



# Doing Good That Is Good™

The newsletter of FARMS International Formerly AGRICULTURAL EVANGELISM

Thailand Update: May 2009

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families – Galatians 6:10

## Shua's Story

**S**HUA IS A FINE CHRISTIAN MAN. He is very humble, yet his joy in the Lord is very evident. I met Shua while visiting our newly started program in Thailand nearly ten years ago. We visited his hillside farm project. He was using SALT technology (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology) which is an erosion prevention and an organic enhancement technique that takes sloping marginal land and turns it into very productive soil. Shua was proud not only to show us his bumper corn crop, but also his fruit trees and fish ponds. His life had really taken a turn for the better.



Shua's corn and fruit tree orchard

Over the years we watched his life change dramatically. He now has a small pickup truck which he uses for this farm and also for evangelism. Shua is a pastor and has an infectious love for the Lord. His whole family is involved in evangelism. Their lives are real examples to those that know them. His life and story vividly illustrate why the loan program of FARMS is so needed in

places of poverty and how it expands the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Shua was interviewed by Michael Phillips, resident missionary, Chiang Kham, Thailand.



Shua and wife with grandchildren, truck in background

**Shua:** In the church where I am a leader, we were very poor and so was our church. Our village was very poor, we were very poor until the FARMS program came into our village; we are Hmong.

We have had a number of families who have received loan money from the FARMS committee and it has been very profitable especially, for those that have been righteous and have used the money properly. We have had the FARMS program for about 10 years and just recently

we have been able to buy a piece of land to build a new church building. It has been our dream to build a church building for our believers to worship in.

I would like to say a little about myself personally. Before I had an opportunity to borrow from the program I was very poor. I really did not have anything. My house was very small, I had no vehicle, but over the years because of the FARMS loan program, and making a profit, now I even have a pickup truck! The Lord has really blessed me and my family. Because I have this truck the Lord has blessed us, and with money from the

*(continued on next page)*



Visiting Shua's home during first project (Dave Crist and FARMS committee members, with Shua and wife)



Shua with sons and daughter-in-law and two grandchildren

FARMS International, Inc. • P.O. Box 270 • Knife River, MN 55609 • (218) 834-2676 • 1-888-99FARMS

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*[Shua's Story, continued]*

church body, I started to drive the truck around to the surrounding three villages that are near us, with other church members. We have been able to witness, and we have seen some real fruit. The church members in our own village have been growing in faith because of this, plus we are seeing others come to faith in these other villages. Just recently we have seen two families come to know the Lord, and because these families are so large, we now have twenty new converts! So we have a new group of believers in a village near ours. I believe in faith that in the future, the Lord is going to bless and we are going to see continual growth. We see that there are still many villages that have not had the opportunity to know about Jesus, and we have a real desire to bring our Lord to them.



*Shua's son teaching Christian songs*

**Shua was asked about his own projects:**

My first project was to plant corn and I planted that and the Lord blessed, so I had a good profit and I donated to the church 10% of that. In our village we did not have much opportunity to plant more than our rice. With the FARMS loan I was able to buy corn seed and this produced a cash crop which was really beneficial. Outside of that we really only planted rice for our own consumption. I have used my FARMS loans to grow corn and to increase the size of my fields. I now have a much larger farm. Before I wasn't so confident and I only took a loan for 10,000 Baht (\$285). Now, I have taken 20,000 Baht (\$570) out and I have been faithful in paying this back also. We do have other loan programs and places to borrow money in our village, but the FARMS program is the only one I care to deal with and I hope to continue with FARMS in future. Thank you!



*Shua discussing project with Suwat from FARMS committee*

# Interview with Harald and Gladys Tonnessen

**T**HE TONNESSENS were introduced to FARMS by its founder, Reverend Gareth Miller, who had married Harald's sister Gunhild. Harald and Gladys were involved with FARMS from its inception. Harald served on its board for a short period. The Tonnessens became one of the first supporters of the ministry. It was Harald, who worked as a commercial artist in New York City, that designed the first FARMS's logo.

Harald and Gladys have been married for 57 years. They have two daughters, Lois Andersen and Gail Tonnessen. They have been blessed with two granddaughters, Laura and Rebecca Andersen. The Tonnessens have always been very active in church ministry. Harald served as choir director and was active in prison ministry for 34 years. Gladys was involved in Pioneer Club; a program that disciples young girls. Their home has always been a place of hospitality and graciousness.

The Tonnessens were instrumental in having our Executive Director, Joseph Richter; speak at their former church in Centerville, Massachusetts. Christ Chapel has become a

faithful supporter of FARMS.

Harald and Gladys think FARMS is a "very worthwhile ministry and one of the best around." They love the way FARMS ministers to poor Christians by empowering them spiritually as well as economically. They feel that this approach enables the beneficiaries to evangelize and spread the "Good News".



Harald and Gladys Tonnessen

The Tonnessens have been faithful supporters of FARMS International. In addition, a few years back they decided to bless the ministry with a gift of a **Charitable Gift Annuity**. They would like to encourage others to consider this planned giving approach as a way to support the ministry of FARMS.

If you are interested in learning more about giving through a Charitable Gift Annuity, please contact us.

## Find out more about a Charitable Gift Annuity

**F**ARMS International offers charitable gift annuities in partnership with Funds For Life Ministries. FFLM is a Christian organization that offers a unique charitable gift annuity program to Christian ministries.

A charitable gift annuity is a practical way to make a special gifting now to a ministry, with the added advantages of interest income and tax benefits. This approach to planned giving blesses the ministry and can enhance your financial well-being. For more information, please complete and mail

the form below.

Need more income? Are low CD and savings account rates disappointing? Do you own highly appreciated stock that does not provide adequate income? Establishing a charitable gift annuity with FARMS International may help increase your income and provide tax savings, while helping us provide much needed income generation projects for poor Christians around the world. *(Single Rate Example/ Please call for Double Rates)*

Age	Annuity Rate	Age	Annuity Rate
90	9.5%	75	6.3%
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80	7.1%	65	5.3%

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**Nathan McLaughlin, Assistant Director for Development**  
**PO Box 177**  
**Clarissa, MN 56440-0177**



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Questions? Please contact  
**Nathan McLaughlin**  
 nathan@farmsinternational.com  
 ph. 218-756-2170



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**P.O. Box 270**  
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*Thank you  
 for faithfully supporting  
 the ministry of  
 FARMS International!*

**FARMS Travels to Rwanda: June 2009**

**N**ATHAN MCLAUGHLIN, our Assistant Director for Development, is going to Rwanda to visit the FARMS loan program. He is looking forward to seeing first hand the various loan holders' projects, meeting with the loan committee and fellowshiping with the missionaries. He will also be visiting the churches that are benefiting from the program. Keep an eye out for a complete report upon his return.

Nathan is delighted to have his second son Nolan, who is ten, travel with him. Nolan is personally raising funds for his first missionary journey. This will be a wonderful way for Nolan to experience missions and to see God's work in a new land. Please keep both of them in your prayers in the coming months.



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**NEW!**