

## July Newsletter 2018

Volume 15 Issue 7

### Contact & Donation Information

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### In This Issue

- Honoring Sr Khiet of Sao Mai
- VS-1 has a new roof
- My two front teeth
- Summer activities at Vinh Son
- June FVSO Board meeting
- Another successful concert

### Sister Khiet keeps on inspiring

Sister Khiet, who is in charge of Sao Mai Orphanage in Pleiku, celebrated the 60th anniversary of taking her formal vows as a Sister of Saint Paul De Chartres in March of this year. The celebration was attended by a large number of family, nuns from the convent, children and friends in Pleiku.

Sisters' dedication to her vocation has been literally life saving for so many whom she calls "the poorest of the poor", the Montagnards of the Central Highlands. We are honored and privileged to work with Sr Khiet on her mission. Sister is pictured below (far left) with a few of her charges.



## Some education facts about the students at the Sao Mai orphanage in Pleiku

### We have total 43 orphans.

Five of them can not go school because of neuropathy.

Thirteen are too young for school; however 6 of them have polio.

One is 34 years old and has epilepsy.

Twenty-four orphans are attending school: 3 in high school, 9 in middle school, and 10 orphans in elementary.

Two are ready to be in 1st grade.

During last school year, eleven orphans got excellent grades, 6 good and 5 average.

## Vinh Son 1 Joint Project, Another Successful Collaboration



Sr. Marie Kham at VS-1 asked Children of Vinh Son (CoVS) for assistance with a kitchen/cafeteria roofing project that would cost \$2,900. Subsequently, CoVS asked FVSO to assist by absorbing 50% of the cost, a total of \$1,450.00.

Before photos (left) and a written cost estimate were received, substantiating the need for repairs and to determine what the costs would be. The FVSO Board unanimously approved the project.

### Expected Outcomes:

Improved safety, functionality and sanitation in the kitchen area that serves at least 200 children plus staff on a daily basis. It looks great!



Her name is Tra (grade 8, 13 years old). She fell off her bike and broke her two front teeth. When she was at home or at school, her friends teased her many times because she was missing teeth. They referred to her as an 80 year old grandmother! When she knew about the program for examination and dental treatment of children, she was very happy. She came to me and said "Hello Ya, could you please implant two teeth for me?" At that time I laughed and answered her, "it is so expensive." She covered her mouth, smiled, and told me to grow two teeth for her because her friends teased and laughed at her. Tra is shy. I laughed with her and said it is alright, but you have to pray for the benefactors twice as much as other children. After hearing that, she said without thinking "I will pray many times to thank God for having beautiful teeth."

She had dental treatment and dental implant, the total cost was 3,100,000vnd (about \$125). After having nice teeth, she has more confidence in smiling and communicating with friends.

Tra told me to relay her message. **"I would like to Thank you to FVSO Association and many benefactors very much, I love you."**

## A happy ending to this dental dilemma (left) as Sr Basile relates.



## Summer fun, work and the search for talent

Summer for the kids has started in Vietnam just like in the US. School is out and now the Sisters have 850 kids to manage ALL day ! They do an incredible job. The Sisters have small agriculture and livestock farms that help support what they do. Many of the kids will work on the farms full time during the summer. Little is mechanized so it is a lot of hand labor. Many of the kids will stay at the orphanage and the nuns will provide practical education and trade skills like sewing, carpentry, and basic mechanics. A few of the kids will find relatives back in the village and help with village chores. The kids too young to help will have structured time.

The workload the nuns have and the energy to keep all this going is beyond imagination. Your contributions are a big help in relieving the nuns of some of the worry about running an operation this size. Through us, they express their deep gratitude for your donations and support.

### Special Summer Activity reported by scholarship student Y Uen

On 24 June, the group of BAFA and volunteers held "Vinh Son's Got Talent" which is a very good and useful program where you can show your talents. Not only that, it has created a cheerful and vibrant atmosphere to connect the entire family of Vinh Son. The program consists of children from each Vinh Son orphanage. The first winner was Vinh Son-6 and both Vinh Son-3 and 4 also won prizes.

BAFA is a project of PdV, a French non-profit whose overall aim is to support the societal integration of the children and provide them with the tools to build a better future for themselves and their families.



### FVSO Semi-annual Board Meeting – 15 June, 2018

Being President of FVSO could be seen as my dream job. Certainly, our mission and our accomplishments are most fulfilling. However, the most rewarding feature of FVSO is a Board of Directors that works so hard to make all of our projects "issue free". All of our success is dependent upon our donations and that has been a most stable base of support as well. So I extend a big toast of gratitude to all on the Board who work so hard and to all of our donors who have been so generous. I can report our June Board meeting was issue free and the mission of FVSO continues on course.

We discussed one of our long time partners, SWK from the Netherlands, will be terminating operations in January 2019. Their founder and other Board members are in their 80's and no longer have the energy to carry on. They contribute about \$US20-25,000 annually to help with primary education. Although tuition is free, the 850 kids must buy uniforms, school incidentals, extra activity fees etc. Not unlike the US. Our discussion ended with a commitment to look closely at what we can do to help fill the void. Hopefully we can increase our donor base. Our donations YTD are running ahead of the same time period from 2016 and 2017. That is most encouraging and we will watch closely through the end of the year.

Dave is planning a trip to Vietnam in January 2019 and Clyde is looking at a trip in April 2019. We will have more details in upcoming newsletters.

So once again, thank you to the Board and to all of our dedicated donors for making the mission of FVSO possible!

**Pat Leary**



### Arts & Kids ride again

Many thanks to our committee members represented by:

Bart Ruud - Chairperson  
 Colleen Sands  
 Hank Gonzales  
 Dave Chaix

FVSO netted \$4,790! This is the 8th year of concert, with each of the 3 entities making over \$63,000.

### Enlisting new benefactors

We can help you connect with potential new supporters of the Vinh Son and Sao Mai orphanages.



- Board Members are available to speak at military reunions or to local civilian groups.
- Distribute copies of the monthly FVSO newsletter to your friends and interested groups. Forward the on-line versions and website information via e-mail.
- A Power Point presentation, detailing the FVSO story, is available for your use.
- Tell your personal story. Why are you a member of this team? What would you tell a potential supporter about FVSO? Your history might prompt others to reach out to the children of FVSO.

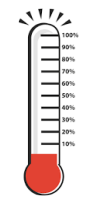


### Legacy Fund Update

Target is \$2.0m in 10 years

Total contributions to date  
**\$519,378**

% achieved = 26%



#### Legacy Contributors

- Jim & Jane Gardner
- Henry Huddleston
- Glen Smith
- William Higbee
- Corps Detachment 711

#### Legacy Contributors

- VVA Chapter 535
- 

### Long-term supporting organizations

- 189<sup>th</sup> & 155<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Companies
- 227<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Battalion (A and D Companies)
- VN Veterans of America, Chapter 535, Nevada Cnty, CA
- Marine Corps League Detachment 711, Salinas, CA
- Counterparts Association
- 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Btn. Association
- MilSpec Tours (800-953-5812)
- Fr. Luke Tran (VN-SHEP) Social Health Education Projects
- Fr. Relihan, Sacred Heart Church, Lone, CA
- Rotary Club of San Juan Capistrano, CA

## amazon smile

Support FVSO by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

### Words of Wisdom

*Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
 Is our destined end or way;  
 But to act, that each to-morrow  
 Finds us further than to-day.*

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

### Vinh Son & Sao Mai Orphanage Facts

- About 830 Montagnard children live in seven orphanage facilities in the Kontum/Pleiku area, Vietnam
- FVSO is a humanitarian, Non-Profit organization approved by IRS Code 501(c)3. Donations are tax deductible.
- Run by Sisters of the Miraculous Medal & St Paul Chartres

### Officers

**President** – Pat Leary  
**Secretary** - Nga Wynne  
**Treasurer** – Ken Tokutomi  
**Senior VP** - Pat McKee  
**1st VP** - Open  
**2nd VP** - Michael Little

### Board of Directors

Hank Gonzales  
 Rich Lahey  
 Clyde Lewandowski  
 Bart Ruud  
 Dave Chaix  
 Colleen Sands  
**Social Media Advisor**  
 Sean Grame

### Donation Information

Please make checks payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son  
 \$12 per month provides each child one nutritious meal every day.  
 Donations are accepted year round