

# UPDATE

Bi-monthly Membership Newsletter Reporting on US - Vietnamese Current Events and Culture  
Issue 2 March/April 1998

## GSVA Receives Grant for Trade Mission

The Greater Seattle Vietnam Association has received a significant grant from the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) to bring a trade delegation from Haiphong to Seattle. The purpose of the mission will be to educate Seattle area businesses about contract opportunities in the massive Dinh Vu project near Haiphong. The Dinh Vu Peninsula is the site of a port and economic enterprise zone development project being un-

dertaken by a multinational consortium, which includes the American International Group of New York. GSVA anticipates that the delegation will visit Seattle in late May or early June and participate in a range of activities including seminars for and one on one meetings with area businesses, tours of the port and other local business centers, and a variety of social activities. A highlight promises to be a dinner at the Bell Harbor International Conference  
*continued on page 4*

## GSVA to Host Water Puppet Troupe

This year's Seattle International Children's Festival is featuring performances by the Saigon Water Puppet Troupe.

If you have never seen a water puppet performance, this opportunity is not to be missed. The troupe performs while standing in a large tank of water with the puppeteers out of sight behind a screen. A remarkable hand operated mechanical system allows large puppets to dance magically upon the water.

Fire breathing dragons and boys catching fish while riding water buffaloes are all a part of the spectacle. Please see the Children's Festival insert to note performance times.

The City of Seattle is giving each sister city association 100 free tickets to festival events. GSVA will host a "meet the puppeteers" reception after the performance on the evening of Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. The performance runs from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and the reception will follow immediately after in a nearby room

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## Donated Books Shipped to Hai Phong

GSVA secretary, Judith Henchy, recently finalized the shipment of donated books to the Hai Phong Library and Hoa Phung Orphanage. With help from Boeing, these books, which range from the classics to children's books, will have arrived for distribution in early March.

Interest in English language books is quite high as children and adults struggle to learn the language but have few tools to do so. In to-

tal 18 boxes of over 700 books have been shipped via DHL.

The GSVA book drive began 3 years ago. We have received books from private donors and organizations such as the Boeing Blue Bills. GSVA will announce when we plan our next book drive. Thank you to all that have participated and helped in making this a successful project!

## US Envoy to Vietnam Speaks in Seattle

Deputy Chief of the US Mission in Hanoi, Dennis Harter, addressed an audience of some 60 attentive luncheon guests at the Madison Hotel on Wednesday, February 11th. The cuisine was no match for the oratory at this event, which was sponsored by The Washington Council on International Trade and cosponsored by GSVA.

Harter has served with the State Department in Asian affairs since 1966. His comments, entitled "US-Vietnam Relations: The Political and Economic Perspective", were frank and candid. While by no means promising roses, Harter did point to positive prospects, especially for those enterprises with long-sighted interest in global marketing. For example, he pointed out that Nike's factories in Vietnam are not producing for the US market,

but reaping big profits in Europe. Vietnam's membership in ASEAN could, within eight years, provide access to a new consumer market the size of the USA, with negligible trade and tariff barriers.

US efforts at "normalizing" relations with Vietnam have changed little in the last decade. It is hoped that encouraging continued progress by the Vietnamese government toward international standards in economic, trade and banking policies will lead to increased political, religious, and personal freedoms for Vietnamese citizens. Unfortunately, Mr. Harter could acknowledge no concrete moves that Viet authorities have made to this end in the last two years.

Ironically, the economic woes of her Asian neighbors, including primary trading

### Business Breakfast Schedule

#### March 25

Al Davignon, Director  
*REM Ventures*

#### April 22

Derek Haynes, Product  
Development, SE Asia  
*Microsoft*

*Please contact GSVA at  
206-322-1178 for details.*

partners, may fuel desired reforms. Investment monies are declining in tandem with export markets, forcing Vietnam to more seriously consider the requirements of the IMF, for funding, and the US, for trading under Most Favored Nation status. And there is evidence of a gradual, erosion of resistance to treating with Vietnam in Washington.- *Scott Wild*

### THE GREATER SEATTLE VIET NAM ASSOCIATION

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## Business Briefs

Vietnam is **planning to privatize** all of its state-owned garment enterprises. The goal is to produce two billion meters of fabric and export four billion dollars of goods by 2010, according to the Saigon Times. For this, the textile and garment industry requires an estimated 600-700 million dollars for expansion projects and about 5.5-6.0 billion dollars in investment

**Honda Motor Co.** unveiled its new joint venture motorcycle factory in Vietnam, the Nikkei Industrial

Daily reports. In February Honda and its partners began manufacturing and marketing 100cc motorcycles for the local market. Honda plans to produce 130,000 units in 1998, 240,000 in 1999, and 300,000 in 2000.

**Mitsubishi Motors Corp.** announced that its joint venture in Vietnam would begin making sport utility vehicles for the Asian market in April. Mitsubishi expects to produce 300 of the 2,000cc vehicles in the first year and 80,000 by 2005.

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*Water Puppets from page 1*

in the Seattle Center's Northwest Rooms complex. GSVA urges members and friends to send in the ticket request form selecting tickets for the

**GET INVOLVED!  
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**TO HELP ORGANIZE OUR  
ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT**  
Contact GSVA (206) 322-1178

Friday night performance so that you can join us in welcoming and getting to know the troupe. This will be a great event for people of all ages. So that many can take advantage of the free tickets, we ask that you do not request large numbers. For further information, contact Gary Johnson at (206) 684-4812 or (206) 632-4957. Don't miss it!

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## Fundraiser Benefits Vietnamese Orphanage

The Greater Seattle Vietnam Association Board of Directors is planning our second annual fundraising event for late May or June. This year's benefit promises to be an exciting evening of food, music and silent auction. Proceeds will benefit the Hoa Phung Orphanage located in our sister city, Hai Phong.

This orphanage houses eight "families" in which children are raised in homes located within the orphanage's grounds. The children attend a nearby school and are taught skills such as sewing. The grounds are sparse and limited activities are offered these already disadvantaged

youngsters. We are hoping to bring some joy into their lives by providing them with, among other things, much needed playground equipment.

The evening will include dinner and a silent auction with fabulous items being donated by local businesses (see donation form on p. 4). The location and time will be announced soon. You are encouraged to bring a small toy or stuffed animal which will be sent to children at the orphanage.

If you are interested in more information or would like to volunteer, please call Beth Whitman at (206) 322-1178.

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## Operation Smile in Vietnam

*In November 1997, Alice Park was a part of the Operation Smile team that spent a week in Can Tho, Vietnam performing corrective facial plastic surgery on children and adults. The following article shares her experience.*

Operation Smile has been sponsoring medical missions for nine years. Generally two teams visit separate locations during a country mission. Last November teams provided medical services in Quang Binh and Can Tho. Most of the surgeries were for cleft lips and palates. A few adults had old burn contractions or adhesions corrected. One 47 year old

woman was brought by her family to have her cleft lip repaired which, to the delight of her family, dramatically changed her appearance.

Alison's team arrived at the Saigon airport following a lengthy flight one day after hurricane Linda had swept through the southern Mekong Delta. Fortunately Can Tho, which is on the Mekong River, was missed by the hurricane. Unfortunatly, serious flooding and storm damage prevented a number of potential patients from reaching Can Tho hospital.

In spite of the storm, 110 patients were operated on at Can Tho. Another 134 pa-

tients received surgical treatment at Quang Binh. During the week of surgery local physicians and medical staff received teachings in surgical techniques and anesthesia care. Staff and patients benefited from a mutual exchange of culture, teaching, good will and friendship. The surgery on faces to correct defects ensured smiles for the future and for everyone. A job well done!

*Alice Park is a Registered Nurse at Virginia Mason Hospital. This was her second mission with Operation Smile.*

Center to raise funds to build a playground complex for the Hoa Phung Orphanage in Hai Phong. The children there have completed drawings of their desires for the playground and their art-

work, which is remarkable, which will be featured at the event. We are also working with Mayor Paul Schell's office to coordinate schedules so that we can feature a formal sister city signing cere-

*Trade Mission from page 1*

mony that evening between Mayor Schell and Tran Huy Nang, his counterpart in Haiphong and the delegation leader. It promises to be a gala event so watch for further notice of details!

## **DONATE TO SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION'S AUCTION**

Your donation will be actioned at the GSVa fundraiser benefiting the Hoa Phung Orphanage

Company/Individual Name \_\_\_\_\_

Item Donated \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form along with the item donated or instructions for pick-up. **Thank you for your generosity!** GSVa, PO Box 23282, Seattle, Washington 98102.

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**THE GREATER SEATTLE VIETNAM ASSOCIATION**

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P.O. Box 23282  
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**GET INVOLVED!**  
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TO HELP ORGANIZE OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT  
See articles on pages 1 & 3