

# THREADS OF LIFE

November 2010 newsletter



*A child in Bayan, Lombok, during the Ngurisang ceremony;  
Potters in Hanoë and the Ua Bau market*

Dear Friends,

The start of the agricultural season for most of the communities we work with marks the end of the weaving season. During October and November many cooperatives send us shipments that will not be repeated until mid-2011. Lots of Threads of Life money goes out buying this inventory and ensuring weavers' income over the beginning of the wet season. Ironically, the start of the monsoon can be the hungriest period for people as food reserves are exhausted before new crops are ready to harvest.

The arrival of all this new inventory has kept us very busy and means that we only have two new Field Notes to offer. They are very interesting, however.

Ketut Wenten shares with us his July 2010 off-the-beaten track (even for us) trip to visit potters in west [Timor](#) with an eye buying their beautiful and functional pots. Larger pots are used for making arak which is a strong alcohol distilled from the nectar of the lontar palm. Arak sales make up a large percentage of household income for many people throughout eastern Indonesia as it is important for ceremonies and celebrations.

There are more Field Notes in the pipeline however. Watch this space for Made Pung's recent trip to the headwaters of the Kapuas River in Kalimantan, and Jean's upcoming research trip to Sumatra.

Also in October, the events Threads of Life organized for the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival went extremely well. We brought to Bali eight weavers from groups we work with on the remote island of Savu and they performed two nights running to audiences of over two hundred each time. We closed the street in front of the gallery (with the neighbors' permission) but still had foot traffic passing through the "stage", making for a very relaxed atmosphere. Music, dance and song were mixed with cultural explanations from an island elder and cooperative leader, Zadrak Bungga. At 150 cm (5ft 0in) Zadrak was dwarfed by his translator, Threads of Life's co-director William Ingram at 207 cm (6ft 7in), much to everyone's amusement.

Best wishes,

from William, Jean, Pung, Lolet and everyone at  
Threads of Life and the YPBB Foundation

In October Made Rai Artha went to Bayan in northern [Lombok](#) to witness the Ngurisang coming of age ceremony during which children's hair is cut for the first time. The Ngurisang ceremony is considered a cleansing ceremony and allows the child to be ready for the ceremonies such as a tooth filing and later for the boys, circumcision. The continuity of traditions with neighboring Bali is evident, as are the unique expression of local culture.

## On Threadsoflife.com

Threads of Life is a fair trade business that utilizes culture and conservation to alleviate poverty in rural Indonesia. The heirloom-quality textiles, baskets and crafts we commission are made with local materials and natural dyes. With the proceeds from sales, we help weavers to form independent cooperatives and to manage their resources sustainably.

### WHAT WE DO

This section explains the breadth and depth of our work. Behind the beautiful textiles seen in the gallery are months of [field work](#) each year [supporting women's weaving cooperatives](#) through [fair trade](#), [revitalizing traditional textile techniques](#), and [conservation efforts](#).

### FIELD NOTES

Keeping people informed of our ongoing work in the communities is important to us. Every time our staff return from a field visit their experiences and observations are turned into a [field notes](#) slide show. Over time a rich archive of these will build up for visitors to browse through.

### INDONESIAN TEXTILE ARTS

Fourteen slide shows explore the traditional [textile arts](#) from across the Indonesian archipelago while introducing the [weavers](#) and their [cooperatives](#), and the [materials](#), [natural dyes](#), and production [techniques](#) they employ.

### OUR TEXTILES

Detailed descriptions, cultural references and photographs with high-resolution images [catalog](#) a varied and exciting sample of the best textiles produced by the weavers' cooperatives associated with Threads of Life.

### OTHER PRODUCTS

Traditional links between livelihood, culture and nature are expressed through some of the world's finest [basketry](#). Diverse [cultural arts](#), including pottery, woodcarving and bead work, also retain a remarkable vitality. [Books, music and DVDs](#) illustrate and entertain.

### CLASSES, TOURS and UPCOMING EVENTS

The [classes](#) offered at the gallery on the history and diversity of Indonesia's textile arts are an excellent way to gain a new level of appreciation. News of any tours, events or exhibitions we are offering is also to be found here.

### HOW TO PURCHASE

Threads of Life sells its textiles, baskets, or other cultural artifacts through its [gallery in Ubud](#), Bali, and occasional overseas exhibitions and sales. Books, music and videos are available online.

### YPBB FOUNDATION

YPBB stands for Yayasan Pecinta Budaya Bebali and is the name of the Indonesian nonprofit that the Threads of Life business is partnered with in its community work. [Read more](#) about YPBB's projects and funding.

### THREADS OF LIFE TEXTILE ARTS CENTER

### GET INVOLVED

Jalan Kajeng 24, Ubud, Bali 80571, Indonesia

Open 10 am to 7 pm daily.

[Click for directions.](#)

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