

Special points of
interest:

- Celebrating Karen Culture
- Karen New Year 2013's Chairperson
- Traditional Clothing Sales
- Red Cross Grant
- Youth Dance Program

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KOSD News & Notes

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Karen New Year 2752

January 12th, 2013

After months of planning and preparation, Saturday January 12, 2013 was a day of joy for the Karen community and the Karen Organization of San Diego. Along with refugees from Burma, event attendees included individuals from all over the city.



Done Dance Performance

San Diego City Councilmember Marti Emerald spoke briefly about her support of the refugee community from Burma. Crawford High School's Vice Principal, Diego Gutierrez, and San Diego Police Department's Sergeant Cynthia Hanna also shared a few kind words.

With an engaging presentation of the history of the Karen people, and several traditional musical and dance performances, this year's celebration was certainly a success! Guests were also treated to fashion shows of traditional Karen clothing. Handmade traditional clothing items, similar to those seen in the shows, were available for purchase before and after the main program.

A lunch reception concluded the festivities for the day.

Though Karen New Year 2013 proved to be a memorable, momentous occasion, Karen New Year 2014 promises to be even more marvelous. Hope to see you there!

For a copy of the 2013 program, check out our blog at <http://karensandiego.org/blog>

To access the full story, visit <http://www.kpbs.org/news/2013/jan/15/local-refugee-community-celebrates-karen-new-year/>

Have a story to tell? KOSD welcomes guest writers! Please contact info@karensandiego.org for more information.

Spotlight On: Community

By Yaw Lay Htoo

I am from Burma. I moved to a refugee camp in Thailand in 2000, after my village was burnt down. While I was in the refugee camp, I had the opportunity to resettle in the U.S.A. I moved to the United States in 2011. I am glad to be in the United States because I can go to school to study English. I have a chance to get to know new friends in a diverse society. Moreover, my children can go to school, too.

I am happy to be able to work with my community in San Diego. I was

selected by the community to be the Chairperson for Karen New Year 2013. My favorite part of my duties was "giving a speech to the audience." My favorite part of Karen New Year 2013 was seeing the support of San Diego leaders (Crawford High School Vice Principal, San Diego Police Department, and City Councilmember) and the support of community members.

I would like to continue to have the opportunity to celebrate Karen New Year, and I would like to see my

Learn Karen

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(How are you?): Nuh oh su ahh?



Yaw Lay Htoo at Karen New Year 2013

community attain self-sufficiency in the future. I really think the Karen Organization of San Diego should help with this dream. KOSD should keep helping organize events and continue its work empowering the community.

KOSD Wish List

- 15 computer monitors
- Storage cabinet(s) or shelves
- 2013 hanging wall calendars
- Tickets/gift cards for clients
- Blank notebooks & binders for clients

If you have items you would like to donate, please contact:
nao@karensandiego.org

KOSD would like to offer a huge "THANK YOU!" to everyone who helped out with the Karen New Year 2013 celebration. We look forward to your participation next year!



UPDATE:

Microenterprise

Your monetary donations for handcrafted items at Karen New Year 2013 are gifts that go beyond the January 12th event.

By purchasing traditional pieces, your contributions aid not only the items' creator, but also the refugee community from Burma.

For each purchase, 10% of the proceeds have been put toward the development of microenterprise opportunities for refugee individuals and families.

Similar to the efforts of WEAVE, a women's empowerment initiative along the Thai-Burma border, KOSD seeks to aid individuals and families through the sale of products like the one(s) you purchased. For more information about WEAVE, you can visit <http://www.weave-women.org/>.

If you have suggestions, ideas, or would like to get involved, feel free to contact KOSD at info@karensandiego.org.

Thank you for your support!

Emergency Preparedness

KOSD's Efforts to Equip the Community for Disasters

In addition to Karen New Year 2752, KOSD has another reason to celebrate in the new year. The American Red Cross notified KOSD mid-January of a Preparedness Program grant award. With the award, our organization can now create Emergency Kits for at least 100 families. These kits are meant to contribute to the overall program goal of bolstering resilience within communities.

"What goes into an Emergency Kit?" you may ask. Here are a few examples of the items each family will receive:

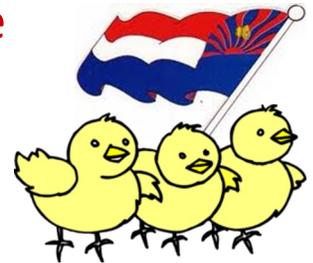
- Basic First Aid Supplies
- Emergency Blanket(s)
- Emergency Contact Cards
- Radio
- Flashlight
- Emergency Water



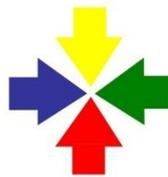
American Red Cross
 San Diego/Imperial Counties Chapter

Cultural Dance

Community Celebrates Karen New Year Accomplishments



On Saturday, February 16th, from 3—5pm, performers and instructors from the Karen New Year 2013 celebration received recognition for their participation in the cultural dance program. Included in this ceremony were individuals from the Karen Kids Dances, Bamboo Dance, Karenni Dance, Chin Dance, Done Dance, and Fashion Show.



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The Karen Organization of San Diego was established in 2009 to meet the needs of Karen and other ethnic minority groups from Burma who reside in San Diego. Karen Organization of San Diego is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our primary purpose is to provide social services and opportunities for culture preservation for the Karen and other ethnic minority groups from Burma who reside in San Diego to improve their quality of life.

If you would like to know more about KOSD, or are interested in partnering with us, feel free to give us a call, or e-mail us at info@karensandiego.org.