

Artists for Orphans newsletter from Ho Chi Minh City. Nov 2012



Dear Artists, Supporters and Friends,

It has been a very busy but rewarding time for Ros Bradbury and myself in Vietnam. We have visited Than Xuan Peace Village in Hanoi, I visited three more institutions in the Ba Vi District which is 11/2 hours from Hanoi, and we took a bus to Hai Phong Orphanage which is three hours from Hanoi and I am currently in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).

Our new initiative "will save lives" says Director of Go Vap Orphanage, Co Loan. Go Vap Orphanage, in Ho Chi Minh City, recently unveiled their brand new Intensive Care Unit dedicated to new born and premature babies. The required equipment has already been donated but they did not have the necessary medicines as the price was prohibitively expensive. Artists for Orphans has pledged at least three months worth of these life saving meds. This will save lives the Director said, as they no longer have to rush babies to hospital and will save valuable time by being able to treat the bubs on the premises. Well done artists and supporters! Below is one of the babies in this ICU.



We also got to see the last two air-conditioners that we had installed in the ward for very sick babies and children with Hydrocephalus. Some of these babes will never recover. We have now installed 4 air-con units at Go Vap Orphanage and hope this makes the sick and bedridden children much more comfortable. Below is a photo of one of the babies in this ward.



On behalf of the artists and supporters of Artists for Orphans, we have sponsored four young people to take part in the Teach Me To Fish Programme and Ros and I met our sponsored kids in Hai Phong. We were so impressed with their quiet, shy and respectful demeanours.



(Above) This is Thai and Thuy, the twin girls from Hai Phuong Orphanage. They will turn 18 and like all the other healthy orphans will have to leave the orphanage. This is where Kids Without Borders 'Teach Me To Fish' programmes are invaluable. It helps these kids stand on their own two feet out in the real world. These two gorgeous girls are very naive and would be extremely vulnerable in Vietnam. We are helping them by sponsoring their education and helping them realise their dreams of becoming teachers.



(Above) These are the two boys we have sponsored. Tu is on the left and Trung is on the right. We are sponsoring their education after they leave the orphanage also. Tu is going to learn welding and Trung will study to become an electrician.

Ros and I attended a reunion of the Teach Me to Fish Graduates and most are doing well and are a credit to the programme. One very shy young girl (orphan) we met took part in a course to become a waitress, passed very easily but all prospective employers said she was too short to reach shelves etc. so she is currently employed in a sweat shop where the employees get beaten by their boss. Recently her roommate left unexpectedly and she is now struggling to pay the rent on her small room. We donated Aust \$200 to her as hardship money and we hope this makes her journey a little easier.

Stories of why the kids end up in the orphanages are varied and tragic. One two year old boy had just arrived at one orphanage we visited because both his parents were recently incarcerated.

Two sisters arrived at an orphanage because her single mother was trafficked to China. Three siblings found both their parents dead on their bed. And some kids are just too sick or too affected by Agent Orange to be cared for at home.

We have delivered new shoes and new clothes donated by Sue of Newrap Costume hire and the kids loved having something new. Also some toys donated by the Kyneton Bowling Club were give out to the kids.

(Below) Agent Orange is STILL breaking hearts all over Vietnam.



(Below) Ros getting hugged to bits by a little doll



Be home soon. Thank you all for making this happen.

Roni Wildeboer
Founder
Artists for Orphans