

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

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September 2012 Newsletter - Volume 9 Issue 5

Annual Fundraising Appeal

Message from Dave Chaix, FVSO President

If you've read any of our 2012 newsletters, you know this year has been another very active period for FVSO, our partners, and the caregivers who oversee the 800+ children at Vinh Son and Sao Mai orphanages. Through your generosity and desire to help, we continue to provide the basic necessities for a healthy and productive childhood: food (from powdered milk to protein supplements), clothing, educational assistance, medical and dental care, clean water, and a safe, nurturing environment.

The smiles we share with you are real. Anyone who is lucky enough to spend time with these special children comes away blessed.

As been our practice, each year we actively solicit donations beginning on September 1st through the end of December. While we graciously accept donations throughout the year, this 4-month period is when we receive the lion's share of our budget, which dictates our level of support for the following year.

The kids are counting on you! Please consider FVSO as one of your charitable priorities for 2013. Let's continue the mission. On behalf of everyone at Vinh Son and Sao Mai....**THANK-YOU!**

Dave



In mid-August, 3 FVSO Board members headed off to Kontum, Vietnam, to assess needs and opportunities. These visits are an important way to make sure your donations are spent wisely and efficiently. Look for their detailed report in the next newsletter.

All expenses are paid by the travelers.

Matching Donation Program Sep-Dec 2012



Once again, we are so fortunate to have benefactors who have stepped up to enhance and maximize our annual appeal. Beginning September 1st, every dollar that is donated to FVSO will be **MATCHED** up to **\$20,000!!** The program ends on December 31, 2012 or when the cap is reached, whichever comes first. What a great way to make your support count **TWICE!**

Please join us in thanking our benefactors:

- ⇒ St. Cloud Truck Sales
- ⇒ Bruce Meyers
- ⇒ Mark and Ann Thelen

VINH SON 1



Miracle Child not out of the woods yet

Last March, during his visit to Vinh Son 1, Patrick Leary came to the rescue once again, not in the cockpit of a helicopter gun ship, but as an emissary of mercy. A little boy in serious need crossed his path and captured his heart. These emails tell the story of a baby boy named A Ga Ney, a miracle child.

March 21, 3:54 am: There is a premature baby at VS1 who has been of concern. This is the baby who was "cut from the mother" and the mother died. The concern was that the baby needed more care than the sisters were able to provide. I asked Sr. Imelda if it was ok to ask a professional nurse the opinion about what to do. Last night, she agreed it would be ok. The baby is now 7 weeks old and weighed 1 kg (2 lbs) when he arrived. He now weighs 2.2 kg (abt 5 lbs). The professional nurse said it would be ok to leave the baby at VS1.

There is still some concern, but the weight gain and nurse's opinion is encouraging. It is not clear that the sisters know the baby needs specific formula. Still trying to solve that issue. Today the nuns hired a lady whose only job is to care for this baby.

March 21, 5:46 pm: I have recommendations from the French nurse at St. Paul to use Enfalac, which is easily available here. I bought one can and a new bottle, will give to the sisters today with funds to buy more. Michelle Hedouin, from France, was great helping me understand.

Like everything with babies, I was told to go slow to make sure the baby accepts it. I have written instructions. Sr. Imelda and staff have done a great job managing this situation. Double the weight in one month is a big thing!

March 21, 8:52 pm: I am now the godfather of A Ga Ney, Christian name Patrick. Formula was delivered this AM and the sisters are very thankful.

March 23, 7:00 pm: Left Pleiku this evening; asked my friend, Tran Nhung, to take \$100 to Kontum & to look after Ga Ney as best as possible.

April 9, 9:29 pm: A Ga Ney is doing well. They are going to bring him to the hospital to check his health soon.

April 15, 6:21 am: Good news. Baby Ga Ney has been brought to the hospital for a general check-up. All the results are excellent. Now he weighs 2.6 kg (abt 6 lbs). The sisters take good care of him, and he drinks lots of milk. Very healthy baby boy!

May 15, 7:25 pm: Nhung visited again today and bought another \$100. He reports that A Ga Ney looks ok, but is always sleepy. Wonderful pictures but my, does he look tiny.

July 31, 6:21 am: A Ga Ney has been out of the hospital for 3 weeks, and is back at VS1. He weighs 4-5 kg (10 lbs). He has been baptized in the Wooden Church on July 29. His baptismal name is Patrick.



Then and Now



August 9, 9:05 pm: A Ga Ney went to the hospital yesterday because he could not breathe.

August 14, 4:39 am: A Ga Ney is in the Kontum hospital. He is still having difficulties and the doctors would like him to be transferred to a hospital in HCMC for further treatment.

August 18, just thinking: It is so difficult not being there. I have held Patrick A Ga Ney for a total of 3 minutes of his life, yet he is so much a part of me. The care system in Kontum is quite different from what we have here. I need to let the sisters make decisions as best they can, but it is painful to wait. I support them with tons of prayers.

So far, it's been a difficult journey for little A Ga Ney. Along with Pat, we hope you'll keep him in your thoughts and prayers while he continues to fight for his life.



About 40 nuns & 40 lay care-givers tend to the needs of 800+ children.

Orphanage Stats Vinh Son & Sao Mai

800+ children

VS-1	188
VS-2	190
VS-3	62
VS-4	170
VS-5	91
VS-6	80
Sao Mai	50

Things we thought you might like to know



We make a big deal about “smiles,” weather they’re the result of a group sing-a-long, riding a motorbike, or a simple pose for the camera. Your support makes these smiles possible....every day. TELL A FRIEND!

Sr Imelda VS-1: What did Christine Yardley’s visit mean to the children? *“The children were very happy because they made new friends like Mrs. Christine and her kids. They really loved to play games together.”*

Sr Jeanne VS-2: What is your happiest day at VS? *“Everyday is my happiest day because I feel like a mother when I see the children grow up, be obedient, study hard, and get the awards when they finish the school year.”*

Sr Gabriel VS-3: How did your time working for Dr. Pat Smith help you to care for the children at Vinh Son? *“The time working for Dr. Patricia Smith helped me to care for the children in VS very much. She had many experiences for examining and curing the sick children.”* (Note: Dr. Pat Smith ran a Montagnard hospital in Kontum 1959-1975)

Sr Lieng VS-4: “What is your favorite thing to do for the children? *“I love to play some games and sing with the children.”*

Sr Truk VS-5: If you had the money, what would be the one thing you would buy for the children? *“If I had the money, I would buy the soap, shampoo and milk shower for the babies and the children.”*

Sr Nhun VS-6: If you have free time away from the children, what would you like to do? *“I always work in the fields and clean the house.”*



Veteran Organizations supporting FVSO

- ❖ 189th Assault Helicopter Company
- ❖ Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada County, CA
- ❖ Counterparts

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

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1st VP - Sr. Marie Dominique
2nd VP - Michael Little

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Hank Gonzales
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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