

May Newsletter 2018 Volume 15 Issue 5

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Contact & Donation Information

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

Email: FriendsofVSO@gmail.com

Web: www.FriendsofVSO.org

The Value of Clean Water

Since 2014, we have had professional clean water systems installed at each of the seven orphanages. We have also become more proactive in our dental program. We knew upfront that clean water and good dental hygiene were the foundation for good health. The results in 4 years have been spectacular. Our medical bills for worms, stomach parasites, fevers, undefined stomach problems, infections and other common problems in rural 3rd country areas have been almost eliminated. With good health, the kids are poised to succeed in school and other areas.

We partner with another charity, VietDreams, headquartered in San Jose California, to install and maintain the systems. They have installed over 190 systems that have served over 65,000 children. The systems are installed in Vietnam by a company called MK. Their water filtration systems have been used for students and workers in many different provinces of Vietnam. They have also been recognized by The Central Panel of Scientists and The Ministry of Health as "Product safety preparations for public health". Without VietDreams and MK, our clean water system would not have been possible.

Continued on next page



(above): Sr Lan at VS-6 with a happy and healthy child.

(at right): The kitchen system at VS4. At the larger locations, we have systems installed in the kitchen and in the living areas.

Providing clean water takes a professional hand (continued)

Each system costs about \$2,500 to install, depending on location. We inspect them quarterly at a cost of \$300 per year for each system funded by FVSO, while VietDreams contributes another \$300 per year per system. Some of our locations have more than one system installed. The details of the systems are extensive and I could not include all of them here. Briefly, each system serves about 200 individuals. Each system can accept water sources from wells, rivers, or other local water supplies. They have several levels of filters to remove organic substances, acid, chlorine and pesticides. They also have a water softening function that disposes of inorganic substances like magnesium and iron. At the end of the process, there is a UV light that eliminates any bacteria that may have made it through.

Just providing clean water systems is not the end of the story. We have to educate the sisters and the kids why, when and how to use the water. MK has been instrumental in this education. Their history has been to drink direct well water, river water etc. It is hard to change habits and we do have some stories about changing habits. One of my favorites is the older kids at VS-2 were turning off the water because the younger kids were spilling water and leaving a mess for the older kids to clean up. After several clean-ups, I might have done the same thing! Through education, and probably some discipline from Sr Jean, this has been corrected.

This is just one of the many projects that have been funded because of your generosity. You have made a big difference!

FVSO Board Member, Mike Little, donated his personal collection to make this museum exhibit happen.



Collecting Carolina: Montagnards, Vietnam's Central Highlanders

April 21, 2018, through Sept. 30, 2018

North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh, NC

Montagnard, a French word meaning "mountain people," refers to the indigenous ethnic minority living in the central highlands of Vietnam. These tribes became close allies of American soldiers during the Vietnam War. This exhibit focuses on traditional Montagnard culture and will feature a selection of textiles, crafts, tools, hunting weapons, and musical instruments, all collected by a Vietnam veteran while in Vietnam.

Farming, Projects, and a Son's Lament



A Cassava Celebration

From Sr. Josie: Here is a photo of children from VS-6 who are harvesting their cassava trees. After planting one or two years, these trees will be harvested. Mostly, cassava is used to make cake and noodles.

Cassava 'smart farming' taking root in Vietnam

Cassava, a popular raw material and the third largest source of starch (after corn and wheat) is grown in around 90 countries around the globe.

Whether an entrepreneur decides to get into growing cassava tuber or manufacture starch from the root, both are simple processes that require limited capital.

Cassava starch has numerous applications in a wide variety of industries and is used in sweeteners, MSG, food, paper, cardboard, plywood, leather goods, glue, paste and cement.

In the food industry, it is also used in the processing of many bakery products and in noodles, soups, yogurt, ice cream, and soft drinks among others.

Project Update

While visiting the Vinh Son Orphanages in February of this year, requests were made for projects at VS-5 & VS-6.

The VS-5 project was \$1,000 USD for computers. We were able to fund them while there (see photo at right).

The VS-6 project was for a land purchase with a cost of \$5,000 USD, which exceeded the funds we were carrying at the time. Upon returning home, some of our wonderful travelers banded together to fund this significant land purchase.



What a great, generous group of orphanage visitors!

Opening up a new world and new possibilities



Excerpt from a letter written by A Viet, an FVSO student

My mother is suffering from a kidney stone disease and the doctor says she needs surgery to restore her health. My mother refused to accept the advice because my mother knew that the surgery would cost a lot of money. We barely have nothing in the family and would sell everything we have in order to pay for the operation. My mother said if there is no money I am going to wait for God.

My mother says with tears of love and her affection. What I fear and afraid most if my mother dies and leave me alone in this life, afraid there is no one that I can share the joy, afraid there is no mother's advice to tell me that she always be on my side everyday. Now, I only pray and look to the mercy of God. May God help us.

A Viet (above) attends a college in Pleiku, majoring in Community Service and plans to graduate in May, 2020. FVSO Board Members have contributed funds to help A Viet's mother (results pending).



Caregiver Mary Y Bia
 Passed away on April 3rd & will be missed by all the children

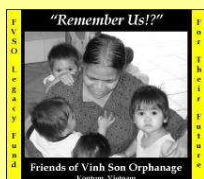
We would like to inform you there is a girl who is an orphan of VS-1 orphanage. Mary came to stay in our orphanage when she was 13 years old and now she is 43. She has been at our orphanage for 30 years and has been a good cook at VS-1. For a longtime, she stayed in the orphanage all day all night as her own house. Mary was always single and she loves the orphans very much. Unluckily, she got innate cardiac disease and she stayed in Kontum general hospital for 3 weeks. **Sr. Kham**

Enlisting new benefactors

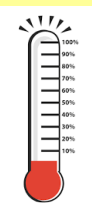
We can help you identify new supporters for the Vinh Son and Sao Mai children. Just ask.



- 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
 Target is \$2.0m in 10 years
 Total contributions to date
\$507,871
 % achieved = 25%



Legacy Contributors

- Jim & Jane Gardner
- Henry Huddleston
- Glen Smith
- William Higbee
- Corps Detachment 711

Legacy Contributors

- VVA Chapter 535
-

Long-term supporting organizations

- 189th & 155th Assault Helicopter Companies
- 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion (A and D Companies)
- VN Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada Cnty, CA
- Marine Corps League Detachment 711, Salinas, 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

amazonsmile

Support FVSO by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com

Words of Wisdom

Every person, all the events of your life are there because you have drawn them there. What you choose to do with them is up to you.

-- Richard Bach, from *Illusions*

Vinh Son & Sao Mai Orphanage Facts

- About 830 Montagnard children live in seven orphanage facilities in the Kontum/Pleiku area, Vietnam
- FVSO is a humanitarian, Non-Profit organization approved by IRS Code 501(c)3. Donations are tax deductible.
- Run by Sisters of the Miraculous Medal & St Paul Chartres

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Donation Information

Please make checks payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son
 Donations are gratefully accepted year round
 \$12 feeds, shelters and educates one child for one month