



Children of Vietnam

Mission: to provide direct aid to poor and handicapped children in Vietnam

Winter News Update 2008

From our president, Ben Wilson

Honoring Our Founders, Celebrating Our Past and Planning Our Future—our theme this year is celebration of COV's 10 year anniversary! What a decade it has been to see so many children have opportunity where little existed before your support. Thousands of children and their families have a better life because of you—our donors. Thank you!

As we look to the past, we are so grateful to everyone who has joined us in this journey for the children. And, we are planning for the future, the future of COV, and most importantly the future of children who cannot wait for an education, or a

surgery, or a dry home, or even a cup of milk.

In honor of our anniversary and to ensure funds are available to continue reaching children who need help, we are initiating a **Founders Circle**.

Please join us by making a gift in honor of ten years of service:

\$10 per month \$100 gift per month \$1,000 one-time gift

Gifts can be made from our website at www.childrenofvietnam.org, by check or credit card. Let us know if you want to join our Founders Circle with a note in your check memorandum or a separate note. If you would like to discuss any of our programs, please call or write. We

want to hear from you. Thank you again for your support.

Ben Wilson



Vietnam Facts:

- ◆ Population: 80 million
- ◆ Size: about twice the size of North Carolina
- ◆ Half of the population is under age 25
- ◆ Literacy rate: 89%
- ◆ Per capita income: \$350
- ◆ 40% of population lives below the poverty line
- ◆ 38% of children under 5 are malnourished.
- ◆ Land mines and unexploded armament are still a threat to children.
- ◆ Education is not free
- ◆ Children with intestinal parasites are common

Through the Streets of Danang—Our Founding Story

Our founding was humble—one man seeing the unmet needs of hundreds of children, indeed thousands, and acting at first in small ways yet significant for each child reached. As luck and fortune would have it, Ben Wilson, our President, met Huong Thi Luong, who carried the same passion in her heart for the children she saw needing food, shelter, medicine, a dry home. Together, they rode on a scooter through the streets of Danang and into the countryside to bring aid to children and their families.

Ben and Huong volunteered on their own time and with their own resources and the resources generously given by friends, family, and church. When Ben retired from his business in Vietnam and returned home to the States he still continued looking for ways to help. Danang is a small city and word travels. Families knocked on Huong's door asking for help. Ben would send money and material goods from the States and Huong, in her living room, would assist families, stretching the resources as much as possible.

This spirit and passion of Ben's and Huong's continues to this day—a decade later with the generous donations and gift from hundreds of individuals, businesses, religion and civic organizations, and foundations. Ben returns twice a year bringing with him individuals interested in learning about and joining COV in making a difference. Huong, now COV's Country Director, oversees seven in-country staff that provides services through our four programs—education, housing, nutrition and medical and three special initiatives. These special initiatives include: Mending Hearts Program (heart surgeries for critically ill children), Empowering Foundations for Woman (supporting single woman and their families with education, training and housing), and Hope System of Care, (wrap around services for children with disabling conditions, including those who have congenital impairments or may have been negatively impacted by exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin).

Thank you to all of our donors and supporters, who through your generosity have made often life-saving change in the life of thousands of children and their families.

Send The Gift of Love
This Holiday
By
Helping a Child
If you make a gift in
the name of a friend,
COV will send them a
note of appreciation –
Just give us their name
and address.

Children of Vietnam
Sends Wishes for a
Merry Christmas
And a Blessed New Year
Thanks for all YOU do
for the children!

817 West End Boulevard, Winston Salem, NC 27101

www.childrenofvietnam.org Phone: (336) 727-1110

E-mail: ben@childrenofvietnam.com

Children of Vietnam Decade Report: 1998 to 2008

One decade ago, in 1998 Children of Vietnam was founded . . . An IRS 501(c)3 designation was received. Two months a year, during Ben's return trips to Vietnam, he and Huong, traveled by motorbike to provide assistance to the most needy children.

In 1999 . . . distribution of an increasing amount of food, clothing, and medical goods was being staged in Huong's living room.

In 2000 . . . COV hires its first two full-time employees and hosts its first group of visitors to see our work and the children we serve.

In 2002 award honors COV for positive impact on the children . . . COV received the Exceptional Humanitarian Award for Work with Children from the Danang People's Committee. COV continues to regularly receive awards for its work.

In 2003 42,500 children's lives were improved. . . new programs were begun including a successful **Parasite Remediation Program** to reduce parasite infections in

children.

In 2004 44,492 children were touched . . . through growing support of donors. COV moved into its first office space and now had four full-time in-country staff.

In 2004 two critical programs were added . . . the **University Scholarship Program** for deserving young students and the **Street Children Tutoring Program** for grade school and high school students were initiated.

In 2006 49,790 children were served . . . and COV added its fifth staff person.

In 2007 funding for a new initiative. . . was received from the Ford Foundation to pilot a **case management system** for the poorest of children with disabling conditions, including those **who have congenital impairments or may have been negatively impacted by exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin.**

In 2008 . . . **With your support and commitment, we work daily to improve the lives of needy children in Vietnam and to honor your generosity. Thank you.**

Children with Disabilities Wrap-Around Services Change Lives

Our Hope System of Care is changing lives of poor children with disabilities who may have been negatively impacted by Agent Orange by providing wrap-around support that focuses on helping the child develop to his or her highest potential.

Nationally, according to a government report about 32.5% of the families of children with disabilities are

living in poverty (less than \$1 USD/day). Another government report indicates that only 24% of children with disabilities nationally attend school, and they have a high school graduation rate of less than 20%. Others cannot go to school although they are capable of learning due to poverty, physical barriers, or societal acceptance.

These children have so much potential. COV is responding, thanks to a grant from the Ford Foundation. In partnership with the Danang Hai Chau People's Committee, services include one or a combination of educational/vocational scholarships, surgeries (orthopedic, heart, eye, etc.), medical aide equipment (wheelchairs, prosthetics, hearing aides, glasses), medicine, therapy, and a dry safe house with indoor bathroom facilities and/or up fitting for accessibility. If you would like to learn more, your call or email is welcome!

COV has created a Community Care Fund specifically to ensure these services continue as each child grows. **Please join us in this effort by making a contribution.**



Meet our staff

Children of Vietnam currently has seven staff members managing our DaNang office. We would like to introduce you to one of them as each are the key to making our operation run smoothly, efficiently and economically.

Ms. Phuong – Junior Program Assistant

In the past editions of our newsletter, Children of Vietnam has had the opportunity to share the lives of our Vietnamese Staff with you. This Past year, we increased our in-country staff by two because of expanded programs.

It is so exciting to introduce you to one of our newest staff members, Ms.

Phuong. What makes Ms.

Phuong's story so wonderful, it that she is one of the first university students to graduate through the COV University Scholarship Program.

Ms. Phuong was raised with in a family of five, which included her mother,



father, sister, and grandmother. Her father is a motorcycle taxi driver and her mother is a homemaker. Ms. Phuong's sister is in tenth grade and working hard to following in her sister's footsteps. Ms. Phuong worked, tutoring English, for a number of years to help pay for her sister's public school fees.

Ms. Phuong graduated from Danang Foreign Language University, with a degree in English. She is currently

working for COV as a Junior Program Assistant. Her main responsibility is working on the Ford Foundation Project, Hope System of Care.

How exciting to have see our programs change the life of a family.

BIKE RIDE OF A LIFETIME

During our March visit to Danang, a two-day bike ride Fund Raiser for Education



(Bikes for Tykes) will take place and you are invited ! This seventy mile trek from Phu Bai to Danang will ramble through some of the most beautiful scenic countryside in Vietnam between The Gulf of Cao Hai and the South China Sea, then up 1500 feet to historic Hai Van Pass from which breathtaking views of all China Beaches and the city of Danang can be seen. We are expecting ten bikers from the US and can accommodate more.

The purpose and goal is to raise funds for bikes costing \$70 for poor school children to be presented at the conclusion of the ride.

You do not want to miss this event. We depart March 1, 2009. Call 336 727 1110 for more information.

NETWORKING, AN ASSET FOR GREATER IMPACT

Yes, NETWORKING, a primary means we use to leverage your generous donations into significantly greater opportunities for helping children. Our investment in shipping and implementation is multiplied at least ten times in final benefits to our needy orphan, street, and poor children.

With potentially a slow year of income ahead us, we remain confident that these networking relationships will be an even greater asset. With your continued support we can maintain these valuable relationships.

Some of our dedicated partners are:

- Stop Hunger Now
- Samaritan's Purse
- Facing The World
- King Benevolent Fund
- Med Eq, Inc
- Global Links, Inc.
- USS Peleliu - US Navy

It is these partnerships that assist us in a major way to maintain our administrative costs at 5%.

We extend our most sincere appreciation to you, our donors, and to these dedicated organizations for your commitment to our children.

Stop Hunger Now Food Program

Children of Vietnam is currently distributing a forty foot container of highly fortified dehydrated food to 6 institutions in Danang .This much needed product is a SIGNIFICANT boost to their meager diets and is greatly appreciated. The best news yet is that we have an allocation for TWO additional containers for 2009 - 570,000 meals for hungry children and adults.

Thank you so very much STOP HUNGER NOW of Raleigh, N.C. Visit them at: www.stophungernow.org

Mark Your Calendar

TET Celebration at A Southern Season, Chapel Hill, NC

On Saturday, February 7, 2008 from 11 AM to 4 PM at A Southern Season located on 201 S. Estes Drive, Chapel Hill, NC, TET will be in full swing celebrating the year of the Buffalo! Enjoy Dragon Dancers, Vietnamese food, and children's games. We are raising awareness and funds to support the handicapped children including those who may have been negatively impacted by Agent Orange. All donations will be matched by A Southern Season. For more information call, 434-823-1224 and ask for our event coordinator Nancy Letteri.

Children of Vietnam

www.childrenofvietnam.org

817 West End Blvd.

Winston Salem, NC 27101 USA

What YOU can do to help!

Our mission is to provide direct aid to the poor and handicapped children of Viet Nam. Our work is done primarily in Danang and surrounding area.

The aid provided is the result of donations given by our friends and partners.

You can make a difference in the lives of the children we serve by making a 501-C-3 tax deductible gift to Children of Vietnam. We cannot continue our work without you.

As a guide, please view the table to the right to see that the phrase “*a little goes a long way in Vietnam*” is a reality and an opportunity for you to make a difference with a small contribution.

We are still providing aid with less than a 5% administrative charge.

“A Little Goes A Long Way in Vietnam”

Build a house	\$1,200
Provide rice for a family	\$18/month
Scholarship for child	\$45/year
“Piggy” project (includes some food)	\$50 each
Fund a calf	\$300/pkg.
Buy a bicycle	\$70 each



Two friends sharing life



A group of kindergartners saying “thank you”