

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

P.O. Box 9322 Auburn, California 95604-9322 - Email: info@FriendsofVSO.org -Web: www.FriendsofVSO.org

April 2014 Newsletter - Volume 11 Issue 3

In This Issue

1. Dave and Hank gear up for another Vietnam visit to Kontum and Pleiku
2. Steve Fisher and his wife Joanne Glah initiate an art project at Vinh Son
3. Rhythm Riders ride again for VVA vets and FVSO kids
4. Vietnam Veterans of America help spread our story

On April 16th, Board Member Hank Gonzales and I will be leaving for a 12 day trip to Vietnam, mostly spent at the 7 orphanages in Kontum and Pleiku.

I try and visit every year – this year is scheduled to coincide with the East Meets West Dental Clinic that the children from all 6 Vinh Son Orphanages will attend. FVSO has funded this effort for many years; working with our good partners EMW the dental health of the children is greatly improved. Many thanks to our EMW partners, Minh Huong and Mel Potter, for putting this together again this year.

The children from Sao Mai Orphanage will again be seen by the Pleiku Dentist, assisted by our good friend Thien.

As with every trip, besides the Dental Clinic, there is much to do: funds to distribute, projects to evaluate, needs to be assessed, visiting with each of the Sisters and of course enjoying the children.

Traveling with us are our good partners from Orphans of Kontum, the Netherlands, Diny and Evert. We plan to meet FVSO Board Member Clyde Lewandowski, who will be visiting with a tour group he is leading and hope to be at the orphanages to meet one of our newest partners, Marie Tran from Orphans of Vinh Son, Boise, ID USA.

Our to-do list is large and we will have a trip report for the next edition of the FVSO newsletter.

Dave Chaix, President FVSO



“All of these photos were taken by volunteers. We go to the orphans with a real love, so if you need these pictures to help the children makes me and everyone so happy.” *My Tran*

Photos on this page courtesy of My Tran, and the many local volunteers who help the children of Vinh Son

“First they take you by the hand. Then they take you by the heart.”

The Vinh Son Art Project by Joanne Glah

For years I heard my husband, Steve Fisher, say he wanted to go back to Vietnam so he could see that the country had survived despite the trauma we helped to inflict, and that there was a future for the next generation, a generation that we, in our very small way, helped VSO support. For me, every year when we received a beautiful Christmas card drawn by a child at VSO, I thought that there must be some way to use that talent to raise money for them. So this fall when Steve talked about things on his bucket list, I got on the internet and crossed one off. How easy it was to book those two tickets to Saigon. Yes, the rest of the trip took some planning, but once the tickets were bought, there was no turning back!

The idea for the Vinh Son art project was for the children to produce work that I could bring back to the United States to sell the originals at local art shows and on the internet through groups like FVSO, and also print cards: Christmas, birthday, note cards. I brought artist quality paper and colored pencils to VS1 and the best artists were assembled. Their talent and the pride in their work was immediately obvious. I came home with many pieces, leaving the art supplies behind with stamped envelopes with volunteers who will continue the project. We will have the artwork for sale up on the website soon.

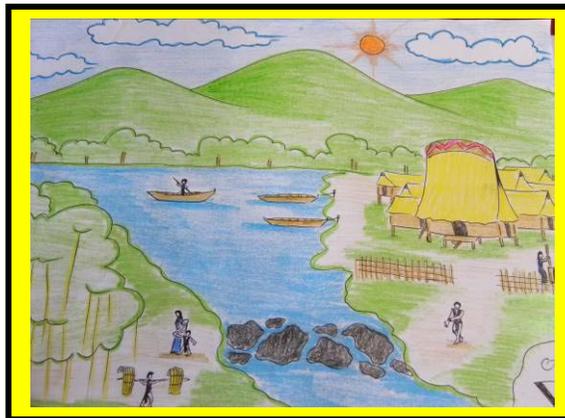


Photos courtesy of
Joanne Glah & Steve
Fisher
March 2014



Steve sums up his experience

I am writing an encouragement, for all vets who think “maybe”, “someday”, “if only I could.” Book your flight. You will see a country that has healed. A country prospering. A generation of 20-somethings who refer to the war as “the old times”. A generation at the orphanages who look only to the future. And a child who will take you by the hand. Then take you by the heart. And by doing so, your heart will be healed.



The Vinh Son artists focus their creativity
on scenes of village life and natural
surroundings



Vietnam Veterans never forget

Friends of Vinh Son Orphanages (FVSO)
Kontum & Pleiku, Vietnam

Please help us keep these beautiful children smiling
Your \$12 donation sustains a child for one month

Over 800 children (mostly Montagnards) live at the 6 Vinh Son orphanages in the Kontum area and the Sao Mai orphanage in Pleiku. Cared for by Roman Catholic nuns, they are completely dependent on outside assistance for clothing, food, medicine, drinking water, education, and much more. They may be orphan poor, but their loving devotion for one another is inspirational.

Founded by a small group of Vietnam veterans and concerned individuals, FVSO was formed in 2005 as a non-profit organization whose sole mission is to meet the needs of these very special children. At their own expense, FVSO Board members often journey to Vietnam to observe, firsthand, how living conditions have improved at the orphanages. Their observations and photos can be found in our newsletters, easily accessed on the web site. While donations are accepted year-round, a Matching Donation program is available during the annual fundraising period (Sep-Dec). 100% of all donations is spent on the children and their caregivers. Visit the [FVSO website](http://www.fvso.org) today to see how you can help...**THANK-YOU!**

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Thanksgiving Christmas New Year

The above ad appeared in the Nov/Dec 2013 edition of the **Veteran**



Friends of Vinh Son are grateful to the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) for their continued support in helping us spread our message through their **Veteran** magazine. Over the last few years, advertising placements have generated new donors and renewed old loyalties.

Can you here that train a'comin? It's Johnny and Dee Price and the Rhythm Riders bringing their acclaimed Johnny Cash and Patsy Cline tribute show at the Veterans Memorial Building in Grass Valley, California. WS Holland, Johnny Cash's drummer for 37 years has played with the Rhythm Riders and calls them "a world-class, Vegas/Branson style show and one of the best Johnny Cash tribute bands in America today".

FVSO has teamed up with Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 535 (Nevada County, CA) for this fundraising event featuring our friends, Johnny and Dee Price. It's a must-see show!

Why we do it

A Concert to Benefit Vets & Kids

JOHNNY CASH PATSY CLINE
TRIBUTE SHOW
With Johnny & Dee Price
and the Rhythm Riders

Saturday, May 17th
8:00PM 255 South Auburn Street, Grass Valley
VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING
TICKETS: GENERAL ADMISSION \$25
PREMIUM \$35 (FRONT 10 ROWS & PARKING)
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT 800-858-0066, ONLINE AT WWW.VETSCHICKET.COM
AND AT BIRLAR PATCH AND SPD MARKETS

PRESENTED BY VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA AND FRIENDS OF VINH SON ORPHANAGE



Organizations supporting FVSO

- 189th Assault Helicopter Company
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada County, CA
- Counterparts
- 4th Infantry Division Association (NY & NJ Chapter)
- 14th Combat Engineer Btn. Assoc.
- MilSpec Tours



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 - Dave Chaix
Secretary - Dennis Coyne
Treasurer - Colleen Sands
Senior VP - Pat McKee
1st VP - Sr. Marie Dominique
2nd VP - Michael Little

Board

Hank Gonzales
Rich Lahey
Clyde Lewandowski
Bart Ruud
Patrick Leary

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