

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

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April 2016 Newsletter - Volume 13 Issue 4

Sister Josie has translated a very personal story written by a young lady named Y Rim. She is one of the four students who began to receive scholarship money from FVSO last Fall. Y Rim is 21 years old, a freshman studying nursing at a college in Kontum. Her story isn't uncommon; all the children of Vinh Son have stories.

Vinh Son 2, My Home Sweet Home



**Y Rim, 1st year nursing student,
now studying emergency
procedures at a hospital**

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the FVSO leaders, for giving me the opportunity to share my story with people around the world through the FVSO Newsletter.

About 21 years ago, a baby girl whose name is Y RIM, was born and my parents were so happy to welcome the new member into our family. We were a lovely family of ten people, who enjoyed a very happy life.

However, the loss of my mother brought a lot of sadness, since eight of us were still very young. On top of that, being a single dad was a big challenge for my father who now was responsible for doing the duties of a mother and a father. As you can imagine, this was not an easy life at all. All my brothers and sisters did not go to school because they had to help my father work in the fields. Me and my two younger brothers, who were only four and two years old, did not work the fields.

Unfortunately, this part of my life didn't last long. Just a few months after my mother died, my father was also taken to Heaven. We were orphaned children from that time on, so you can see how difficult our lives were.

I used to think that my life would be like my other brothers and sisters, never going to school and living a life working for people to buy food for us. However, it was destiny the day I was sent to Vinh Son 2, because it totally changed my life. When I was five, my sister took me to see Sr. Magdalena, the superior of Vinh Son 2, to ask her permission for me to stay at the Vinh Son 2 orphanage. After hearing my story, Sr. Magdalena was very happy to welcome me as a new member of Vinh Son 2.

I easily made friends with other kids, and I felt so much at home there. For me, living in Vinh Son 2 was so amazing because even though all the children were from different villages and spoke different languages, we all lived as brothers and sisters of one family. Indeed, every one of us was able to go to school, which was my biggest dream.

Thinking back, I am so grateful for the help of the Immaculate Miraculous Medal (IMM) Sisters who dedicate their life to serving the poor, the sick, and especially taking care of orphaned children like me. They are just like mothers, sisters and dear friends to me. They not only care for us with food and clothing, but our spiritual life also. Besides teaching us about knowledge, the sisters also teach us to be better people.

Y Rim Continued....

In addition to the sisters' help, thanks to FVSO and other benefactors, every Vinh Son child is now having a better life. As you know, without your support, it would be difficult for the IMM Sisters to run all six orphanages. Now all of us are able to go to school and college, and help make our dreams come true.

Words are never enough to express gratitude to you for what you have done for me and countless others. As my dream of becoming a nurse is coming true, I will try my best to do good both in school and at home, so I can graduate and have a job at Vinh Son 2. Now I am in the first year of college. Being a nurse and helping other orphaned children has always been the only dream I wanted to achieve. For this reason, I promise to study hard and be a good person. I am so busy at school, and I am free only on weekends, but I still spend all my free time teaching and taking care of the kids at Vinh Son 2, my second home.

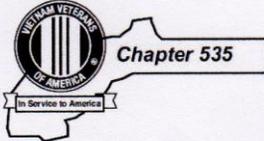
Therefore, it is a real blessing for me to be part of Vinh Son 2 where I could find life and my dream. I am happy with who I am and what I am doing now. One thing I can never forget is that Vinh Son 2 is where I found the love of God and was blessed with the support that the sisters gave me and my orphan friends. May God always bless the Sisters' ministries and all my friends in FVSO.

Y Rim

A big THANK-YOU to VVA Chapter 535!



INCOMING
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535
Website: www.vva535.org



Chapter 535

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Dave (left) receives check

VVA 535 Director, Dave Chaix President Emeritus of Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage was presented with a donation of \$3,000 on March 3, 2016 by VVA 535 Treasurer Ralph Remick. The contribution will be used as stimulus funding for a matching challenge fundraising effort to be staged during the last Quarter of 2016.



Sr. Gabriel with the new motorbike for Vinh Son 3. It will be used for driving kids to school, to the hospital, and for going to market. Reliable transportation is very important for everyone.



Pray for rain!



Major Drought hits Vietnam

El Niño has been affecting parts of Southeast Asia countries since the last quarter of 2015, with conditions expected to improve in the second quarter of 2016. Viet Nam is one of the countries which is severely affected, mostly by higher temperatures and below-average precipitation during the rainy season. This combination of events has led to drought in the southern central, the central highlands, and the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam.

Tân Điền Lake's water is exhausted in Kon Tum Central Highland Province. Drought in the Tây Nguyên (Central Highlands) region has seriously affected farming and the lives of local residents in the region.— Photo vietnam.vnanet.vn

HCM CITY — Drought in the Tây Nguyên (Central Highlands) region has seriously affected farming and the lives of local residents in the region.

About 180,000ha of rice, crops and other trees in the provinces of Đắk Lắk, Đắk Nông, Kon Tum, Lâm Đồng and Gia Lai have faced a shortage of water since the middle of this month, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).

Trần Trung Thành, deputy director of the Tây Nguyên Centre for Hydrometeorology Forecasting, said the ongoing El Nino phenomenon was the most extreme of the last 60 years and it would cause a record drought in the Highlands.

“The peak of the drought will occur in early April,” he said.

The region’s rainfall between December 2015 and February 2016 has fallen by 40 per cent against the same period last year, according to the Tây Nguyên Centre for Hydrometeorology Forecasting.

The water levels of most reservoirs in the region have fallen by 15-35 per cent compared to the average of many years. More than 35 rivers and springs and 40 per cent of small reservoirs have dried up.

The region has also faced a shortage of daily use water, with Đắk Lắk being the hardest-hit province as it has about 25,000 affected households. People in Đắk Lắk have drilled wells and built dams to take water

So far, the orphanages seem to be doing alright. There have been reports of water re-cycling used for garden irrigation. We will monitor this situation closely. Anecdotal reports from friends living in villages in the Pleiku area state there is water for personal use, but not for the crops.

Elvis delivers for the kids!



In 2009, Dave Chaix, Hank Gonzales, Pat McKee and I were involved with setting up a triad of local charitable organizations with the thought that we could earn some funds for each entity for their discretionary use. We called the organization **Arts & Kids** and filed with the County of Placer for use of our fictitious name and to give us business notoriety. The triad is composed of FVSO, the Auburn Placer Performing Arts Center (APPAC) and the Boys & Girls Club of Placer County. Hank's wife, Glenda, has since served as co-chair, together with me as co-chair, and Colleen Sands has coordinated outreach and kept the books for our group. Hank, Patrick, Colleen and Dave led the way in selling tickets throughout our community, but tickets were moved by every member of the triad.

On February 27, 2016 we staged Elvis Presley tribute artist, Rick Torres and his troupe, based in San Francisco. Rick Torres is the leading Elvis tribute artist in California. Torres was also the 2008, 2010 and 2011 Rising Star Entertainer of the year and was voted best of 2012. Torres' show this year was his so-called Burning Love Tour.

The United Auburn Indian Community graciously donated the use of Pano Hall at the Thunder Valley Casino Resort and the Resort was instrumental in helping market the show. Another piece of good news is that the Casino Resort will work with us again in 2017 if we elect to pursue and stage another fundraiser event.

Bart Ruud, FVSO Board Member

The committee has met to disperse funds to FVSO, APPAC and the Boys & Girls Club of Placer County. After expenses, each entity received a disbursement of \$6,700.

Thanks to all who helped us achieve this measure of success!

Long-term supporting organizations

- 189th Assault Helicopter Company
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada Cnty, CA
- Counterparts Association
- 14th Combat Engineer Btn. Assoc.
- 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

Anyone who thinks that they are too small to make a difference has never tried to fall asleep with a mosquito in the room.

— Christine Todd Whitman

One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something.

— Henry David Thoreau

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

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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