

## *BMWEC Certificate of Appreciation*

Dear Sofia,

We wanted to send our love and hopes and prayers along with the certificate tonight.

There are many, many foreigners who pass through Mae Sot. We appreciate their kindness and the work that they do for us. But just sometimes there are those who touch our hearts in ways that go beyond 'aid'. You have been one of those people - and this has nothing to do with your illness. But it has everything to do with who you are.

Even as a very young teenager, on your first visit, you were able to make connections - reach across boundaries of language and culture in calm and respectful ways that made those of us who were lucky enough to meet you feel valued, and better about ourselves. This is a rare gift.

We could see that children just liked to be with you. Not because you were handing out flashy presents or doing amazing juggling acts, but because you just make people feel good. Your calmness was like a gentle embrace; and, in this sea of uncertainty, which is the border, being next to you was a very safe place to be.

Some of us adults knew about your illness when you visited last year. We were concerned, and worried. But when we were with you, it seemed the cloud of cancer evaporated. Just like the last time, what shone out was that same calm, thoughtful person. Someone who is just good to be with.

On that visit, the children probably did not realise that you had been going through such difficult times. You never let on because your focus was them, not yourself. You continued - always, to be there for them. And each time that you caught a child in this cocoon of care - you gave something precious. A moment of calm, safety and love. Nectar.

Thank you for coming to see us. Thank you for sharing your wisdom, Thank you for reminding us of what is important.

Erin tells us that you are making friendship bracelets. Please imagine that there is the most huge and beautiful friendship bracelet coming right back at you. Please feel our love. You are such a precious friend.

Most of us like to think that we are making a difference. We work hard at this and hope hard that we succeed. You just seem to do it naturally. You have made a difference in many lives. So thank you.

From your Mae Sot - BMWEC fan club

With all our love.