



Viet Nam Friendship Village

The Newsletter of the US Committee of the Vietnam Friendship Village Project

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Summer 2001

Fundraising moves ahead for house for severely disabled children



CARL STANCIL

At the October 31, 2000 International Committee meeting in Hanoi, representatives of VFVP-USA committed to raising \$50,000 in the year 2001. This will cover construction of a new building for the severely disabled. Anything extra will go toward village operating costs.

As of June 15, 2001 sixteen percent (about \$8,000) of the required amount is currently in the bank. The largest single contribution received this spring was \$1,000 from the Pittsburgh chapter of Veterans For Peace. (Thank you!)

Carl Stancil has scheduled three multimedia presentations with Santa Cruz area Rotary Clubs. Suel Jones and Michael Cull are organizing events in and around Anchorage, and supporters are planning events in the Washington, DC and Houston areas as well. We'd love to see many of our supporters in many different places around the country find ways to contribute to meeting our fundraising goal so we can send the money to Vietnam as soon as possible to build that building!

See "Where do we go from here?" on page 8

Vietnam's first State Medal of Friendship awarded to Friendship Village organizers

by Carl Stancil

HANOI, October 30, 2000—In a historic ceremony attended by numerous dignitaries, US veteran George Mizo, together with Georges Doussin of France and Rosi Hohn-Mizo of Germany, were awarded the first State Medal for Friendship by the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for their work in building the Vietnam Friendship Village near Hanoi.

The momentous event denoted the first time a US veteran has been formally acknowledged for humanitarian work for the people of Vietnam. Senior officials in attendance represented the National Assembly, Central Committee, Vietnamese Veterans Association, Union of Friendship Organizations of Vietnam, as well as veterans from France, Japan and the US.

In a private audience after the ceremony General Vo Nguyen Giap, senior military commander during the French and American wars, greeted the three recipients and congratulated them for their humanitarian work. The appearance of the venerated General Giap was historic in that it was the first time a senior Vietnamese military official has met with and acknowledged the contributions of a former enemy. During his surprise visit the self-described "Peace General" greeted Michael, George Mizo's 12-year-old son, with a warm hug and the admonition, "Never go to war."

George Mizo, president of the International Committee



CARL STANCIL

George Mizo, Georges Doussin, and Rosi Hohn-Mizo are applauded after receiving the State Medal of Friendship

of the Vietnam Friendship Village, suffers from the effects of Agent Orange as well as numerous war initiated traumas. George has worked tirelessly with his wife Rosi and other veterans' groups to build the Vietnam Friendship Village, designed to serve Vietnamese who suffer from the after effects of the American war in Vietnam. The project is a model of international cooperation for peace and reconciliation.

2000 International Meeting Report

by Carl Stancil

In late October 2000 three American Veterans—Michael Cull, Suel Jones and I—represented the US Committee at the Vietnam Friendship Village Project's International Committee meeting in Hanoi. Warmly welcomed by the Association of Vietnamese Veterans, we joined delegates from Vietnam, Germany, France and Japan.

It was a time of celebration in Hanoi as the Vietnamese commemorated the 990th year of the establishment of the capital city Thang Long (Hanoi), designated by the UN as a city of peace and culture.

The meeting of the International Committee was held October 31, 2000 after a solemn state ceremony in which the first Vietnam Medal of Friendship was awarded to George Mizo, Georges Doussin and Rosemary Hohn-Mizo. Despite the happy occasion, we were saddened as we acknowledged the loss of two hardworking friends and colleagues over the past year; Mr. Gilbert Jacquemin, International Committee General Secretary from France, and Ken Sharples, President of the British National Committee.

The meeting began with a presentation from Lieutenant General (Retired) Vu Xuan Vinh, Director of Management and Construction for the village. He reported on project status and proposed goals for the next two years.

Project status

The village continues to develop. Between 1999 and 2000 it grew from about 55 residents to its present level of 110. Residents include children, as well as women and men veterans, all of whom are confronting chronic illnesses and malformations related to Agent Orange exposure. Since opening, the village has served more than 200 persons from northern and central Vietnam. Residents are rotated through the village to receive treatment and then returned to their families as their condition permits.

Residents are receiving a broader range of services as our capabilities are strengthened. In addition to nursing and curative treatment, we are providing physical therapy and have had good results with medicinal herbs. However, a number of patients are sent to specialized centers for orthopedic surgeries.

The village has developed working relationships with a number of specialists and hospitals that visit and treat residents as part of their research. The village is developing a reputation for innovative treatments using both traditional and Western methods.

Progress report

Impressive progress has been made over the last year, including the following.

- The French-funded Rehabilitation Center is operational with a cafeteria, space for physical therapy, three classrooms, a small library and conference room.
- The medicinal herb garden has expanded to nearly 230 dif-

ferent plant varieties.

- A system of ponds which has already provided nearly one ton of fish and green vegetables has improved the village diet.
- A pigsty with a family of pigs has further improved the dietary protein level.
- A methane digester uses animal and biological waste to produce methane for cooking and compost fertilizer for the garden.
- The British National Committee has supported the planting of an orchard of orange and grapefruit trees in memory of Ken Sharples, the late President of the British National Committee.

Project goals for 2001

In 2001, project managers are working to:

- increase the number of residents;
- further enlarge the orchard and garden;
- construct a residential building for severely disabled children (est. cost \$45,000);
- complete the rehabilitation center with more facilities for physical therapy, recreation, and vocational training;
- build an administration building with living space for staff (est. cost \$35,000);
- expand the medical clinic to include space for orthopedic surgery.

It is hard to imagine that less than 10 years ago this was a rice paddy. How did this happen? First it was an idea. Then there was dialogue. Then there was work—hard work. Some of it was physical, some political, but much of it was people helping people. Fundraising, organizing and healing is the process.

NBC visits the Friendship Village

by Carl Stancil

HANOI, November 13, 2000—I'm at breakfast at 7:30 am. Suel shows at 8:15 and Mike at 8:30. We discuss our "Press Release" and the Village visit scheduled for the afternoon.

It's 1:00 pm. Suel, Mike and I are at Chuck Searcy's office on Le Tai To. We meet with NBC correspondent Ned Colt, producer Mike Mosher, and their video crew and head out to the Village. I'm with the crew in their van and Chuck, Mike and Suel are in a cab. On the way out Ned and Mike collect some background information on the Village and me.

On site, Friendship Village Director Mr. Hung is his usual warm earthy self. We video individual children describing their history and conditions. Then Suel, Mike and I are there, on camera, with Ned's questions. Are there connections with Agent Orange? What do vets think? What should Clinton do? Ned is clearly moved by what he heard. I can see it in his eyes.

After three hours of intense interviews, dialog and video-taping, we ride back to town with Chuck. "You guys were great," he said, "clear, coherent and together."

What a day! We have a beer at the Kangaroo and debrief. Tomorrow: CBS.

A letter from Earl

by Earl Huch

When the new dynamic brochures for the Vietnam Friendship Village arrived the other day, I was happy to see a couple of the pictures I took at the dedication of the village held in October 29, 1998. I had traveled to Hanoi to attend the grand opening and the international meeting of the Friendship Village Project and to honor the memory of my son Jeff "Paco" Huch who died in Hanoi 5 years ago in March while attending a meeting of the International Committee of the Village. Jeff, at that time, was the national director of the United States Friendship Village Project and was making his third trip to Vietnam.

Jeff first went to Vietnam in 1993 on an excursion to Southeast Asia that also included Cambodia and Laos. He was one of the early Americans to visit Hanoi before normalization of relations between the US and Vietnam. He went first, I think, because he had a sense of adventure, and because he wanted to see the country before it was, in his words, "Americanized." He loved the people of Vietnam, especially the young people. He wrote about people he met on that trip and on the second trip he took in 1995 as a representative of an official Santa Cruz delegation. He worked with LB Johnson, film-



maker and former board member of the Friendship Village in the making of the film, *Forget Me Not*.

Jeff first got involved in the Friendship Village Project to help out a couple of Vietnam Vets he met in Santa Cruz. While Jeff was not a veteran of the Vietnam war or any other, he cared about justice and abhorred war. He later took on the job of volunteer director, with help from his wife Becky Luening. He had just secured tax-exempt status for the project at the time of his last visit to Vietnam and, in fact, had a meeting scheduled with a representative of the Bank of America in Hanoi the day he died to discuss possible funding for the project.

I was pleased to see a picture of myself with Friendship Village Director Nguyen Khai Hung in the brochure. That picture taken in front of the house at the Friendship Village that was dedicated to the memory of Jeff. I think he would have been pleased.

It is a wonderful cause, the Friendship Village Project. It is indeed an effort of a lot of caring people from around to world to make right so many wrongs of so long ago. I urge anyone who has an interest in helping innocent victims who have suffered from no fault of theirs, and continue to suffer so many years after the "American War" ended, to send a check to the Vietnam Friendship Village Project.

I think of Jeff every day and I know I will for the rest of my life. I miss him terribly. He was making a difference and he is missed by many.

Brochure — hot off the press!

We recently received a printing grant for 5,000 two-color brochures, designed by board member Becky Luening. We have enclosed one in the newsletter—just in case you have the urge to share this project with a friend!

Since there are no photo captions in the brochure, we include them here:

- Front Panel—top, board member Carl Stancil and veterans share a moment at the village; bottom, board member Suel Jones with two young villagers.
- Inside—left, project founder George Mizo and son Michael, with village staff and residents, show off US donation of \$5,000 during 1998 grand opening; center, Friendship Village Director Nguyen Khai Hung embraces VFVP-USA board member Earl Huch (same photo as above); right, board member Liliane Floge sits with a roomful of boys at the village.
- Outside Left ("An Invitation")—former board member LB Johnson and Santa Cruz children release white doves during a local ceremony commemorating 25th anniversary of end of Vietnam War. (We love you, LB!)
- Back Panel—Photo of girl taken by Earl Huch during his 1998 visit to the village; photo of boys taken by Suel Jones.

One correction: Since the brochure printing, it was discovered that an Agent Orange research center is *not* part of the long-term plans for the Friendship Village. However, treatment and care of veterans and children with conditions linked to dioxin exposure is and will continue to be an important focus.

Suel Jones and Michael Cull have arranged to print extra brochures specific to their Alaskan group's efforts. Between us, thousands of VFVP brochures will be distributed during the next year. If you can help distribute these in your locale, please call, write or e-mail to let us know how many and where to send them.

VFVP-USA Income & Expense Report for Fiscal Year 10/1/99 through 9/30/00

Income

Individual Donations	\$12,008.20
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Expenses

Bank Charges	\$ 40.00
Booth Fees	35.00
Nonprofit Incorp. Fees	30.00
Photocopies	56.90
Postage	567.26
Printing	1,306.80
Telephone	225.34
Website	355.20

Transferred to Vietnam

\$10,000.00

Balance

< \$ 608.30 >

Return to Vietnam

Another veteran visits the Friendship Village

by Ken Slosberg

That first hit of tropical air as I came out of the plane immediately transported me back to 1968, but with a lot less anxiety than I felt when I stepped onto the tarmac at Ton Son Nhat Airport the first time. After living with memories for 32 years, I was hungry to see how the reality would match.

Of course everyone has their own reality. I'd read a lot over the years, talked to a lot of immigrants from Vietnam, and in recent years talked to Americans who had gone back as tourists. I'd been an Army photographer and had traveled a bit when I was there, mostly in the Central Highlands. I always thought that I'd go back for a few months and visit some of the places I had known. But it became clear to me after reading the guide books that I couldn't really go back. The places I knew are no longer the places I knew.

I had been hearing about The Friendship Village since its inception. My wife, Tina, and 24-year-old daughter, Rebecca, were looking forward to traveling with me and we were all anxious to see firsthand how this exciting project had turned out. As fate would have it, Carl Stancil gave a slide presentation about the Village just as we were getting ready to travel, which just added more fuel to the fire of our excitement for the trip. Through Carl we made contact with Mr. Huynh Van Trinh of the Veterans Association of Vietnam, and he arranged for our visit.

On a beautiful afternoon filled with sun, songbirds, and the usual throngs of people in the narrow streets, we made our way to the office of The Veterans Association, not far from Hoan Kiem Lake in the old section of Hanoi. The guard at the open gate directed us to a small waiting room, a sparse affair with a low table and a few chairs. We were warmly greeted by Mr. Ho Xuan Dich who explained that Mr. Huynh was ill and sorry he couldn't be there. Mr. Ho sent us off in a taxi to the Friendship Village. The unmarked entrance is tucked back off the lane, and we drove by the village and had to ask directions before finding it.



KEN SLOSBERG

Boy having leg lengthened through a series of operations with friends in the clinic of the Friendship Village, May 2001

The village is as pleasant as the photos had led me to believe. We met Mr. Nguyen Khai Hung, the director, and Mr. Nguyen Tien Nhung the vice-director. We felt like visiting heads of state as we were led into a formal looking little room that was filled with an oval table set with water and glasses. The walls of the room were covered with photos of patients, visitors, and events, which seemed to give a fairly complete history of the Village. The director received us warmly and filled us in on village history and current activities. Everything was translated. Our hosts were very generous with their time and gave us a thorough tour.

Of course, the highlight of the experience was seeing the smiles of the children. We visited several groups of children. Some we saw in the classroom, where they excitedly showed us the artwork they had done with a visiting volunteer teacher from The Netherlands. Others we met in their houses. One boy was having a leg lengthened through a series of operations. We were told there were about 70 children and about 30 vets in residence. Everyone seemed happy to see us. The vets we visited were particularly gracious.

We were impressed with the various vegetable gardens and the medicinal Chinese herb garden. They were lush and quite beautiful. The kitchen facilities were basic, but like the rest of the village, well organized. It was obvious that Nguyen Khai Hung was proud of the Village and happy to show it off to us. The tour had the feeling of formal courtesy and friendly warmth that at once made us feel honored and at ease. Our hosts saw us off with waves as we drove away.

The Friendship Village seems unique in terms of cooperative ventures involving American and Vietnamese veterans. Hopefully this will be the model for more projects along these lines. We left feeling the work here stands as a symbol of what can and should be done. Our visit left us feeling better about the possibilities for us all.



KEN SLOSBERG

Girls in their house at the Friendship Village, May 2001

Meet our newest board members

The US Committee's Board of Directors has grown over the past two years. Following are profiles of our newest members, who are making a huge difference in our fundraising efforts.

Michael E. Cull, MS, CDC



Our newest board member, Michael E. Cull, was born and raised in Providence, Rhode Island. He enlisted in USA Medical Corp in April 1964. After serving as a social work technician for two years at Fort Dix, he volunteered to serve in Vietnam on a new unit designed to evaluate, treat, and evacuate soldiers with "combat fatigue." The 98th Medical Detachment was assigned to the 8th Field Hospital in Nha Trang.

He was responsible for all psychiatric patients in the central highlands.

After his discharge in 1967, Michael earned a BS degree in Urban Studies in St. Peters College in Jersey City. At University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Michael attained an MS in Urban Affairs. His ensuing career included numerous administrative positions in the area of education and social services.

After 16 years Michael took a break and traveled extensively in Europe and Asia, leading to a new career as a publisher's representative. Eventually he became certified as an addiction counselor and worked in a treatment center in Denver, Colorado. He moved to Alaska in June 1995 to accept a counseling position at the Wasilla Vet Center. For two years he provided PTSD treatment to homeless veterans at the Anchorage VA Domiciliary. He remains at the Wasilla Vet Center as a counselor/therapist for approximately 50 combat veterans.

In November 1998 Michael returned to Vietnam for his own healing journey. He and Suel have both been instrumental in raising support for the VFVP in the greater Anchorage area.

Liliane Flöge

Liliane's photo can be found on the right panel of the inside spread of our new brochure.

Liliane has spent her last 20 years in higher education, first as a sociology professor at Bowdoin College in Maine, and then as an academic administrator at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania. Since 1990 she has lived with her husband Steve Crawford, a Vietnam Vet, in Frederick, Maryland. As a sociologist she has been interested primarily in gender issues, work-family conflict, and demographics.

Presently Liliane is VP of the Board of Advocates for Homeless Families in Frederick, in addition to having served on four different non-profit boards. For a little over a year she has been on the board of VFVP-USA. Her husband Steve is also involved. She brings to the organization strong

non-profit experience and French language skills.

Liliane's loves include vegetable gardening, cooking, and yoga. She has traveled throughout the world and she and her husband have visited the Friendship Village twice—first in August of 1999 and again in January 2001 while on a mission to adopt a baby Vietnamese girl. (See note from Liliane and Steve on page 6.)

Earl C. Huch

A letter from Earl, with accompanying photo, is on page 3.

Earl has over 40 years of correctional experience, mostly in the juvenile area trying to keep young offenders out of institutions. He spent most of his career in the public sector, but also worked 8 years for private consulting firms. After his retirement two years ago, Earl established a business called Everyday Gourmet, a Personal Chef Service, as cooking has been his passion for many years.

Earl resides in Catonsville, Maryland with his wife, Lois Eldred, a Public Health Official with the Federal Government's Health Resources Services Administration AIDS Bureau, and their daughter Melissa, whom they adopted from Bolivia in 1993. Earl's son, Tom, resides in Eugene, Oregon. His eldest son, Jeff "Paco" Huch, was Director of VFVP-USA when he died in Hanoi in 1996 of natural causes.

Earl attended the grand opening of the Friendship Village in October of 1998, and represented the US at that year's international meeting. Earl joined the VFVP-USA Board because of his interest in world peace and the love his son had for the Vietnamese people and the Friendship Village Project.

Suel Jones



Suel Jones served in the Vietnam War as a Marine (D-1-3-3). After leaving the Marine Corps in 1969 he returned to Houston, Texas, his hometown where he apprenticed as a millwright. In 1977 he received a degree in journalism from the University of Houston. After several jobs with small papers he began to tire of Texas, so he bought an old Econoline and headed north to Alaska where he has lived

since 1981. He worked as a millwright in the oil fields of Northern Alaska for several years before deciding he had enough of the winters 350 miles above the Arctic Circle.

In November of 1998 Suel returned to Vietnam, and while there, visited the Friendship Village. He decided to focus his energy on the VFVP because he felt it was time to help the Vietnamese people, especially the children, who are still being affected by the war. He returned to Vietnam in 1999 for an extended stay, and again in 2000. On his visits to the Friendship Village he has been deeply touched by the progress of the children being treated, and by his communications with veterans he once considered enemies.

Becky Luening and LB Johnson: The heart and soul of VFVP-USA

In March of 1996 Becky Luening, who had been assisting her husband with the operation of the US committee, was thrust onto center stage when Director Jeff “Paco” Huch died in his sleep in Hanoi on the eve of the International Committee meeting. Despite her intense grief and supported by her dear friend LB Johnson, she continued to build on what Paco and others had begun.



Readers may remember this photo of LB (left) and Becky (right) taken at a 1996 wine tasting fundraiser hosted by Erik and Judy Johnson (center) that netted \$6,000 for the project.

Becky and LB organized fundraisers, designed, wrote and mailed the newsletters, paid the bills and kept accounts. LB finished production of the Forget Me Not video begun with Paco in 1995. Together the two traveled to the 1997 Veterans For Peace convention to enlist the support of like-minded vets. All this while Becky continued operation of

her full-time word processing business and LB took on additional video projects.

Today, as Becky finishes a Masters in Education program at the University of California in preparation for a new career as elementary school teacher, her commitment to VFVP continues, bolstered by the dedication and enthusiasm of new board members around the country. LB Johnson resigned her seat on the VFVP-USA board a year ago, but has remained an active volunteer up until her recent move from her long-time home of Santa Cruz to Paradise, a small town in northern California. “LB’s creative energy was vital to me and to this organization after Paco died,” Becky commented. “Without her, many things wouldn’t have happened, or been as successful.”

It is safe to say that without the tireless work of these two incredibly skillful women, VFVP-USA would not exist today. They have provided the heart and soul for the organization, and lighted the way for those of us who came after.

—Carl Stancil

Ruben Gomez: A Steady Presence

Ruben Gomez, long-time member of Santa Cruz’s Bill Motto VFW Post 5888, has the distinction of having the longest held seat on the VFVP-USA Board. Ruben became involved with the project and served as director in 1993-94. In May of 1994, he played a key role in hosting the International Committee meeting in Santa Cruz. May 12th was truly a “Day of Reconciliation” as Ruben, VFVP Founder George Mizo and many other veterans, embraced their former enemies. Vietnamese visitors included Sr. Lt.

General Tranh Van Quang, then president of the Vietnam Veterans Association. This was the highest ranking delegation of Vietnamese officials to visit the US since the end of the Vietnam conflict.

In the past few years Ruben has dedicated much of his time to researching the Battle of Little Bighorn. He has made annual pilgrimages to this battle site for the past three years, and done extensive reading and research on the topic. He is becoming quite an expert on this fascinating piece of history and has begun making public presentations to share his knowledge with others.

Ruben’s commitment to the Vietnam Friendship Village has been strong and steady. He maintains regular communication with his long-time friend George Mizo to keep tabs on the health of both George and the project. His dedication is an inspiration to us all.

—Becky Luening

Steve and Liliane return to Vietnam

On January 1, 2001, Steve and I left for Vietnam to begin yet another type of relationship with that country. Our wish was to adopt a little Vietnamese girl. On January 4 we traveled to a provincial Social Assistance Center (what we would call an orphanage) about 90 minutes from Hanoi to pick up our child, known as Hoang Thi Ngat. We spent another ten days in Vietnam during which time we met up with Suel Jones in Hanoi and revisited the Friendship Village. We noted with admiration and pleasure the several new additions to the village since our visit in 1999 and really enjoyed seeing some of the children again.

After spending ten days in Vietnam finishing the required paperwork, we returned to Maryland on January 14 to begin life as a newly expanded family. We have renamed our child Pascal Hoang Crawford, and after some initial medical problems, she is doing very well. Pascal is now 21 months old and is a very cheerful child who wants to learn the words for everything she sees. She very quickly became attached to her new mother and also after a few months to her Dada! We now feel more connected to Vietnam than ever before and expect to expose Pascal to as much of her heritage as we can and she wants.

—Liliane Floge and Steve Crawford

And then there’s Carl...

We have mentioned all our board members here except Carl Stancil, who is neither our oldest nor our newest member. However, he has taken up a lot of the slack since Becky’s busy at school, and has consistently done what he does best—he calls it “stirring the pot.” Carl has lately been involved in developing a promotional CDROM for the Friendship Village Project. Check it out!





***Pain and Grace:
A Journey through Vietnam***

(San Jose Mercury News, 2000)
<http://news.bayarea.com/special/vietnam25/painandgrace/viet.html>

Pain and Grace documents a unique period in Vietnamese history. In 1987, *San Jose Mercury*

News photographer Jim Gensheimer traveled to the South China Sea with the French rescue operation, *Medicine du Monde*, to photograph the plight of Vietnamese refugees who were fleeing their country by boat. Over the next 13 years, Gensheimer visited Vietnam six times.

Pain and Grace depicts Vietnam during a decade of exodus and return, rebuilding and healing. Mr. Gensheimer's photographs, like no others, capture the grace of the country and its people as well as their pain, suffering and hardship. Through his photos I felt, smelled, and tasted Vietnam. Looking at this book brought tears of sorrow, then of joy. Thumb through a copy at your local bookstore—you won't be able to put it down.

The 128-page hardcover book includes 104 color photographs. It also includes essays by Kristin Huckshorn, who opened the first newspaper bureau in Vietnam on behalf of the Mercury News, and Mark McDonald, the current Mercury News Vietnam bureau chief.

—Carl Stancil

***Reflections Between the Lines:
The Healing of the Vietnam Generation***

(Turner Publishing Co., Paducah, Kentucky, 2000)

When the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 shook the earth, Vietnam veteran Roger LaFontaine's life was shaken beyond its roots. Roger had returned from Vietnam more than 20 years earlier and by all indications had successfully placed his service experiences behind him.



The "quake," however, shook apart both Roger's life and that of his wife, Janice Goff-LaFontaine, as it brought painful memories to the surface. Their ensuing healing journey involved Janice in interviewing and photographing Vietnam veterans from across the nation. The result is an intimate, beautiful work of healing art. The 128-page hardcover book includes 67 photographs and personal interviews by Janice Goff-LaFontaine.

This book is a must for veterans and those who wish to understand veterans. Like an intimate friend, it is a constant presence on my office desk.

—Carl Stancil

**VFVP-USA multimedia CDROM, In
Search of Healing, now available**

A multimedia CDROM describing the history of the Vietnam Friendship Village and its current status is now available for Windows-based PCs. It contains 58 slides taken by Carl Stancil and 3 video clips from the November 2000 visits of NBC and CBS News. Running the show requires Windows 95 or 98, CDROM drive, and sound card. It is useful for public presentations and runs about 35 mins. If you are interested in obtaining a copy, please e-mail Carl Stancil at carls@cruzio.com.



SUEL JONES

A Friendship Village resident rests after leg surgery.

Help expand our network!

VFVP-USA is a hands-on, grassroots organization with no paid staff. We rely on people like you to network and volunteer their time, energy and support.

We invite you to join our email network, through which we will provide regular updates and advice for raising support. Please e-mail us at info@vietnamfriendship.org. Let us know how you can help us expand our efforts. Here are some ideas:

- Write a short article about VFVP (with contact information) and submit it to be published in your local paper or the newsletter of a local veterans organization.
- Place our brochures in a shop or prominent public area (we have lots to distribute—just drop us an e-mail and tell us how many to send).
- Give a presentation to your local service clubs, church group, or employees at your company. A CDROM slide show is available from Carl Stancil (carls@cruzio.com).
- Host a small gathering to share the project with friends, neighbors and associates.
- Send an e-mail to people you think might be interested in helping us reach our goal. Give them our website address: www.vietnamfriendship.org.
- Help us with website updating and promotion.
- Share with us any other ideas you may have for expanding our network of supporters.

Where do we go from here?

by Suel Jones

Every time I go out to the Friendship Village it seems something new is happening or about to happen. Even the road south, Pho Nguyen Chi Thnh, is new, which makes the trip much faster and the Village easier to find. The newest addition is Mrs. Ha's baby. I expect she will be one of the healthiest children imaginable, because Mrs. Ha rode her one-speed Chinese-made bicycle back and forth to work every day during her pregnancy, a 20-kilometer round trip.

A new building, opened last year, houses the communal dining room, which the vets and kids enjoy because it feels more like home when they gather to eat. A physical therapy area on the lower level contains a cable-weight machine and other exercise machines. On the upper level are four classrooms and a conference room. This building is now a very important part of daily life.

Invite people over and ask them to bring a donation for the Friendship Village. If ten people bring \$100 each, then you have raised a quick and easy \$1,000!

Shortly before leaving Vietnam after my last visit in January 2001, I learned that Madame Kim Nhuong, a well-known Vietnamese traditional healer, is practicing Reiki on the kids and is hoping to bring other traditional healers to work at the village. We met one boy who recently had an operation on his legs to help strengthen and straighten them, and another who had a device anchored into the leg bone so his leg can be lengthened bit by bit. While the bulk of the medical work here involves providing the basics—healthy food, clean water, herbs and traditional medicine—more children are receiving surgery as the money comes in.

A large part of the Friendship Village's success is due to the development of its own source of income. "Wood ear" mushrooms are being raised for profit in bamboo sheds on the undeveloped acreage. The fishpond built by funds raised in Alaska produces enough fish to feed the community; extra fish are sold for profit. The Veterans Association of Vietnam, the in-country organization that runs the village, is looking for other ways of producing income. The day before I left, Village Director Nguyen Khai Hung told me they had just signed a three-year contract for a cut-and-saw industry that will be located alongside the mushroom project.

What's next?

The answer to is easy. Creating a living space for about 30 severely disabled children along with a basic surgical center. This will give the village the capacity to treat about 100 children and 30 veterans at any time, and provide an

on-site facility for basic surgery.

Fiscal year 1999-2000 was a banner year for the VFVP-USA because so many new faces were added to the board (see pages 5 and 6). Becky Luening, LB Johnson and Ruben Gomez deserve so much credit, not only for holding the organization together, but also keeping the fundraising alive during very difficult times. Now, this year, we have the opportunity to add onto their foundation and carry our fundraising efforts a step further.

An Appeal

Of the five nations involved in the Vietnam Friendship Village Project, the US and England are the only ones who haven't sponsored a building. Our time has come! We now have an expanded board with the energy and know-how to raise the \$50,000 necessary for the construction of a building for severely disabled children. But we need your help!

Think of it—We can easily meet our \$50,000 fundraising goal if one group of dedicated VFVP supporters in each state in the Union raises just \$1,000!

One way of doing this is to have a seven-course dinner party with all the trimmings. Or sponsor an art auction, a wine tasting ... a biker rally! Serve beer and burgers on the patio, bangers on the barbie, or salmon on the grill after shoveling the snow off the deck—whatever fits your style! Invite people over and ask them to bring a donation for the Friendship Village. If ten people bring a hundred dollars each (chump change in the US), then you have raised a quick and easy thousand dollars. That will go a long way in Vietnam.

How about all that junk in the garage? Sell it, donate the money to the Friendship Village, and get a tax write-off. This is not just about raising money to help kids; it's also about educating the American public about what we left behind and what we need to do. If this idea appeals to you, then pass it along to a friend in another city or state. Enclosed in this newsletter is one of our new brochures just for that purpose.

For more information see www.vietnamfriendship.org, or e-mail us at info@vietnamfriendship.org. While you're on the net check out www.hatfieldgroup.com. This Canadian-based group did a five-year study on Agent Orange and dioxin in Vietnam. Our web page is currently in the process of being rebuilt. Any help on that end would also be greatly appreciated.

The Vietnam Friendship Village Project-USA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, so all contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the IRS. Make checks payable to VFVP-USA and on the lower left corner indicate that it is for the "building project."

A sincere thanks for any and all help. And the first chance you get, I encourage you to visit Vietnam, so you can personally see how openly and lovingly you are accepted over here, especially you vets. I have sat and talked with men I actually fought against and always they extended their hands to me, looked me straight in the eyes and smiled. They welcome us with an open heart; now we can help them with our own open hearts.

Vietnam Friendship Village Project-USA thanks you for your support!

Listed below are all who made donations since our last newsletter. Please let us know if we have missed anyone.

Philip Aaronson
Mrs. A.D. Adams
James Bannister & Sigrid Anderson
Charles & Barbara Bare
Dorothy L. Barenholtz
Thomas E. Baxter
James "Groucho" Beckenhaupt
Valarie Bengal
Derk & Galia Bodde
Amira Bramson
Jill Brethauer & David Samuel
Col. James B. Burkholder, USA, Ret.
Barry Lee Burnside
Phil Butler & Barbara Baldock
Yvonne & Walter Byron
Debbie Cahoon
Les Caulfield
Helen Charpentier
CMP Media Inc. (matched donation
from Bentham Thompson)
Community of Reconciliation
Carol & Kriston Coney
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Congdon
Mike & Cathy Corrigan
William & Lillian Corrigan
Paul Cox & Margo Schueler
Stephen Crawford & Liliane Floge
Robert & Lois Crowley
Joe Curry
Kimberly D. D'Ippolito
Trilby Dickson
Peter DiNardo
Thomas R. Dooley
Sharon Dowe
James & Vicki Downey
Tod Ensign Citizen Soldier
Jane Fessenden
Leonard & Janice Foreman
Wendell P. Garton
Nicola Geiger
James Gensheimer
Mark M. Giese
Jeanne Gillespie
Thompson A. Grunwald
Norma Gulick
Beverly Hall Sasha Illich
Rebecca Hawkins
Lenneke & Tara Heckathorn
Elizabeth & David Henry
Jane Higgins
John Hopkins, Augustus
Construction Company
Ruth Hunter
Joy Jenko
Sandy Johnson
William 'George' Johnson
Pete S. Jussel
Marvin & Gloria Kaplan
Scott Kennedy
Vivian G. Kinnaird
Jon & Tina Koen
Ernest Lendler
Edward J. Madara
Tim Malacarne
Grace & James Malley
Robert Margulies
Rona Mason
Chris Matthews, Poet and Patriot
Irish Pub
Frank J. McDonough
Myron Meinhardt, M.D.
Greg Miller
James & Lynne Minton
Mary Morris & James Anderson
Greta Neelsen
Gerda Norvig
Laura Norvig
Mike Oxtoby
Charles Palms
Margaret M. Peterson
Johanna Beth Portefield
Janet M. Powers
J. Coral Reiff
Jim Richmond & Leah Wecksler
David & Marilyn Rigler
Cal Robertson
Robert B. Robey
Ramon & Dagny Rodriguez
Muriel Salmansohn
Jerome Schnitzer
Urania Schoennauer
Roland Schroeder
Robert J. Schwartz, Ph.D.
Celia & Peter Scott
Tom Shanle
Michael Sharp
Ken Slosberg
Bob & Becky Spitzer
Laura J. Spivak
Frances H. Steadman
Kay Stonemetz
Ann M. Sugrue
Tom Taylor
Bentham Thompson &
Nori Grossman
David Tracey & Heather Ford
Rick Tracy
Robert & Karen Twitchell
Veterans for Peace Pittsburgh Ch.
Richard & Marion Vittitow
Lynda Watson
Silas B. Weeks
Benjamin Weintraub
Jeff Wells
William Wenholz
VADM Ralph Weymouth
Edwin & Dung Williams
John C. Wodynski
Thomas H. Wright
Harold W. Wulke

DEDICATIONS received from our 2000 Mailing

Donor	Dedication
Anonymous (name lost)	In honor of those whose lives were lost on both sides
Anonymous (name lost)	In memory of the damage done by the U.S. to others
Anonymous (name lost)	In memory of "Frosty" Miller
Charles & Barbara Bare	In memory of Stephen G. Bare (Vietnam vet, former officer of Bill Motto VFW Post)
Groucho Beckenhaupt	In memory of Hollis "Frosty" Miller
Valerie Bengal	In honor of my Vietnamese patients in Marina
Citizen Soldier	In memory of Tricia Critchfield
Carol & Kriston Coney	In memory of Ernest Bromley, war tax refuser & peacemaker
Mike & Cathy Corrigan	In honor of Mike's parents, William & Lillian Corrigan, who have worked for peace & justice for over 30 years
Mrs. Alex D'Ippolito	In memory of Alex D'Ippolito, deceased December 27, 1999
Vicki & Jim Downey	In honor of April Burns & Brian Burns & in memory of Bill Burns
Jan Eldred & Peter Szutu	In memory of Jeff Huch
Joseph Eno	In memory of Jack McChuskey
Diane Carison Evans	In honor of American Military women who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War
Heather Ford & David Tracey	In honor of Earl Huch—our best friend
Beverly Hall	In honor of George Mizo's work
Jane Higgins	In memory of Jeff "Paco" Huch
Joy Jenko	In honor of Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program Staff
William "George" Johnson	In honor of the dead on both sides
Marvin Kaplan	In honor of Evelyn Schonfeld
Scott Kennedy	In memory of Walter Guzman
Jon & Tina Koen	In memory of Lo Thi Nguyen (mother 1937-1997) & to celebrate Xinh Thi Nguyen (daughter)
Frank J. McDonough	In memory of Ruth A. McDonough, my daughter, a Vietnam era vet (two hitches in USMC)
Gerda S. Norvig	To celebrate our friend Paco
Laura Norvig	In memory of Jeff "Paco" Huch
Margaret M. Peterson	In honor and memory of Captain James W. Peterson, killed in Vietnam May 22, 1971
Jim & Leah Richmond	In honor of Paco's work
Peter Rubin	In memory of Dr. William Eisman
Jerome Schnitzer	In honor and memory of Ellie Schnitzer
Florence M. Schneider	In memory of Sgt. Bill Schneider, 27th Infantry
Robert & Becky Spitzer	To celebrate the end of the Vietnam-American War
Frances Steadman	In memory of Dr. Bill Eisman, DDS
Tom Taylor	In honor of ALL vets of the war...
VFW Bill Motto Post 5888	In memory of Charles Heil
Silas B. Weeks	In memory of the Wrong War
Ben Weintraub	Hello to George Mizo!
William Wenholz	To celebrate Dan Pham
Harold W. Wulke	In memory of Minnie Lou Wulke, deceased

Special thanks to...

- **Liliane Floge and Steve Crawford**, whose generous \$1,000 donation was matched by new donors after our last newsletter appeal
- **Debbie Nass**, who arranged for a donation of Vietnamese food for Carl Stancil's slide presentation in Santa Cruz earlier this year
- **Ed Teicher**, for help with the slide show photo display
- **Sigrid McLaughlin**, for her gift of 100% of her photo sales from the Santa Cruz event

INSIDE—

- A copy of our new VFVP-USA brochure, hot off the press!
- Report from the 2000 International Committee meeting in Hanoi, including Vietnam's first ever Friendship Medal award ceremony
- Progress report on the Friendship Village and current international and US goals
- Return to Vietnam: Another veteran visits the Friendship Village and shares his impressions and photos (taken in May 2001)
- 2000-2001 donors and dedications
- Where do we go from here? Board member Suel Jones takes us there!
- Carl Stancil announces the release of a multimedia CDROM and reviews two new books about the Vietnam experience

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Vietnam Friendship Village Project USA is to cultivate reconciliation and heal the wounds of the Vietnam War by uniting veterans and caring citizens through international cooperation in the building and support of the Village of Friendship, a living symbol of peace.



Vietnam Friendship Village Project-USA, Inc.

P.O. Box 3805, Santa Cruz, CA 95063 - (831) 429-9197 - info@vietnamfriendship.org

Return Service Requested



The Friendship Village provides loving care to children in a community setting.

PHOTO BY KEN SLOSBERG

Visit us on the worldwide web — <http://www.vietnamfriendship.org>