

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

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January 2017 Newsletter - Volume 14 Issue 1

- Financial results for 2016 reflect a very strong year
- The Christmas party has become a tradition at Vinh Son
- FVSO has a new volunteer Treasurer
- Grad student, Y Hoi, will become a “nurse for the needy”
- The annual Board meeting took place on January 6th

What a year!

Your 2016 donations totaled \$195,255, which was our 2nd best result ever!

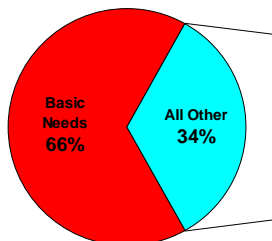
The 850 children of Vinh Son and Sao Mai orphanages are fortunate to have you in their corner, year after year. Guided by our annual commitment to each of the 7 orphanages, \$110,283 was spent on Basic Needs and other yearly expenses (see below). Each child received about \$130 worth of support.

Since our inception in 2001, we have raised \$1,468,022 for the kids!

2016 Expenditures by Category

\$110,283 Total

Basic Needs (\$72,550) - All Other (\$37,733)



All Other Categories

- 9% - Discretionary
- 8% - Higher Education
- 12% - Dental Program
- 1% - Parasite Meds
- 3% - Water Systems
- 1% - Christmas Party

Administrative expenses (\$8,613) were paid by the Board Members, and are not included in the categories above (ie.: Internet, newsletters, advertising, etc.)





The Vinh Son Christmas Celebration December 18, 2016

Dear Mr. Patrick Leary and all the Board Members of FVSO,

I am Sr Marie Kham. I would like to report to you, President of FVSO and all the Board Members of FVSO, about the celebration of Christmas 2016 for the six Vinh Son Orphanages on the evening of December 18 on the yard of the Immaculate Miraculous Medal Mother Congregation in Kontum City.

The Christmas celebration was held from 8 am to 3 pm with the good activities like this: the Association of Poussiere de Vie has organised all the games for the children and there were 721 children from the six orphanages who participated in this celebration. We have received the financial support from FVSO, Cap Gemini, Poussiere de vie, Mrs. Diny.

We bought many kinds of goods to display in the small stalls as they are in the real fair. A small stage was made for the musical performances. We also prepared and arranged many Christmas gifts that were given to each child who attended the celebration; and we did the same for the little children who were absent. For organizing the fair, we printed fair tickets that were distributed to the children. Everyone seemed very happy after a fun day of playing games, exchanging each other in many activities like eating a good lunch and watching the musical performances. Of course, they were so pleased to receive a beautiful Christmas gift.

The end of Christmas celebration was at 3 pm. After that, the bus took the children, who lived away from Kontum city, back to their orphanages.

Once again, we wish all the donors and benefactors, who helped us to hold this celebration, will have a Happy New Year 2017 full of peace and prosperity in your work.

Representative of all the Sisters and the children of Vinh Son



We are pleased to announce that Michael Burke has volunteered to become our Treasurer. We are fortunate that Mike's business background and dedication to what FVSO does will bring additional strength to the board. We are also fortunate to have had Colleen Sands as our Treasurer since March 2011. She has been stalwart in keeping up our books and tax returns. We are also fortunate that Colleen has agreed to remain on the Board as a member at large. Her experience will be invaluable as we grow into the future. So on behalf of the Board, Welcome Mike and thank you Colleen, our future is brighter because of both of you.

Michael F. Burke, new FVSO Treasurer

My Father was in the Navy for 32 years and retired as a Command Master Chief. He served in Viet Nam from 1964 to 1968. Every Sunday our house was the destination spot for those veterans without family on base...there were quite some celebrations as I am sure you can imagine

I was told I was going to college by the CMC. He instilled a life and commitment to veterans and their causes that has never left.

My son had the calling and joined the Navy. He was a "cryogenic engineer" on the Carl Vinson. We lost him in 2012 while in service. This too has also strengthened my commitment to seeking out ways to help. This led to my continued support and involvement with FVSO.



**Mike is tasked with our basic commitment:
100% of your donations go to the kids!**

Y Hoi Visits the Leper Colony

Y Hoi graduated in May with a nursing degree and is now attending Medical School of Kontum as she works toward her degree. This is similar to a nurse practitioner in the U.S. She tries to help the needy when she can.

This week Y Hoi traveled with the village Priest to visit the leprosy colony near her home village. This is the first time she was able to visit there. She wrote to say, "I am tired, but I'm happy to have helped them."



Smiles despite the suffering, these villagers are always happy to see visitors like Y Hoi

FVSO Board Meeting

On January 6th we held our semi-annual Board meeting. We have an incredible amount of talent on our Board and we are blessed to have them so dedicated to what we do. We are also thankful to you, our donors, for continuing your support to make our mission such a success.

We covered a vast range of topics in almost 3 hours. It is difficult not to be excited about each topic. I would love to give you all the details but fortunately, for you, space is limited. Again in 2016, our donors proved to be most generous and we feel a heavy responsibility to manage FVSO carefully.

The most important topic we discussed was our budget. We believe we have had great success in past years by promising the sisters a fixed income each year. They know what they have to plan for to make up the difference between their needs and their income. We believe this guarantee has enabled the sisters to risk the development of some of their own support programs.

FVSO Board Meeting, January 6th, continued

In fact, in the last few years we have seen development of successful agriculture, livestock, and bakery programs. Our budget for the year was \$126,000. Our actual was \$110,000. In 2016 we did not spend as much as we planned for higher education and one of our partners helped us financially with the Dental Clinic. Our income from donations was \$195,000. So, in 2016, we also had an excess over budgeted needs. What a wonderful problem.

Last January in the annual report for 2015, we discussed the Rainy Day Fund, a set aside for emergencies, and the concept of a Legacy Fund. Dave Chaix, President Emeritus, is in the final stages of confirming the fund. We are excited about this and you will be hearing more in the very near future.

Two of our most successful projects continue to be the Dental Program and the Clean Water initiative. In 2016 we had over 550 of the children and caregivers receive dental care. We want to increase that number in 2017. The Clean Water program is a major factor in good health and we appreciate the hard work of our partner in this, VietDreams.

Education is always an important topic. This year we have 10 students receiving some financial aid for higher education. Two students graduated and we are delighted that both are giving back to the FVSO community. Y Vui graduated with a degree in pharmacy and is now studying to become a nun. Y Le is also a pharmacy graduate and working at the dispensary in VS1. Thanks much to Clyde for managing this program. There is an exciting future.

We look forward to 2017 when we will continue to make a difference for these children.

Your support provides a future for them. **Thank You !**

Long-term supporting organizations

- 189th Assault Helicopter Company
- 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion (A and D Companies)
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada County, CA
- Counterparts Association
- 14th Combat Engineer Btn. Association
- MilSpec Tours (800-953-5812)
- Fr. Luke Tran (VN-SHEP) Social Health Education Projects
- Fr. Relihan, Sacred Heart Church, Lone, CA
- Rotary Club of San Juan Capistrano, CA

Words to live by

**If you want happiness for an hour take a nap.
 If you want happiness for a day -- go fishing.
 If you want happiness for a year -- inherit a fortune.
 If you want happiness for a lifetime -- help someone else.**

-- Chinese Proverb

Vinh Son & Sao Mai Orphanage Facts

- Population – approximately 830 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

Officers

President – Pat Leary
Secretary - Open
Treasurer – Mike Burke
Senior VP - Pat McKee
1st VP - Sr. Marie Dominique
2nd VP - Michael Little

Board of Directors

Hank Gonzales
 Rich Lahey
 Clyde Lewandowski
 Bart Ruud
 Dave Chaix
 Colleen Sands

Advisory Board

John Scott & Bruce Herron

Donation Information

Please make checks payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son

Donations are gratefully accepted year round

100% of administrative costs are paid by the Board and Officers