

## Introduction

Most of you will receive this newsletter on your holiday location that we hope is sunny. For us here, it is the rainy season and we are already working on project proposals for 2013. Next year will be a year full of events: organisation of a concert of our foster parent, world tour of Yannick with his truck, etc. We also need to mobilise all the players of the association and to unite their energies, so fully charge the batteries so they will come back to us in top form for the new season in September!

Marc de Muynck

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## Orphanages

### Visitors to Minh Tam



Caroline who is the foster mother of one of the children and who supports our projects with her association "La Kermess" in Rijswijk (The Netherlands), visited Minh Tam with a group of fourteen

befriended tourists. They brought medicines and Myriam, a young women from Brussels handed a filled envelop to the person in charge of the orphanage. Her mother, originally from Maghreb, organised a "big" couscous in her neighbourhood and donated the profits to support our association. The nuns invited the group to share a "Bun Bo Hue chay". The basis is a good beef soup with Hue noodles, but in this case, the nuns being vegetarians have replaced the beef by soja.

We thank the mother of Myriam very much for this generous gesture and the whole group for the medicines.

### Funding needed for reconstruction at Minh Tam



For Minh Tam, we are looking for sponsors to be able to execute some activities to enlarge the orphanage and putting dorms with beds and wardrobes, a library and a small 'corner' with some

computers. If you are interested to help us with this project or you wish to receive more information, please mail us [contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com](mailto:contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com). If you know an interested sponsor, please forward this information. It is quite urgent, because the official operating licence for this centre depends on the realisation of these works.

See the November 2011 newsletter for the presentation of the orphanage.

### Gifts for a foster child

This afternoon young Thu Phuong, fostered by our association came by motorcycle with her father from Vung Tau to receive the gifts of her foster mother in France.



Thu Phuong is 8½ years old and underwent a heart operation in France in October 2009 thanks to a solidarity chain organised by "Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque" (Philanthropy Heart Surgery). Her host family in France approached our association to continue helping her to grow up with the best support. Doctor Truong Da Luu, pediatric heart surgeon of the hospital "Nhi đồng 2" who checks her regularly, was there too. We had received two computers in donation from a French organisation in HCMC and we gave one to the girl. The doctor had asked us that for her. Thu Phuong was very happy to receive this gift.

We would like to thank the donor of the computers and of course the foster parents.

### The adventures of tamtam in the country of the children of the dragon

#### Le Duy Tam



My shirt sticks to my body, the sun burns to make a Vietkieu (oversea Vietnamese) crazy, who is not used to the May heat of his country of origin anymore.

On my 22 years' old scooter, borrowed from the family, I drive in the hustle and bustle of Saigon's (ancient name of Ho Chi Minh City) traffic. Drive is exaggerated, because you cannot advance in this anthill of 15 millions scooters, at a maximum speed of 30-40 km/h. I have to go quickly, little one (I reminded myself in my mind), because I cannot keep waiting the foster moms and dads at the other end of the wonderful machine that is often the diabolic digital small tablet. (in the maze of the



internet). But today this tablet computer has become a wonderful tool, because it connects the hearts of those who can give and receive these wonderful gifts: the smile of a child.

I finally arrive after a ride of one hour and 20 minutes on my motorized iron horse. Already the first welcoming with the very sympathetic sentence: "Ah that's the "daddy" of Tam (our foster daughter). We have to call little Tam, her foster dad is here."

The little ones emerge after a beneficent nap in this choking heat, the eyes still misty with childhood's dreams.

Sister Maria's welcomes me. And here I am asking permission to go upstairs to the study room and to gather the children whose foster moms and dads would like to talk to them and especially see if they are in a good shape. Time goes certainly too fast for the foster dads, foster moms and children and for me too, because I would like those moments to last longer. The shyness of the children cannot stop the happiness of foster moms and dads, very happy to see them and that happiness makes me feel very good.

But everything has an end. I'm happy once more to have completed well the mission promised to the foster moms and dads.



And again it will be the return plunged into this impossible circulation, but on the way home everything seems easier for me.

Till soon, foster moms and dads. The children are also happy despite their fascination and their failure to understand all this computer technology that brings hearts closer together.

## Projects

### Gia Canh

On 9 July Pierre-Yves and Laura arrive, two northern volunteers (F). Our friend Thuy welcomes them at her house for their first night. The following morning they and Marc depart at 6 (a.m.) for Gia Canh in Dong Nai province, where they meet the officials of the People's Committee.



They also meet some poor families who will benefit from our support to obtain a decent house.

In France they managed to collect the necessary money for the construction of two houses. To vary their stay, they are going to participate in a first

construction in Dong Nai province for the duration of two to three weeks. The duration is defined by the climate, because it is the rainy season here. After that, they will move to a second construction in Soc Trang Province, in the Mekong Delta.



On 24 July Marc gets up very early to take Caroline and Estelle, two students of HEC Montreal to the construction site of a house that their student association is financing. They accompany Marc to meet two families who recently benefitted from a house. They also see a house that is being constructed, before meeting Pierre-Yves and Laura who they are replacing in the house of Mrs Hoa and Mr. Minh (*on the photo*). They will start their stay with a "full" immersion because the interpreter who would accompany them is unable to attend at the last minute. But we are convinced that this will not be a problem.

### Soc Trang

27 July after the construction in Gia Canh and a refreshing two day's rest in Ho Chi Minh City, the car leaves at 4 a.m. for the Mekong Delta, with of course Marc, and Pierre-Yves and Laura. They have the opportunity to meet the provincial authorities in Soc where Marc had to finish some administrative formalities. After that they are introduced to the place where they will stay in Bo-Na village. Laura had told Marc that their first stay in Dong Nai reminded her of an episode of Peking express, this time it will be more like "Koh-Lanta" (French reality show). Marc left them in the company of mosquitoes who are crazy of joy at the thought of a feast of new blood announced for the evening. Soon another team of volunteers will arrive to help with the construction of other houses. In a short time the construction of seven other houses will start: four in Dong Nai and three in Soc Trang.



We thank Pierre-Yves and Laura, Caroline and Estelle and their association, the other team (still to come) and all the sponsors of these houses.

## Contributions

### Walking sticks

Marc has started the distribution of walking sticks to the handicapped, poor and/or elderly, donated by [SARL Walking sticks factory Fayet](#).



Here the pictures of two people who benefited from this donation: Mr. Lu Cung and Mrs. Hoang Thị Tiet. Having joined the French Army at a young age Mr. Lu Cung, who is now 82 years old, has served in Tonkin (the former name of the north of Vietnam) for eight years. He is always very happy that he can still say some words in French. Mrs. Hoang Thị Tiet is from the neighbourhood where Marc lives.

All the members of the association and the beneficiaries of the action thank the company and its manager Mr Jean Luc Fayet for their generosity.

### Operation Dragon 2013

In the May edition we announced the project of Yannick to support the construction of our own orphanage. We would like to present the truck with which he is planning to make the big trip. The trailer is painted, remains the selection of the publicity to put on it. The tractor will be ready in ten days. If you are interested to sponsor the trip or our project directly, contact us at [contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com](mailto:contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com).



### Impressions of a foster mom



#### Can you tell something about yourself?

My name is Aline, I am 30 and I am a translator. I am from the north of France, but I live in the Jura region now with my husband.

#### Since when are you a foster parent?

I foster a child with les Enfants du Dragon for approximately two years.

#### What made you decide to become a foster parent?

I had been thinking about it for a long time, because I wanted to give back a little bit of the luck I had received in my life. I did it when I could afford it, when I discovered the association.

#### Can you tell some more about what is it like to be a foster parent?

I am still learning to be a foster mother because it is still new to me. I try to show my foster child that despite the distance, I think of her and I accompany her.

#### Why did you choose Vietnam and the association 'the Children of the Dragon'?

I was contacted by the association to make a translation. Then, I offered to sponsor a child. I preferred to do it with an association "of a human scale", that I knew.

#### Did you choose a boy or a girl?

A 10 year old girl.

#### Did you already meet your foster child?

No, not in flesh, but I had the chance to see her and to talk to her via Skype.

#### Will you visit her/him soon?

I would love to! It's a dream I'd like to fulfil in the coming years.

#### In what way do you communicate with your foster child?

On Skype, thanks to Tam who interpreted our discussion.

#### Can you tell us about your most moving moment?

Yes... The first question that my sponsor child asked me was: "Do you like me?" I didn't expect it at all, especially because she's quite shy in front of the camera. I was really touched. And now, it encourages me to be a little more demonstrative in my oral and written communications with her.

#### Do you have a tip for the other foster parents?

I should be the one to ask for advice, but I guess you have to adapt to the child while remaining yourself.

### Impressions of a volunteer



#### Can you tell something about yourself?

My name is Trinh. I was born in Ho Chi Minh City in 1986. I graduated from University of Social Sciences and Humanities. I am working for a Canadian Kindergarten.

#### Since when are you a volunteer?

I started working as a volunteer in 2009 during my study and I work for the association "the children of the dragon since April 2011

### What made you decide to do volunteer work?

I believe we are all fortunate enough to lead our normal life and it is only fair to share a bit of our luck with the less privileged.

### Have you been doing volunteer work before and in which country?

I volunteered for a cultural exchange program when I studied. I've been working on some charity events, giving scholarships to the less privileged.

### In which country are you a volunteer now?

I've only been working in Vietnam.

### Is there a difference between doing volunteer work in Vietnam or elsewhere?

Each country has its own particularities. However, I have never had a chance to volunteer in other countries. But I think in a developing country, especially in Vietnam, there are so many cases and situations that need help and support and there are so many things that need to be improved. The difficulty is to choose the one that need help the most.

### Why did you choose the association the Children of the Dragon?

It was a coincidence, I heard from the association from a friend. And then I discovered the interest of the activities. Besides, the orphanage where I volunteer is the one that best fits my criteria. The place is not too near to the city in order to get easy support from surrounding people, and it is not too far away so I can come to help frequently. And the support I can provide to the kids are within my capability. So I decided to join.

### What kind of volunteer work do you do?

I teach English to the kids.

### Can you tell some more about what it is like to be a volunteer?

My life is more meaningful when I can help someone and share a bit of my luck. From that, you realise how lucky your life has always been and you cherish more what you have.

### What has been your most moving moment?

The fun, happiness and the joy the kids have never enjoyed before like children living with their parents.

### What do you find difficult about being a volunteer in Vietnam?

The difficulty is choosing the ones that need help the most. Also many orphanages are driven by groups

that use kids as a tool to serve personal purposes instead of giving help to the children.

### Do you want to share something else with the readers?

I believe everybody can give a hand to help others. Some can do big things, some can do small things. Your support and action, either big or small, are valuable regardless.

### Do you have a tip for other volunteers?

Patience and tolerance. It is not always easy and it takes long time to see improvement. For that, helping others requires great tolerance to overcome these difficulties.

### Do you want to share something else with the readers?

I believe everybody can spread his or her hands to help others. Some can do big things, some can do small things. Your support and action, either big or small, is equally valuable.

### Adresses of the association

#### France

Les enfants du dragon  
73 rue Roger Salengro  
59243 Quarouble  
Tél. +33 (0) 327 273 751

#### Vietnam

B 23/26 Đường Số 5, Tổ 23 - Ấp 2  
Vĩnh Lộc B - Huyện Bình Chánh  
TP Hồ Chí Minh  
Mobile +84 (0) 937 126 605  
[contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com](mailto:contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com)

#### Switzerland

Rue du mont 6  
1023 Crissier  
Mobile +41 (0) 78 619 78 65

### Council of the association

President	BUI Huy-Lan
Vice-president	Marc DE MUYNCK
Secretary	Yves LEFEVBRE
Treasurer	Stéphany RAULT
Communication	Marieke VAN DER PIJL
In charge of the foster children	Marie-France BAILLEUL
Representatives in Switzerland	PHAM Hai LE Duy Tam
Representatives in France	Liliane GAIDOT Patrick and Francine FAY Evelyne VIREMOUNEIX

Webmasters      Sylvain LORILLOU  
                         PHAM Hai

**Colofon**

Editors            Marc DE MUYNCK  
                         Marieke VAN DER PIJL  
Translators      BUI Thanh Thuy  
                         Marieke VAN DER PIJL  
Lay-out            Marieke VAN DER PIJL

For more information about us and our activities  
see: [www.lesenfantsdudragon.com/](http://www.lesenfantsdudragon.com/).

If you have comments or questions do not hesitate  
to write us at [contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com](mailto:contact@lesenfantsdudragon.com)

