

Checks payable to: VSO or VinhSon Orphanage

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

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February 12-27, 2007 Vietnam Trip Update

Twelve travelers will depart San Francisco a few minutes after midnight on 2/12 and arrive in Hanoi 2/13. Since this will be the 1st trip for many, we will visit several cities en route to the orphanage in Kontum. Three full days of work, visiting, and assessing the children's needs will take place at VSO.

We will work on Health Issues at VSO. DDS-4-Kids (Dental Mission for Children) has worked with the children on previous medical missions and gave us suggestions to help improve Oral Hygiene. Dr. Lan Jones led 2 previous missions to VSO to help the children— March 2006 was the last one. Since they will not

return this year, we will do our best to follow Dr. Jones's advice to improve their dental hygiene. (See Dr. Jones at VSO to the right) The non profit, East Meets West is also working on

"We will work on Health Issues while at VSO. DDS-4-Kids ... gave us suggestions to help improve Oral Hygiene." Also, we will assess other medical needs for the children.

shipping a mobile dental van to Vietnam. We'll investigate its use at Vinh Son, while assessing other medical needs at both orphanages.

We will also transport the remainder of the thread (about 40 lbs.) that was donated last year for the Sewing Class project.

VSO officers will purchase many items in the local market to care for the children's needs as agreed upon at the annual meeting (see below). Some funds will be taken to meet on-site assessments that need immediate action.



This trip and all expenses are paid for by the travelers.

January 2007

Volume 3, Issue 1

Board Officers

President:
Dave Chaix

Secretary:
Dennis Coyne

Treasurer:
Pat Keegan

Senior VP:
Pat McKee

1st VP:
Sr. Marie Dominique

2nd VP:
Mike Little

3rd VP:
Mike Gregersen

Summary: Annual Meeting (December 28, 2006)

Once again, the meeting was held in Richmond, CA. In addition to the VSO Board, one donor member participated. The following is a brief summary of the meeting:

1. Sister Marie Dominique provided an update of the orphanage population and events occurring there. She sent money from her personal savings so the children would have a festive Christmas Celebration.
2. Dave Chaix- a great year for us as joint entity - we have sent over \$20,000 to VS 1 and 2, we have verified the data and have receipts; money was well spent.
3. Dennis Coyne proposed adding a "sponsor-a-child" page to the web site. Discussion led to another less involved concept that could be called "meet-a-child" page. More work is required plus
4. Pat Keegan presented an analysis of our financial situation. Pat stated that income from cash donations exceeded the 2006 plan by 42%.
5. 2007 Fund Drive Goal— Based upon the huge success of exceeding the 2006 goal of \$25,000 and reaching \$35,445, the Board agreed that \$45,000 should be our 2007 goal.

The digital camera at VS 2 is helpful to us for verifying completion of projects and to help overcome the language barrier. The repair of the tractor at VS I was cited as case where a photo would have been good for us to better understand the problem.

input from the staff in Kontum.

VinhSon Facts

- Population - more than 450 Montagnard children in two facilities
- Administered by the Sisters of the Miraculous Medal
- Location - Kontum, Vietnam in the Central Highlands
- About \$12 feeds, shelters, and educates one child for a month

Projects for 2007

The following projects are approved for funding for 2007 at Vinh Son 1 and 2.

Vinh Son 1

1. Basic Needs (food, clothing, shelter, and education)
2. Sewing Class expenses
3. Computer Class expenses
4. Kitchen (buckets basins, bowls, forks, etc.)
5. Tractor Repair
6. TET celebration for the children
7. Children's Bedrooms (mosquito nets, blankets, mats and pillows)

Vinh Son 2

1. Basic Needs (food, clothing, shelter, and education)
2. Sewing Class expenses
3. Computer class expenses
4. School Fees
5. Shoes and clothes
6. Supplemental teachers pay for one year
7. TET celebration for the children

Discretionary funding will be taken to address issues identified during the visit, i.e. like the repair of the bakery that occurred during the 2006 visit.



Children preparing bread at the bakery that was repaired last year

TET Celebration at VSO & Communication with You

In our country, the period from Thanksgiving through New Years is full of great excitement and joy. For the Vietnamese and much of the Eastern World, the observance of the Lunar New Year (TET) is as big as these holidays...combined.

Preparation for TET starts weeks before



New Year's Day. Homes are cleaned to get rid of bad fortune associated with the old year. Families paint their homes to give it a new look. Everyone gets new clothes.

People pay their debts, and resolve differences between family and friends. February 18 is the first day of TET this year.

TET, which means the first morning of the first day of the new year, is the Vietnamese New Year. The celebration lasts for 7 days. Like the Chinese, the Lunar New Year is one of the most celebrated holidays.

We've set aside a small amount of money to help make this year's TET festival a joyous occasion for the children and their caregivers. It will culminate with a traditional dinner, which

promises to be an evening to remember. They have very few material possessions, and we will provide a special occasion for them.

Many VSO Board members will be in Vietnam during the February trip dates. It may be difficult or impossible for us to communicate with you during this time. We ask for your patience in responding to emails, donation replies, and other things at this time. We will publish a trip report upon our return in early March. If we have access to email, we will try to provide an in country update.

VSO Web Site Results From April–December 2006

Since our web site went live April 13, 2006, a total of **6,474** "hits" have been recorded on the site by 12/31/06. We believe that these are good numbers for a small non-profit like VSO. **3,001** unique visitors came to the site in this time frame as determined by the number of unique IP addresses. Basically, this means that most people came to

our site more than once. We averaged more than 700 hits per month. We hope that you will share our site with your family, friends, etc. The site is our primary resource tool for people to learn about VSO and the children. Help us spread the word...

