

The Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association



UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2002

Winner of
2000



Seattle's Sister Cities Award

Seattle - Hai Phong Sister City

ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Patricia Davis
Commissioner Port of Seattle
- Sue Donaldson
Daniel J. Evans School University of Washington
- Jan Drago
Seattle City Councilmember
- William Glassford
Bank of America
- Christopher J. Flint
The Boeing Company
- Mike Lowry
Enterprise Washington
- Jim McDermott
U.S Congress
- Paige Miller
Commissioner Port of Seattle
- Douglas "Pete" Peterson
Former U.S Ambassador to Viet Nam
- William Stafford
President Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle
- Jim Street
Executive Director, Reinvesting In Youth
- Betty Tisdale
Helping And Loving Orphans

OFFICERS

Son Michael Pham, *President*
Khue Dang, *Vice President*
Lea Ann Kaplan, *Secretary*
Gary Johnson, *Treasurer*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judith Henchy
Richard Hunter
Imbert Matthee
Khan Tran

Project Committee:

- Kids Without Borders

My Trip To Viet Nam

This summer I embarked upon a trip to Viet Nam that I will not soon forget. I was able to see a part of Asia that is very new to me, one that is not cosmopolitan, not urban, yet is a developing economy. Through the Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association (GSVA) and with the help of donors, I was able to make a difference in the lives of a small group of children in the cities of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City.

Viet Nam is a culture very different from any other Asian country. As I stepped out of my hotel at 6a.m., I was surprised to see that the streets of Ha Noi were alive with people. There were hundreds of people walking around the lake practicing Tai Chi, jogging, playing volleyball and badminton. It is their only time for recreation before the day becomes too hot and humid.

The streets of Viet Nam are a chaotic commotion of pedestrians, automobiles, bicycles, and motorbikes. Ha Noi, my first place of visit there is the capital of Viet Nam. Ha Noi is very different from Ho Chi Minh City. One can observe many architectural influences reflecting the French colonial period. There are few traffic lights. There is no such thing as yielding for other vehicles or pedestrians. At any given intersection, one can observe motorbikes and cars

simultaneously crossing in four different directions, trying to avoid collision by making eye contact with fellow motorists. There are no marked crosswalks; when crossing a street, one simply anticipates an opening by judging the speed of the oncoming traffic and then embarks slowly through a maze of intersecting cars, bicyclists, motorbikes and trucks weaving in and around your path of destination.

Ho Chi Minh City is a much different culture from Ha Noi. Ho Chi Minh City may remind one of Tokyo in its early days of urban development; the city once known as Saigon is fairly metropolitan. There are, however, many characteristics of Ho Chi Minh City that are ubiquitous in all of Viet Nam, such as the bustling traffic of people, activities and vendors along the city streets.

Every person in Viet Nam is an entrepreneur. When not in school, children are out on the streets to subsidize their family's income. The streets are lined with men, women, and children selling live chickens, frogs, snakes, and other animals in front of their family-run businesses of selling furniture, tiles, bricks and other living necessities. Freshly cut meats of fowl and livestock are not

(continued on page 2)

To Viet Nam

continued from page 1)

and are sold in open-
all day as customers
ase for their evening
te afternoon is quite a
shopping on the way
many pulling to the
ic to pick up a few
the day. Elderly men
set up shop on the
king noodles on small
sell while customers
ave lunch. Vendors
a bottle filled with pink
te that gasoline is
for motorbikes.
follow you for blocks
money or selling
arried on baskets
eir shoulders. These
around my age of 15
ire at least a foot
ing the heavy baskets
nted their growth.

re fortunate enough,
ntinue their schooling
sity level. However,
ave that opportunity.
my visit was the
mination period for all
ere. Many families
outside the gates of
anxiously waiting for
to finish with their
are filled with hope
life for their children
elves as well.

isit to Ho Chi Minh
ble to attend a U.S.
Day celebration at
nsulate General, the
ds of the American
was the first time a
was held there since
gon, in 1975. There
Vietnamese from Ha
ound Viet Nam in
as well as many
fter years battling the
French, and the
many Vietnamese
o no longer have to
eing engaged in war.

PEACE VILLAGE

In Ha Noi, I was given the opportunity to visit the Than Xuan Peace Village for children. The Peace Village was created to give shelter to children affected by Agent Orange. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this term, Agent Orange was the code name for an herbicide developed for the U.S. military, primarily for use in tropical climates. The purpose of the product was to deny an enemy cover in dense land by defoliating trees and shrubbery where the enemy could hide. Agent Orange, named for the orange band that



Tatsuya Adachi presented to a staff of the Thanh Xuan Peace Village a donation of new children's clothes from Kids Without Borders.

was used to mark the drums it was stored in, was above all effective against the dense jungle-like terrain found in Viet Nam. An estimated 19 million gallons of Agent Orange were used in South Viet Nam during the war. The earliest health concerns about Agent Orange were about the product's contamination with TCDD (dioxin). The dioxin found in Agent Orange is extremely harmful to humans. In laboratory tests, dioxin has caused a wide variety of diseases, many which are fatal.

AGENT ORANGE

The Viet Nam War, or the American War as it is called in Viet Nam, has long since passed. However, the extremely toxic dioxin of the Agent Orange used in the war is still present in Viet Nam's soil. The dioxin does not go away; therefore when contaminated soil is used for crops, dioxin enters the food chain.

Once a human consumes it, his/her offspring will now have traces of dioxin in their system. Though United States military forces no longer use Agent Orange, its effects are still pervasive. There are many stories of U.S. war veterans and their children suffering the aftereffects of exposure to Agent Orange.

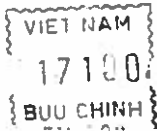
The physical effects of dioxin on the human body are serious. Victims of Agent Orange often are underdeveloped, suffer from mental disabilities, and are seldom able to walk or stand. When affected individuals have children, they are unable to care for them properly; the children also have the same health defects. The Peace Village gives boarding for these children and additionally gives them physical therapy, teaching these children how to sit properly, stand, and then walk. As these children grow older, they are able to learn how to walk and even run at advanced levels. Peace Village currently owns one treadmill and a few exercise bikes.

For my visit to the Peace Village, I accompanied Mr. Son Michael Pham, President of the Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association (GSVA), who donated approximately 70 pounds of clothing that will be distributed to the children there. I also purchased many bracelets as part of my donation, one of which I have enclosed, that were made by children from the Peace Village.

GO VAP ORPHANAGE in SAIGON (HO CHI MINH CITY)

After Ha Noi, I visited Saigon, now called Ho Chi Minh City. There, I visited the Go Vap Orphanage. Go Vap is located adjacent to a Catholic church in the center of the poorest part of Saigon. There are approximately 245 children being housed there. A large number of these orphans are abandoned children; most of these children arrive at the orphanage in baskets

(continued on page 5)



F.Y.I



GLOBAL LANDMINE

A Conference entitled "Ending the Tragedy of Landmines Through Innovation and Cooperation" will be held in Seattle on September 30 and October 1, 2002. The conference is sponsored by Rotary International and the U.S. Department of State, and is limited to members of Rotary clubs from around the world.

Some of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from our area participating in this conference are Clear Path International, Prosthetics Outreach Foundation, the American Red Cross of King, Kitsap and North Mason Counties, and Peacetrees Viet Nam.

Hosted by the local Rotary District 5030, the conference is expected to bring more than 200 Rotarians from countries as far as Bosnia, Cambodia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Hong Kong. Speakers at the conference include representatives from the Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicap and the Viet Nam Veterans of America Foundation.

Founded in Chicago in 1905, Rotary International has approximately 1.2 million members in 163 countries.

More information on the conference and Rotary International can be viewed at www.rotary5030.org.

TRADE MISSION

The Ho Chi Minh City Business Development Mission To Seattle hosted by The Port of Seattle is on Thursday, September 26, 2002.

The Port of Seattle is sponsoring an incoming mission of 10 government and 22 business leaders looking for opportunities and potential US business partners.

The purpose of this visit is to arrange meetings between the various industries represented and potential US business partners.

Vietnamese Industries represented on this mission are from the following industries: Garment, Wood Products, Information Technology (software development/software product sales), Food Products, Construction Projects (contractors looking for offshore construction projects), and Handicrafts.

In addition, individual appointments for vendors to meet with Vietnamese companies can be scheduled after group meetings.

To participate, please register by contacting:

Tara Van Vleet
Business Development - Port of Seattle
206-728-3195 Email: vanvleet.t@portseattle.org

Further details:

When: Thursday, September 26, 2002, 9:00 – 11:30 am
Where: Port of Seattle Headquarters, Pier 69
2711 Alaskan Way, Downtown Seattle
Cost: Complementary, but – RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

Month-long Exchange in Viet Nam ... and Rotary picks up the tab!

Rotary Clubs around the world have worked towards advancing understanding, goodwill and peace since Rotary's beginning in 1905. Local club within the Rotary District 5030 (greater Puget Sound area) are encouraging young business people to join these efforts by taking part in a month-long Group Study Exchange (GSE) in Viet Nam from March 1 through 31, 2003. Applications are currently being accepted until September 27, 2002. The exchange is open to non-Rotarians only.

The exchange is designed to develop professional and leadership skills, and to better prepare participants to address the global needs of their own communities when they return. It's a month-long program in which participants will travel throughout Viet Nam, engage in professional exchanges, and tour business and cultural facilities they would never see as a tourist. All costs are covered by Rotary.

Some of the requirements for applicants are: not available to Rotarians, children or grandchildren of Rotarians; applicants must be currently employed in any recognized business or profession in a health care field, and must be within 25 to 40 years of age in order to have maximum long-term career impact.

Further information and application forms are available on the Rotary website (www.rotary5030.org/gse).

JOB OPENING: Cultural Liaison (3 Temporary, Part Time Positions)

The Culture Liaisons' purpose is to recruit volunteers in South King County for the American Red Cross Language Bank, a service that helps limited English speakers meet basic needs and avoid preventable emergencies by providing interpreters and translators. The CLs conduct outreach with and market Language Bank services to communities speaking one of the three languages: Spanish, Vietnamese or Somali (or another East African language). For more information, please contact the Language Bank at the American Red Cross-King, Kitsap and north Mason Counties (206) 323-2345 or visit www.seattlredcross.org.

JOIN US

as we celebrate our 10th year anniversary of

MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

The GREATER SEATTLE VIET NAM ASSOCIATION Annual Benefit Reception

Wednesday, October 23rd, 2002 5:30 p.m – 7:30 p.m
The Atrium at the Port of Seattle on Pier 69

Mistress of Ceremonies: Mimi Gan, KING 5 Television

Reservation information and form is enclosed in the newsletter.

For information on sponsorships, in-kind contributions, auction donations, please contact us at (206) 322-1178 or by email info@seattlevietnam.org.

SAVE THE DATE:

November 20, 2002
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

The 7th Annual Seattle Sister Cities Awards Reception

At the Artic Building Dome Room
(700 3rd Avenue & Cherry)
honoring our 21 sister city associations.

(Reservation information to be available).

HUMAN TOURS

DESTINATION → VIET NAM

*A project of GSVa in partnership with the Rotary Club of the University
District Seattle and Kids Without Borders*

*H*umaniTourism' is a unique concept that combines tourism and humanitarianism. It is a bargain price "working vacation" that will offer you the opportunity to see firsthand a variety of humanitarian projects throughout Viet Nam, while you discover the stunning beauty of Viet Nam. Your experience of a lifetime will inspire you with ideas and purpose to make the difference in the lives of the people of Viet Nam.

On October 2, 2002, HumaniTour October 2002 will depart from Seattle for a 14-day trip to Viet Nam. The team will arrive in Hanoi, then visit Ha Long Bay, Hue, Dong Ha/Quang Tri south of the former DMZ, Saigon, Tay Ninh-Cu Chi, Vung Tau and Dalat.

Some of the programs and projects on our agenda are: supporting disable children at the Thanh Xuan Village in Hanoi, donating equipment to the vocational training center at the Hoa Phuong orphanage in Hai Phong, supporting children at the Go Vap orphanage in Saigon, and presenting scholarship of 250 'Tropical Helmets' to elementary school students in Saigon. We will also visit other international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including Clear Path International mine-action programs in Dong Ha.

To get ready for the trip, team members have been busy procuring donations, such as sports equipment and school supplies. We will take along over \$10,000 worth of new children's clothes donated by Kids Without Borders.

Our team will have a presentation of our trip at the upcoming GSVa Benefit Reception on October 23, 2002 at the Port of Seattle.

To reserve your space on our next HumaniTour in Feb-Mar 2003, or for more information about the HumaniTour, please contact Dave Dean or Son Michael Pham by sending an email to info@seattlevietnam.org.



Some of our sponsors are:

- Rotary Club of the University District Seattle.
- Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (Hanoi).
- The Detlef Schrempf Foundation: donating sport bags, mini basketballs, and children t-shirts.
- Kids Without Borders: donating over \$10,000 worth of children's clothes and products. KWB also provides funds to purchase the 'Tropical Helmets' for elementary school students in Saigon.
- Tatsuya Adachi: for contributing funds to support projects at the orphanages, the Thanh Xuan Peace Village and the 'Helmets for Kids' program.
- Buffalo Tours: a leading destination management company in Viet Nam and Cambodia, with offices in Hanoi, Danang, Saigon, and Siem Reap.

Board Member Judith Henchy Returns from Research Leave

GSVA founding member Judith Henchy returned on July 1st from research leave from her job as the Southeast Asian Librarian at the University of Washington, after spending 20 months overseas in connection with her PhD research on Vietnamese history. During this period, she spent 7 months in France and the remainder of the time in Vietnam.

Her research, which traces a cultural and intellectual history of the 1920s and 1930s, focused on two Vietnamese nationalist intellectuals from the Saigon area, Nguyen An Ninh and Phan Van Hum. Her investigations took her to the National Archives Center in Hanoi, where the records of the Resident Superior of Tonkin, the administration of the Northern part of the country under French colonial rule, reside. She also drew upon the records of the Government of the colony of Cochinchina, the French administration in the Southern part of the country, which reside in the National Archives No 2 facility in Saigon. She also spent much of her time in the National Library in Hanoi, which was the legal deposit library under the French colonial administration, and in the General Sciences Library in Saigon, the former National Library of the Republic of Vietnam between 1946-75, and the repository for many colonial era newspaper and journal holdings. She was able to capture close to 10,000 digital images from the serial holdings in Hanoi and Saigon.

Her time in France was divided between the Bibliotheque Nationale de France and the Archives d' Outre Mer in Aix, which is the main repository for records of the French Ministry of the Colonies. It houses the records of the Governor General's office in Hanoi and part of the records of the Resident Superior of Tonkin.

Besides her work in the libraries and archives, Judith was able to make contact with the families of her research subjects, and with scholars working on related fields, both in Vietnam and in France. During her stay in the region, she also attended two meetings of the Southeast Asia Consortium on Access and Preservation, based at Chiang Mai University in Thailand, participated in a workshop organized by the Ford Foundation on providing resources for the study of Anthropology to the research community in Vietnam, and in a workshop sponsored by UNESCO aimed at increasing awareness of the Memory of the World Program within the Southeast Asia region.

We are glad to have Judith back home with GSVa and applaud her for her outstanding work furthering understanding of Vietnamese history.

Gary Johnson

My Trip To Viet Nam

(continued from page 2)

or boxes at the doorstep of either the church or the orphanage itself.

The orphanage is divided into two parts. The main part of the orphanage houses approximately 140 children, ranging from age 5 to 17. These children are provided with an education at local public schools. A select group of these children are part of the "Teaching English Program," which is currently being sponsored by the GSVA. In Viet Nam, orphans are often shunned from society. These children are frequently being picked on not only by their peers, but also by their teachers. Because they live in an orphanage, these children are very isolated from the outside world. Approximately \$120 of the money that I have raised was used to take a group of about 15 children of the English Language Class from the Go Vap Orphanage on a field trip on Sunday July 7, 2002. When asked what they wanted to do, they simply said, "Go far away and for a long time." All 15 of these children were to be separated and sent to various other orphanages to make room for younger children, so it was their last chance to do something fun as a group. This may seem like an impractical use for funding, but a simple carefree outing made a huge difference in the lives of these children.

The children also live in fairly poor conditions. One of the sites that I visited in Ha Noi was the *Ho Lo* prison also known as the *Ha Noi Hilton*, a jail where American pilots were detained during the Viet Nam War. One of the detainees was Arizona Senator John McCain (R). Prisoners were treated very badly there, and I noticed that the beds that they slept on are the same beds that the children at the Peace Village sleep on. The beds do not have mattresses. The children sleep directly on mats placed on these hard, steel frames. Over

time, however, these steel beds become rusted and weak.

The rooms at the Go Vap Orphanage are not air conditioned; when the orphans enter air-conditioned rooms, they often fall ill or pass out because they are not used to the environment. The extent of keeping everyone cool at Go Vap is very minimal, through the use of electric fans.

The second part of the orphanage is used to house babies ranging from newborns to 18 months old with life-threatening illnesses. This ward houses over 100 babies with Down Syndrome, HIV, and hydrocephalus. I am sure most of you are familiar with HIV and AIDS, and some of you may be familiar with hydrocephalus.

HYDROCEPHALUS

Hydrocephalus is the abnormal buildup of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) in the ventricles of the brain. In most instances, hydrocephalus is a lifelong condition where the patient is treated rather than cured. There is currently no way to prevent or cure hydrocephalus, and shunts are the main method to treat hydrocephalus. A shunt is a device which diverts the accumulated CSF from the obstructed pathways and returns it to the bloodstream. It consists of a system of tubes with a valve to control the rate of drainage and prevent back-flow. It is inserted surgically so that the upper end is in a ventricle of the brain and the lower end leads either into the heart or into the abdomen. The device is completely enclosed so that all of it is inside the body. The fluid, which is drained into the abdomen, passes into the bloodstream. Last December, the GSVA donated 38 shunts to the St. Paul Hospital in Ha Noi. There are two downsides to the shunt, however: they are very expensive (\$700 for each shunt not including surgery) and they can only be used once.

Children born with hydrocephalus begin to accumulate CSF in the ventricles of their brains. Because of the high price of shunts, the hydrocephalus is usually not treated properly causing a baby's head to become extremely engorged, sometimes growing to the size of a bowling ball. At this stage, it becomes too late for treatment. There are, however, some babies that may still be saved and are treatable with the help of a shunt.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND SAFETY

Because many families are not able to afford cars, most families purchase motorbikes, a hybrid of a motorcycle and a moped. As of recent times, the number of motorbikes far outweighs the number of cars in Viet Nam.



Tatsuya Adachi at the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation helmet factory near Hanoi Noi Bai Airport.

In Viet Nam, the congestion on the streets is unbelievably thick. There are few, if any, traffic regulations. Because of this, the number of traffic accidents and injuries and deaths is incredibly high. A contributing factor is that it is a rarity to find people on motorbikes who are wearing helmets, and this includes children. Often a single motorbike is the only mode of transportation with the father or mother driving with one or two sleeping children or adult riding behind with a child riding precariously in front of the driver. Most of the passengers are sleeping and holding lightly from behind with the driver holding a young child or baby in the front

(continued on page 6)

My Trip To Viet Nam
(continued from page 5)

steering with the other arm. This is a serious hazard in the first place, but is furthermore intensified when there are no traffic lights, stop signs, or other traffic regulators.

ASIA INJURY PREVENTION FOUNDATION – HELMETS FOR KIDS

In Ha Noi, I had the opportunity to take a side trip near the airport to a helmet-making factory. It is an extremely well kept factory with state of the art production and testing equipment. I have mentioned to most of you a little about the helmets. Greig Craft, a former businessman, has now founded the 'Helmets for Children' project. This groundbreaking initiative is part of an effort to reduce the number of deaths among children and adults from motorbike accidents.

MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

- \$7 purchases a 'tropical helmet' for an elementary school student (Helmets for Kids program).
- \$35 purchases a flock of poultry.
- \$70 pays for a small boat, fishing net, and motor.
- \$50 pays for one year school expenses for a child.
- \$300 pays for one year school expenses for a medical university student.
- Your generosity and care: PRICELESS.

Contributions to GSVA are tax-deductible and will help us continuing our work in VN, such as:

- Teaching English project at the Go Vap orphanage.
- Building a school in the village of Nang Ren in the Mekong Delta.
- Providing scholarship to poor students in Hai Phong.
- Supporting a poor college student with her medical school.

THANK YOU ... CAM ON

The 'Helmet for Children' program targets specific schools to distribute helmets. The children are contracted by their teachers to wear these helmets, otherwise punishable by a point-deduction system. Little by little, 'Helmets for Children' strives to create both a national and international awareness of road safety.

'Helmet for Children' is a completely non-profit organization. All of its profits, or revenues as they prefer to call them, go directly to the production of more helmets. The program is additionally supported by corporate sponsors whose corporate logos are displayed on the helmet.



Tatsuya Adachi
August 16, 2002

Note: Tatsuya Adachi is a student at Lakeside High School in Seattle. Prior to his trip to Viet Nam, he collected donations from his friends on his birthday, in lieu of gifts. With some matching funds from his mother and others, Tatsuya collected \$1,410. Through GSVA and Kids Without Borders, he donated the collected money to projects supporting children in Viet Nam. Tatsuya met some of these children during his visit to the Thanh Xuan Peace Village and the Go Vap Orphanage.



IN THE NEWS

VIET NAM FLOOD DEATH TOLL REACHES 49, MOSTLY CHILDREN (Deutsche Presse-Agentur)

September 16, 2002, Monday
DATELINE: Hanoi

The death toll from floods in Vietnam's Mekong Delta rose to 49 over the weekend, as nine more people drowned in the rising waters, officials said Monday.

All but three of the victims were children who fell into the water while left unattended, flood control officials in three provinces said. Worst hit has been the province of Dong Thap, 125 kilometres southwest of Ho Chi Minh City, where 24 people have drowned in the past month, an official told Deutsche Presse-Agentur dpa by telephone.

Nearby An Giang and Long An provinces have had 14 and 11 deaths,

respectively. Officials are bracing for more deaths as families struggle to make it to higher ground. In An Giang, rescue units in power boats plucked dozens of people from the waters, and 312 child-care centres have been set up to ensure children are not left unattended, provincial officials said.

Nearly 13,000 families in the province have been evacuated, and more than 50,000 homes have been submerged in the Delta region.

STUDY: VIET NAM ENVIRONMENT GOING DOWNHILL (Associated Press)

HANOI, Viet Nam – The Vietnamese natural environment, which supports one of the world's most biologically diverse ecosystems, has deteriorated rapidly over the past 10 years, the World Bank said in a report released yesterday.

(continued on page 7)

IN THE NEWS

(continued from page 6)

Vietnam is home to about 10 percent of the world's species, but 28 percent of its mammals, 10 percent of birds and 21 percent of reptile and amphibian species are now endangered, mainly because of habitat loss and hunting, the report said.

About 96 percent of Vietnam's coral reefs are now severely threatened, while more than 80 percent of its mangrove forests – a spawning ground for marine life – have been lost. Over the past decade, Vietnam's economy has doubled in size and poverty has been reduced from 70 percent of the population to about 35 percent – one of the fastest declines in the world, according to the World Bank.

MID AUTUMN FULL MOON FESTIVAL *(from Buffalo Tours)*

This ancient event originates from China and is celebrated throughout Asia. It has added importance in Hoi An as much of the old town was built and inhabited by Chinese traders. The festival is a colorful occasion and is dedicated to children. The children are given star lanterns and street parties and processions are held in their honor. At night the old town's electric street lighting is switched off and the procession of lanterns becomes a magical sight. The festival's roots can be traced back to the days when parents worked tirelessly in the fields preparing for the harvest, so much so that they had little time for their children. It was therefore decided to address this problem by creating a special day purely for the children.

Food is also an important part of the festival especially the eating of 'Moon cakes'. Legend has it that in ancient China the Han people resented their Mongol rulers and plotted to overthrow them but they needed a way to unite the people to revolt on the same day without letting the Mongol rulers learn of the plan. They finally came up with an ingenious idea. A rumor was

spread that a plague was ravaging the land and that only by eating a special moon cake distributed by the revolutionaries could the disaster be prevented. The moon cakes were then distributed only to the Han people, who found, upon cutting the cakes open, the message "Revolt on the fifteenth of the eighth moon."

This year's Mid-Autumn full moon festival takes place on **September 21st**.

CLEAR PATH INTERNATIONAL BECOMES INDEPENDENT MINE ACTION *(by Imbert Matthee)*

DORSET, Vermont – Clear Path International, founded as a project of the Greater Seattle Vietnam Association in 2000, has become an independent mine action 501 C 3 nonprofit organization.

"We are extremely grateful to the Greater Seattle Vietnam Association for its unwavering and nurturing support of us as a fledgling organization," said Imbert Matthee, co-founder and newly elected president of Clear Path's board of directors. "It is with their encouragement that we are leaving the nest and spreading our wings."

The independent organization will be based in Dorset, Vermont, and continue to maintain a West Coast office on Bainbridge Island near Seattle. It will be registered as an out-of-state nonprofit in the state of Washington, where it has many donors and supporters, Matthee said.

Co-founder Martha Hathaway was selected to become Clear Path International's executive director and secretary-treasurer of the board, while her husband, co-founder James Hathaway, will serve as vice president of the board. Kristen Leadem also joins the board as a director. Additional board members will be recruited during the coming months. The organization already has a group of seasoned professional advisors.

During the two years since its founding, Clear Path International has grown from an organization with a single clearance project in

central Vietnam to a mine-action entity with programs in three countries, including Cambodia and Thailand near the Burmese border. Its grassroots efforts are all privately funded by foundations, churches, service organizations and numerous individual donors.

Clear Path's move to become an independent nonprofit is fully supported by the board of the Greater Seattle Vietnam Association, said Son Michael Pham, that group's president.

"We are very proud of the successful growth of Clear Path International and we will continue to lend our support for its mission and programs as it has become independent," he said. "We are certain that our organizations will mutually benefit from our ongoing partnership and we offer our congratulations to our friends at Clear Path International."

Dedicated to a no-nonsense hands-on partnership with survivor communities in Southeast Asia, Clear Path International is aiding hundreds of accident victims from the time they are injured to the day they reintegrate into society as productive contributors.

"Thanks to the compassionate support of our sponsors, the number of mine survivors, families and communities who benefit from our humanitarian mine-action programs continues to grow," Matthee said.

Clear Path's services to survivors include emergency medical care, orthopedic surgery, general surgery, eye care, prosthetics, physical rehabilitation, educational scholarships, income-generating assistance and vocational skills training. Its hospital donations, shipped in 40-foot containers, have gone to nearly a dozen hospitals that treat and heal mine survivors. Its ordnance removal efforts have included the largest bomb clearance project of its kind by an American organization in Vietnam. Its work has been applauded by the U.S. State Department and endorsed by two of the most prominent U.S. Senators, John McCain and Patrick Leahy.

The Greater Seattle Viet Nam Association
 P.O Box 23282
 Seattle, WA 98102 USA
 (206) 322-1178 Fax (206) 374-2944
 www.seattlevietnam.org
 Email info@seattlevietnam.org

U.S
 Postage
 Stamp

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

.....
 Name

.....
 Company / Organization

.....
 Address

.....
 Phone

.....
 Email

.....
 Amount Enclosed: