines, adapting to the culture and making life-long friends have had a profound impact on his life



Fluvial parade (left); Sinulog 2003, Cebu's Mardi Gras (center); Rosary at Birhen sa Regla chapel, Buyong (right)



In August Paul will be returning to Tokyo to begin work at International Secondary School, located in Meguro-ku. While the new job will no doubt be interesting and challenging, it will be extremely difficult to leave behind the lifestyle and friends in Buyong. The activities of the Buyong Sponsorship Program will continue, and Paul will still visit at least three times a year. Janet will continue to make her yearly trip to Buyong at the end of March. Please be sure to keep in touch with us, and let us know if you have a change of address (email or otherwise). Thank you again for your continued support of the Buyong Sponsorship Program.



Thank You

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Buyong Sponsorship Program:

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