

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

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January 2014 Newsletter - Volume 11 Issue 1

In This Issue

- Dave's annual message of appreciation
- Christmas celebration at Vinh Son
- 2013 financials - Basic Needs and Special Projects review
- Rhythm Riders 4th annual benefit concert for FVSO
- Reaching out for new donors, a unique approach, and a good one

From Dave Chaix, President FVSO

Every year I write this message of appreciation to you and our project partners, but this time I'm nearly at a loss for words. By every measure, 2013 was our most successful ever! Your donations totaled **\$162,000**, which were at a record level, up **5.9%** vs. previous year. With over 700 individual donations, FVSO was able to meet its objectives for both Basic Needs and Special Projects. We are also poised to continue this level of support in 2014.

Spreading our story is so important, and it resulted in 73 new contributors last year (25% of the total), resulting in donations of \$26,000. Hopefully, these generous givers will become "continued" supporters, whom we rely upon to help the children, year after year. Over 800 orphans and their caregivers are forever in your debt, and on behalf of the FVSO team, please accept our gratitude. When you donate, you are placing your trust in us, and while we may be strangers to each other, we are one voice to the kids. Hope.

In April, accompanied by other Board members, I will once again return to Vietnam with visits to each of the 7 orphanages. Nothing can substitute for the face-to-face interaction between us and the kids. It's like getting our batteries re-charged. We'll also meet with the Nuns who run the day-to-day operations to make sure FVSO is doing everything it can to meet their needs. Stay tuned for pictures and a complete report.



The Christmas parties at Vinh Son and Sao Mai were huge successes! As you can see from the above banner, FVSO was joined by other groups in support this year's celebrations. Word has it that even Santa made an appearance. By the way, our **"Matching Funds"** program during the last 5 months of the year was maximized and contributed to our sponsorship. Every dime spent on this program is well worth it. Fun for everyone!

Summary: Basic Needs & Special Projects

Comments from the Treasurer

The young lady pictured at right, along with her 829 brothers and sisters had many reasons to smile in 2013. No one went hungry. No one was denied medical and dental care. No one slept with an unsafe roof over their head. Everyone has you to thank for all these blessings, and more.

As Dave said, 2013 was our best year since we began this effort back in 2005! Donations exceeded \$160,000 for the second time, and by staying within our budgetary parameters, we expect similar results going forward. Although our #1 priority is Basic Needs, we will continue to partner with other groups as special projects become necessary. Supporters are also invited to direct their donations for specific needs. On behalf of everyone at FVSO, **THANK-YOU** for a very successful 2013!



Basic Needs expenditures were \$70,000, right on target

VS-1	\$ 16,800
VS-2	\$ 14,400
VS-3	\$ 4,300
VS-4	\$ 10,200
VS-5	\$ 6,800
VS_6	\$ 5,100
Sao Mai	\$ 6,000
Other	\$ 6,400

Projects undertaken June 20, 2013 – Dec 31, 2013

1. **VS-1 Girl's Washroom Project** – partially funded by VVA Chapter 535, as well as David & Janet Wheatley. Project nearing completion at this date.
2. **VS-4 Boy's Dorm Repair** – funded by Bob Lee and Bruce Herron. With this having been fully funded by donors, there was no FVSO vote on the project. Project currently nearing completion.
3. **Water System Maintenance** at all sites – Completed
4. **East Meets West Foundation dental clinic** – August 2013. Fully funded by Scott & Valerie Hanson, Tim & Anne Sullivan, Paul & Nancy St. Pierre.
5. **Pleiku Dentist**, for VS3 &4 and Sao Mai – Fully funded by Dave & Claire Christensen, Bob & Carolyn Lee, Bruce & Susan Herron
6. **Parasite Meds**
7. **Epilepsy meds** for Sao Mai girls
8. **Government school fees** – Funded by Orphans of Kontum (the Netherlands) and FVSO
9. **Diaper project** – funds included with EFTs
10. **VS-3 Kitchen Water System & Chimney** – financed by Steve Holley.

Special Projects Update

As outlined in the Position Paper on Funding Distributions, developed in 2012, a limit of \$55,600 in total project funds is allocated for a given year. The rationale is that we cannot spend indiscriminately because such spending would deplete reserves. Usage of the allocated funds is, in general, restricted to primary education, college tuition, water filter maintenance, major tractor repairs, equipment purchases, dental projects, major medical expenses, etc.

Fiscal year 2013 ended with a positive Project Expenditure balance of +\$5,914 of the \$55,600 allocated by our Position Paper for special projects.

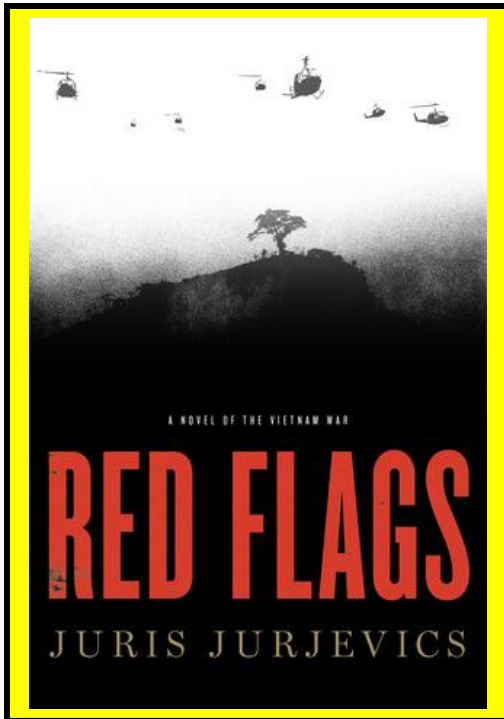
We were fortunate that no urgent projects came along such as storm damage, major illness, equipment breakdown and repair, etc.

Note: Special Projects are requested by the Sisters and, when possible, are funded by selected donors who target their donations. Our primary mission remains providing for Basic Needs.

Anticipated 2014 Special Projects

1. Parasite Medication – August 2014
2. Epilepsy meds at Sao Mai – ongoing
3. Government School fees – August 2014
4. Diaper project – Quarterly ongoing at Sao Mai and VS-1
5. Phone data funding
6. Higher Education funding
7. Water System Maintenance & Testing
8. Pleiku Dental Clinic; East Meets West Dental Clinic

Some creative ways of reaching new supporters



Author's Note

"For those still suffering guilt incurred during the Vietnam era, I offer this salve: Donate online to the Vinh Son Montagnard Orphanage in Kontum...."

From Red Flags

Getting the FVSO word out can take many shapes, be it through a musical concert or honorable mention in a novel. In his book, **RED FLAGS**, author Juris Jurjevics pays tribute to the Montagnards he served with. *"They remain near to my heart though far from my eyes,"* he laments. In his Author's Notes, he invites other veterans to discover Vinh Son and get involved.

Juris also informed his 3,800 Facebook friends, asking them to join us in helping the children of Vinh Son and Sao Mai. You never know who might be listening. **Thanks Juris!!**



The 4th annual concert promises to be as entertaining and exciting as the previous ones. FVSO has greatly benefited from its involvement, netting \$30,000 from the prior shows. Johnny & Dee are GREAT!

Organizations supporting FVSO

- 189th Assault Helicopter Company
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada County, CA
- Counterparts
- 4th Infantry Division Association (NY & NJ Chapter)
- 14th Combat Engineer Btn. Assoc.
- MilSpec Tours



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 - Dave Chaix
Secretary - Dennis Coyne
Treasurer - Colleen Sands
Senior VP - Pat McKee
1st VP - Sr. Marie Dominique
2nd VP - Michael Little

Board

Hank Gonzales
 Rich Lahey
 Clyde Lewandowski
 Bart Ruud
 Patrick Leary

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