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## NEWSLETTER 12/06

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Welcome to all new members on the mailing list. We have received a wonderful amount of support over the last 6 months. This newsletter will update you on some of the projects.

As many of you know I have decided to leave Colorado and move to Hoi An to continue the work of the foundation. I am working here with Jackie Wrafter and Nick Keegan of our sister organization in the UK.

### PROJECTS IN 2006

Since we are concluding 2006, I would like to highlight the work that has been accomplished due to the dedication of Jackie, Nick and the staff as well as the donations received this year.

**Nutrition.** We had funding for 6 months to look at ways to improve the nutrition of the children by supplementation of the diet.

**Special Education.** We renovated the roofs in the special education room. Phuong the physiotherapist and 2 of the carers now work in the afternoon with Lai to help with the special education of the more severely disabled. The windows in the classroom were redone and a group of students from England painted the walls. In the main classroom the children are doing well and learning to read and write. Thuy continues to do well in school in Da Nang.



**Physiotherapy.** Kalli, a physiotherapist from Germany, spent 3 months here this year giving further training to our therapists. He plans to return next year to continue this work.

**Health.** We took the children to Da Nang for eye exams. The children also went for the yearly dental exam in June courtesy of East Meets West. Minh Hien and Van Hien had cleft palate surgery.

**Social.** The disabled children are getting monthly trips to restaurants in town for their birthday. The able-bodied children had a day out in the waterpark in Da Nang.

**Other.** We paid for extra schooling during the summer for the able bodied children with teachers in the town. Hien and Hau are doing well in school and at the orphanage and we are supporting them for the next year.



## **TYPHOON HITS HOI AN**

Many of you will be unaware that we were hit by a Typhoon in Hoi An on Sunday 1 October. Typhoon Xangsane (named after the Laos word for elephant) killed around 50 people in Vietnam and caused widespread damage. The storm raged for some 16 hours, devastating homes, businesses, landscape and lives. Amazingly there were few fatalities in Hoi An, although the nearby city of Da Nang suffered the worst structural damage and 26 people were reported killed.

The Orphanage did not sustain major damage, but was without water and electricity for four days following the typhoon. This meant that vital washing and laundry (of dirty nappies etc) couldn't be done. We are hoping to raise money for a generator to help us through the tropical storms and numerous power cuts that regularly happen in this part of the world.

## **A BIG THANK YOU TO Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC, SINGAPORE**

Near the end of September, 36 construction students and staff members of Ngee Ann Polytechnic in Singapore spent two weeks at the Orphanage. They worked tirelessly painting, re-wiring, cleaning, mending our run-down buildings, and helping to care for the disabled children.



We are particularly grateful to Ngee Ann Polytechnic for funding the construction of a new bathroom next to our second special education classroom. Prior to this, Mrs. Lai, the room's teacher, spent considerable time carrying the children to the toilet facilities on the other side of the Orphanage. Those children, who were toilet trained, were using a plastic bottle. We strive to help our children live as "normal" lives as possible; going to the toilet in a bottle is not what typical pupils do!

## **LE VAN TRANG, 16 YEARS OLD**

Mr Nhan lives at the Orphanage taking care of his two physically disabled sons, Anh and Trang. They are an extremely close family, and Mr Nhan has given up his life to caring for his boys and ensuring that they get the best care and education possible. In the school summer holidays, the family returned to their home in the remote countryside to stay with their mother and two younger brothers (one of whom has learning difficulties).

Trang caught a cold; this quickly developed into pneumonia. The local doctor was unable to treat him so Mr Nhan brought his son to the hospital in Hoi An. Unfortunately, it was too late; Trang died on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2 days before his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. The family is devastated; they now live in a perpetual state of fear that their eldest son, Anh, who has the same disabilities and fragile health, will soon die the same way.

Young people with severe curvatures of the spine like Anh, Trang (and Luu Mai whom we lost last Christmas) have a poor cough reflex. They cannot easily clear their lungs from infections, and therefore find it difficult to fight off minor infections, which escalate rapidly. We are now working closely with Anh to detect and treat infections early.

## **UPDATE ON THE CHILDREN**

### **Three new children arrive at the Orphanage**

We have three new children at the orphanage. Baby girl “Nghia Thanh” (named after the street that she was abandoned in) came to the Orphanage in October, when she was two months old. She is in the process of being adopted to America.

*Mr Nhan with Anh and Trang*





Two year old Sam joined us in November, following his father's death at sea. It appears that his mother is now the sole bread-winner for the family and can no longer look after him. Sam suffers from cerebral palsy. He is quickly adapting to life in the orphanage and has started speaking.

Despite his disability, Cuong has good intelligence and can speak a little. His general health is weak and early medical exams show that he has a history of poor nutrition. Cuong has a family who love him but are unable to care for him. As he is not an orphan, the American organization Rivers of Hope are funding him to be at the Orphanage to get schooling and rehabilitation. He is already stronger in the three months that he has been with us.



### **The children continue to make good progress**



The children have been in generally good health the last few months; a few of them are making really good progress, most notably Be Hong (on the left) and Minh Hien (on the right with physiotherapist Phuong). Be Hong (three years old this month) had shunt surgery for hydrocephalus (water on the brain) two years ago. She can now hold her head up for long periods of

time, roll over, is learning to crawl; she is a very happy and responsive child. Minh Hien, also three, used to display no reaction to her environment. Now she is an extremely interactive member of the Special Education Class, learning to walk and talk at a great pace.



We are making the fastest progress with children who came to us at a young age, showing that early intervention really works.

### **Nam, 10 year old boy with HIV**



A few weeks ago we visited Nam out in the countryside. Although Nam's health is good, he continues to live an isolated and friendless life with his grandmother and great-grandmother. In October, his grandmother had taken him to the local school, but the families removed their children and refused to allow them to return until he left. We are trying to arrange for Nam to spend two days a week at the Orphanage classrooms.

### **Medical Assessments**



Many of our children have chronic medical problems that have been unaddressed or intermittently managed. We have funding from the DED (German Development Service) to complete full medical assessments of the children. We are completing screening labs and x-rays. We will review the medications the children receive and work on improving the delivery of health care to the children. As the assessments are being completed, we are discovering many untreated health problems that will need addressing in the upcoming year.

### **CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

If you want to give a more meaningful present this Christmas, one that will truly impact positively on others' lives, why not consider making a donation to the Hoi An Foundation on behalf of a friend, family member or loved one?

Please send us the email address and name of the gift recipient, along with your own name. We will acknowledge all gifts made with an email, Christmas message and pictures to the person on whose behalf you have made the donation.

*Carer, Mrs Duong, with Risa Lien*



Donations can be made securely by credit and debit cards through Paypal on our website or checks and money orders can be sent to us at PO Box 181182, Denver, Colorado 80218. Please visit our websites at [www.hoianfoundation.org](http://www.hoianfoundation.org) or [www.kianh.org.uk](http://www.kianh.org.uk) or for more information on how to support our work.



Thanks to everyone who has supported us through the years. The kids are doing great and we hope to continue the progress with their education, therapy and quality of life. We are meeting early next year to discuss future plans for our work and ways to expand the reach of the foundations. These will be outlined in our next newsletter.

Happy Holidays!

