

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

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September 2015 Newsletter - Volume 12 Issue 7

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## Matching Donation Program

Currently, every dollar donated to FVSO will be **MATCHED** up to **\$24,500!**

### Matching Fund Update

The annual donation goal = \$125,000

Donations in August were \$18,275, which leaves a balance of \$6,225 towards our Challenge Goal of \$24,500. We will need \$23,523 or \$5,880 per month to reach our year end goal of \$125,000.

**Matching Funds are still available!**



We thank these benefactors for providing "The \$24K Challenge"

**Hanson McClain Financial Advisors**  
**San Juan Capistrano CA Rotary**  
**Bob and Carolyn Lee**  
**VVA Chapter 535 Nevada County CA**  
**Steve Holley**

The children and the nuns are most grateful for your donations. Please share the FVSO story where you can. Every dollar counts and goes directly to support the kids.

**Patrick R. Leary**  
President, FVSO



# School is back in session

## Back-to-School Report from Mr. John Ho, Vinh Son 1

Mr. Ho works at VS1 as the resident English tutor and student mentor. He is long time friend of FVSO.

Today is September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and it's the first day of the new school Year 2015/2016. All of the children at the 6 Vinh Son Orphanages get up early to prepare for the new term after their three month summer vacation. They dress in their school uniforms, a white shirt and blue trousers with a red scarf and school badges. They also wear sandals or shoes and a cap with the name of their school on it. The high school girls wear a white Vietnamese traditional AO DAI with white loose pants. The little children attending primary school wear their ethnic minority traditional uniforms.

Yesterday, the teachers and students decorated their school with the national flags and they hung the banners on the platforms in the middle of the school yard. They hung a big drum near the flagstaff. At 7am today, everyone solemnly gathered with representatives of the Parents Association on the schoolyard where they waited for representatives of the Peoples Committee of Kontum City to arrive and chair the celebration. At 8am, they started to celebrate the Feast of the new school year.

At first, they celebrated the rites of saluting to the colors. Everyone sang the Vietnamese national anthem with a team of school pioneers who beat the small drums, the cylindrical drums and play the trumpets. After that, the headmaster of the school beat three rolls on the big drum to make the signal of the beginning of the new school year. Then a speech is made to welcome the Chairman, the representatives, the teachers and all the students. The headmaster promises to work well with the teachers' staff and to give the students the best education possible. The teachers are reminded to be good examples for all the students. The students are encouraged to work hard and follow the regulations and the disciplines of the school.

After that, a representative of the students makes a speech to welcome the chairman, the headmaster of the school and the teacher's staff. The students promise to work well at school and observe all the regulations and disciplines. Finally, the headmaster invited the chairman of the celebration to step up to the rostrum to make a speech with the thankfulness or the praise for the achievements and the results of the schools in the past time. He hopes the students will become a good generation for the future, in order to guide and lead the country which the ancestors who passed by tradition from one generation to another.

The celebration finished at 10am and after that all the students lined up to enter their class. Today, all the orphans of the Vinh Son Orphanages are very happy and very grateful for the donors of FVSO who help them. They are thankful for the food, medicines, clothes, uniforms, school fees, text books and the things they need for their study at school. In their minds, they always say to themselves that they will try their best to work hard at school. They hope they will have a good job to take care of themselves and of their families in the future. And they think it is the best way to pay their donors for all their service. Today, they also pray God bless all the donors.



**FVSO is very proud of all the students who work so hard**



**The 1<sup>st</sup> day of a new school year is the time for celebration in Vietnam. Teachers and students make promises to each other to do the best they can. Many thanks to John Ho and Sister Marie Kham for these beautiful images and ceremony report.**

# Bringing dental care to the orphanages has been a top priority

## Lemons to Lemonade: The 2015 Dental Program



- Clean teeth
- Fill small cavities
- Pull teeth
- Apply sealant

The original plan called for East Meets West Dental Clinic to conduct the annual dental treatment. They had made arrangements for 12 U.S. dentists to travel to Kontum to treat the children. However, long story short, they bumped into some major bureaucratic issues and the mission had to be cancelled. It looked like the kids would have no access to dental care this year.

That changed when two things happened: 1) a local Vietnamese dentist was identified and he agreed to provide the service, and 2) we partnered with our friends from another charity, Children of Vinh Son. We would share the total cost of \$8,500...50/50. Talk about turning lemons into lemonade!

With the new arrangement, the dentist agreed to basically operate a portable dental clinic. He brought his services to the kids. Over a 3-week period, he and his team were able to serve over 500 children and staff....Truly a fantastic number!

Sao Mai in Pleiku is an urban environment. Our long time friend, Em Thien, helps with transportation for the 55 children at Sao Mai to see a local dentist once a year as well.

## Recognition well deserved

Dave Chaix (Left, in jeans) was honored by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, September 8, in the County Board of Supervisors Chamber, for his leadership of the Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage. Over the past fourteen years, FVSO has grown, and now supports seven orphanages with 830 children in Pleiku and Kontum, Vietnam.

### Long-term supporting organizations

- 189<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada County, CA
- Counterparts Association
- 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Btn. Assoc.
- MilSpec Tours
- Fr. Luke Tran (VN-SHEP) Social Health Education Projects

**“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.”**

— *Charles Dickens*

**“As we work to create light for others, we naturally light our own way.”**

— *Mary Anne Radmacher*

### 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

### Officers

- President** – Pat Leary
- Secretary** - Dennis Coyne
- Treasurer** - Colleen Sands
- Senior VP** - Pat McKee
- 1st VP** - Sr. Marie Dominique
- 2nd VP** - Michael Little

### Board of Directors

- Hank Gonzales
- Rich Lahey
- Clyde Lewandowski
- Bart Ruud
- Dave Chaix
- Steve Fisher/J. Glah

### Advisory Board

- John Scott
- Bruce Herron

### 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