

The Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association



September - October 2001 Issue

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- Clear Path International
- Kids Without Borders

THIS OLD SCHOOL

By Son Michael Pham

Located deep in the southern of the Mekong Delta, Nang Ren Hamlet is approximately 45 minutes from the main highway ... by small boat (sampan). On dry days, bicycles, water buffaloes, and occasionally a rare scooter share the two dirt roads running along the canal that takes you to the village. These dirt paths are not usable when it rains and the only way to get to Nang Ren is by sampan.

In the village, the Nang Ren church is the focal point. On the church grounds is a two-story school building that was built back in 1907. Although it withstood many years of war, storms, typhoons, and flooding, it is lost to the termites and needs to be taken down. This has been the place where up to 350 young students each day spent time after working outside on the rice paddies or tending the buffaloes and family livestock.

Nang Ren parish is under the direction of Father Peter Chanh. Through the introduction of Khue Dang's family in Can Tho, I first met Father Chanh in December last year when he came up to Saigon with some of the children. It was then he told me about the need to replace 'this old school', as he was worried about the safety of the children. When I was in VN in May this year, I

went to the village to look at the school as well as other needs.

Several people told me of the harsh living condition in this remote rural village and discouraged me from visiting and staying overnight there, I was warned that there was no electricity in the village, it was dangerous to get to when it rains, and about the swarm of mosquitoes at night. I somehow had a sense of being well-taken care of and placed my trust in Father Chanh. After all, I was born to a Catholic family in Saigon, educated in Jesuit schools until I left VN in 1975 and finished my college in the U.S in a Jesuit university.

It is quite difficult for me to describe my experience in Nang Ren in this short article. Farmers inhabit the village over many generations. All of the families are involved in cultivating rice or raising shrimp. Children are abundant, full of energy and youth. Life here is harsh and well below the standard in VN, but the people are happy that today they only have to deal with natural causes such as floods and windstorms and not war.

The Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association is joining Vets With A Mission (VWAM) in raising funds to rebuild the school for Nang Ren parish. VWAM is a nonprofit

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'THIS OLD SCHOOL'

(continued from page 1)

organization based in Newberry, South Carolina. Our two organizations have made the joint commitment to raise \$8,500 for 'This Old School' project, and an additional \$1,000 to equip the school with furniture, supplies, and equipment. For a total of \$9,500 or \$27.00 per child, we will replace this dangerous building in this remote village. Without any overhead expenses and paid staff, it does not cost hundreds of thousand of dollars to build a school in Viet Nam. If you wish to receive further information on 'This Old School' project and learn how you can make your contribution, please contact Khue Dang, our project chair via email to info@seattlevietnam.org. Remember you can double your contribution through your company matching funds program, and your donation is tax-deductible. For \$27.00 per student, please join us in rebuilding this 94 years old school,

You Are Invited ...

The Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 18, 2001 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at West Precinct Community Room at 810 Virginia Street (corner of 8th Avenue & Virginia Street in downtown Seattle).

This is your opportunity to learn about our projects and programs, and to meet our board members and committee members.

There is not cost to attend the event and you can RSVP via email info@seattlevietnam.org or call 206-322-1178. For direction, please call 206-233-8560

Refreshment will be provided.

KIDS WITHOUT BORDERS KWB

Have you heard about the latest addition to our GSVA list of projects? In February 2001, project 'Kids Without Borders' was born.

Through a national nonprofit organization 'Kids In Distressed Situations' based in New York, KWB receive new apparel, toys, juvenile products and other items that benefit children in need. The donations come from manufacturers, retailers, vendors and suppliers of children's products.

With the help of volunteers from GSVA, greater Seattle area Rotary clubs (District 5030), the Detlef Schrempf Foundation, teachers and students from school districts in King County, KWB will distribute approximately over \$500,000 of new children's clothes and products by the end of this year.

Donations are made to children's service agencies and low-income families in the Puget Sound area and to several developing countries around the world.

Our volunteers gathered on weekends at the Sammamish Shurgard Storage, sorted and packed thousands of boxes of donated children's clothes.

Some of the agencies in our area that were recipients of our projects are: Adams Kids' Company, Alcott Elementary ESL Students, Bow Lake Elementary ESL Students, Boyer Children's Clinic, ECEAP (PSESD), Evergreen Children's Association, Family, Friends & Community, Highline School District ESL Students, Head Start, Healthy Start Shoreline/Lake Forest, HALO, Latino ESL Kids Summer Camp, Mona Foundation, Northshore School District, Project LOOK, Rise And Shine, Seattle Mental Health, Treehouse, University District YMCA, Vietnamese Catholic Community Church of Seattle,

Vietnamese Buddhist Temple of Seattle,

Some of the countries that KWB donated to are Cambodia, Columbia, Guatemala, Nepal, Viet Nam, and Uganda.

Our special appreciation goes to the University Rotary Club for providing us with a grant to cover some of our costs, to Shurgard Storage for donating some of our storage space, and to our in-kind donors: Frontier Packaging and Jet City Label. And our most sincere thanks to Khue Dang (Vice President of GSVA), Nicole Morrison with the Detlef Schrempf Foundation, Det and Mari Schrempf, Rotarians Rosemary Aragon, Karon Fenton and Bob Wilson for your tremendous support. Founded by GSVA President Son Michael Pham, the primary mission of KWB is to involve youths helping other youths.

For more information, please write to us at info@kidswithnoborders.org. Contributions made to KWB are tax-deductible.

THANK YOU ...

CAM ON ...

The recent Vietnam Business and Dining Etiquette by the World Trade Club Seattle, co-hosted with the GSVA on July 26 was a major success. A big Thank You to our friends at the World Trade Club Seattle, especially to Co-Presidents Jennifer Spatz and Kathleen Sebastian. Featured speakers for the evening were GSVA President Son Michael Pham and Vice-President Khue Dang. Joining them were Mai Dao, Vice President of Bank of America and Hung Lam, Emerging Markets Program Manager of the Washington State Office of Trade & Economic Development.

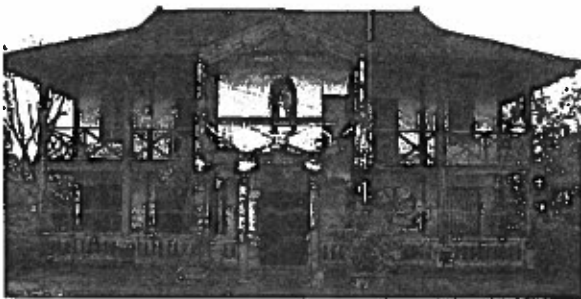
The event was held at the recently renovated Viet Nam Pearl restaurant and all were treated to a delicious traditional Vietnamese dinner.



Children at the Go Vap Orphanage (in Saigon) received their new school supplies from GSVVA. Delivery of the stocked backpacks to them were made by Rachel Greenwood (friend of GSVVA) last July 2001. These kids are students of the English class at the orphanage, coordinated by GSVVA and Rotary funded by the Boeing Company and Airborne Express.



GSVVA has been supported the children of the Go Vap Orphanage through several joint projects with the Club of the University District Seattle



'This Old School' in Nang Ren hamlet. Built back in 1907, it will be torn down and replaced with a new building funded by the joint effort between the Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association and the Vets With A Mission group.



Class inside of 'This Old School' in Nang Ren



Donated new children's clothes, packed and ready to be distributed to local children's service agencies as well as orphanages and poor children in Viet Nam



Youth volunteers of the 'Kids Without Borders' project at a recent 'Packing Party'



In May 2001, GSVVA President Son Michael Pham traveled to Hanoi and met with U.S. Ambassador to VN Pete Peterson. Joining Son were University of Washington Vice Provost of Research Alvin Kwiram and Wife Verla. The group met with Ambassador Peterson on the day that he submitted his letter of resignation to President George W. Bush

From The CLEAR PATH INTERNATIONAL Team
CPI is a project of the Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association

C S N

Can you guess what is CSN?

Please come check out the Crosby, Stills & Nash concert at the Gorge in George, outside of Seattle, Washington on September 21! The band is helping us out and allowing us to set up an information booth inside the show. So come say hello to us while you are enjoying some great music!

The CSN tour just started last week and is already receiving rave reviews... so don't miss it.

CPI staff was at another CSN show in Saratoga, New York on August 25th!

We look forward to seeing you at either of these events and we sincerely appreciate the support of Crosby, Stills & Nash as we continue in our efforts to clear landmines and bombs in Vietnam and assist landmine victims in Southeast Asia.



Exert from an essay by a student at the Tran Phu Secondary School for Gifted Students, Class 11 English, in Hai Phong:

Question: Why do you want to go to the U.S.?

Answer: As a 17-year-old schoolgirl, I really wish to get the opportunity of attending a studying course in the U.S with students from all over the world. Because, firstly, this is a great opportunity for me to meet and communicate with students of all races, colors and nationalities from far-away lands. I will be able to learn much more about the history, culture and people of their own countries. In turn, I will also have chance to introduce my country to friends in the world that Vietnam is a beautiful country with a long, eventful history, a varied culture and lots of cultural and historical relics and that the Vietnamese are very friendly, hard-working and hospitable. To the best of my knowledge, I will get my own country more and more well-known.

Furthermore, I would like to take this opportunity to enlarge my knowledge of people and country the United States. I could admire famous sky-scrapers, huge blocks and expanding entertainment areas of big cities. I could also have chance to study the culture and history of America more thoroughly, through what I see and hear rather than what I have read in books and watched on television.

In all, a studying course in America is an opportunity to broaden my horizon that I have always dreamt of.

Dang Thuy Van

Born 26 Dec, 1984

OUR WISH LIST ...

- Large luggage or duffel bags: they are used for donated clothes, toys, school supplies, medicine, ... going to VN.
- Gift certificates, auction items for our upcoming Fundraising Event on November 14, 2001.
- Airline Mileage.
- Computers or printers in good condition.
- Funds to continue our Teaching English project at the Go Vap orphanage in Saigon.
- School supplies
- Peace.

THANK YOU.

Asian Breast Cancer Awareness Program

Recent studies have shown that among ethnic populations in the U.S., Asian women are the least likely to be screened for breast cancer. While it's true that Asian women in the U.S. have a lower risk of breast cancer than white or African-American women, this doesn't mean the risk is low. In fact, breast cancer is the first or second most common cause of cancer death for women from all Asian and Pacific Island ethnic groups. In an effort to increase awareness of breast cancer and screening options among Asian women in our community, Virginia Mason is now participating in the Asian Breast Cancer Awareness program (ABCA). The program, made possible in part through a grant from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, offers free counseling to help women determine their level of risk for breast

cancer. If the risk assessed is high, the ABCA counselor will discuss screening options appropriate to the individual to help promote early detection. Counseling is available in English, Chinese, Japanese or Korean languages.

To promote the ABCA program to patients, available are brochures for the Study of Tamoxifen And Raloxifene (known as the STAR trial; please see enclosed). The STAR trial, which is being coordinated by the Community Clinical Oncology Program (CCOP), is a natural link to ABCA efforts and provides another opportunity for education and prevention for Asian women who meet the criteria.

For more information on this program, please contact the ABCA program office by calling (206) 625-7277. For copies of the STAR trial brochure with ABCA inserts, please call the CCOP office at (206) 223-6742.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- World Affairs Council's 50th Anniversary Gala - Friday, September 14 from 5:30p.m. Sheraton Hotel Grand Ballroom 1400 Sixth Avenue, Seattle. Contact (206) 441-5910
- Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle's Tenth Anniversary Dinner - Wednesday, September 19 from 6p.m. Salty's on Alki - 1936 Harbor Avenue SW, Alki Beach, West Seattle. Contact (206) 389-7301, email deas@seattlechamber.com or www.seattletradealliance.com.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- World Trade Center Tacoma 2001 Trade Show - Wednesday, September 26, 2001 from 9a.m. to 3:30p.m. Tacoma Rhodes Conference Center - 949 Market Street, Tacoma. Special Event Speaker: Bill Center, President, Washington Council on International Trade. Contact (253) 383-9474, email info@wtcta.org.
- Vietnamese Adoptee Network, Inc. Seattle Gathering - October 5 - 7, 2001. Contact Chris Brownlee at chris@van-online.org or Kelly Jackson at kelly@van-online.org. Visit www.van-online.org.

DID YOU KNOW ...

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☞ By Decision 114 issued in August 2001, the government in Viet Nam allowed overseas Vietnamese to pay the same rates as Vietnamese nationals for transport services starting August 15, 2001. Ticket prices, including airfares, as well as the prices of related services will be the same for them and accompanying relatives.

☞ During the first quarter of 2001, the American Red Cross of Seattle-King County Language Bank had a total of 294 requested cases. 218 cases were completed. The top languages requested were: Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, and Somali. For volunteer opportunities, please contact Claudia Crowell at (206) 709-4522 or by email to languagebank@seattleredcross.org.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- World Trade Club Seattle Fall Reception - October 2001 Contact (206) 382-9400, email info@worldtradeclub.net or visit www.worldtradeclub.net.
- Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association Annual Reception & Fundraising - Wednesday, November 14, 2001 from 5:30p.m. A Contemporary Theater (ACT) For sponsorship packages, corporate tables, in-kind contributions, please contact info@seattlevietnam.org.

The Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association
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 Seattle, WA 98102 USA
 (206) 322-1178 Fax (206) 374-2944
 www.seattlevietnam.org
 Email info@seattlevietnam.org



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A Nonprofit Volunteer Organization

JOIN US !

Become a member of the Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association. Your membership helps support our events, programs, projects and services of the Association.

Membership Benefits:

- ✓ Receive our newsletter to stay informed about happenings pertaining to Viet Nam.
- ✓ Contribute and participate in GSVA projects in the U.S and in Viet Nam.
- ✓ Excellent opportunities to network with community and business leaders in the U.S and Viet Nam through our business events.
- ✓ Opportunity to increase your international business contacts.

- ✓ Viet Nam related resources in the areas of education, the arts, trade, and humanitarian work.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

- () \$25 Individual / Friend of the Association
- () \$100 Organizational / Company Membership
- () \$500 Corporate Partner
- () \$1,000 Executive Partner

GSVA is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extend permitted by the law.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

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 Name

.....
 Company / Organization

.....
 Address

.....
 Phone

.....
 Email

Amount Enclosed: