

A Humanitarian Non-profit Organization Approved by IRS Code 501(c) 3 & California Section 23701D

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July Newsletter - Volume 9 Issue 4

In this edition

1. Kids from Belgium reach out to help the children of Vinh Son
2. What are you doing on summer vacation?
3. The 2012 dental visits are a huge success....once again, thanks to many!
4. Hello from Kontum: older kids are staying busy at Vinh Son
5. Introducing the new FVSO Endowment program



Children, helping other children, make a

Difference

Friends of VSO
honors the children at
BuSO De Kouter

For their wonderful generosity in helping the children at the Vinh Son Orphanages in Kontum Vietnam with their gift of €1,421

07/6/2012

Date

Dave Chair

President - VSO



The school is located in the town of Kortrijk in the Flanders area of Belgium

Back in early March, Ms. Katrien, a religion teacher at a Belgium school for pupils with special needs, contacted FSVO about making a donation. Every year, they organize a collection for children in a third world country, and this year they picked Vinh Son. By their March 29 deadline, the students at BuSO De Kouter had raised \$1,781 which will be used to support the August Vinh Son dental mission, a joint effort with East Meets West.

THANK-YOU Ms. Katrien and all of your students – you are an inspiration to each of us!

“Our school is a special needs secondary school for pupils with mild disabilities. Some have ADHD, autism, La Tourette, etc.

Our pupils are between 12 and 19 years of age. A lot of them come from social/financial disadvantaged situations.

In our school, which is the biggest for pupils with this kind of problems in Flanders, they can choose between nine different vocational training programs: bakery assistant, catering assistant, welder, carpentry, hairdressing assistant, mason, painter-decorator, maintenance assistant (floor-managers) and shop assistant.

Every year, during Lent, we organize all kinds of activities to collect money for children/youngsters who are worse off than us. Even though our pupils don't have a lot themselves, they always do all they can to collect some money for the 'good cause'.”

Pennsylvania family spends their summer vacation at Vinh Son

So, you think you're brave? Christine Yardley (mother of four, ages 9 to 15) contacted us awhile back, expressing her desire to visit Vinh Son during their summer break. **FOR 3 WEEKS!!** During the monsoon season! Despite our warnings of possible wet weather, she and her children armed themselves with raincoats, a list of our contacts, and a ton of gifts. Off they went on a grand adventure!

As they "experience" the Vinh Son orphanage sites, we've been treated to their initial observations and reactions like those below. A visit such as this just doesn't happen every day, and many of us are a bit envious. We anxiously await their post-trip report. Keep the photos coming, they truly tell a great story! Stay dry!

"The children at Vinh Son are really sweet and very well behaved. We brought a suitcase full of clothes to donate as well as craft supplies to do activities with the children, which we will use over the next 3 weeks." Christine Yardley



Rebecca

The kids at the orphanage are very nice. They all yell "Hello" when we get there. Some of their names are Bimbi, Thet, and Siu Ly Ya. We brought craft supplies to the orphanage. They love it. A couple of things they like to do that we brought are play with bubbles and paint. Also, they like to play with chalk. If you come, maybe you should bring these things. Just remember, the kids here are just like the kids around the world. **Rebecca, age 9**

"The kids here are just like the kids around the world."



Zak

We have been volunteering every day at Vinh Son 1 since we arrived, and I love it! I work with the youngest children and have enjoyed every time I've been at the orphanage. I play games with them, carry them around, and feed them. The kids are always so well behaved. They are patient and listen to the older girls and women who take care of them. During naptime they all sleep on one mat together. There are twenty little children, so it's amazing they all can get along. They are all so sweet and adorable, too!

Since I have been volunteering in Vietnam, I realize how lucky I am at home in the US. The people here use everything they have to help the children and work so hard, and people should really think about trying to contribute to Vinh Son orphanages or even just appreciate what they have. **Elizabeth, age 15**

I go to a Vietnamese orphanage every day. I like to come up to the baby zone for twenty minutes. Then I like to play in the soccer tournament. Then I go back to the baby zone and feed them lunch. Overall, I like playing chalk and blowing bubbles with the babies. That is why I enjoy going to the orphanage.

Zak, age 9



Elizabeth



Christine

I feel like I haven't done much good with my life before we came to the orphanage. Helping the kids makes me feel so good. It was kind of awkward when I first walked up those steps. Everybody turned and stared at us. Then they all went back to what they were doing. I knew this was going to be hard work. The kids were all screaming and yelling. A couple were throwing soccer ball at each other. I found one kid sitting with a soccer ball all alone. I took the ball and tossed it to him. He caught it and tossed it back. Instant friendship. I made many more friends by doing the same thing and another by throwing a toy plastic dog into the air. By the end of our stay, I hope to have friendship with each and every one of them. **Josh, age 12**



Josh

“Open Wide” – Another year of improved dental health

The children of Vinh Son and Sao Mai are so lucky to have such dedicated benefactors when it comes to the health of their teeth! It truly is a joint effort each year to get everyone to the dentist. Let’s recognize them:

The Pleiku Dental Clinic

Dave & Claire Christensen (Auburn, CA)
4th Infantry Association (NY/NJ Chapter)

A Special Thanks!

To

Ms. Thien

Who makes it all happen

August East Meets West Clinic

Ms. Katrien & her school in Belgium
Colour4Kids (Netherlands)
Father Luke Tran & VN-SHEP (Linden, NJ)



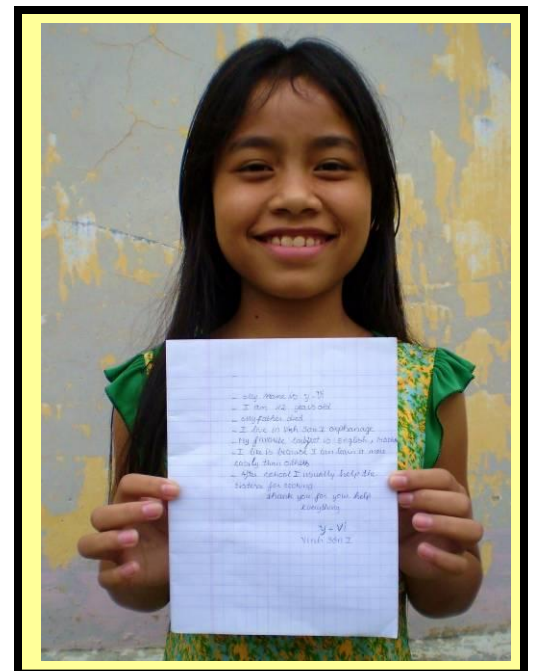
Hello from Kontum!

Ly Nuong (upper) - (below left to right) Thoang - Siu Ly Ya - Y Vi

The children at Vinh Son are in the middle of school break, but for those who haven’t left for a village visit find ways to stay busy. These young ladies (age 12 to 15) recently sent short notes that they wanted to share in the newsletter. They’ve been working hard at the orphanage: caring for the small children, working in the vegetable garden, and assisting the Sisters in the kitchen. Really, they just wanted to say hello! What are the boys up to?



Y Vi (below) proudly displays her letter. She writes: “I am 15 years old. My favorite subject is English because I can learn it more easily than others. After school, I usually take care of the children upstairs. Thank you very much for your interest. I am very grateful.”



“We don’t know how to return your kindness.”



Vinh Son Endowment Program Looks to the Future



The Board of Directors at **Friends of Vinh Son Orphanages (FVSO)** is pleased to announce the creation of an endowment fund called Vinh Son Endowment (**V.S.E.**), intended to guarantee support for the orphanages well into the future. Since 2005, we've been providing much needed assistance to the Vinh Son community, and that commitment must continue in the years ahead. With the help of benefactors like you, we believe that goal can be achieved.

FVSO has been blessed with increasing donations year-after-year. Empty stomachs have been filled, dormitories constructed and teeth cleaned, typhoon damages repaired, sick and injured treated, hungry minds educated...the list goes on and on. Because of you, we have truly made a difference.

None of that changes with this announcement. Your donations, unless otherwise directed, will continue to be added to the General Fund, business as usual.

As the FVSO Board members approach their 70's, they have become more attune to their own mortality, prompting the question, "What happens when we're gone?" That's the genesis of **V.S.E.** This year, some Board members have been hospitalized and undergone serious surgeries. One such patient, Clyde Lewandowski, had these thoughts while lying on his hospital bed:

"As I recovered from the procedure, I thought about the kids in Kontum and how much they mean to me. It also struck me how fragile we humans are, how we are aging quicker than we care to admit. I thought a lot about what will happen to the kids if we are no longer around to support them."

V.S.E. is intended for the future, hopefully many years from now. However, it's never too early to get started. It's offered as an option for those who wish to "continue the mission" of bringing hope and love to the children and caregivers of Vinh Son and Sao Mai.

Contributions to **V.S.E.** could come in many forms, each of which could provide a tax savings. For example, here are a few avenues: 1) A gift of appreciated stock, 2) naming FVSO as beneficiary of a life insurance policy, 3) gifts of property or cash, 4) a charitable annuity, or 5) a simple bequest in a will. Any of these could result in the ongoing funding for the future of the Vinh Son and Sao Mai orphanages. **V.S.E.** is managed by our Treasurer, who will be available to provide direction and answer questions.

To kick things off, Mr. Lewandowski and family have graciously made a contribution of \$15,000. It's a beginning and possibly the first step in maintaining the mission of FVSO over the long haul. Again, Clyde adds clarity by summing up, ***"Hope is what we want to provide for the children. A legacy gift will accomplish that."***

Whether you make a donation to the General Fund or contribute to the long-term goals through **V.S.E.**, know that the children are forever in your debt. You are their "today and tomorrow." They give you thanks! So do we

Vinh Son & Sao Mai Orphanage Facts	Officers	Board	Donation Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population – approximately 730 Montagnard children in seven orphanage facilities Administered by the Sisters of the Miraculous Medal & St. Paul Chartres Location – Kontum/Pleiku, Vietnam \$12 feeds, shelters, and educates one child for one month 	<p>President - Dave Chaix Secretary - Dennis Coyne Treasurer - Colleen Sands Senior VP - Pat McKee 1st VP - Sr. Marie Dominique 2nd VP - Michael Little</p>	<p>Hank Gonzales Rich Lahey Clyde Lewandowski Bart Ruud Patrick Leary Pat Keegan Alan Brooks</p>	<p>Please make checks payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son</p> <p>Donations are gratefully accepted year round</p> <p>100% of administrative costs are paid by the Board and Officers</p>