

January Newsletter 2020 Volume 17 Issue 1

Contact & Donation Information

FVSO: P.O. Box 9322, Auburn, CA 95604-9322

Email: FriendsofVSO@gmail.com

Web: www.FriendsofVSO.org

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Christmas For Vinh Son

Each year, FVSO contributes to Christmas celebrations (\$1,000) at Vinh Son and Sao Mai. Obviously, the biggest party consists of the combined 6 Vinh Son orphanages in the Kontum area. There are physical activities in the morning, grand musical and colorful dance performances in the afternoon. The kids eat a nice lunch, followed by the distribution of the gifts. Everyone gets one. It's a day the children will always remember.

Martha Phanh shares the day's festivities with us

Christmas Celebration 2019

Every year, when the Christmas celebration day comes, the children in all six Vinh Son orphanages are very happy because they get to see their friends from the other orphanages. They love to play games together, to receive Christmas gifts and enjoy the entertaining dances performed by their friends. The children are very eager and happy to participate in the celebration to welcome Christmas Day. This year, Sunday, December 22nd, was chosen to be the "Party Day."

Mother superior entrusted the Christmas organization to Sister Y Phep and Y Kham and the Bafa group (an organization of young women, trained by Poussières de Vie, to help take care of the children and to become activity leaders). On December 18th, they all met to discuss the celebration program, as well as deciding how the donations would be spent. Because the Convent is under repair, it was decided to conduct the Christmas day's celebration at the Vinh Son-1 location.

On December 21st, twelve volunteers of Capgemini arrived in Kontum to help the BAFA group to organize Christmas day and to wrap all the gift packages for the kids.

The Christmas day's program was organized as follows:

- 8:00 Kids from the 6 orphanages arrive at Vinh Son-1 .
- 8:10 On behalf of Sister Vãn, the Christmas day's celebration is opened.
- 8:20 Let the games begin! With the help from the BAFA leaders and the Capgemini volunteers, the competition was fierce.
- 11:40 Time to end all the game activities.
- 11:50 – 1:30 Lunch is served, time for a break.
- 1:35 Traditional dance and song performances fill the room.
- 3:00 Excitement rules as gift packages are distributed, while the musical performances continue.
- 4:30 Sister Y Kham expresses her gratitude to everyone who donated, volunteered and helped organize this year's Christmas celebration day. Widely heard throughout the day were hundreds of joyful greetings...MERRY CHRISTMAS!.
- 4:45 The children return to their Vinh Son orphanages after a long day of celebrating.

...Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!



Ready...Set...GO!! A Perfect Day for a Bunny Hop



Senior VP, Bart Ruud, handles all the electronic fund transfers (EFT) throughout the year, and accounts for every dollar delivered to the Nuns. Below is a recent email from Bart:

“The Vinh Son transfer included additional Christmas stipends beyond what was sent with the 4th Qtr 2019 transfer. Assistant Treasurer Gene Mapa generously donated \$1,000 to the cause. In addition, at its last Board Meeting, Directors voted to send an additional \$500, which is the amount Diny and SWVK would have sent had they not folded their organization.”

Year-End Message

It seems that 2019 went by in a flash. When I look back at FVSO activities, the one word that seems to bring focus to the year is ... **WOW !** As the year progressed, we were receiving enough funds that we were confident to support additional projects. We had budgeted \$40,000 for special projects, but we actually were able to support \$70,000. The projects we supported this year were critical in improving the quality of life and the future for these kids. Hopefully, you have been following our projects in the monthly newsletters. They included:

- Infrastructure improvements like repairing roofs, electrical systems, vehicle repair and sanitary restrooms. Other projects included farmland purchases and farm improvements to help them eventually become self-sustaining.
- You may have read that our partner in the Netherlands, SWVK, has ceased operations. Diny, their driving force, turned 82 and could no longer keep up. We were able to replace the \$10,000 that she sent annually for primary education.
- Additionally, we now have 29 students in trade school, junior college or college. We are now in our 4th year of really supporting the higher education program and we are beginning to see the hoped for results. Several of the kids have returned to Kontum to volunteer.

At our year-end Board meeting, we continued to establish a conservative budget. We want to make sure we can deliver our promises and provide stability to the nuns. That has been a successful formula for the last 15 years. This year, we are confident that we can raise our contribution to our basic mission by 15% for food, medicine and primary education. We will continue to donate the \$10,000 to replace the donations from Diny and we will continue to budget \$40,000 for those unforeseen projects that happen every year.

There is still much work to do. Primary needs are still at a basic level. Infrastructure maintenance for a community of 850 children plus nuns and caregivers will always be a challenge. Education is perhaps the most valuable support we can provide, and we would like to grow that program. Your continued support will help us insure we can do that work. On behalf of the children, the Sisters and the entire FVSO Board of Directors, I want to thank you for your trust.

Patrick R. Leary, President FVSO



Left to Right

Sr Ai, Sr Kham, Sr Dung, Sr Mar, Sr Klanh, Sr Khat, Sr Lok

Each Sister from the 6 Vinh Son locations sends FVSO photo's and receipts of every EFT. They typically receive these funds on a quarterly basis.

amazonsmile

You shop. Amazon gives.

We can help you enlist new benefactors

- Board Members are available to speak at military reunions or to local civilian groups.
- Distribute copies of the monthly FVSO newsletter to your friends and interested groups. Forward the on-line versions and website information via e-mail.
- A Power Point presentation, detailing the FVSO story, is available for your use.
- Tell your personal story. Why are you a member of this team? What would you tell a potential supporter about FVSO? Your history might prompt others to reach out to the children of FVSO.

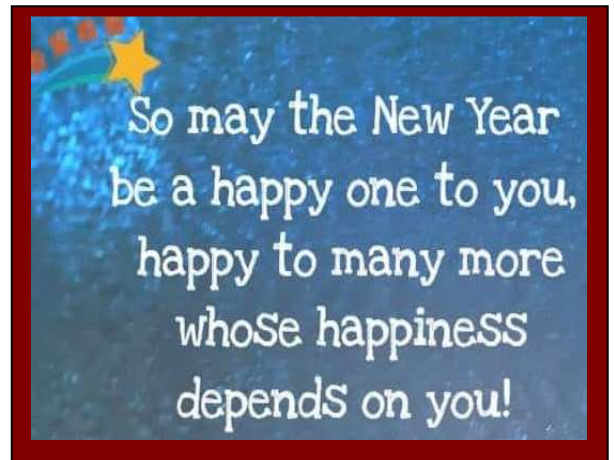


Legacy Fund Update

The goals are:

\$1.0m by Dec 2020
\$2.0m by Dec 2025

Total Contributions
\$634,393



Orphanage Facts

About 830 Montagnard children live in 7 orphanage facilities in the Kontum/Pleiku areas of Vietnam.

\$12 per month provides each child one nutritious meal every day.

Orphanages are run by the Sisters of Miraculous Medal and St. Paul Chartres.

Officers & Board Members

Pat Leary
Nga Wynne
Ken Tokutomi
Gene Mapa
Bart Ruud
Clyde Lewandowski
Michael Little
Pat McKee
Dave Chaix
Hank Gonzales

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Treasurer
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Board Member
Board Member

Donation Information

Checks should be payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son.

FVSO is a humanitarian, non-profit organization approved by IRS code 501©(3). Donations are tax deductible.

Donations are accepted year round and are also available on-line.