

UPDATE

Bi-monthly Membership Newsletter Reporting on US - Vietnamese Current Events and Culture
Issue 5 November/December 1998

A VISIT TO THE HAI PHONG ORPHANAGE

by Roger Ferrell

Mission Statement: GSVVA is committed to promoting positive relationships and mutual understanding between the people of Greater Seattle and the people of Viet Nam. We will accomplish this by promoting contact and cooperation in the areas of education, humanitarian work, trade and the arts.

THE GREATER SEATTLE VIET NAM ASSOCIATION

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Ideas for articles may be submitted to Teri Conti at P.O. Box 27545, Seattle, WA 98125 or at tconti@scn.org.

Last July, Daniel Goldsmith and I visited the orphanage in Hai Phong on behalf of GSVVA. I was traveling on another project, and offered to visit the Peoples Committee and orphanage in Hai Phong to start the process for building a playground. The Peoples Committee made it very clear that they are both excited and committed to get the playground built at the orphanage in 1999. The Director of the orphanage, and her staff, are doing a great job, particularly in light of the limited resources they have available. The children at the orphanage are well cared for, happy and cheerful.



I will be returning to Viet Nam in February with a delegation that will participate in the PeaceTrees Viet Nam Education Fund Ceremony in Dong Ha. The delegation will be visiting Hai Phong, and will be hosting a party, sponsored by GSVVA, for the kids at the orphanage. We will have traditional decorations, refreshments, and a clown direct from the US. to make the kids laugh. If you have any ideas about how we can make the party more fun and exciting, or have gift ideas, please call me at 206-842-6558 or E-mail me at rogerf@seanet.com. Thanks GSVVA for the opportunity to expand my awareness and participation in helping the kids in Viet Nam.

UPDATE ON THE PEACETREES VIET NAM EDUCATION FUND PROGRAM IN DONG HA, QUANG TRI PROVINCE

by Arden Norvold

Our group recently returned from Viet Nam with hearts full of hope and the memories of beautiful children's faces and a job well done!

The second school year began this September with a total of 200 students, of which 100 are handicapped, many by landmine injuries and birth defects believed to be caused by agent orange. The commitment was made last March when Roger Ferrell and I met with the Director of the Peoples Committee of Quang Tri Province Protection and Care of

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ON THE BOARD

The Board of Directors is a diverse group of men and women who are committed to promoting good relations between the people of Greater Seattle, and the people of Viet Nam. Functions of the Board include policy and decision making, and fundraising and promotion of projects and events that help us fulfill our mission. Because we believe that's it's important for GSVa members, and the larger Seattle community, to know who is responsible for the operation and functioning of our organization, the next several issues of The Update will feature a short biography of two or more members of the Board of Directors. We hope you have fun getting to know us, and that we, too, will be privileged with getting to better know you!

**GARY JOHNSON, *President***

During Gary's formative years, (the '60's and early '70's), virtually every newscast and daily paper had multiple stories about the war in Viet Nam, into which many of his older friends were eventually drafted. The war, in this far off land, sparked a long personal interest in the people and the country of Viet Nam.

After college, Gary moved to Seattle, and in 1979 began working in the human service field with residents of Seattle's large public

housing communities. This coincided with the arrival of large numbers of SE Asian refugees, many of whom moved into public housing. He became friends with a number of refugees, and this exposure further pliqued his interest in Viet Nam.

In 1990, Gary and his wife Karen, honeymooned in Thailand, and while there, decided to extend their trip into Viet Nam. Their visit was particularly fascinating, since it was rare for Americans to venture into the country at that time. They found a very beautiful, but very poor country, filled with friendly people who seemed to harbor no ill will toward Americans. They were smitten.

When he returned to Seattle, Gary began looking for an organization that shared his interest in Viet Nam, and it was then he found GSVa. He joined the organization, then became a Board member, and in 1996, became president. He is proud of the good work GSVa does in promoting friendship between our two countries, and is particularly pleased with the creation of our sister city relationship with Hai Phong.

**BETH WHITMAN, *Membership Coordinator***

Beth is a roving travel photographer and writer. She became enamored with Viet Nam after a three month visit to the country in

1992, and got involved with GSVa shortly after returning to Seattle. She loves being involved with an organization that takes such an active role in helping the people of Viet Nam. When she's not out scooting about on her BMW F650 motorcycle, she is dedicating her time to GSVa. She's been a Board member since 1993.

**JUDITH HENCHY, *Secretary***

Judith is currently the Head of the SE Asia Section at the UW Libraries. She has a BA in SE Asian History from London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, an MA in Library Science from UC Berkeley, and a Masters in History from the UW. She is currently working towards a Ph.D. in Vietnamese history.

Her background includes many interesting endeavors: she worked as a librarian for two years at the Institute for SE Asian Studies in Singapore; worked with the US Refugee Program, which administered the refugee camps in Indonesia in the 1980's, and since returning to the US, has worked with both the National Security Archive in Washington DC., and as an archivist for the Viet Nam War Collection at the University of Massachusetts. She visits Viet Nam regularly, and currently manages a grant-funded project at the National Library in Hanoi to preserve early printed texts. She has been a Board member since its inception.

THEATRICAL REVIEW

by Judith Henchy

"TRUNG BA'S SOUL IN THE BUTCHER'S SKIN"

The Association was a co-sponsor of Nha Hat Kich Noi's (The Central Theatrical Company) visit to Seattle in mid-October. The visit, which was organized by the Viet Nam America Theatre Exchange Project at the Pacific University in Oregon, was sponsored by the Ford Foundation. Besides the Seattle visit, the troupe's itinerary included two cities in California, and two in Oregon, including an extended stay in Ashland, where they were negotiating to bring a cooperative performance of Shakespeare to Viet Nam. Other local sponsors included the SE Asian Studies at the UW and Seattle Public Library (SPL). The troupe's performance of the play was held at Kane Hall on October 15th. They also gave several public lectures, including one at the Seattle Public Library.

Both the lecture at the SPL and the performance provoked small demonstrations by the local Vietnamese communities, although these demonstrations were insignificant in comparison with those that had greeted the performance in Southern California.

The play was written in 1982, six years before the policy of renovation (doi Moi) inaugurated

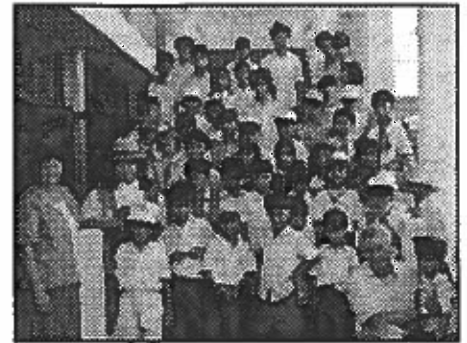
a relative easing of cultural censorship in Viet Nam. The playwright, Luu Quang Vu, was acclaimed from the late 1970's for his innovative and challenging work, although this particular play was not staged until 1987, when the policies of renovation emboldened writers to test the limits of this newly promised freedom. The play has been performed by Nha Hat Kich Noi 500 times, despite the controversial nature of its content. It is widely known and has been greatly appreciated by audiences throughout Viet Nam. The play can be read at various social and moral levels, but is a clear critique of government corruption and bureaucratic incompetence. Luu Quang Vu's tragic and untimely death in an automobile accident in 1988 was received with great sorrow by the Vietnamese literary community.

Despite the small demonstration of some 50 people outside the hall, an appreciative audience of close to 250, including a high percentage of local Vietnamese community members, remained undisturbed by the interruptions outside. A group of close to 100 members of the audience joined the troupe for a reception following the performance.

Peacetrees(Continued from page 1)

Handicapped Children to add 100 handicapped children to our education program. Without this program, many of these children would never have an opportunity to attend school.

Our program included presentation luncheons for the students,



parents and teachers. Each child was called up to the stage and given a red envelope welcoming them into the scholarship program and their tuition for half of the school year. It was heart warming to watch the parents' faces as their children received his or her envelope. This event was well covered by the media.

Remember, it takes only \$50 to sponsor a child for the entire school year. 100% of your contribution goes directly to sending a child to school and is tax deductible. All project expenses are paid for by the Education Fund Committee Members. If you have questions about the project, please call me at 425-821-9878.



WHAT'S HAPPENING

December 12: Nguyen Huu Minh will be giving a talk on Living Arrangement After Marriage in the Red River Delta from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Smith 320, on the UW campus. No charge.

THE CONCISE ENGLISH-VIETNAMESE ACCOUNTING DICTIONARY

The global economy and growing trade among nations have given rise to the need for better technical communications in areas of business and commerce. Therefore, this Concise English-Vietnamese Accounting Dictionary has been developed to help translate the current accounting terms between American English and Vietnamese

languages. This dictionary is prepared with the accountant and translator in mind. However, college students in business, business people in general, and many others, will find this dictionary of practical use. The terms found in this dictionary include common terminology of the accounting and bookkeeping fields, as well as contemporary

terminology found in accounting textbooks of both countries, accounting literature and government documents. A second edition, entitled English-Vietnamese Finance Pocket Dictionary, will be available in early December.

To order, or obtain additional information, contact: The Paper Tiger Press, P.O. Box 3903, Kent, WA 98032-0403. Tel: 206- 322-1253.

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